

POLICY NEWSLETTER

WHAT IS EDUCATION POLICY?

Education policy is comprised of federal, state, and local laws and rules that are intended to regulate public education in the United States. The purpose of IEA's education policy work is to identify the impact of proposed and current education policy and improve outcomes for educators and students.

Visit IEA's Education Policy Webpage:



EDUCATION POLICY WORK

Education policy is often developed by Illinois legislated or state organized committees, commissions, task forces, advisory councils, and work groups. Our members and staff work together to advocate for equity focused research-based education policies as members of these groups.

Thank you to the following members who have volunteered their time to work with these groups.

- Paul Adams
- Katrina Anthony
- Bryce Cann
- Jacob Carlson
- Jamie Davis
- Kimberly Engelman
- Andrea Evers
- Karl Goeke
- Courtney Goss
- Gina Harris
- Cody Hendricks
- Christine Hollenkamp
- Susan Hudson
- Irlanda Jiminez
- Rachel Juarez
- Tammy Knippenberg
- Bridget Lahart
- Beth MacKenna
- Tameeka McFarlane
- Jackie McGrath
- Melissa McCutchen
- Jay Mehta
- Victoria Mikos
- Johnetta Miller
- C. Duke Novak
- Warren Richards
- Christie Rickman
- Jaleen Rodriguez
- Suzanne Schafer
- Ryan Schilb
- Tom Tully
- Jean Zaar

If you are currently serving on a legislated or state organized committee, commission, task force, advisory council, or work group, or have been appointed to serve on one of these groups and are not included on this list, please contact Dr. Diana Zaleski, IEA Education Policy and Agency Relations Director at Diana.Zaleski@ieanea.org.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Jacob Carlson

Bethalto Education Association

Member of the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board (SEPLB)

WHAT IS SEPLB?

“SEPLB is an advisory board that serves ISBE in two key ways. First, the board reviews proposals for new or revised educator preparation programs from institutes of higher education before sending a recommendation to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) regarding the proposals. Second, the board offers feedback to ISBE regarding anything that pertains to preparation and licensure. This can include giving feedback on new projects in the pipeline from ISBE, or fielding public comment, or reviewing current licensure regulations...”

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF SEPLB?

“I started my second three-year term in July of 2022, so I believe I began my first term in the summer of 2019.”

HOW DO YOU CONTRIBUTE TO SEPLB?

“I like how the SEPLB training document refers to us as “thought partners” with ISBE; that captures, for me, the essence of what we do as a board. While I was overwhelmed in the first few meetings by the program review portion (there are a lot of very technical documents!), I took another former member’s advice and focused on what I brought to the table as an educator.

The board is made up of stakeholders from across our profession (classroom teachers, administrators, and higher education faculty), which means that I don’t have to be an expert in everything—instead, I focus on feedback that I think represents the interests of teachers and their students.

Through my time on the board, I’ve learned a lot about how our profession brings together unique and valuable perspectives, and each meeting is an opportunity for me to reflect on public education’s bigger picture. The best (and most humbling) part is the opportunity I get to draw on my own experiences in the classroom to inform how we continue to shape our profession. Whether we are discussing student teaching, or professional development platforms, or options that can help with retention, SEPLB gives me the opportunity to speak for my colleagues and our students!”

POLICY UPDATES

IEA’s Government Relations Department has developed a new legislation tracking tool that allows members to track policy issues that matter most to them. This webpage will be updated daily during active legislative sessions and provide a summary of each session when it has ended.

[LEGISLATIVE SESSION WEBPAGE](#)



The following is a summary of newly passed education bills that are headed to the Governor's desk from the spring legislative session. This is not an exhaustive list, only a summary. To read about all of the bills that were passed during the spring legislative session, please visit IEA's 2023 Legislative Session webpage.

HB2147 – Amends the Illinois Pension Code

In the Downstate Teacher Article, provides that through June 30, 2026 (instead of June 30, 2023), an annuitant may accept employment as a teacher without impairing his or her retirement status if that employment is not within the school year during which service was terminated and does not exceed 120 paid days or 600 paid hours in each school year. [Learn more.](#)

SB1235 – Amends the State Universities Article of the Illinois Pension Code

Provides that for the purposes of computing service for academic years for any participant, one month of service means a calendar month during which the participant qualifies as an employee for any fraction of the month (instead of at least 15 or more days).

SB1351 – Amends the Evaluation of Certified Employees Article of the School Code

Provides that in a teacher evaluation plan, teachers who are due to be evaluated the year they are set to retire shall be offered the opportunity to waive their evaluation and to retain their most recent rating, unless the teacher was last rated as "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory."

SB1352 – Amends the Employment of Teachers Articles of the School Code

In provisions concerning the termination of service by a teacher, provides that outside of a school term, a resignation submitted by any teacher after the completion of the school year must be submitted in writing to the secretary of the board a minimum of 30 calendar days prior to the first student attendance day of the following school year or else the teacher will be deemed to have resigned during the school term.

