

Hannah Swogger

From: Sarah at MCCOY <sarah.kumfer@mccoyouth.org>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 8:00 AM
To: Hannah Swogger
Subject: We are in the final stretch of the 2024 legislative session! Here's what happened this week:

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Hi, Hannah!

The third reading deadlines for bills arrive early next week, meaning this week was the last week that committees could hear bills. Once bills pass out of the second chamber, they then return to their chamber of origin. That chamber of origin either agrees (consents) with the changes made in the second chamber or they can "dissent" from the changes. If the chamber of origin dissents, then selected representatives from both chambers will meet in what is called a conference committee, where they can hash out the changes and come up with an agreement before sending the bill to the Governor to sign into law.

For a full list of the conference committees that will be taking place (some still have yet to be scheduled), [click here](#).

This means that we are in the final stretch of the 2024 legislative session! Rumors are circling that session may end earlier than the anticipated sine die date of March 14th so things are moving quickly toward the finish line! Read below for your legislative updates from this week.

Have a great weekend,

Sarah

Legislative issues from this week



School Absenteeism

[SB 282, "Absenteeism and School Attendance,"](#) was significantly amended in the House Education Committee this week reverting the bill back to enacting punitive measures to addressing chronic absenteeism by requiring schools to report truant students to their county prosecutor's office and removing students' eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities if they have attendance issues. We were additionally disappointed to see that legislators removed the language that would have created a summer study committee to learn more about understanding the roots and best practices on how to address chronic absenteeism.

[Read more.](#)

SB282 passed its 2nd reading in the House on Thursday and will next be voted on its final passage in the House with its 3rd reading.

[Call or email now!](#) Tell your legislators to remove the House amendments to SB282 that could subject children to prosecution!



Literacy

Probably the most high-profile bill this legislative session has [SB1, "Reading Skills"](#) which is quickly approaching the finish line to become law. This bill seeks to address Indiana's poor literacy rates by requiring earlier interventions to ensure children are on track to meet reading requirements by third grade.

While we agree that additional supports are needed to help students meet Indiana's literacy requirements, MCCOY joins the educators, parents, and education advocates who have expressed concern with the retention aspects of the bill because of the negative effects it can bring on social emotional well being for students, and class sizes and capacity issues for schools and teachers.

The bill has now passed through both the Senate and the House. The Senate has concurred with the House amendments to the bill, so it will next be sent to Gov. Holcomb to sign into law.

[Read more on what's next.](#)



Childcare Regulation

[HB1102, "Childcare"](#) passed out of the Senate this week with a vote of 40-9 and has been returned to the House with amendments. This bill loosens the regulations of home-based child care by increasing the number of children allowed in a childcare home from five to seven, and it allows for those homes to care for those kids for longer- from four to six hours a day.

While MCCOY appreciates childcare access expansion efforts in the legislative session, we remain concerned that loosening these regulations puts children's safety at risk.

[Read more.](#)



Religious Instruction

[HB1137, "Civics Education and Religious Instruction"](#) passed out of the full Senate with a vote of 34-14 earlier this week.

This bill originally established a civics seal to recognize students, teachers, and schools for excellence in civics education. That civics language has been stripped of the bill during its time in the Senate Education committee. The content of the bill now includes provisions to allow chaplains to serve in public schools.

MCCOY joins the opponents of this bill because of our concerns that this could put schools at risk of violating the U.S. Constitution's establishment clause.

The bill was returned to the House with amendments and the House dissented from those changes. The bill will now be discussed in a conference committee sometime next week.

[Read more.](#)



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