
Take Action + Legislative Update 4/18/17

We find ourselves in what we assume to be the last week of the General Assembly session. At this time in the session bills have either been passed by both houses, have died, or are being debated in conference committee. After an initial public hearing, most of the work happens behind the scenes. Bills can change in various ways during this period. It is important that we continue to let our legislators know where our non-public schools stand on important issues impacting our schools.

Legislative Update

HB 1003 - Student Assessment (Behning)

HB 1003 would replace ISTEP after June 30, 2018, with a new statewide assessment program to be known as Indiana's Learning Evaluation Assessment Readiness Network (ILEARN). HB 1003 would also return high school assessments to an end of year assessment model. There continues to be differences among the Senate, the House, and the IDOE on how to move forward on the state assessment. There is some agreement on issues on reducing testing time, more timely results, and more teacher usable results. In addition, the IDOE has proposed the use of augmented use of PSAT and SAT be used in lieu of ECA for federal and state accountability. A main issue for the public system is whether test results should be used for teacher evaluations. It is our opinion that a broad framework will be passed with many of the details to be addressed later.

INPEA Stance: It is evident that the current ISTEP is not the best system to provide Indiana valuable feedback on students' achievement and learning, and HB 1003 is making an attempt to make some needed changes. There will

probably be lengthy floor discussions as the conference committee report is voted on.

INPEA believes that if we prepare our students to think, to problem solve, and to persevere (grit), they will do well on whatever assessment the state decides on.

Current Status: Conference committee report being prepared.

HB 1382 - Charter schools (Behning)

HB 1382 is primarily a bill dealing with charter school provisions, but a non-public school provision has made its way into the bill from the Senate. HB 1382 would require a Choice Scholarship eligible school to annually submit a financial report to the IDOE.

INPEA Stance: INPEA is against requiring schools to submit a financial report. We have concerns of a slippery slope, and the state then engaging in how our schools budget and operate financially. We generally support transparency, but to our primary stakeholders: parents and sponsoring churches. It is important to understand we are NOT publicly funded institutions (like public schools), but rather we accept students who are partially publicly funded. Chairman Behning agrees with our stance and has committed to taking that language out of HB 1382 in conference committee.

Current Status: Conference committee report being prepared.

HB 1384 - Various Education Matters (Behning)

HB 1384 has various pieces that affect non-public schools. The first piece would allow the SBOE to accredit a non-public school that enters into a contract with the SBOE to become a Freeway school at the time the non-public school enters the contract. This would allow schools if approved by the State Board to forgo the one year waiting period before being accredited. It is intended to help new Choice school start-ups that are planning to serve a predominately low income demographic get up and running.

The second piece HB 1384 would allow is for a Choice Scholarship school to submit a request to the SBOE to waive or delay voucher consequences if it is placed in the two lowest categories of designations of school improvement for a particular school year. The school must have circumstances that merit a review and demonstrate to the SBOE that the majority of students in the school show evidence of academic improvement during the preceding school year.

HB 1384 would also allow the SBOE to calculate mobility rates for schools and change the graduation rate percentage if a student did not attend a school for 90% of the school year.

INPEA Stance: INPEA supports this bill.

Current Status: Conference committee report being prepared.

Take Action on HB 1001 and HB 1004

HB 1001 - State biennial budget (T. Brown)

The Senate version of the budget has a number of problematic issues which include:

1) It deletes the second Choice Scholarship window

- The second Choice Scholarship window was passed in the 2016 session but wasn't being implemented until the 17-18 school year
- This provision would have allowed families moving into the area after the Choice Scholarship cut-off date to apply for access to a Choice Scholarship in the second semester.
- Students who need to make a move in the second semester will now have to wait another year before gaining Choice Scholarship access.

2) Deletes the Tax Credit Scholarship Program escalator and just sets the new cap at \$12.5 million for the two years

- It does raise the cap from 9.5 million to 12.5 million, but it removed the automatic escalator which would have automatically increased to 20% of whatever prior year total credits were awarded.
- There is no additional increase in the second year of the biennium.
- We hit the cap in December of last year so we went six months without being able to accept contributions into the SGO and receive a tax credit.

3) Removes the Choice Scholarship from tuition support and funds them as a separate line item

- This is huge. It changes the core philosophy of the Choice Scholarship Program, which was that we have one pot of money and the money follows kids to whatever school they select.
- By putting it into a separate line item, it in essence places a cap on participation and every two years we will have to fight the battle to increase the dollar amount (like we do with the SGO cap)

4) Secured School Grants

- The House version of the budget gave non-public schools access to these matching grants for the first time.
- That language does not appear in the Senate version. INPEA has reached out to Senator Luke Kenley to determine if this was an

oversight or by design. We met with him previously and he was supportive.

5) Provides for only a single count date so if students move after the first count date the money does not follow the child

- This count date issue is related to public schools but could be part of the reason for the removal of the second voucher window in the Senate budget.

Take action and tell legislators to protect school choice and non-public schools!

