

Hannah Swogger

From: Sarah at MCCOY <sarah.kumfer@mccoyouth.org>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 8:01 AM
To: Hannah Swogger
Subject: Only one week left until the halfway point of the 2024 legislative session! Here's what you need to know:

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Hello, Hannah!

There is only one more full week of committee hearings during the first half of the legislative session. This means that any bills that have been introduced and have not passed through a committee and met the third reading deadline by February 6 will die. Below you can find more information on the bills we have been watching!

We are also excited to share that Indiana Youth Institute will be joining us at Youth Day at the Statehouse for their annual [State of the Child presentation!](#) Scroll down to learn more!

Have a great weekend,

**Youth Day at the Statehouse
and the 2024 State of the Child**



Presidents Day: February 19, 2024

We are so excited that so many people have already registered to attend Youth Day at the Statehouse! We are hoping to pack the Statehouse with young people from across the state so that lawmakers know that youth belong in the rooms where decisions are made, and youth voices matter! If you haven't yet, [register to attend today!](#)

[Click here](#) for the agenda, information to know, registration information, and resources to prepare youth for the day.

Indiana Youth Institute's 2024 State of the Child

We are so excited to work alongside Indiana Youth Institute to make Youth Day at the Statehouse a success!

IYI will be delivering their 2024 State of the Child presentation and officially release the 2024 Kids Count Data Book on **February 19th from 10:30-11:30am** in the House Chamber at the Statehouse.

The reliable, high-quality data and resources offered through the 2024 Kids Count Data Book empowers and equips leaders, policymakers, youth workers, and advocates LIKE YOU with a go-to, trusted source to create positive change for Indiana youth.

[Click here](#) to let IYI know you plan on attending the presentation!



Legislative issues from this week



Family Visitation in Juvenile Facilities

[SB279, "Juvenile Facility Visitation Policies"](#) is a bill that MCCOY strongly supports and is currently in the Senate Committee on Corrections and Criminal Law. The bill has not yet been scheduled for a hearing.

If passed, this bill will encourage communication between a child in the juvenile justice system and their family.

Currently, children in detention facilities may be unable to access their families and loved ones in person or by

phone for weeks or even months. Financial constraints sometimes prevent them from affording the costs of phone calls. This crucial connection with parents, guardians, and loved ones plays a vital role in the well-being and development of these children, and contributes to a reduction in recidivism.

[Read more.](#)

Contact members of the [Senate Committee on Corrections and Criminal Law](#) and ask for SB279 to receive a hearing.



Youth Employment

Two bills are moving through the statehouse that will loosen restrictions on youth employment.

[HB1093, "Employment of Minors"](#) passed out of the House committee on Employment, Labor and Pensions late last week and has been further amended during discussions in the full House chamber. Supporters of the bill say that this would align Indiana's youth employment law with federal law. Currently Indiana has stricter guidelines for the times certain youth can work and how many hours they can work in a week. Opponents are concerned about undermining these state laws that are in place specifically to protect Hoosier youth.

[SB146, "Youth Employment"](#) was discussed this week in the Senate Committee of Commerce and Technology. This bill will also allow for youth to work later hours during the school year, but also will allow 18-year-olds to sell alcohol in their place of work, including restaurants and hotels. SB146 passed out of the committee with a vote of 9-1.

[Read more.](#)



Student Use of Cellphones

[SB185, "Student use of wireless communication device"](#) passed out of the Senate Education and Career Development committee this week with a vote of 12-0. If passed, it will require school corporations to adopt and implement a cellphone policy that governs a student's use of a cellphone. Many schools already have cell phone policies in place, but this will establish a statewide policy that is consistent to better enforce those restrictions. This bill received unanimous support from advocates who agreed that cell phones can cause disruptions in class.

[Read more.](#)



Chaplains and religious instruction in public schools

[HB1137, "Civics Education and Religious Instruction,"](#) passed out of the House Education committee this week with a vote of 13-0. This bill will allow a student to be excused from class to attend religious instruction providing that the student has written notice from their parent and that the student is not habitually truant and is in good academic standing.

Another similar bill, [SB50, "Chaplains in Public Schools"](#) passed out of the Senate Education and Career Development Committee this week with a vote of 9-4. If passed, this will allow a public school to employ a school chaplain to provide secular support and counseling to a student or an employee.

MCCOY is concerned about both bills because chaplains may not have proper training in child development or psychology to provide school based counseling and we are concerned about the blurring of lines separating the church and state.

[Read more.](#)



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