**RSAI Legislative Update
February 14, 2020**

In this February 14, 2020 RSAI Report of the 2020 Legislative Session, find information about:

* **RSAI Priorities: SSA, Transportation and Formula Equity**
* **RSAI Talking Points for 3.75%**
* **Bill Action Including Future Ready Act, Classroom Behavior, Telehealth Counseling, Vouchers and more.**
* **New Bills Introduced**
* **Link to Jan. 23 Report to find Biographical and Contact Information for your Legislators and members of Key Legislative Committees**
* **Advocacy Resources**

Contact us with any questions, feedback or suggestions to better prepare your advocacy work:

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**Find RSAI 2020 Legislative Priorities and Position Papers here:**  <http://www.rsaia.org/2020-legislative-session.html>

**RSAI Priority: State Supplemental Assistance (per pupil cost increase) and Transportation/Formula Equity:** The Senate passed [SF 2142](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=SF%202142), which set 2.1% increase in the cost per pupil. The House amended the Senate version to match the Governor’s Recommendation of 2.5%. Now that the Senate bill has been amended to the 2.5% increase, RSAI has withdrawn our opposition, now registered as undecided. It’s still short of the 3.75% that RSAI requested.

**Check out the FY 2020** [**ISFIS New Authority Report**](https://www.iowaschoolfinance.com/budget_projections)and compare the various proposals at 2.1% and 2.5% with the 3.75% RSAI request. What additional resources would be available to your district? How would your district put those dollars to work for students?

**Adequate Funding Talking Points:** RSAI’s priority for adequate funding calls for 3.75% increase in SSA for FY 2021.

* THANK YOU to all legislators for working on SSA quickly to meet the 30-day deadline (Feb. 14).
* 2.5% SSA does not allow schools to keep pace with cost increases or compete with the private sector for labor, let alone lower class sizes and increase educational opportunities for students. 3.75% is based on economic benchmarks in Iowa including per capita personal income, state GDP, economic forecasts of insurance cost increases and the trend of utility costs over time. Annual increases in the last decade have not been keeping up with inflation or the actual costs schools experience, which are even higher.
* With full reserves and strong surpluses, the choice is pretty clear: it only takes another $50 million to meet the RSAI request of 3.75%. The tradeoff would be $50 million less deposited into the Taxpayer Trust Fund, which isn’t even obligated yet, based on the Governor’s budget recommendation.
* If the Legislature set 3.75%, the ending balance in the TRF would be essentially $199 million instead of $249 million.
* Iowa’s schools statewide spend 62.6% of their General Funds on salaries, 19.6% on employee benefits and the remaining 18% on everything else (utilities, training, textbooks, bus fuel, educational software, assessments, etc.) There is little left to reduce expenditures after 11 years of low increases, but staffing.
* Iowa’s economy has strong Per Capita Personal Income and Gross Domestic Product growth, both of which are good benchmarks to demonstrate why SSA has been short in the last decade. Iowa’s full coffers and growing surpluses are a good indication the state can afford to adequately fund schools.
* Iowa’s 2.6% unemployment rate, one of the best in the nation, puts pressure on all employers to hire qualified staff. Schools are no exception and will not be able to compete with private sector employers if we don’t have adequate SSA. All across the state, it is harder to find bus drivers, support staff, special education teachers, STEM and ELL teachers, and other positions, demonstrating that our schools do not have the resources to be competitive.

**RSAI Priority: Transportation and Formula Equity:** [**SF 2164**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2164) was approved in the Senate and the House agreed, sending it to the Governor. This bill addresses both transportation and formula equity:

* This bill provides funds to reimburse districts for transportation costs above the state average per pupil enrolled ($348 based on the FY 2019 annual transportation report). The bill first continues the current year appropriation, grows it by the SSA rate (either $390,000 at the senate’s 2.1% or $475,000 at the House/Governor’s 2.5%) and then, after reaching the state average, distributes any remaining balance per pupil to all districts.
* The bill also works to close the District and State Cost Per Pupil formula gap by $10 per pupil, to $155. The RSAI priority requested the second provision be accelerated, since in past years, the gap was only closed by $5. This improved pace will close the gap in 16 years rather than 33.

RSAI is registered in support. As you thank legislators for working on student equity issues, this is an opportune time to move student poverty equity to the top of the list. See new bills SF 2222 and HF 2370 below.

**RSAI Bill Registrations**

Two lists follow: **Bill Action and New Bills**. If RSAI Legislative Priorities address our registration, you’ll see a registration already declared as in *support, undecided or opposed*. For those issues not addressed in our legislative platform, we encourage your feedback on what our registration should be, but in the meantime, will indicate a monitoring registration. Actually, we encourage your feedback and questions on any of these bills.

