



ISTA Staff Legislative Briefing
February 7, 2025

Our kids. Our schools. Our future.

Today's Briefing

- ***Committees this Week***
- ***Floor Action for Bills***
- ***Looking Ahead to Hearings Next Week***

Important Notes

Member Legislative Briefings

- Mondays, Bi-weekly throughout session
- Next briefing: Feb. 17
- Followed by LAT Meetings

Days of Action

Register at *ista-in.org/DayofAction*

- February 11, 2025
- March 4, 2025
- April 14, 2025

ISTA Bill Watch

ista-in.org/billwatch

View legislation that ISTA is tracking this session. Bills can be found by topic, as well as a list of all bills being tracked.

House Committees This Week...

House Ways and Means

HB 1001 Biennial Budget (Rep. Jeff Thompson; R-Lizton)

Lawmakers traditionally start somewhere and generally the initial version in a long session reflects the Governor's priorities. However, it's also important to note that there is no school funding formula yet tied to HB 1001—but the fiscal assumption is an amount of money equal to a statewide average increase of 2% in year one and another 2% in year two. The December 2024 revenue forecast indicated that growth in revenue in the next two years would be by 3.3% in year one and 0.3% in year two. The budget bill also includes various categorical state grant amounts (like TAG, summer school, gifted and talented, charters and many others). Most of these outside-the-formula line items are straight-lined (meaning held to existing levels), but not all. For instance, the Indiana Secured School Safety program shows an increase of \$2.5M each year of the biennium, education savings accounts shows an increase of \$15M each of the next two years, and the dual immersion pilot program is eliminated (\$425k).

All of this is to say this version is the opening salvo, and one in which we will have an opportunity to make changes and augment.

Status: House Ways and Means Committee; hearing on the initial version of HB 1001, the budget bill.

ISTA Position: ISTA will be working on the budget bill all session. Stay tuned, please.

House Committees This Week...

House Government and Regulatory Reform

HB 1220 Attorney General's Office (Rep. Mike Karickhoff; R-Kokomo)

Requires a teacher's electronic mail address to be used for sending the annual summary of a teacher's rights and protections.

Status: Passed House Government and Regulatory Reform Committee 11-0. The bill was heard on 2nd reading and will be eligible for a final vote next week.

ISTA Position: Monitor due to previous legislation.

House Committees This Week...

House Education

HB 1285 Special Education/Cameras and Interventionists (Rep. Becky Cash; R-Zionsville)

- Establishes the special education classroom grant program to assist school corporations in complying with certain requirements.
- Requires a school corporation to provide the parent of a student with the opportunity to collect the student's property under certain conditions.
- Requires school corporations to have electronic recording equipment in each designated special education classroom, seclusion area, sensory room, and time-out area not later than January 1, 2026.
- Provides that electronic recording equipment must be active and recording when certain areas are in use, and that any recorded images and video must be stored for a period of not less than 90 days.

House Committees This Week...

- Creates a process by which a parent of a special education student may request to review certain recorded video footage. Requires school corporations to employ at least one behavioral interventionist not later than January 1, 2026.
- Provides that each school corporation must have a behavioral interventionist on school grounds during the school year while school is in session, and that the behavioral interventionist must be involved in certain school actions. The interventionist does not have to be a separately employed staff member, but could be an existing staff member who has undergone necessary training.

Status: Held in House Education Committee.

ISTA Position: Various concerns and the costs involved.

House Committees This Week...

HB 1376 Emergency Opioid Overdose Medication in Schools (Rep. Pat Boy; D-Michigan City)

Establishes requirements for schools to maintain a supply of FDA-approved medication to counteract opioid overdose and for school staff (nurses) to administer medication.

Status: House Education Committee; Held.

ISTA Position: Support but monitor to ensure teachers are not required to administer medication or be held liable for injuries.

HB 1500 Teacher Appreciation Grants (Rep. Bob Behning; R-Indianapolis)

The bill changes the existing Teacher Appreciation Grants (TAG) to an incentivized stipend capped at \$15,000.

Status: House Education Committee; Held.

ISTA Position: Reforming the TAG program is a top priority for Gov. Braun and the House Republicans. This current House version changes TAG into a more selective award, tied to test scores, high needs teaching positions and other factors. Selected teachers would be awarded stipends up to \$10,000 based on three categories. After 2 years as a stipend, beginning in the 3rd year, schools would be required to continue paying the teachers who had received the TAG even after state funding ends, resulting in questions over both the program's viability and sustainability over time. This and other details still need to be worked out. ISTA is working with other education groups and the bill's author to address all the concerns.

House Committees This Week...

