

March, 2024

# ISTA BILL SUMMARY: 2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



A comprehensive summary of education legislation from the 2024 General Assembly.



Indiana  
State  
Teachers  
Association

## 2024 ISTA LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

### ISTA PRIORITIES

#### **HB 1004: 13<sup>TH</sup> CHECK FOR RETIREES (REP. BOB CHERRY, R – GREENFIELD)**

HB 1004 merges components of HB 1004 and SB 275. It provides a 13th check in 2024 and each year for five years based on a sliding scale of years of service for members of TRF/PERF (the same stipend as the last many years (\$150 - \$450), depending upon the number of years since retirement). SB 275 also includes a longer-term solution to the lack of post-retirement increases (13th checks or cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs)). Requires INPRS to send delinquency notices to delinquent political subdivisions prior to June 15 of each year.

#### **HB 1042: TRANSITION TO TEACHING SCHOLARSHIPS (REP. DAVID HEINE, R – FT. WAYNE)**

HB 1042 provides that any balance in the Next Generation Hoosier Educators scholarship fund remaining after the award for a fiscal year may be used to fund additional transition to teaching scholarships. The bill also removes a provision related to the reduction of scholarships if certain limits are exceeded.

#### **SB 1: READING SKILLS (SEN. LINDA ROGERS, R – GRANGER)**

This bill introduces critical changes designed to enhance reading proficiency with new support and intervention strategies. While ISTA recognizes these efforts' potential to positively impact student learning, the emphasis on retention is shortsighted.

**Summer School and Interventions:** The bill mandates schools to offer summer school to students who either do not reach reading proficiency or are at-risk based on IREAD assessment scores. It contemplates increased funding for certain remediation services. It also adds that if a student does not achieve at least a ninety percent attendance rate in a summer reading course, the student must participate in an individual reading plan aligned with the science of reading in the following school year.

**Teacher Training and Qualifications:** The bill allows unlicensed teachers to teach summer school reading. It also extends the deadline for certain teachers to receive Science of Reading training to 2027.



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**IREAD Requirements:** It requires the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) to administer the IREAD assessment in second grade. It also requires students to take IREAD until certain proficiency scores are met. The bill requires schools to monitor and track students who have failed IREAD. It requires that a student who is not retained but is not proficient to continue reading instruction until the student can pass IREAD.

**Student Retention:** The bill continues to allow exemptions (similarly to current law) for certain special education students, certain students on Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and students who are English language learners. It requires the IDOE in its reading deficiency remediation plan to mandate retention of students not passing IREAD and not passing in the summer (recognizing certain exceptions).

**Parent Engagement and Appeal:** Parents must be notified when a student is not on track, is at-risk to fail the IREAD assessment, or fails the IREAD assessment. The bill requires parents to be notified about any interventions a school determines appropriate for a student lacking proficiency. It requires a parent of a student in kindergarten to be notified about the retention policy. It also adds an appeal process by which the parent may appeal to the school if the school retains a student.

### **SB 185: STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONES (SEN. JEFF RAATZ, R – RICHMOND)**

The bill requires school boards to develop a cell phone policy which prohibits student cell phone usage during instructional time. Exceptions to the policy include:

- Situations where devices are included in the student's IEP or 504 plan.
- A student needs the phone in the event of an emergency or to manage their health care.
- A teacher utilizes phones or similar devices for educational purposes during instructional time.



### ENACTED EDUCATION LEGISLATION

#### **HB 1001: OMNIBUS/CAREER SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNTS (REP. CHUCK GOODRICH, R – NOBLESVILLE)**

This bill mainly addresses the career scholarship accounts program and workforce development, but also expands education scholarship account vouchers.

**Career Scholarship Accounts (CSA):** The bill allows CSA funds to be used for the costs associated with acquiring a driver's license. It also establishes conditions regarding the amount of funds that may be used from CSA annual grant amounts for transportation costs. Certain timelines for applying for a CSA have been extended.

**Education Scholarship Account (ESA) vouchers:** The bill opens eligibility for ESAs to siblings of a student with a disability but includes some restrictions on qualified expenses. Commission for Higher Education (CHE) will be required to prepare a longitudinal analysis for CSA data.

