

Legislation

Special Edition Monitor

Dear PTA Advocate,

On Monday, March 22, 2010, the Illinois House of Representatives passed **HB4886** which was promptly sent to Senate Assignments. This bill speaks loudly to the result of Illinois' years of chronic underfunding for education by permitting local school boards to adopt, by resolution, a four-day school week. Some would say that this is an issue of local control, others would say it is an issue of child safety, and still others might say there is little difference in the overall outcome as students would still be in school the same number of hours just in a different format.

The Illinois PTA says it is an issue of adequate, equitable resources for ALL school districts in Illinois. The Illinois PTA also says it is an issue of the state **NOT** supplementing local support to fully fund an adequate, realistic foundation level of education for every child in every public school in Illinois. In short, the Illinois PTA says that **without the necessary reforms to education funding all school districts in Illinois are facing catastrophic cuts to programs and services to students, and HB4886 is representative of the dire consequences all school districts will be facing.**

While we recognize that elected school boards are the legally constituted bodies making decisions about how to best provide for the educational needs of communities, this issue is not about circumventing local control but addressing the failure of the state to meet its burden of responsibility to provide adequate and equitable sources of revenue for schools.

At a time when bills are being introduced to allow school districts to "opt out" of mandates that are unfunded, or underfunded, by the state, and when countless districts across Illinois are making deep cuts to staffing programs that directly impact student learning, will parents now be asked to put children at risk because of schools closing one day per week? Who will speak for children and families in Illinois? **The Illinois PTA!**

We urge you to contact your state Senator and ask them to take a stand for children and families in Illinois by voting NO for HB 4886.

Should you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

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