



A Union of Professionals

HB 1259, HB 1261 & HB 1126

(Rep. Will Davis)



OPPOSE

Mandate Relief for P.E./Driver Ed, Third-Party Contracting & Property Tax Freeze

HB 1259 – Physical Education & Driver Education Waivers Eliminated

HB 1259 eliminates the waiver process for physical education and driver education. It allows school boards to determine the frequency of physical education with a minimum of three days a week and allows students who participate in sports or extracurricular activities in grades 9-12 to be excused from P.E. It caps what school districts can charge (\$250) to students who take driver education through a contracted driving school.

Physical education supports healthy minds and bodies and enhances academic performance. Studies show physical education contributes to improved academic performance, higher concentration levels, time on task, improved memory, coping skills and behavior. At a time when many schools are cutting school psychologist and therapists, physical education is a healthy outlet and an opportunity for students to develop socially.

Driver education provided by the school district is safe, consistent and reliable instruction by licensed educators. While there are third-party driving schools in Chicago and the suburbs, this legislation could create an access issue downstate where often the only place to get certified driving instruction is from the school district.

HB 1261 – Third-Party Contracting

HB 1261 eliminates the requirement that vendors who contract with a school district for non-instructional services must offer a similar benefit package to employees who perform the privatized services.

This further incentivizes third-party contracting and privatization and encourages school districts to give up control of important services our students rely on. **Privatization means giving control to private companies that must prioritize profit to stay in business.** Under this legislation, the obvious way for a company to profit is by cutting workers' pay and benefits. Removing this worker protection language will make it even more difficult to attract and maintain quality employees, and lead to a lower quality of school services. The legislation allows the discharge of mandates which could remove important requirements like special ed class size. There are unforeseen consequences that could diminish the quality of education our students deserve.

HB 1126 – Property Tax Freeze via Referendum

HB 1126 allows for a three-year property tax freeze by referendum. To get on the ballot, a taxing body would need a petition signed by at least five percent of total votes cast for governor in the preceding gubernatorial election. If the proposition fails, the body can't offer another referendum for a period of ten years. Also, only the districts who are at 125 percent of their adequacy target are eligible for the freeze.

A property tax freeze is bad policy. A large portion of property taxes goes to fund K-12 districts and community colleges. A property tax freeze means district revenue stays flat while bills and debt continue to rise. Coupled with the EBM model in SB1, this provision would potentially freeze total school district revenue while inflation reduces the purchasing power of those frozen dollars. This would be extremely detrimental to school districts that are already waiting for the state funding owed to them.