SB1872 – Amends the Employment of Teachers Article of the School Code

For the first probationary period, requires the teacher to be employed for 3 (rather than 4) consecutive school terms of service in which the teacher receives overall annual evaluation ratings of at least "Proficient" in the second and third school terms. For the second probationary period, requires the teacher to serve for 2 (rather than 3) consecutive school terms of service in which the teacher receives 2 (rather than 3) overall annual evaluations of "Excellent".

SB2017 – Amends the Employment of Teachers Article of the School Code

Provides that educational support personnel employees shall not be required to work on a legal school holiday. Provides that no deduction shall be made from the time or compensation of a school employee, including an educational support personnel employee, on account of any legal or special holiday in which that employee would have otherwise been scheduled to work but for the legal or special holiday.

HB0300 – Amends the Downstate Teachers Article of the Illinois Pension Code and Amends the Employment of Teachers Article of the School Code.

Specifies that the provision that requires an employer to make an additional contribution to the System for certain salary increases greater than 6% excludes salary increases necessary to bring a school board in compliance with the changes to the minimum salary provisions of the School Code under Public Act 101-443 or the amendatory Act.

In the provisions concerning minimum salary, removes a provision subjecting the increase in the minimum salary rate to review by the General Assembly. Provides that the minimum salary rate for a school year shall be increased by a percentage equal to the annualized percentage increase (instead of the percentage increase), if any, in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for all items published by the United States Department of Labor for the 12-month period ending on June 30 of the school year that ended 12 months prior to the school year in which the adjusted salary is to be in effect.

HB1120 – Amends the Charter Schools Law of the School Code

Provides that any renewal of a certified charter must include a union neutrality clause. Requires a union neutrality clause to be included in a charter school proposal.

HB3442 – Amends the Educator Licensure Article of the School Code

Provides that a district may continue to employ the same substitute teacher in the same vacant position for 90 calendar days or until the end of the semester.

HB3690 – Amends the School Boards Article of the School Code

In provisions concerning in-service training, provides that state required training listed in this bill must occur at least once every 5 years. (This bill reduces the in-service training burden on teachers).

SB1488 – Amends the Educator Licensure Article of the School Code

In provisions concerning educator testing, provides no candidate completing a teacher preparation program or other candidate is required to pass a teacher performance assessment. Creates the Teacher Performance Assessment Task Force to evaluate potential teacher performance assessment systems for implementation in this State, with the intention of supporting a thoughtful and well-rounded licensure system that is performance-based and has consistency across programs and objectivity.

HB1297 - Amends the Downstate Teacher Article of the Illinois Pension Code

Provides that a member may establish optional credit for up to 2 years of service as a teacher or administrator employed by a private school recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education, provided that the teacher (i) was certified under the law governing the certification of teachers at the time the service was rendered, (ii) applies in writing on or before June 30, 2028, (iii) supplies satisfactory evidence of the employment, (iv) completes at least 10 years of contributing service as a teacher, and (v) pays the required contribution. [Learn more.](#)

HB2392 - Amends the Employment of Teachers Article of the School Code

Provides that any teacher who is a member of a statewide association representing teachers and who is elected by the association's membership to represent the association in federal advocacy work may spend up to 10 days during a school term representing the association in federal advocacy work. Provides that no deduction of wages may be made for such absence, and the statewide association shall reimburse the employing school district for the cost of the need for a substitute teacher as the result of the teacher's absence. [Learn more.](#)

SB1235 - Amends the State Universities Article of the Illinois Pension Code

Provides that for the purposes of computing service for academic years for any participant, one month of service means a calendar month during which the participant qualifies as an employee for any fraction of the month. (Ensure that SURS members will receive full pension credits for their years of service as an educator that participates in SURS). [Learn more.](#)

SB1468 - Amends the Downstate Teacher Article of the Illinois Pension Code

Provides that through June 30, 2026, an annuitant may accept employment as a teacher without impairing his or her retirement status if that employment is not within the school year during which service was terminated and does not exceed 120 paid days or 600 paid hours in each school year. (Allows retired teachers to return to the classroom for up to 120 days without impairing their TRS annuity until 2026). [Learn more.](#)

HB2396 - Amends the School Code

In a Section concerning kindergartens, provides that, beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, each school board must establish a kindergarten with full-day attendance. [Learn more.](#)

HB2789 - Amends the Illinois Library System Act

Provides that it is the policy of the State to encourage the improvement of free public libraries and to encourage cooperation among all types of libraries in promoting the sharing of library resources, including digital resources, and to encourage and protect the freedom of public libraries and library systems to acquire materials without external limitation and to be protected against attempts to ban, remove, or otherwise restrict access to books or other materials. [Learn more.](#)

HB3680 - Amends the Children with Disabilities Article of the School Code and the School Safety Drill Act

Provides that in the development of the individualized education program for a student, if the student needs extra accommodation during emergencies, including natural disasters or an active shooter situation, then that accommodation shall be taken into account when developing a student's IEP plan. [Learn more.](#)

SB90 - Amends the School Code and the Illinois Human Rights Act

Provides that each school district must create, implement, and maintain an age-appropriate policy on race-related harassment and discrimination. In provisions concerning bullying prevention, provides that the required policy on bullying shall also include age-appropriate information about the definitions of harassment and sexual harassment, the procedures for reporting harassment, and the protections and relief available under Illinois Human Rights Act.

