

ISTA Legislative Briefing

January 23, 2026

This legislative update will cover:

- Committee bill actions this week.
- Floor and other bill actions thus far.
- Preview of upcoming actions.
- Reminder of upcoming ISTA GR briefings and Day of Action information.



Senate Education Committee

SB 88 Various Education Matters (Sen. Gary Byrne; R-Byrneville):

SB 88 is another omnibus bill with several separate issues:

- A candidate for initial licensure through an alternative pathway may also seek a waiver from the Department from examination requirements if they received a score on a college entrance exam or graduate entrance exam (e.g. SAT/ACT/GRE, etc).
- Requires public schools to incorporate the importance of obtaining at least a high school diploma and acquiring additional training in preparation for the workforce; securing full-time employment; and waiting until marriage to begin having children.
- Requires certain documents to be taught in a civics education course, including the Ten Commandments along with numerous historical documents.
- **Amendment Removed:** Anti-DEI/CRT language excluding student instruction or discussion that fosters:
 - Racial identity or discrimination;
 - Gender identity or discrimination;
 - Victimization;
 - Class struggle;
 - A hierarchy of privileges; or
 - Systemic exclusion.

Status: Passed Wednesday in Senate Education Committee 7-3.

ISTA Position: Oppose anti-DEI language, which was removed; neutral on the bill.

House Ways and Means Committee

HB 1145 Retiree 13th Check (Rep. Mike Karickhoff; R-Kokomo):

- Provides a 13th check for retirees.
- House version of SB 63.
- The House version seems to be the one moving.

Status: House Ways and Means Thursday.

ISTA Position: Support.



Senate Appropriations Committee

SB 204: Various Education Matters/Teacher Stipends and Increments (Sen. Spencer Deery; R-West Lafayette):

- ISTA opposes the provisions in the bill with respect to section of law; IC 20-28-9-1.5, the law that speaks to salary increases and increments, stipends and supplements.
- It seems every session there is an effort to make changes to this statute, to further manage (micro-manage) how salary increases and increments are determined.
- These efforts fundamentally take money from one teacher to give it to another, tying the hands of those people who come together every year to figure this out.
- ISTA requested that the author remove this provision from the bill and allow local educators to determine the best way to attract and retain qualified personnel through pay issues.
- Academic needs is a factor that the local school district determines. That is the essence of local control and decision-making.
- Last session, the high need area was inserted as an example of academic needs and here we are less than a year later to further regulate the actions of the local school district.
- The fact of the matter is districts have differing academic needs. And some of those academic needs could be things like teacher retention, teacher evaluation, leadership, etc. For some, it may be employment in a high need area, too. Or it could be something else, altogether.

Status: Passed committee 9-2; Passed Senate Appropriations.

ISTA Position: Oppose salary scale change language.



Carry-over Bills from Previous Committee Weeks

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

HB 1423: IPS School Corporation (Rep. Bob Behning, House Ed Chair; R-Indianapolis):

- The bill is the result of the law enacted last session creating the Indianapolis Local Education Alliance (ILEA). It establishes a new Indiana Public Education Corporation (Corporation) and Board (Corporation Board). The existing IPS school board is referred to as the school city in the bill. This bill goes into effect upon passage (essentially March 2026). The bill empowers the corporation with fixing and reviewing of budgets, tax rates and tax levies and removes certain powers and duties from the school city. That said, the county auditor must distribute the revenue collected from the local levies to the school city.
- Currently, local property tax dollars are targeted for operations fund costs: bussing/transportation, buildings, maintenance, utilities, etc., not direct teacher and classroom learning costs.
- Going forward, only the state charter board, the mayor of Indianapolis, or the IPS school city may grant a charter. Existing charters not authorized by one of these bodies can continue until the term of the charter expires, but then that charter expires. An existing school can be renewed but must be renewed by one of the three grantors listed here.
- The bill specifically gives the school city any powers that are not otherwise granted to the corporation.
- The list of what the corporation is authorized to do is widespread, including (1) establishing a unified transportation system for students within IPS and charter schools within the IPS boundaries; (2) a unified system for school property matters, and a unified school performance system within the school city.
- The corporation board's make-up is nine members all appointed by the mayor of Indianapolis, with three (3) who are leaders of participating innovation network charters or charter schools, three (3) who are members of the school city, and three (3) who have expertise in management, capital planning, facilities transportation, or logistics or experience in working with vulnerable student populations and communities. The initial terms are staggered.



