

## Hannah Swogger

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**From:** Sarah at MCCOY <sarah.kumfer@mccoyouth.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 23, 2024 8:00 AM  
**To:** Hannah Swogger  
**Subject:** Here are your legislative updates from this week, including your recap of Youth Day at the Statehouse:



Hello, Hannah!

We kicked off this week in the best way by hosting hundreds of young people from around the state at MCCOY's first annual Youth Day at the Statehouse. Young people had the chance to share some powerful messages during our lunch program and they also had a chance to connect with other advocates and youth advocacy groups. We were especially excited to share the day with the Indiana Youth Institute who hosted the 2024 State of the Child and officially launched their 2024 Kids Count Data book.

Legislators were hard at work this week with not only plenty of committee hearings, but also already passing some bills through their third reading in the second chamber. Things will only move faster from this point on as we prepare for the last 2.5 weeks of session!

Have a great weekend,

**2024 Youth Day at the Statehouse**



## Thank you for a successful Youth Day at the Statehouse!

On Monday, we were so excited to host our first annual Youth Day at the Statehouse. We were thrilled to see so many young people from across the state come to the Statehouse, learn about Indiana's legislative process, connect with other youth advocacy groups through our resource fair, and share their voices, opinions, and ideas about the policy issues that are of importance to them.

Thank you to all of the young people who came out and thank you to all of the adults and organizations who were there to support raising youth voices!







## Indiana Youth Institute's 2024 State of the Child

The Indiana Youth Institute hosted their 2024 State of the Child on Monday. This also marked the official launch of the 2024 Kids Count Data Book. This year, IYI reported that the data within the Kids Count Data Book shows that Hoosier youth are in need of more supports for their mental health and their is a higher need for early childhood education.

[Read more.](#)

[Access the Kids Count Data Book here.](#)

## Legislative issues from this week



### School Absenteeism

[\*\*SB 282, "Absenteeism and School Attendance,"\*\*](#) received a hearing in the House Education Committee this week. This bill establishes a summer study committee to work on addressing truancy and chronic absenteeism and to understand best practices to support students and families who struggle with school absenteeism. Everyone who testified on the bill was in support, though the bill has been held in committee because committee members are considering several amendments to the bill.



## School Safety

[HB1104, "School Safety"](#) passed unanimously out of the Senate Education and Career Development committee last week, and again passed unanimously this week out of the Senate Appropriations committee. This bill will require public schools to develop a protocol for armed intruder drills and include accommodating students who have mobility restrictions, sensory needs and auditory or visual limitations.

The bill will now be sent to the full Senate chamber for further review.

[Read more.](#)



## Youth Employment

[HB1093, "Employment of Minors"](#) passed out of the Senate Pensions and Labor Committee this week 7-3. This bill will provide certain exemptions from some minors from labor laws and loosen certain regulations regarding hours and time worked for youth between ages 14-16.

[SB146, "Youth Employment"](#) passed its third reading in the full House chamber with a vote of 81-10. This bill will expand work hours and time restrictions for young Hoosiers and allow 18-year-olds to ring up alcohol sales in work settings such as a restaurant or hotel.



## Religious Instruction

[HB1137, "Civics Education and Religious Instruction"](#) passed out of the Senate Education and Career Development Committee earlier this week with a vote of 9-4. If passed, this will establish a civics seal to recognize students, teachers, and schools for excellence in civics education — which could look like offering civics-minded lessons and field trips to students. The bill also changes existing Indiana policy to require principals to release students for religious instruction during the school day at their parents' request.

While MCCOY is very supportive of the civics education parts of this bill, we remain concerned about the inclusion of the aspects that would allow students to leave class for

religious instruction because of school day interruptions and also could open up schools to legal liabilities.

The bill will now be sent to the full Senate for further review.

[Read more.](#)



### Cell Phones

**[SB185, "Student Use of Wireless Communication Device"](#)** passed its third reading in the full House chamber with a vote of 83-8. This bill requires all schools to adopt and implement a policy to address wireless communication devices including cell phones, watches, and tablets. While many schools already have procedures in place, this will create consistency for schools to address cell phones and other communication devices across the state.



### University Matters

**[SB202, "State Educational Institution Matters"](#)** passed out of the House Education Committee this week with a vote of 8-4. This bill will increase lawmaker oversight of state colleges and universities and push speech in the classroom toward "intellectual diversity." MCCOY joins the advocates from the university community who oppose this bill because it will severely constrain academic freedom and threaten schools' ability to recruit and retain top faculty.

The bill will now be sent to the full House for further review.

[Read more.](#)



MCCOY  
1375 W. 16th Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
United States

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