**Higher Education Reporting:** The bill mandates state educational institutions to provide comprehensive data on various academic and administrative aspects to the CHE. It will require each private postsecondary educational institution and each out-of-state public and nonprofit degree granting institution that offers instructional or educational services or training in Indiana to provide to the IDOE information to implement reporting requirements and requirements related to the Indiana Graduates Prepared to Succeed dashboard. It allows for the revocation of an out-of-state public or nonprofit degree granting institution's authorization if the institution fails to provide the information.

**Workforce Development and Training:** The bill integrates teaching into the sectors eligible for the Next Level Jobs employer training grant program. It also revises criteria related to career coaching grant eligibility and career awareness education.

#### **HB 1002: EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN EDUCATION/ANTI-SEMITISM (REP. CHRIS JETER, R – FISHERS)**

The bill establishes a definition of antisemitism. The definition comes from the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and focuses on anti-Semitic perceptions of Jewish people and Judaism.



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### **HB 1093: EMPLOYMENT OF MINORS (REP. KENDELL CULP, R – RENSSELAER)**

The bill repeals several child labor laws that protect children from working later hours or longer shifts, particularly on school nights, as well as factory farm labor. It exempts minors aged 14 to 16 from certain time restrictions, removing the 7 p.m. limit on work before school days from June 1 to Labor Day. Hour and time restrictions for minors aged 16 to 18 are repealed and restrictions on employers who hire minors to work after 10 p.m. and before 6 a.m. are eliminated. Additionally, minors aged 16 to 18 working in agriculture are exempted from hazardous occupation rules.

### **HB 1102: CHILDCARE (REP. DAVID HEINE, R – FT. WAYNE)**

The bill limits the number of children under 12 months of age that may be provided care in a childcare home. It provides that certain childcare programs are exempt from licensure. It amends some licensing requirements for class II childcare homes and childcare centers. Additionally, it provides that certain childcare providers are eligible for childcare voucher payments. It allows certain childcare programs at schools to provide services to business employees' children when the business enters a contract with the school and certain conditions are met (with the intention of assisting school bus drivers in particular).

### **HB 1104: SCHOOL SAFETY (REP. MICHELLE DAVIS, R – GREENWOOD)**

The bill changes current active shooter drills to intruder drills. Drills involving sensory experiences, including gunshot simulations, are to exclude students, require teacher written consent to participate and not occur during the school day. Also adds certain SROs to the 1977 Retirement Fund.

### **HB 1120: TAX ISSUES/REFERENDA (REP. JEFF THOMPSON, R – LIZTON)**

This omnibus property tax bill contains several provisions related to schools.

**Operating Referendum Tax Cap:** The bill extends the current cap on the operating referendum tax levied by school corporations through to 2025. It also establishes a formula to determine the cap for that year, impacting how schools, particularly growing districts, can fund operational costs.

**Curricular Materials:** The legislation repeals the requirement for schools to maintain a curricular materials account and requires fees collected to now go into the education fund. These funds won't be considered tuition support and won't count toward a school's minimum expenditure on teacher compensation.



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**Controlled Projects:** The bill changes procedures for petitions and referendums for controlled projects funded by debt service. If a project's scope changes from what was initially advertised, the bill requires reestablishing the petition and referendum processes.

### **HB 1135: COSMETOLOGY APPRENTICESHIPS (REP. TIM WESCO, R – OSCEOLA)**

The bill establishes an apprenticeship program for cosmetologists outside of traditional cosmetology schools with the completion of 2,000 hours shadowing a licensed cosmetologist, as well as instructional coursework completion. The apprenticeships must be registered through the U.S. Department of Labor.

### **HB 1137: RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION (REP. KENDALL CULPT, R – RENNSELAER)**

The bill requires principals (instead of voluntary under current law) to grant a student leave during the school day to receive religious instruction. In addition to the fine line in this bill between separation of church and state, some students from non-Christian religions may be discriminated against if certain religious institutions cannot access students. Questions also remain about whether schools would be liable should a student be injured during this release time for religious instruction. The bill does not require background checks for participating organizations. Interestingly, the amount of time students are allowed to leave school for religious instruction during the school year equals exactly the number of days for a student to be considered habitually truant – during a session where truancy prevention was a major priority. Language that would have allowed principals or superintendents to hire chaplains to provide secular support to students and staff was removed by a conference committee.

