February 2022 Legislative Update

The House held several virtual committee meetings this week but was not scheduled to convene in Springfield. The Senate did convene and held committee meetings leading up to this Thursday’s committee deadline. Leadership extended the committee deadline for 69 bills. All House bills must be passed from a standing committee by next Friday, February 18.

The House and Senate will meet for session at the Capitol next Tuesday through Thursday.

The Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS), representing the leaders of Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Service Centers in all 102 Illinois counties, partnered with Goshen Education Consulting and Illinois for a fall 2021 survey of more than 660 school districts statewide on the key questions around the depth and consequences of Illinois’ teacher shortage crisis.

The latest survey confirms the sobering reality playing out in classrooms statewide: the shortage crisis is immense, complex and growing, despite many ongoing policy and practical efforts at all levels of education to take it head on. Learn more about the Illinois Educator Shortage Crisis at the IARSS website.

According to a recent study by business.org, Illinois ranks 9th in the nation for teacher earnings. The average teacher salary in 2019-20 was $68,305, 17% higher than the state’s overall average salary for all occupations at $58,070.

Priorities:

SB 3900/HB 5032 - Reading Foundations Test
HB 5032 is posted for committee hearing on Wednesday. IACTE will oppose again. We will meet with Stand for Children on Wednesday afternoon.

HB 4293 - removing audio - Should not be called for a vote

HB 5330 - posted for hearing on Wednesday - CPS initiative to allow microcredentials

ACTIVE BILLS

House Bill 4139 (Scherer-D) creates a teacher reimbursement grant program for students at public universities teaching in public schools. The bill was voted out of committee but faces strong opposition due to high cost. House Second Reading

House Bill 4256 (McCombie-R) allows districts to waive evaluation requirements for teachers and principals for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years, as long as the teacher was rated as “excellent” or “proficient” in the most recent year. House Second Reading

House Bill 4257 (McCombie-R) reduces the number of professional development hours from 120 to 100 during any five-year cycle that includes the 2021-22 academic year. The bill also removes the requirement of completing an Illinois Administrators’ Academy course for 2021-22. House Second Reading

Senate Bill 3693 (Joyce-D) allows substitute teachers to teach up to 120 days instead of 90 days for any one licensed teacher. Senate Second Reading

Senate Bill 3900 (Lightfor-D) requires teaching applicants to pass a test in reading foundations. Senate Second Reading

Senate Bill 3988 (Pacione-Zayas-D) allows a paraprofessional educator endorsement on an Educator License with stipulations to be issued to applicants at least 18 and for elementary education only. Senate Second Reading
Senate Bill 4056 (Belt-D) is an extensive ISBE cleanup bill with references to career and technical educator endorsements. Senate Second Reading

Senate Education Committee – Tuesday, February 15 at 4:00 PM

Senate Bill 3907 (Turner-D) allows a short-term substitute teaching license to teach up to 15 consecutive days instead of 5, per licensed teacher.

House Elementary Education: School Curriculum – Wednesday, February 16 at 8:00 AM

House Bill 5032 (Mayfield-D) requires teaching applicants to pass a test in reading foundations. **Initiative of Stand for Children. ISBE also believes a new test would be duplicative.

House Bill 5347 (Bourne-R) requires a General Assembly joint resolution approval to revise teaching and learning standards.

House Elementary Education: Administration, Licensing & Charter Schools – Wednesday, February 16 at 2:00 PM

House Bill 4293 (Bennett-R) removes requirement of audio, in addition to video, submission for licensure assessment and allows candidate to submit a letter stating that the candidate meets the requirements. The bill still requires that candidates pass a teacher performance assessment. *Concerns on removing audio requirements in exchange for letter **ISBE opposes; the bill is likely not moving.

House Bill 4666 (Yednock-D) allows districts to waive evaluation requirements for teachers and principals for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years, as long as the teacher was rated as "excellent" or "proficient" in the most recent year.

House Bill 4798 (Stava-Murray-D) requires ISBE to give substitute teacher licenses to students in educator preparation programs who have earned at least 60 credit hours. *Concerns about not completing course work in exchange for paying job

House Bill 5330 (Cassidy-D) reduces the minimum hours of semester work from 24 to 18 for subsequent endorsements and makes special provisions for career and technical educator endorsements. Allows school districts to establish professional development sequences. *CPS initiative for microcredentials

House Joint Resolution 61 (Bennett-R) creates the Addressing the Illinois Teacher Shortage Task Force.

House Higher Education Committee – Wednesday, February 16 at 4:00 PM

House Bill 5361 (Grant-R) creates a paraprofessional fast tract to teaching degree pilot program for one public university.

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