Provides that harassment by an elementary, secondary, or higher education representative or the failure of an institution of elementary, secondary, or higher education to take remedial action or appropriate disciplinary action against a student or an elementary, secondary, or higher education representative employed by the institution (if the institution knows that the student or representative committed or engaged in harassment) is a civil rights violation. Provides that each institution of elementary, secondary, or higher education shall establish, implement, and maintain a continuing race-related discrimination and harassment program. Sets forth requirements concerning policies and procedures, a model training program, and reporting. [Learn more.](#)

SB2243 - Amends the School Code

Provides that, in consultation with education stakeholders, the State Board of Education shall develop and adopt a comprehensive literacy plan for the State on or before October 1, 2023. [Learn more.](#)

POLICY NEWS

- During his budget address, Governor Pritzker announced significant financial investments in expanding early childhood education, the [Comprehensive Community Based Youth Services program](#), and MAP grants. In addition, he announced an increase in investment in K-12 education and an increase in grants for transportation and special education. [Press Release.](#)
- The state announced a new teacher pipeline initiative aimed at addressing chronic shortages in the state's most understaffed districts. The proposed Teacher Pipeline Grant Program will direct \$70 million per year over the next three years to the 170 school districts with the greatest need to fill teaching positions. [Press Release.](#)
- The state released a new report from the [Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Initiative](#), which will redesign the delivery of behavioral health services for Illinois youth. The goal of the Initiative is to transform statewide systems to provide clear, consistent, and comprehensive guidance to families seeking behavioral or mental health services for children and adolescents. [Press Release.](#)
- The Biden Administration has approved a proposal to expand the [Illinois School-Based Health Services program](#), which will bring in additional federal matching funds to provide covered services for Medicaid-enrolled students across the state, including critical youth mental health services. [Press Release.](#)

POLICY RESOURCES

We have developed guidance documents on pertinent local policy issues. Please access these resources by using the links below and logging into members only.

- [Performance Evaluation Policy Guidance](#)
- [Student Discipline Policy Guidance](#)
- [Workplace Violence Policy Guidance](#)



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Mastering Performance Evaluations, June 9 – July 12 (8 PD Hours)

Is it time to revise your local performance evaluation plan? In this course, you will learn about state requirements, how to select and use a research-based instructional framework, and how to use classroom assessments to measure student growth. The course will also include discussions about streamlining burdensome local plans. Dr. Zaleski will facilitate this course.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Victoria A. Mikos

Schaumburg Education Association
Vice-Chair of the Whole Child Task Force

WHAT IS THE WHOLE CHILD TASK FORCE?

"The ISBE Whole Child Task Force was created following legislation (Public Act 101-0654), consisted of a diverse group of professionals from across the state, and aimed to 'address both the immediate mental health crisis and the significant barriers and disparities in accessing mental health services that exist across our state.'"

HOW LONG WHERE YOU A MEMBER OF THE WHOLE CHILD TASK FORCE?

"I was a member since the inception of the task force in July 2021 until our final recommendations were submitted in March 2022."

HOW DID YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THE WHOLE CHILD TASK FORCE?

"The Whole Child Task Force created 30 recommendations 'to improve student mental health, wellness and school engagement.' These recommendations were submitted to the Illinois General Assembly for consideration, as 'it is imperative that we improve students' physical and emotional safety at school.'"

On the Task Force I represented IEA and was the voice of its members. It was important for me to bring my voice to the Task Force as an educator who is currently doing the work...I was able to share my ideas, engage the task force in meaningful discussions, and encouraged collaboration among the other Task Force members.

Personally, being a part of this Task Force was so important to me because I have always been a therapist who looks at the child as a whole in order to make progress. When students are deregulated for any reason during the school day, I have always tried to problem solve what they are trying to communicate and then provide appropriate interventions to re-establish regulation so they can be available for learning...

I never envisioned having these leadership opportunities at the state level and collaborating with professionals across the state on topics that I am very passionate about. Everything I have been a part of thus far and will continue to do moving forward includes using my voice and advocating for special educators and students.”

MEMBER INTEREST SURVEY

Are you interested in learning more about education policy or getting more involved in IEA's policy work? Please complete our short member interest survey using the link below.

[▶ TAKE OUR SURVEY](#)



Please contact Dr. Zaleski, Diana.Zaleski@ieanea.org, with any policy related questions.

