



# Action Line

## Legislative Activity

### Education Appropriations

The shell Education Appropriations Subcommittee bill was released this week. A shell bill is one without a bill number and, with an appropriations bill, generally only has dollar amounts included for the various line items. Rarely does policy language make it into a shell bill – until this week.

The shell bill includes language that exempts Teacher Salary Supplement (TSS) funds from future across-the-board cuts and makes it retroactive to the current fiscal year. This language overrules a December 2009 Iowa Department of Education declaratory ruling that stated TSS funds are not exempt from across-the-board cuts. IASB adamantly opposes this language, especially the retroactivity of the language, as it unduly burdens school districts when hit with an across the board cut. If the majority of a school district or AEA's budget is to be held harmless, that makes the cuts even deeper for the rest of the budget.

The bill also mandates the use of a combined salary schedule which would place all teacher salaries in one item. IASB also opposes this language. The main reason is that we cannot control the budget process at the state level nor can boards control the governor's ability to use an across-the-board cut due to a budget shortfall. Support staff and educational programming should not take the brunt of a budget cut. If teachers can guarantee that we will never have another across-the-board cut or a shortfall in funding due to the regular budget process, we might be more comfortable with the language.

Contact your legislators in both the House and Senate this weekend to let them know about your concerns with the language. We anticipate the Education Appropriations Subcommittee will take the bill up on Monday. The following are members of the Subcommittee: **Senate:** Schoenjahn, Chair, Quirnbach, Vice Chair, Boettger, Ranking Member, Feenstra, Horn. **House:** Winckler, Chair, Hanson,

Vice Chair, Dolecheck, Ranking Member, Chambers, Ficken, Frevert, Koester, May, Wenthe.

### Race to the Top

IASB continues to work with legislators and other educational stakeholders on a solution to the Race to the Top language passed and signed earlier in the session. Since Iowa was not one of the states selected in the first round, we have time to make the amendments so more schools will apply in Round 2 which is expected in June. Continue to talk to your legislators about your concerns with the current language and ask for their support to reconsider that language. For talking points, see <http://www.iasb.org/WorkArea/showcontent.aspx?id=9120>.

### Bills on the Move

#### **SF 2291 – DE Special Education Clean-up – Signed by the Governor**

This bill makes a number of code clean-ups to the special education chapter of the Code. IASB monitored this bill.

#### **SF 2194 – Election Law Updates – to the Governor**

These bills include a Physical Plant and Equipment Levy fix that has been needed since the big election law changes of 2008. Currently, the law requires a PPEL with income surtax vote to take place at the regular school election, not a special election. These bills correct that mistake. The bills also make other corrections to the law as a result of the 2008 changes, including addressing annual meetings and the election of officers. IASB requested the corrections and supports the bills.

#### **HF 2462 – PPEL Levy Uses**

On a 58-39 vote, the House approved HF 2462. No amendments were adopted on the floor and the bill passed on a bi-partisan vote. This bill gives school districts the ability to use the board-approved PPEL for computer software, repair and maintenance of equipment bought using the regular or voter-

approved PPEL and technical support and training. IASB supported the bill, which is now in the Senate. SF 2292 is identical and on the Senate calendar.

### **HF 823 – Green Cleaning Mandate by McCarthy**

The House approved an amended version of HF 823 on a vote of 52-47. The amendment replaced the mandate with a requirement that school boards consider the use of green cleaning materials. Boards that decide not to make a shift to green cleaning materials must pass a resolution stating their intention and provide that information to the DE. The bill allows districts one year to explore green cleaning options before making that determination. It also provides an exemption for the use of traditional cleaning products. IASB worked with the committee to draft the amendment but remains opposed to the bill. SF 2335, similar to HF 823, is on the Senate calendar.

## **Bill Tracker**

### **SF 2369 – SILO Reporting by Ways and Means**

The Senate Ways and Means Committee approved a bill that will require districts to report the uses of statewide penny sales tax infrastructure dollars. Data will be collected on the CAR and will be limited to how much was spent on property tax relief and how much was spent on infrastructure. DE was directed to work with stakeholders in developing the actual request for this information. IASB is monitoring the bill, which is on the Senate calendar.

### **SF 2316 – Floodplain Management by Rebuild Iowa**

The bill that would have imposed more stringent regulations on certain facilities within the 500-year floodplain failed to make it out of a House committee. SF 2316 would have limited the construction, repair or modification of buildings located within the 500 year floodplain if they are defined as critical facilities. IASB was monitoring the bill, which is now dead.

## **Bills Surviving the Second Funnel**

SF 2305 – Sex Offender Clean-Up  
SF 2288 – DE Code Clean  
SF 2226 – Child Visitation of Military Personnel  
SF 2178 – Nonpublic Textbooks/Computers  
SF 2088 – Government Reorganization  
HF 2502 – IPERS  
HF 2485 – PERB Technical Clean-up  
HF 2461 – School Business Official Certification  
HF 2432 – Study of Minority Hiring  
HF 2295 – Study of AEAs

HF 2197 – Veterans Day Off  
HF 2144 – School Closures  
HF 2110 – Unemployment for Spouse of Military Member  
HF 777 – Open Meetings/Public Records

## **Bills that Died in the Second Funnel**

SF 2337 – Paid Sick and Safe Leave  
SF 2193 – Notification of Personnel Policies  
HF 2420 – Fair Share for State Executive Branch Employees  
HF 2413 – Use of School Resources  
HF 2440 – Market Factor Pay  
HF 2375 – Former Employees Access to Personnel Files  
HF 495 – Extracurricular Activities

## **IASB Lobby Day on March 9**

Our last Regional Lobby Day is scheduled for March 9. We will begin the day with a briefing on current education issues and will then visit the Capitol to meet with legislators. This is an incredibly powerful opportunity for you to build relationships with your legislators and tell your district's story. The Revenue Estimating Conference meets on March 11 so legislators will be starting to focus on the budget. We strongly encourage all IASB members, no matter the AEA in which you are located, to attend on this Lobby Day to ensure our needs for adequate funding are addressed. If you cannot make it on March 9, please come to the Capitol any day you can to have your voice heard. Remember, those who are not at the table may be on the menu!

This opportunity is free of charge but we do ask people to register. More information is available online at <http://www.iasb.org/EventsTraining.aspx?id=8410>

## **Conference Call on Fridays**

IASB is introducing a new Friday morning legislative conference call. Dial in to hear IASB lobbyists Mary Gannon and Emily Piper give you a wrap-up of action at the Capitol each week, and e-mail them questions on the spot. The calls will begin at 8:30 a.m. every Friday.

**Conference Call dial-in instructions:** Dial (866) 316-2753 followed by the conference code, 6805834672. You will hear music until your hosts arrive on the call.

E-mail questions ahead of time or during the call to [mgannon@iasb.org](mailto:mgannon@iasb.org).

*IASB Action Line, Mar. 5, 2010*

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