### **HB 1179: STATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (REP. JOANNA KING, R – MIDDLEBURY)**

This bill mandates stricter controls over foreign engagements by state educational institutions.

**Disclosure of Foreign Gifts and Contracts:** State educational institutions are required to disclose any foreign gifts and contracts received or entered into after December 31, 2020.

**Public Access and Audit:** The CHE must create and maintain a website where information about these disclosed gifts and contracts is accessible to the public.



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**Intellectual Property:** Institutions must adopt policies that prevent the transfer of intellectual property developed with the institution's resources to entities connected with foreign adversaries.

**Restrictions on Public Statements:** Employees or contractors of an institution are restricted from making public statements in their official capacity unless these pertain to the institution's operations, sponsored events, or have been approved by the board of trustees.

**Prohibition on Engagements with Terror-Associated Entities:** Institutions cannot use state funds or resources to engage with individuals or organizations associated with foreign terrorist groups or state sponsors of terror.

### **HB 1233: ROBOTICS PROGRAM (REP. CHUCK GOODRICH, R – NOBLESVILLE)**

The bill makes minor changes to grants for the robotics program that was enacted last session. There is a provision in the bill that makes these program funds non-bargainable.

### **HB 1243: VARIOUS EDUCATION MATTERS (REP. BOB BEHNING, R – INDIANAPOLIS)**

This bill contains various topics, many of which were added in conference committee from HB 1304, which died.

**Collective Bargaining:** The bill clarifies that literacy grants are not subject to collective bargaining. The Indiana Department of Education previously issued guidance that literacy grant dollars were not subject to collective bargaining, but this language puts it into statute.

**Diploma Changes:** Following up on its establishment of graduation pathways, this bill seeks to revamp diploma requirements. It requires the IDOE to align student diploma waivers with the new graduation requirements. It also makes changes to the minimum number of alternate diplomas that can be counted for a school corporation's graduation rate. Beginning in 2028, all schools will be required to offer at least one computer science course as a separate subject, with completion of a course becoming a graduation requirement. All school corporations and charter schools will be required to include financial literacy in its curriculum. The bill adds completing International Baccalaureate courses as another method to earn a diploma with a Core 40 with academic honors designation.





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**Compensation Thresholds:** The current threshold requiring school districts to expend at least 62% of their new tuition support money towards teacher compensation triggers a waiver mechanism for school districts unable to comply. This bill eliminates the waiver process and replaces it with a public transparency set of rules requiring the IDOE to publish a list of non-compliant districts on its website and require a non-compliant school district to publicly acknowledge this at its next public school board meeting and enter it into the school district's official minutes and publish it on its website. The compensation threshold also includes funds that school districts expend on dropout recovery programs for students (does not include virtual schools). ISTA believes that the 62% threshold needs to be reassessed.

**Textbook Fee Reimbursement:** Recognizing that the existing curriculum fees reimbursements have been insufficient to cover the actual costs, public schools will be required to participate in an annual statewide survey about school fees related to curricular materials.

**Literacy Coaches:** Defines "literacy coach," and sets requirements for literacy coaches with an emphasis on science of reading principles. It establishes professional development programs for literacy coaches.

**Expulsion Notices:** Allows schools to notify parents of a student's expulsion by electronic mail.

**Truancy:** Prohibits students who are categorized as habitually truant from participating in school extracurricular activities (originally in SB 282).

**Internet Safety:** Allows schools to provide courses on internet safety and requires the IDOE to develop age-appropriate curricula for internet safety (originally SB 287).

**Teacher Licenses:** Establishes that a visiting teacher license issued to a visiting teacher must be a five-year nonrenewable license.





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**Math Instruction:** The bill requires the IDOE to an online, self-paced professional development system for mathematics including implementation of Indiana academic standards, effective teaching strategies, problem-solving strategies, collaborative learning environments and universal student supports. It requires math proficiency level descriptors to track student grade level proficiency. The bill requires the IDOE to create and identify dedicated math resources for parents, families and educators to assist with intervention and enrichment opportunities and instructional strategies, as well as early identification for students at-risk of failing to meet proficiency.

**Data Governance Teams:** Requires the Office of Management and Budget to establish a K-12 data governance team to collect data and reports from school corporations to streamline data and reporting. It also requires stakeholder input on reducing redundant data collection and reporting.