HB 1004 - Pre-Kindergarten Education (Behning)

The Senate version of HB 1004 would expand the pre-k pilot program to all Indiana counties, up from the original five counties. HB 1004 would also allow the development of a reimbursement program to reimburse costs incurred by parents to provide technology based, in-home early education services to a child. HB would make appropriations to the fund of \$16,000,000 in both state fiscal years 2017 and 2018. Specifies that of the \$16,000,000 appropriated in a state fiscal year, \$1,000,000 of that amount must be used for reimbursement of in-home early education services.

INPEA Stance: INPEA fully supports the expansion of the pre-k pilot program. HB 1004 previously had a provision that would allow for a pilot recipient to also receive a Choice Scholarship for kindergarten the following year if the family meets the Choice Scholarship guidelines. The House passed a version of the bill with these provisions, but the Senate removed this language and refused to debate the issue. INPEA continues to advocate for the Choice and pre-k linkage and encourages members to do the same.

Current Status: Conference committee.

Please take action to let your legislator know you support pre-k expansion and the kindergarten Choice Scholarship!

TAKE ACTION

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School Choice in Indiana: Parents as Leaders

EdChoice and Institute for Quality Education Event

Indiana is a national leader when it comes to school choice programs. More and more, national media is looking to our state to interview parents and hear how the programs are benefiting real families. Join us for a fun day of advocacy training where parents will learn tips on sharing their story with the media, how to affect the law-making process, and hear experts discuss school choice in Indiana.

Workshop topics include:

- Sharing your story
- Legislators perspective
- Public speaking
- Understanding the Data

May 17-18 | CharBlue Restaurant & The Westin Indianapolis

Out of town guests will be given a hotel room at the Westin. In town guest will have parking reimbursed for the dinner Wednesday and for the workshops on Thursday. Dress for all events will be casual.

Please register by April 21st to reserve your spot. Space is limited to the first 25 people.

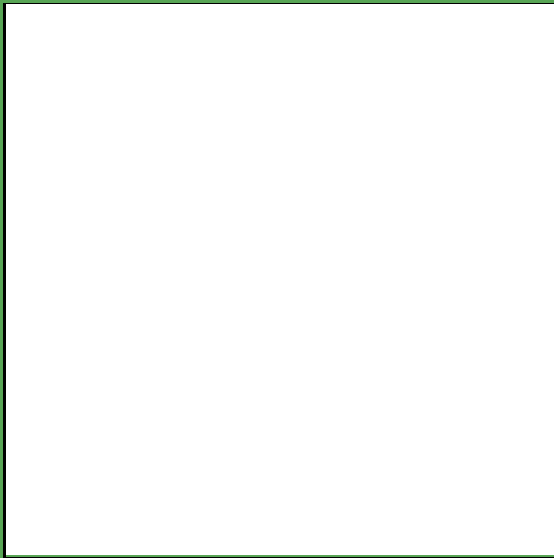
When: Wednesday, May 17, 2017 - Thursday, May 18, 2017
6:30 PM - 6:00 PM ET

Where: Westin Indianapolis
214 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
317-262-8100

[**REGISTER**](#)

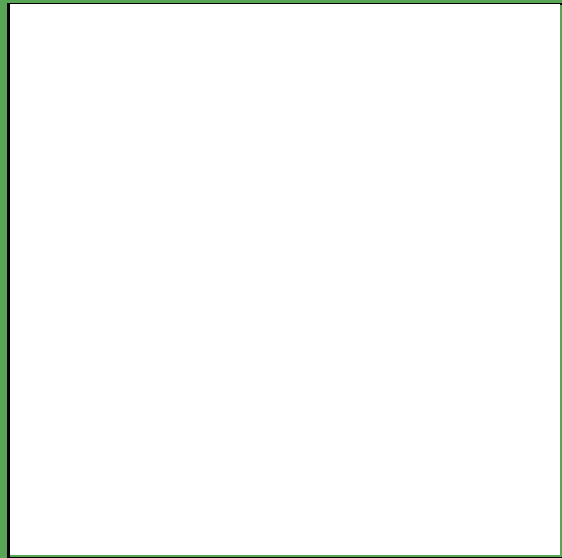


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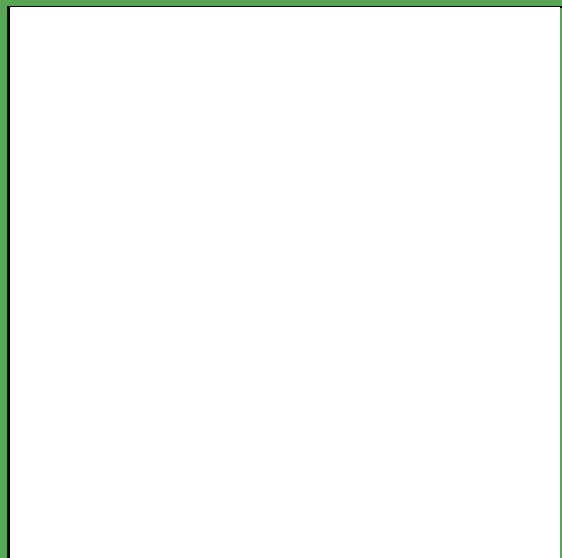
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Mission

The Indiana Non-Public Education Association serves as an advocate, promotes engagement, and strives for the advancement of non-public schools.



Visit our Website

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