

## Pension Update for Feb. 9, 2012

Discussions that could change state pension policy, involving policymakers and unions representing public sector workers, have begun in earnest.

Here is the latest information on those discussions.

Three meetings held this week were related to the issue of pensions. All three meetings involved representatives of the Illinois Labor Coalition, which includes IEA, IFT, AFSCME, SEIU, the Illinois AFL-CIO, as well as other labor organizations.

Early in the week, coalition representatives met together. Later in the week, the coalition participated in two separate meetings, the first with the presidents of state universities; the second with Gov. Quinn's pension panel.

The [Quinn pension panel](#) is led by the governor's senior advisor, Jerry Stermer, and is comprised of representatives chosen by the four leaders of the legislative caucuses:

- Sen. Mike Noland (D-Elgin),
- Rep. Elaine Nekritz (D-Des Plaines).
- Sen. Bill Brady of (R-Bloomington),
- Rep. Darlene Senger (R-Naperville)

Legislators are being joined in the meetings by senior staff representing all four legislative caucuses.

While it is fair to say that the negotiation process has begun, it should be noted that **there are no agreements and no proposals have actually been put on the table by any of the parties.**

While no formal proposals have been made, Senate President John Cullerton (D-Chicago) spent the week [publicly discussing pension ideas](#), including a proposal that would shift the state's pension contribution responsibility to the local school districts.

Again, no members of the pension coalition have taken a position on any of the ideas and nothing has yet been presented in the form of a proposal by anyone participating in the negotiations.

IEA's position on changes in pension policy is that:

- Any proposed changes must be legal under the Illinois Constitution.
- Any changes should be fair to our members.
- Any change must maintain the stability of the state retirement systems.

**[Read more about the IEA and pensions.](#)**

Coming up will be more meetings of the Illinois Labor Pension Coalition with policymakers. IEA members are encouraged to make their feelings known to their state representatives and senators via email or by participating in in-district lobbying.

**[More information on Back Home Lobby Days.](#)**