

# IASB Legislative Report 104-28

*Delivered via email: March 27, 2026*

## **This Week at the Capitol**

Both the House and Senate were in session this week with a full week of committee hearings. The House Committee deadline of March 27 marked an important milestone as bills now move to the next stage of the process. The IASB Governmental Relations team was primarily busy meeting with House representatives as they tried to move their bills out of committee. Committee deadlines are critical dates because, with some exceptions, bills that do not pass out of committee by March 27 will not proceed this session. With more than 5,700 bills introduced in the House alone, the deadline represents the first meaningful narrowing of legislation, allowing IASB Governmental Relations to focus its advocacy on a smaller set of proposals still advancing through the General Assembly.

Looking ahead, both chambers will be off next week for Spring Break. The House is scheduled to return on April 7, and the Senate will return on April 14.

## **Advocacy Day at the Capitol**

IASB's Advocacy Day on March 24 was a great success, with strong attendance from members across the state. IASB received positive feedback from Association members and legislators. The morning session featured remarks from Deputy Governor for Education Martin Torres, Senate President Don Harmon, House Minority Leader Tony McCombie, Assistant Majority Leader Jay Hoffman, Senator Meg Loughran Cappel, and Representative Michelle Mussman.

In the afternoon, IASB board members spread out across the Capitol grounds meeting with legislators and attending committee hearings. It was a full and productive day at the Statehouse, offering valuable opportunities to build new relationships with lawmakers and strengthen existing ones.

## Unemployment Insurance for ESPs Passes out of Committee

As part of IASB's Advocacy Day, IASB members expressed opposition to **HB4416 (Evans)**, which would expand unemployment benefits for educational support personnel during scheduled school breaks. Importantly, there is no state funding to pay for the proposal. IASB issued a Call to Action that same day. IASB appreciates the strong response from our members, with more than 1,000 witness slips filed in opposition to this bill. The following day, the Illinois Federation of Teachers and the Illinois Education Association held a lobby day in support of the bill. That afternoon, HB4416 was called in the House Labor and Commerce Committee and passed out of committee on a partisan vote.

School management groups, who put together a fact sheet, estimated that HB4416 would cost school districts approximately \$452 million each year statewide, including \$200 million for Chicago Public Schools. The unions projected a far smaller, yet still significant, cost of \$138-\$176 million annually. During committee discussion, several comments were made about the potential cost impact. Representative Will Davis, the original sponsor of the Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) model, emphasized the importance of protecting EBF and recommended that HB4416 be first reviewed through the Professional Review Panel (PRP) to better understand its impact on school funding.

IASB encourages board members to work with their superintendents and school business officials to understand the potential local impact and reach out to their legislators to share their concerns on HB4416.

## Key Bills that Passed Out of Committee

**Cell Phone Policy (SB2427, Mussman/Castro)** – This bill passed out of the House Education Policy Committee, where it adopted an agreed amendment to ensure a broad range of perspectives were addressed. The amendment reflects consensus language developed with input from education, health, and state agency stakeholders. It requires school districts, by the 2027-2028 school year, to adopt a policy limiting student cell phone use during the school day. There is flexibility for the school board to allow high school students to use devices during passing periods and lunch, for educational purposes, and in the event of an emergency when certain conditions are met. Required exemptions for students include fulfilling a Section 504 plans or IEP, as prescribed by a physician, and when determined necessary by school personnel for English Learners and students caregivers. Districts must also incorporate community input, including parents, teachers, staff, and, where possible, students, when developing these policies.

One question raised by committee members concerned the provision prohibiting the use of suspensions, expulsions, fines, or law enforcement solely for violations of the cell phone policy. In response, the sponsor indicated that enforcement would be left to local

discretion through less severe measures such as detention and emphasized that any consequences must be clearly outlined in student handbooks. The amendment received unanimous committee support.

**Section 504 Hearings (HB5488, Faver Dias)** – This bill adds strict qualifications for Section 504 hearing officers and includes several new procedural unfunded mandates for the Section 504 process, including requiring districts to cover hearing costs and interpreters. IASB opposed the bill due to concerns that this would increase litigation instead of promoting a collaborative process, be costly and challenging for districts to implement without additional resources, and make it difficult to find hearing officers that meet these qualifications in small and rural districts. While the advocates seek to strengthen protections and consistency in local Section 504 dispute resolution processes, it is important to note that Section 504 is not federally funded, unlike IDEA. The sponsor did indicate a willingness to continue negotiations on this bill.

### **Bills That Passed Out of Committee**

The following bills impact K-12 education and were passed out of legislative committees this week.

### **House Appropriations-Elementary & Secondary Education Committee**

Teach Excellence (HB5216, Stuart)

Career Success International Baccalaureate (HB5330, Faver Dias)

ACT Now (HB5363, Hirschauer)

### **House Education Policy Committee**

Latine Studies (HB4372, Delgado)

Play-Based Learning (HB4577, Faver Dias)

School Ventilation (HB4739, Lily)

CPR/Female Manikins (HB4788, Hirschauer)

Expulsion for Sexual Violence (HB5447, Davidsmeyer)

Section 504 Hearings (HB5488, Faver Dias)

Wireless Communication Device Policy (SB2427, Mussman/Castro)

### **House Education Elementary and Secondary Committee**

Deactivate School Contract (**HB3860, Fritts**)

School Psychologist Degree (**HB4397, Crawford**)

Teach Excellence (**HB4792, Faver Dias**)

Early Childhood License (**HB4795, Faver Dias**)

Staff Mental Health (**HB4862, Yang Rohr**)

IASB Opposed - Charter School Administrative Fees (**HB5097, Guerrero Cuellar**)

Mobile Panic Alert (**HB5107, Syed**)

### **House Executive Committee**

Credit Card Statements (**HB4196, DeLuca**)

### **House Labor and Commerce Committee**

IASB Opposed - Unemployment Insurance for Education Support Professionals  
(**HB4416, Evans**)

### **House Transportation: Vehicles & Safety Committee**

School Bus Driver Permit (**HB5163, W. Davis**)

School Transportation (**HB5375, DeLaRosa**)

### **House Public Health**

Food Reform for Student Health (**HB5507, Harper**)

### **Senate Executive**

Nicotine Sales Near Schools (**SB2393, Morrison**)

### **Legislative Tracking List**

The IASB Governmental Relations team tracks all legislation that may impact K-12 public education and makes regular updates to that list. As a reminder, although a bill may be filed, many factors influence whether it makes its way through the legislative process. Some of those factors include whether the bill gets assigned by leadership to a committee, the extent of any opposition, and the priorities of the sponsor.

To ensure that IASB members can monitor all bills the Governmental Relations team is tracking, legislation has been broken down into ten different topics:

[Boards of Education](#)

[Insurance](#)

[OMA and FOIA](#)

[Personnel](#)

[Regional Office of Education](#)

[School Finance](#)

[School Safety and Health](#)

[State Board of Education](#)

[Students](#)

[Taxation](#)

## **Illinois Association of School Boards**

---

2921 Baker Drive,  
Springfield, Illinois 62703-5929  
[\(217\) 528-9688](tel:2175289688)

One Imperial Place, 1 East 22nd Street, Suite 310,  
Lombard, Illinois 60148  
[\(630\) 629-3776](tel:6306293776)

**The vision of the Illinois Association of School Boards is excellence in local school board governance supporting quality public education.**

Although the IASB website strives to provide accurate and authoritative information, the Illinois Association of School Boards does not guarantee or warrant the accuracy or quality of information contained herein.

[Accessibility Statement](#)

[IASB Privacy Policy Statement](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Staff Site](#)

