



## NEWS ...

*From ... State Representative Lou Lang (D-Skokie)*

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### **House Ok's Bill to Fire State Education Board, Curtail Gov's Power to Appoint Board; Superintendent Could be Booted**

(Springfield, IL) – The Illinois House today approved legislation, 86-21, that would end the terms of the current nine-member Illinois State Board of Education, strip the governor's power to directly appoint board members, and curb the governor's prerogative to propose a state superintendent candidate to the board.

Sponsored by State Rep. Lou Lang (D-Skokie), the bill creates a new and permanent seven-member nomination panel that would identify, evaluate, and submit a list of qualified education board candidates to the Governor for his or her consideration.

"The Governor has undermined the board of education's independence, effectiveness and credibility with the General Assembly," said Lang. "The current board needs to be replaced and the appointment process needs to be replaced, too.

"The Governor has exercised undue influence on the board and thwarted its independence of judgment."

Lang's proposal empowers a new state board of education to fire the current superintendent if it chooses.

The legislation's key provisions include:

#### Nomination Panel & Board Member Selection Process

Within 30 days after the effective date of this bill, the Governor, Attorney General, and Secretary of State must establish a 7-member Panel of educators by majority vote. Sixty-days after the Panel is established, it must recommend 27 nominees for appointment to the Board. The Governor has 30 days to choose 9 appointees from the Panel's list which includes chairman.

### Board Members

Under this bill, one member of the Board must be a former school board member, one must be a former district superintendent, one must be a former teacher, and one must have significant business experience. The Board members shall have staggered terms to ensure continuity.

### State Superintendent of Education

The bill allows the new Board to appoint a new State Superintendent of Education. However, the Governor is no longer given the option to propose a Superintendent. Moreover, it will no longer be necessary to appoint a Superintendent at the beginning of each term of the Governor. The Superintendent's contract will remain a 4-year contract, but his/her contract can be renewed, unlike current law where a Superintendent can only serve for 4 years.

### Budget

The bill requires Illinois State Board of Education to submit to the legislature any information it submits to the Governor or his/her Office of Management and Budget (estimate of receipts and expenditures, budget figures, etc.). The Board also would be required to submit an "ideal world" budget to the state lawmakers in addition to a "real world" proposal.

### Financial Communications

In addition, this amendment requires the Board, Superintendent, or a Board employee to document and make part of the record any ex parte communications with the Governor or his or her official representative, employee, or attorney. Ex parte communications are any written or oral communication on financial, budgetary, or investment matters under consideration by the Board.

### State Board of Education Advisory Board

This amendment also creates an 8-member State Board of Education Advisory Board. The President of the Senate, Minority Leader of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives must each appoint 2 members.

The legislation now moves to the Senate for consideration.