HB 1634 Math Education (Rep. Jake Teshka; R-South Bend)

- Requires each school corporation and charter middle school to automatically enroll a student who meets certain conditions in a middle school advanced math course.
 - Allows a parent of a student to opt out of automatic enrollment.
- Allows a parent of a student who does not meet the conditions for automatic enrollment to opt the student *into* a middle school advanced math course.
- Establishes requirements regarding: (1) mathematics screening, evaluation, and intervention; and (2) teacher preparation program math curriculum and content.
- Student screening is required for certain non-proficient students.
- Teacher PD is optional (for now).

Status: Passed House Education Committee 11-0.

ISTA Position: Neutral as long as no new "Science of Math" endorsements are *required*.

House Committees This Week...

HB 1660 Excused Absences from School (Rep. Beau Baird; R-Greencastle)

Provides that the governing body of a school corporation or the chief administrative officer of a nonpublic school system shall authorize the absence and excuse of a school student if the student participates in certain events offered by the National FFA Organization, the Indiana FFA Association, or a 4-H club.

Provides that a student's excused absences may not exceed six days in a school year. Provides that the student must be in good academic standing.

Status: Passed House Education Committee 10-0.

ISTA Position: Neutral.

House Committees This Week...

House Government and Regulatory Reform Committee

HB 1134 Executive Sessions (Rep. Ben Smaltz; R-Auburn)

Allows meetings of a state or local agency governing body concerning the following topics to be held in executive session:

- (1) Employee health care options with respect to special exceptions to coverage.
- (2) Employee handbook changes.
- (3) Review of negotiations on the performance of publicly bid contracts, when public knowledge may result in increased cost.
- (4) Solicitation of contract proposals containing a bidder's proprietary information.

Status: House Government and Regulatory Reform Committee; Held

ISTA Position: Working to remove personnel handbooks from the list of topics for which, under this bill, a school board can call an executive session.

House Committees This Week...

House Family, Children and Human Affairs Committee

HB 1241 Trauma Informed Care (Rep. Vanessa Summers; D-Indianapolis)

- Establishes the trauma informed care commission.
- Provides that the commission shall:
 - (1) study and make recommendations for use by health, educational, and other social service providers;
 - (2) recommend best practices and research models to specified entities; and
 - (3) submit a report to the general assembly regarding best practices with respect to children, youth, and families who have experienced trauma.
- Urges the legislative council to assign to an appropriate study committee the task of studying various issues pertaining to teachers and education.

Status: House Family, Children and Human Affairs Committee; Held

ISTA Position: Support.

House Committees This Week...

House Children, Family and Human Affairs Committee

HB 1404 Parental Support Services (Rep. Dale Devon; R-South Bend)

- Provides that the governing body of a school corporation shall adopt rules for establishing a safety plan that provides steps for the school corporation to request assistance from the department of child services to ensure a student is receiving appropriate intervention.
- Requires the department to initiate an assessment for alleged child abuse or neglect if the report comes from school personnel if certain conditions are met.
- Allows the department to release unredacted reports to a school's designated liaison in certain circumstances.
- Amends certain child in need of services provisions to include bullying or abusive behavior for which a child's parent fails to participate in disciplinary proceedings with the child's school.

Status: House Children, Family and Human Affairs Committee; Held

ISTA Position: Support.

Senate Committees This Week...

Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee

SB 1 Property Tax Relief (Sen. Travis Holdman; R-Markle)

The bill is one of several property tax reduction bills this session and generally is reflective of Governor Braun's property tax reforms. The bill also restricts school referenda to general fall elections.

Under LSA's fiscal note, school property tax losses would total around \$2 billion over the next 3 years. Property taxes pay for things like transportation, building maintenance, repair, construction, administration, technology, etc...the several supportive services and programs that compliment the actual education program. Indiana law enables school districts to move money from their respective education programs to their operations funds when there are shortfalls. State and local school funding is interrelated in this way.

Status: Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee.

ISTA Position: ISTA will be working on these property tax measures all session. These programs will be crafted alongside HB 1001; the budget bill. Stay tuned, please.

Senate Committees This Week...

Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee

SB 345 Property Tax Matters (Sen. Linda Rogers; R-Granger)

- Amends the property tax exemption for property used by a for-profit provider of early childhood education, including by requiring the provider to offer age-appropriate curriculum and by excluding from the exemption tangible property that has been granted a homestead standard deduction.
- Provides a partial property tax exemption for an employer that provides childcare on the employer's property for the employer's employees, and for the employees of another business if the employer and the other business enter into an agreement that outlines the terms under which the childcare is to be provided.
- Requires the office of the secretary of family and social services, in consultation with the early learning advisory committee, to: (1) evaluate and make recommendations; and (2) submit a report; regarding childcare.

Status: Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee.

ISTA Position: Monitor.

Senate Committees This Week...

Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee

SB 394 Various Tax and Fiscal Matters (Sen. Fady Qaddoura; D-Indianapolis)

The omnibus bill contains numerous provisions, but namely, it increases the maximum amount of the income tax credit for an individual employed as a teacher for amounts expended for classroom supplies from \$100 to \$1,000 per taxable year.

Status: Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee; held.

ISTA Position: Support.

Senate Committees This Week...

Senate Elections Committee

SB 287 Partisan School Board Elections (Sen. Gary Byrne; Byrneville)

- Requires candidates for school board offices to be nominated in the same manner as candidates for all other elected offices are nominated.
- Repeals the current statute relating to nomination of candidates for school board offices
- Makes changes to school board member compensation.

Status: Senate Elections Committee; held for amend and vote.

ISTA Position: Oppose.

Senate Committees This Week...

Senate Education and Career Development Committee

SB 249 Teacher Compensation (Sen. Spencer Deery; R-West Lafayette)

- Amends provisions that allow school corporations to provide a supplemental payment to teachers in excess of the salary specified in the school corporation's compensation plan.
- The school corporation may exclude supplemental payments currently available for bargaining purposes before bargaining occurs.
- Reduces teacher compensation combination of factors/criteria for salary purposes from 50 percent to 40 percent.
- Adds to the salary considerations teaching in high-needs subject areas.

Status: Passed Senate Education Committee and Career Development Committee 9-4. Amended out the reduced 40% threshold and restored the 50%.

ISTA Position: Oppose the supplemental pay changes; working with the author.

Senate Committees This Week...

Senate Education and Career Development Committee

SB 365 Education Matters (Sen. Jeff Raatz; R-Richmond)

- Requires the IDOE to collaborate with MPH and the Commission for Higher Ed to collect and maintain data on CTE programs.
- Requires IDOE to collaborate with the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, DWD and CHE to conduct a return on investment analysis for adult education programs.
- Requires the CHE, IDOE, DWD and Governor's Workforce Cabinet to conduct a return on investment analysis for postsecondary CTE, 21st Scholars Program and various grant programs.
- Amended to change certain authorities from CHE to IDOE; places parameters on career coaching aptitude for certain grade levels.

Status: Passed Senate Education and Career Development Committee 10-3.

ISTA Position: Neutral.

Senate Committees This Week...

Senate Education and Career Development Committee

SB 366 Education Matters (Sen. Linda Rogers, R-Granger)

- Exempts public schools and charter schools from certain prekindergarten childcare program requirements.
- Not later than October 1, 2025, requires the department of education to submit a report to the general assembly concerning school bus driver safety education training.
- Makes certain changes concerning the process of filling a school board vacancy.
- Provides that a superintendent is preferred (current law says required) to hold a master's degree from certain institutions.
- Provides that certain covered school buildings are not required to revert to a school corporation if the building is subject to ongoing renovations.
- Repeals certain school transfer requirements.
- Removes a requirement that a superintendent must discuss a plan for annual performance evaluations with a teacher or the teacher's representative.

Senate Committees This Week...

Status: Passed Senate Education Committee and Career Development Committee 9-4.

NOTE: A significant amendment filed making collective bargaining voluntary was not called in committee. ISTA is continuing to work with Senators to prevent the amendment from being included later.

- Additional amendments: Remove language on improvement plans due to costs. Remove incentive pay; Remove literacy endorsement changes language. Remove early education advisory committee language. Remove pre-K program changes. Removes language limiting school districts on remediation spending 1 percent cap. All fiscals removed.

ISTA Position: Oppose some provisions, specifically removal of evaluations from discussion with superintendents; Working with the author on some.

Senate Committees This Week...

SB 257 Civics Education (Sen. Spencer Deery; R-West Lafayette)

- Requires certain instruction or discussion to: (1) incorporate the universal principles of the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, and the Constitution of the United States; and (2) foster a national identity, heritage, and culture established by an aspiration to certain shared principles (shared principles).
- Prohibits certain instruction or discussion from fostering a national identity, heritage, or culture that is contrary to shared principles.
- Creates a process for a parent or community member to request that a governing body investigate instruction or discussion that the person believes is not aligned to shared principles.

Status: Senate Education and Career Development Committee; held

ISTA Position: Concerns with “fostering” language and threat of license revocation; Working with author on possible amendments for next week.

SB 403 Charter School Requirements (Sen. Greg Taylor; D-Indianapolis)

The bill requires that charter schools comply with financial data access protocols.

Status: Passed Senate Education and Career Development Committee 13-0. An amendment removed language that at least one member of the charter school board be appointed by the fiscal body of the county where the charter school is located.

ISTA Position: Support as a good step in improving charter school accountability.

Senate Committees This Week...

