

August 20, 2019

To the Honorable Members of  
The Illinois Senate,  
101st General Assembly:

Today I veto Senate Bill 2124 from the 101st General Assembly, which would have amended the Illinois School Code. My administration appreciates the hard work of the sponsors of the legislation in the Senate and the House. While this legislation was well intended, the School Code already equips school boards, superintendents, and administrators with the tools necessary to discipline students who bring inappropriate, potentially harmful objects to school.

The School Code authorizes school boards to expel students who bring weapons to school. It also authorizes school boards to establish policies to discipline students who engage in gross disobedience and misconduct. These policies provide authority for school districts to discipline a student who brings a pneumatic gun, spring gun, paint ball gun, or B-B gun to a school or school activity, and to tailor the punishment to the circumstances of the incident. My office is prepared to work with the bill sponsors in order to address any ongoing concerns surrounding student safety.

Our state must do everything possible to prepare students for academic success, career advancement, and civic life. Too many students are derailed during their academic careers and entangled in the school-to-prison pipeline. State law should be crafted to ensure that students are not disproportionately disciplined in a manner that affects the long-term trajectory of their success in school and life. The School Code reflects this philosophy by recommending that school officials consider forms of non-exclusionary discipline prior to using out-of-school suspensions or expulsions.

Therefore, pursuant to Section 9(b) of Article IV of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return Senate Bill 2124, entitled "AN ACT concerning education," with the forgoing objections, vetoed in its entirety.

Sincerely,

JB Pritzker