**Teacher Prep Programs:** Requires the IDOE and the CHE, in coordination with the state board of education (SBOE), to partner with teacher preparation programs to receive an outside evaluation on the programs' instruction on the science of reading.

### **HB 1380: OMNIBUS/VARIOUS EDUCATION MATTERS (REP. BOB BEHNING, R – INDIANAPOLIS)**

This bill contains various topics.

**Pilot Programs:** The bill mandates the secretary of education to develop plans for pilot programs focused on optimizing school facilities and student transportation.

**Seclusion and Restraint:** It emphasizes minimizing the use of time-out by including this goal in the commission on seclusion and restraint's model plan. The commission will be required to meet biannually.



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**Innovation Network Schools:** The bill delineates specific terms and conditions for agreements between innovation network schools and school corporations generally favoring the innovation network schools. It outlines financial dynamics guaranteeing certain funding levels for innovation network schools and states that school corporations cannot impose additional performance goals or accountability metrics beyond those initially agreed upon. The bill specifies how funds from property tax levies will be allocated to the organizers of these schools. It also restricts school corporations from changing the usage of facilities utilized by innovation network charter schools without the organizer's consent. The bill sets limitations on the fees that school corporations can charge the organizers for goods and services, tying these charges to the amount received from the operations fund property tax levy.

**Transportation Funding:** School corporations are allowed to use their operations fund to transport students to various educational and work-based learning programs.

**Student Learning Recovery Grant:** The bill extends the COVID-relief funding for school districts that were set to expire.

**Enrichment Scholarship Account:** The termination conditions for a student's Indiana enrichment scholarship account are updated.

**Student Absences for Military Duty:** Schools must authorize absences for secondary students on active military duty.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Hearings:** The bill assigns jurisdiction over certain hearings to the office of administrative law proceedings. The office will be required to determine the cost of conducting hearings and to assess a fee based on the weighted ADM count for each school corporation and charter school that is sufficient to cover the costs.

**ESAs:** The bill amends the date by which a student has to be a certain age to be eligible to participate in a school scholarship program and the Indiana education scholarship account program.

**Transfer Policies:** The bill prohibits school corporations from charging fees for transfer students.



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**Hazing Policies:** State educational institutions are required to publish information on hazing incidents committed by a member of a group or organization that is adjudicated by the institution.

**Firefighter and EMT Training:** Students 16 years or older are permitted to enroll in training programs for firefighting or emergency medical services.

**Referendum Timelines:** School corporations must notify each charter school (except virtual charters and adult high schools) no later than 45 days prior to whether the charter school will participate in a referendum. The notice must include the total amount of the school corporation's expected need, the estimate for that amount divided by the number of students enrolled in the school corporation and the date when the school board will vote on holding the referendum.

### **SB 6: READING PROFICIENCY (SEN. JEFF RAATZ, R – RICHMOND)**

A companion bill to SB 1, this bill will require the IDOE to identify students in grades four through eight who fail IREAD or are at risk failing IREAD. It also requires the IDOE to develop guidance around students who lack reading proficiency.

### **SB 8: HIGHER EDUCATION REPORTING (SEN. JEAN LEISING, R – ODENBURG)**

This bill addresses several higher education issues, as well as some graduation requirements for high schools.

**Indiana College Core Requirement:** Starting in the 2024-25 school year, every high school must offer the Indiana College Core (previously known as the statewide transfer general education core) or submit a compliance plan to the CHE by October 1, 2024. Students completing courses under this core are guaranteed secondary credit toward graduation, with these credits reflected on their transcripts.

**Reverse Transfer Program:** The bill establishes the reverse transfer program for community college associate degrees. This program will facilitate the awarding of associate degrees through a reverse transfer process for students who have moved on to a four-year institution without completing their two-year degree.



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**Three-Year Baccalaureate Degree Programs:** State educational institutions that offer baccalaureate degrees will be required to assess and potentially restructure their programs to enable full-time students to complete their degrees in three years. By July 1, 2025, each institution must offer at least one such accelerated program and report annually on their offerings.

**Course Access:** The CHE, in coordination with IDOE and institutions, is tasked with maintaining a comprehensive list and syllabi for college core courses. The IDOE will be required by 2025 to partner with one or more institutions to provide online access to all College Core courses through the course access program.