Carry-over Bills from Previous Committee Weeks

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

HB 1423: IPS School Corporation (Rep. Bob Behning, House Ed Chair; R-Indianapolis):

- There shall be a meeting at least once every three months. Members on the corporation board receive no compensation. Final votes must record votes as aye and nay and on any other item if at least 2 (two) members request a recorded vote.
- There will be an executive director of the corporation board chosen by the board as recommended by the mayor. The executive director must reside within the school city. Salaries and other staff salaries shall be set by the corporation board.
- In addition to the transportation and facilities duties, the corporation board also is tasked with the following: (1) developing and implementing a single school performance framework that applies to all the participating schools, (2) developing a unified enrollment system, (3) creating a tracking system to monitor qualitative and quantitative data to measure outcomes and to publicly report data in a manner prescribed by the mayor; (4) making and executing contracts and other instruments as are necessary; (5) acquiring personal property that the board considers necessary; (6) making rules and (7) carrying out any other power and making any expenditure in carrying out the powers granted in this law that are reasonable from a business or educational standpoint.
- The corporation board may establish advisory committees.
- Any unified transportation plan must be submitted to the legislative council at least one year before the date the plan is implemented.
- The corporation is subject to required audits and all applicable laws subjecting a school corporation to regulation.
- No existing contract may be impaired by this law. However, after the effective date of this law, the school city may not enter into, renew, or extend a contract that is not in compliance with this article.
- Removes IPS from the \$1 charter school building law.
- **STATUS:** Held last week and up for amend and vote Wednesday.
- **ISTA POSITION:** Oppose as introduced. Seeking multiple amendments.



Carry-over Bills from Previous Committee Weeks

HB 1004: Various Education Matters (Deregulation Omnibus) – Rep. and House Education Chair Bob Behning; R-Indianapolis):

The bill is this year's version of deregulation, and ISTA had input on which sections of code we sought to modify or delete. There are numerous, numerous provisions in this massive omnibus bill, but there are a few highlights.

- **SECTIONS 70-74:** These SECTIONS deal with contractual protections and provisions teachers who teach in a joint program. They are all being repealed. They have been in this spot in the Indiana code since the Title 20 recodification (2005).
- By repealing these sections, the bill is carving out teachers who teach in joint programs from having the most basic of protections in their employment: (1) a regular teacher contract, (2) due process protections, (3) leave provisions, (4) minimum salary, (5) duty-free lunch, (6) reduction in force procedures—the whole deal. This makes teachers in these programs completely at will with no identifiable contractual rights.
- **SECTION 140:** Like above regarding teachers who teach in special education cooperatives. ISTA has requested this entire section removed.
- **SECTION 171:** This does the same thing for teachers teaching in interlocal programs. ISTA has requested this section be removed.
- **SECTION 93** removes “the number of hours per day” that the teacher is expected to work from the regular teacher contract for all teachers who teach under that regular contract. A court decision around this question about 12 years ago was resolved when the IDOE moved to include minimum hours in the regular teacher contract.

