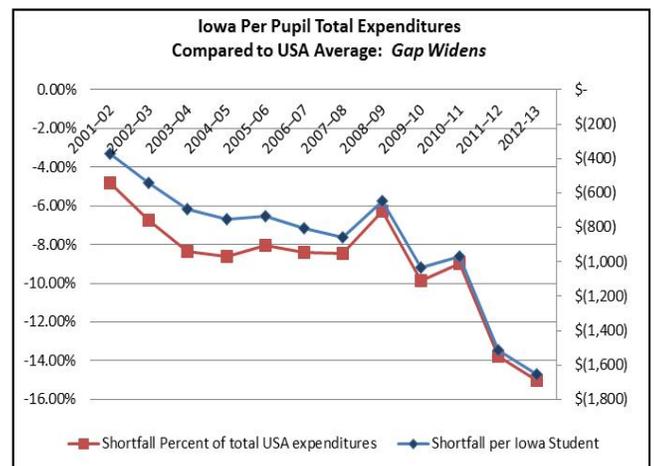


RSAI Position Paper State Supplemental Assistance: A 2015 Legislative Priority

Background: The Iowa Legislature annually determines the state cost per pupil. This action, formerly known as allowable growth, now known as state supplemental assistance, is considered the revenue to pay for the annual cost of doing business in Iowa schools. Iowa Code [Section 257.8](#) requires the decision on per pupil funding be enacted by the Legislature and Governor within 30 days of the release of the Governor’s budget in the year prior to the budget year. This gives school districts time to plan budgets, set reasonable tax rates, and bargain salaries with staff. In recent years, during and since the great recession, Iowa’s state cost per pupil has experienced record low increases, falling far short of the cost increase of delivering a good education. The state cost per pupil was not set during the 2014 Legislative Session for the 2015-16 school year as required by Iowa law.

Current Reality:

- Iowa total expenditures per pupil continue to fall compared to the rest of the nation. The newest data reported in the [LSA FACTBOOK](#) shows continuation of that downward trend. Although Iowa maintained its 37th in the nation ranking for the 2012-13 school year, Iowa per pupil expenditures continued its downward trend, falling to \$1,657 below the national average.
- This shortfall is a full 15.0% below the US average despite that fact that Iowa’s per capita personal income is above the national average.
- The costs of staff salaries and benefits continue to rise, as do the costs of curriculum, textbooks, utilities, transportation and supplies.
- Additional requirements demand more resources: early literacy efforts, summer school, before and after school programs, needy school populations, increasing STEM program, implementation of higher expectations through the Iowa Core and the goal to graduate every student college or career ready for a successful future.
- Since Iowa’s funding formula is based on enrollment, those districts with fewer students than the prior year are doubly challenged to provide great programs and supports for teachers and schools in this budget challenged environment.



RSAI calls on the Iowa Legislature to quickly set the 2015-16 cost per pupil, **State Supplemental Assistance, at 6%:** RSAI supports a goal to get Iowa’s investment in education to the national average. Iowa is now \$1,657 per pupil below the USA average level of expenditure. Funding per pupil for the 2015-16 school year must be determined ASAP as the 2015 Session convenes and set at an adequate level, no lower than 6%. Per Iowa law, funding for the 2016-17 school year must be set within 30 days of the Governor’s budget announcement in the 2015 Session. RSAI supports a per pupil increase for 2016-17 no lower than 6%.

Contact anyone on the RSAI Leadership or Legislative Leadership Group.