**Credit Equivalency and Transparency for International Examinations:** Institutions must annually update and submit credit equivalencies for Cambridge International Advanced A and AS Level exams to the CHE, which, in turn, will be posted on each institution's website and the commission's transfer portal.

### **SB 48: STATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (SEN. BLAKE DORIOT, R – GOSHEN)**

The bill requires colleges and universities to post links to the U.S. Department of Education scorecards which lists the school's cost, student debt, employability, etc.

### **SB 146: EMPLOYMENT OF MINORS (SEN. LINDA ROGERS, R – GRANGER)**

The original bill would have allowed students/children to work more hours per day, extended allowable work times and made numerous negative changes to child labor laws. The original bill violated federal laws on child labor (FSLA) on several grounds. The original bill also essentially sought to employ students/children for cheap labor and significantly downplay the importance of education. A floor amendment required that the state comply with existing federal labor laws with respect to child work hours, and so much of the original bill language has been removed.

### **SB 202: STATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS MATTERS/CENSORSHIP (SEN. SPENCER DEARY, R – WEST LAFAYETTE)**

This bill focuses on several items regarding state educational institutions.

**Diversity Programming:** State educational institutions must ensure their diversity programming significantly promotes both cultural and intellectual diversity.



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**Policies on Free Inquiry and Expression:** Institutions are required to create policies that address disciplinary actions for individuals disrupting protected expressive activities and set criteria for tenure or promotion linked to adherence to principles of free inquiry, expression and intellectual diversity.

**Faculty Tenure:** The bill limits or restricts the granting of tenure or a promotion for violations of freedom of expression. It requires disciplinary action by tenure review committees at state institutions for faculty who violate freedom of expression, free inquiry or intellectual diversity. It also establishes a student complaint process for faculty who violate these requirements.

**Prohibitions on Ideological Coercion:** There will be explicit prohibitions against requiring applicants, employees or contractors to endorse specific political or ideological beliefs. This extends to admissions, hiring, promotions and tenure decisions.

**Student and Employee Feedback:** The bill encourages the collection of student and employee feedback on the institutional climate regarding free speech and academic freedom, potentially through surveys designed by the CHE.

**Neutrality Statement:** Institutions must adopt a neutrality statement that makes a distinction between the official positions of the institution, including its schools, colleges and departments, from the individual viewpoints of the institution's employees, contractors, students and alumni.

### **SB 211: VARIOUS EDUCATION MATTERS (SEN. JEFF RAATZ, R – RICHMOND)**

This bill contains two different items:

**Excellence in Civics Designation:** The IDOE, in collaboration with CHE and approval by the SBOE, is required to establish the Excellence in Civics Designation which may be earned by a high school student and recognized on their transcript beginning with the 2029 cohort. The student must demonstrate volunteer hours, participation in a project, certain coursework and other criteria established by the IDOE.



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**Bargaining Public Hearings:** The required public hearing, which must precede formal collective bargaining, can now occur during a regular or special meeting of the school board.

### **SB 212: VARIOUS EDUCATION MATTERS (SEN. JEFF RAATZ, R – RICHMOND)**

This bill introduces several different items:

**Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired:** Requires that the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Board give preference (but not require) to a candidate for the chief executive officer position in the area of visual impairment disabilities.

**Indiana School for the Deaf:** Allows the Indiana School for the Deaf to partner with an existing nonprofit corporation to benefit the purposes of the school.

**Superintendent Contracts:** Allows that the public meeting required before a contract for employment is entered into by a school board and a school superintendent to occur at a regular or special meeting of the school board and does not have to occur at least seven days before the contract is established. Allows a school board to enter into a contract with a superintendent after an election if only one new member is elected to the school board.

**Teacher Preparation Curriculum:** The bill prohibits a teacher preparation program from using curriculum or content that is based on the three-cueing model.

**Primetime Program:** The bill repeals the Primetime program.



### **SB 270 VARIOUS EDUCATION MATTERS (SEN. LINDA ROGERS, R – GRANGER)**

SB 270 introduces several significant regulations concerning the leasing and utilization of school property, alongside amendments to educational institution policies and funding mechanisms. A requirement for all school districts to share referendum dollars with charter schools was removed.

