



Action Line

IASB Legislative Activity

Status of Budget Discussions

We are still hearing from legislative leadership that their intention is to fund state aid at the same level as the governor, which was approximately \$170 million short, about \$300 per pupil. The amount includes all state aid including the categorical funds. The plan is to maintain the 2 percent allowable growth. If there is a shortfall, schools will maintain the spending authority. Access the following link to see the specific allocations: <http://www.ia-sb.org/WorkArea/showcontent.aspx?id=9176>.

The AEAs, however, do not have spending authority. Discussions continue about how to hold the AEAs harmless to any underfunding. There is also some movement to give schools the spending authority for the loss of the Instructional Support Levy (ISL) state aid portion. The current state portion, 25 percent of the total amount of the ISL, is approximately \$51.4 million for FY 2010. The state, however, only funded \$13.1 million from ARRA funds in the current fiscal year. The Legislature is unlikely to provide spending authority on the full amount. We will keep you informed about the progress of the budget negotiations. This weekend, continue to talk to your legislators about your specific needs for full funding of education.

SBRC Action

The School Budget Review Committee met on Monday and heard requests from 51 school districts for modified allowable growth to adjust for the elimination of Phase I Teacher Salary Supplement (TSS) monies. The SBRC granted modified allowable growth for 14 districts, voted to deny the request for nine districts and had a split vote on 28 district requests. One of the key issues was the definition of “unique, unusual and substantial.” There is no uniform definition for this phrase. IASB had fought for the provision to allow modified allowable growth in response to last year’s legislative action to eliminate the Phase I monies.

IASB is working with legislators, in conjunction with SAI and ISEA, to determine the appropriate solution. The solution hinges on the definition of “unique, unusual and substantial” and whether or not this can be resolved through discussion with the DE or will require legislative action.

Bills on the Move

SSB 3248 – Educational Appropriations by Appropriations

The Education Appropriations bill passed the Senate on Tuesday and is still in the House Appropriations committee as of this writing. The bill includes language that exempts TSS, professional development and early intervention (class size) funds from future across-the-board cuts but the Senate did pull the retroactivity language for both the TSS and the single salary schedule. 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 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. Contact your legislators in both the House and Senate this weekend to let them know about your concerns with the language. IASB is monitoring the bill, which is in the House Appropriations Committee.

SF 2369 – SILO Reporting by Ways and Means

The Senate approved the bill that requires school 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 in the House Ways and Means Committee.

SF 2305 - Sex Offender Registry Changes by Judiciary

This bill makes some clean-up amendments to last year's major rewrite of the sex offender registry bill. Of importance to IASB members is a provision that provides immunity to individuals who attempted to comply with the new law, but did not, including the provision where sex offenders are not to be on school grounds except when dropping off/picking up their children, voting or with the consent of the principal. IASB supports the bill, which has passed both houses and it is on its way to the governor.

HF 2518 – IPERS by Appropriations

The House has passed the IPERS bill and the bill is in the Senate Appropriations Committee. The bill:

- Moves from a high three-year salary average to a high five for those employees not vested on July 1, 2012.
- Increases the amount IPERS can increase the contribution rate annually from 0.5 percent to 1 percent. The first time this would be in effect is for FY 2012 as the contribution rate already increases by 0.5 percent for FY 2011.
- Extends to July 2012 the ability for employees to continue to get full credit for their normal or previous salary/wage in the case of furlough or employee-exercised acceptance of a lower paying wage position, in order to prevent termination, if with the same employer.
- States that on or after July 1, 2012, a regular member of IPERS will have to have seven years of service to be fully vested for the sake of benefits. (Currently it reads four years.)
- Increases early retirement penalties for vested members retiring before they reach age 65.

IASB is monitoring the bill.

HF 2461 – Business Managers by Education

This bill establishes a professional business manager license for school business managers. The new license requirement is effective for new hires after July 1, 2012, and grandfathers in those business managers already practicing at that time. The bill also mandates continuing education requirements for all business managers including those grandfathered in without a license. An advisory committee will develop the license and continuing education requirements due to the Board of Educational Examiners on Dec. 31, 2010. IASB supports the bill, which is on its way to the governor

HF 2295 – Study of AEA Services and Funding by Education

This bill creates a task force to study the mission, structure, governance and funding of the area education agency system to determine if the current model is applicable to the challenges and requirements of 21st-century learning. The task force is comprised of educational stakeholders and legislators and their report is due by Dec. 15, 2010. IASB supports the bill, which is on its way to the governor.

HF 823 – Green Cleaning Mandate – to the Governor

The Senate approved HF 823 on a vote of 28-20. The bill requires boards to consider the use of green cleaning products. 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 is opposed to the bill, which is on its way to the Governor.

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>.

Conference call on Fridays

IASB is holding Friday morning legislative conference calls for legislative updates. 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 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@ia-sb.org.

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