Carry-over Bills from Previous Committee Weeks

HB 1004: Various Education Matters (Deregulation Omnibus) – Rep. and House Education Chair Bob Behning; R-Indianapolis):

- SECTIONS 23 and 91 on adjunct teachers removes the requirement that school districts that hire adjunct teachers. Adjunct teachers are not licensed by the state—they are “permitted” under local authority. That permission applies only to the district hiring them. ISTA seeks to maintain current provisions in statute, while we oppose these permits generally.
- SECTION 56. Removes the 1% cap on tuition support to fund remediation programs in a district.
- SECTION 100 repeals the law that says for the exam for teacher licensure, if an individual does not demonstrate the level of proficiency required, the exam scorer must provide the individual with the individual’s scores including sub scores.
- One Positive Note: SECTION 97: Repealing the 30-day notice requirement for teacher resignations (20-28-7.5-8).

Status: Held last week and up for amend and vote Wednesday.

ISTA Position: Oppose the above sections of an extensive omnibus bill. See ISTA call to action.



Floor Update

SB 78: Wireless Communication Device Ban in Schools (Sen. Jeff Raatz, Senate Chairman; R-Richmond):

The bill expands upon a previous bill by requiring stricter enforcement of cell phone and related device bans for the entire school day.

Promoting Learning by Reducing Distraction

Teachers across the state report that cell phones are the number one classroom distraction. Social media notifications, messages and entertainment compete constantly with academic tasks. Even when phones remain in students' pockets, the anticipation of alerts interrupts concentration.

Maintains exemptions for students with an IEP, medical condition, ELL translation purposes (new), emergency situations, upon determination by a school administrator (new) and for purposes of teaching instruction.

Status: Passed committee 12-1. A floor amendment added language protecting schools from civil liability. Passed out of the senate 28 – 19.

ISTA Position: Support with recommendations.




GENERAL SESSION + LOBBY DAYS | JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2026

JANUARY

Monday, Jan. 5: Session Reconvenes

 **Monday, Jan. 5: Member Update (virtual) + Session Preview + LAT meeting follow-up (virtual)**

 **Tuesday, Jan. 6: Statehouse Day of Action (virtual with a special guests)**

Wednesday, Jan. 7: House bill filing deadline (2pm) +

Senators may begin filing just two bills per day

Wednesday, Jan. 7: Committee Day

Friday, Jan. 9: GR Review with Field (virtual)+ Senate bill filing deadline (4pm)


 **Monday, Jan. 12: Member Update (virtual) + LAT meeting follow-up (virtual)**

 **Tuesday, Jan. 13: Statehouse Day of Action (in person)**

Wednesday, Jan. 14: Committee Day

Friday, Jan. 16: GR Review with Field (virtual)

Monday, Jan. 19: Martin Luther King Holiday (no session)

 **Tuesday, Jan. 20 (on Tuesday (due to Dr. MLK Jr. Day): Member Update (virtual) + LAT meeting follow-up (virtual)**

Wednesday, Jan. 21: Committee Day

Friday, Jan. 23: GR Review with Field (virtual)

Wednesday, Jan. 28: Committee Day + 2nd Reading Deadline

Thursday, Jan. 29: 3rd Reading Deadline

Friday, Jan. 30: GR Review with Field (virtual)

FEBRUARY


 **Monday, Feb. 2: Member Update (virtual) + LAT meeting follow-up (virtual)**

 **Tuesday, Feb. 3: Statehouse Day of Action (in person)**

Friday, Feb. 6: GR Review with Field (virtual)

Wednesday, Feb. 11: Committee Day

Friday, Feb. 13: GR Review with Field (virtual)

 **Monday, Feb. 16: President's Day (session in) + Member Update (virtual) + LAT meeting follow-up (virtual)**

 **Tuesday, Feb. 17: Statehouse Day of Action (in person)**

Wednesday, Feb. 18: Committee Day

Friday, Feb. 20: GR Review with Field (virtual)

Monday, Feb. 23: 2nd Reading Deadline

 **Tuesday, Feb. 24: 3rd Reading Deadline + Conference Committees + Statehouse Day of Action (in person—tentative)**

Friday, Feb. 27: Anticipated Sine Die