SB 348 Waiving Requirements for Accredited Schools (Sen. Brian Buchanan; R-Lebanon)

- Requires (instead of allows) the State Board of Education to approve an application to waive compliance with certain provisions requested by a school or group of schools under the performance-based accreditation law.
- Requires the State Board to do the following review each compliance waiver request at least once every three years; and suspend or revoke a compliance waiver if the state board determines that the school or group of schools has not demonstrated an improvement in student academic performance.

Status: Senate Education and Career Development Committee; held

ISTA Position: Neutral; Monitor.

Senate Committees This Week...

SB 442 Instruction Concerning Human Sexuality (Sen. Gary Byrne; R-Byrneville)

- Provides that, if a school provides any instruction to students concerning human sexuality, the school's governing authority must first approve and publish certain information concerning the instruction in a conspicuous place on the website of the school and requires the school to provide a direct link to that information in the school's written request for consent for instruction concerning human sexuality.
- Prohibits a school from using learning materials that concern human sexuality unless approved by the school's governing authority.
- Requires the governing body of a school to establish and maintain a grievance procedure for a violation of certain provisions.

Status: Passed Senate Education Committee and Career Development 9-4.

ISTA Position: Concerns with some provisions around reporting.

Senate Committees This Week...

SB 523 School Chaplains (Sen. Stacey Donato; R-Logansport)

- Repeat of last session's bill.
- Allows a principal or superintendent of a public school, including a charter school, to employ, or approve as a volunteer, a school chaplain if certain requirements are met.
- Allows a school chaplain to provide: (1) secular advice, guidance, and support services; and (2) nonsecular advice, guidance, and support services if certain conditions are met.
- Provides that, with exceptions, communications made by a student to a school chaplain are privileged and confidential.
- Not mandatory (now under the bill) for school corporations to hire chaplains; strictly voluntary.

Status: Passed Senate Education and Career Development Committee 9-4.

ISTA Position: ISTA does not believe school chaplains are the solution to the school counselor shortage. There are also equity concerns around religion in schools with diverse students.

Floor Action This Week...

HOUSE

HB 1002 Deregulation (Rep. Bob Behning; R-Indianapolis)

Status: Passed House 3rd reading 75-16.

ISTA Position: Oppose some removals from Indiana Code.

HB 1016 School Safety Commission (Rep. Matt Commons; R-Williamsport)

Status: Passed House 3rd reading 90-0.

ISTA Position: Support.

HB 1102 Contracting with Private Schools for Pre-K (Rep. Matt Commons; R-Williamsport)

Status: Passed House 3rd reading 91-0.

ISTA Position: Issues with privatization but stayed out of bill; Neutral.

HB 1201 Student Absenteeism (Rep. Bob Behning; R-Indianapolis)

Status: Passed House 3rd reading 87-0.

ISTA Position: Support with further recommendations.

HB 1221 Pensions (Rep. Mike Karickhoff; R-Kokomo)

Status: Passed House 3rd reading 89-0.

ISTA Position: Support most of the bill; continuing to work with author.

Floor Action This Week...

HOUSE

HB 1348 Nonaccredited Nonpublic Schools/Diplomas (Rep. Tim Wesco; R-Osceola)

Status: Passed House 3rd reading 62-29.

ISTA Position: Oppose concept but stayed out.

HB 1498 School Accountability/A-F (Rep. Bob Behning; R-Indianapolis)

Status: Passed House 3rd reading 62-28.

ISTA Position: Oppose use of A-F letter grades as labels; Open to multiple accountability measures and dashboard.

Floor Action This Week...

SENATE

SB 9 Maximum Levy Growth Quotient (Sen. Scott Baldwin; R-Noblesville)

Status: Passed Senate 3rd reading 39-11.

ISTA Position: ISTA acknowledges property tax reform but requests replacement revenue as to school funding.

SB 146 Teacher Compensation (Sen. Linda Rogers; R-Granger)

Status: Passed Senate 3rd reading 50-0.

ISTA Position: Support current version as amended in Appropriations; monitor for further developments with TAG and other issues.

SB 235 Anti-DEI/Limitations on DEI (Sen. Tyler Johnson; R-Leo)

Status: DEAD; elements incorporated into SB 289.

ISTA Position: Oppose.

SB 255 Education Matters/Licensure (Sen. Spencer Deer; R-West Lafayette)

Status: Passed Senate 3rd reading 49-0.

ISTA Position: Concerns with some provisions; working with the author

Floor Action This Week...

SENATE

SB 289 Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education (Sen. Gary Byrne; R-Byrneville)

Status: Passed Senate 3rd reading.

ISTA Position: Oppose some elements, but a significant amendment removed teaching concepts from prohibitions under the bill for educational purposes; work in progress with the author.

SB 482 Student Absenteeism (Sen. Stacey Donato; R-Logansport)

Status: Passed Senate 3rd reading.

ISTA Position: Support.

Please Stay Tuned...

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact ISTA staff:

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