**\$1 Law:** Redefines underutilized regarding facilities available to charter schools under the “\$1 law.” Schools must be using 50% of the building’s classroom capacity or the average maximum full-time equivalent enrollment in any of the last 25 years. Additionally, a district opting-in to share referenda money with charter schools within the district is exempted from the \$1 law.

**Vacant Buildings:** Clarifies when schools must notify IDOE of their intention to vacate a building. It adds additional information schools must provide in their notice to the IDOE, as well as timelines including a requirement for the IDOE to notify all interested parties within 15 days of getting the notice. Schools designated as distressed political subdivisions within the past three years are exempt.

**Lease Limitations:** The bill sets new restrictions on how school properties can be leased.

### **SB 282: FAMILY SERVICES TO PREVENT TRUANCY (SEN. STACEY DONATO, R – LOGANSPOUR)**

This bill provides several items to address issues around student chronic absenteeism.

**Notification by Prosecuting Attorneys:** The bill requires a prosecuting attorney to notify a parent when an affidavit is filed on a habitually truant student.

**Attendance Officers:** The bill specifies new responsibilities for both local and state attendance officers, including the issuing of an annual report to lawmakers with recommendations.

**Truancy Policies:** Every school corporation and charter school must establish a truancy prevention policy for students in K-6. The policy must include certain communications with parents of absent students, in addition to further attendance conference requirements.



### DEAD BILLS

#### **HB 1073 SPECIAL EDUCATION (REP. BECKY CASH, R – ZIONSVILLE)**

Seclusion & Restraint: Would have provided that the commission on seclusion and restraint in schools must include eliminating or minimizing the need for use of time-out in its model restraint and seclusion plan.

Cameras in SPED classrooms: [As Introduced] Would have required school corporations to have electronic recording equipment in each designated special education classroom, seclusion area, and time-out area not later than July 2025. Provided 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 60 days. Created a process by which a parent of a special education student may request to review certain recorded video footage.

#### **HB 1376: ELECTION DAYS FOR SCHOOL REFERENDA (REP. BOB BEHNING, R – INDIANAPOLIS)**

The bill would have required that school referenda be on the ballot only during general and municipal elections. It could have restricted one of the few remaining tools local voters have to support their community public schools and supplement crucial funds to deal with shortfalls from the state appropriation.

#### **SB 50 CLERGY AS SCHOOL COUNSELORS (SEN. STACY DONATO, R – LOGANSPOUR)**

The bill would have permitted a public school to employ or use on a voluntary basis, members of the clergy to provide secular advice, guidance, and support services to a student or employee unless the student, employee or parent of the student provided permission to receive nonsecular advice, guidance and support services (This appears to be a singular case in which the student can grant him/herself permission to receive services without the consent of a parent). The communications that a chaplain received would have been privileged unless the communicated information was about gender identity (in which case, the parent must be notified) or unless the chaplain is called to testify about the matter in court (in which case the communication cannot be grounds for excluding evidence in any judicial proceeding resulting from a report of child abuse). The bill did not specifically link a school chaplain to the duty to affirmatively report suspected child abuse communicated to them in this role. Rather, it set up a situation about disclosure that was linked to a judicial proceeding.

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### **SB 255: EDUCATION ACCOUNTS (SEN. RYAN MISHLER, R – MISHAWAKA)**

The bill would have expired the state's voucher program, and other voucher-like programs such as Education Savings Accounts, and created a new pilot titled the Fund Students First Program, which would be a new voucher system on steroids including expansion of state dollars to homeschoolers. It would have allowed parents to utilize state tax dollars through per-pupil amounts at will. Sen. Mishler intentionally did not move this bill but wanted to start the conversation of reforming the private school voucher programs in the 2025 legislative session.

### **SB 285: PROPERTY TAXES (SEN. RYAN MISHLER, R – MISHAWAKA)**

The bill looks into the future (once the unfunded liability of the pre-1996 TRF account is actuarially paid off by the state). The bill would take the monies the General Assembly would have otherwise appropriated (up to \$1 billion) to pay unfunded TRF benefits and use them to pay for a homestead property tax credit (not including referendum-generated property taxes). The bill included an automatic escalator of 2% per year on the grant. INPRS estimates the unfunded liability to end in 2030, but should lawmakers continue to make large investments toward it (as they have in the last decade), that timetable could be hastened. The decision to re-allocate existing state funds away from the improvement of education funding and into property tax relief warrants much more discussion.