**Bill Action**

* [**SF 2142**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=SF%202142) **SSA Senate’s 2.1%** increase in the State Cost per Pupil: approved on party lines 8:5 in the Senate. See more detail at the beginning of this newsletter. RSAI is now registered as undecided since the House amended the bill to the higher 2.5% amount. The bill is back in the Senate. Iowa Code requires the Legislature and Governor to enact an SSA rate within 30 days of the release of the Governor’s budget, which is February 14.
* [**SF 2164**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LGI/88/SF2164.pdf) **Transportation and Equity Payments**: these bill was approved almost unanimously, 48:0 in the Senate and 98:1 in the House (Rep. Shipley was the lone no vote). The bill continues the prior year appropriation, applies the SSA growth rate to that amount, and appropriates an additional $7.2 million. This amount of funding is estimated to reimburse schools districts with transportation costs per pupil enrolled above the state average, the difference between their actual transportation costs and the state average. Any remaining amount in the fund is then distributed to all school districts prorated on a per student basis. The bill also addresses the foundation formula equity gap by increasing the state cost per pupil base by an additional $10, closing the gap to $155 per pupil. The bill is estimated to cost $5.3 million to raise the base by $10 per pupil, of which $3.6 million is property tax relief. RSAI supports this bill as a legislative priority. The bill is to the Governor.
* [**SF 199**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=SF199) **Equity/Desegregation Plans;** this bill relates to voluntary diversity plans under the state’s open enrollment law. Introduced in the 2019 session, the bill was approved by the Senate Education Committee but never received full consideration in the Senate. The subcommittee met this week, heard testimony from stakeholders including Des Moines Public Schools, and was eventually moved forward on a 2:1 vote.

The bill would prohibit the five districts with Diversity Plans (Davenport, Des Moines, Postville, Waterloo and West Liberty) from being able to regulate open enrollment in and out of the district based on those diversity plans. RSAI is opposed to the bill. It moves next to the full Senate Education Committee.

* [**SF 2066**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2066) **Occupational Therapist for Concussions**: this bill adds occupational therapists to the list of providers who can address concussions to detect during a sporting event or treat and release back into participation. The bill was put forward by ChildServe. The subcommittee moved it forward unanimously to the full Senate Education Committee. RSAI is registered in support.
* [**SF 2190**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2190) **Room Clears** by Education (companion [**HSB 598**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hsb598) by Dolecheck). These bills are in various states of amendment, with the lobby groups working together with both Republican and Democratic legislators to make improvements. Details of the bill:
	+ **Best practice and Training:** Requires the DE to define appropriate and inappropriate responses to behavior, including standards, guidelines and expectations, and requires DE and AEAs to create PD on least restrictive environment and the teacher prep programs to include this content in teacher prep.
	+ **Therapeutic Classroom Grants:** Creates a grant process to fund creation of therapeutic classroom programs. Uses a formula weighting at the upper range of intended slots (for programs intended to serve 1-5 student, weighting of 1.5 X 5; for programs intended to serve 6-10 students, weighting of 1.5 X 10, and for programs intended to serve 11-15 students, weighting of 1.5 X 15). Also creates a process to reimburse for transportation costs to the classroom for public and nonpublic students in such classrooms for whom transportation is not included in an IEP, if over 30 miles. The bill requires school districts to submit claims by June 15 and the DE to provide reimbursement by July. The bill requires the DE to prorate reimbursements if claims exceed appropriated amounts.
	+ **Defines therapeutic classroom** as a classroom designed for the purpose of providing support for any student whose emotional, social or behavioral needs interfere with the student’s ability to be successful in the current educational environment, with or without supports, until the student is able to return to the current education environment, with or without supports, including but not limited to the general education classrooms.
	+ **Softens Least Restrictive Environment Requirements**: changes Iowa code language on LRE to be consistent with federal IDEA law. Iowa Code 256B.2(2)(a) currently requires that to the maximum extent possible, children requiring special education shall attend regular classes and shall be educated with children who do not require special education. The bill strikes “to the maximum extent possible” and replaces it with “consistent with the LRE requirements under IDEA”. The bill also changes the standard from whenever possible to whenever appropriate, that supports for special education students be provided in the inclusive classroom rather than separately.
	+ **Regulates Room Clears:** Prohibits IEPs and behavior intervention plans (BIPs) from requiring room clears to calm the student. Allows room clears only if necessary to prevent or terminate an imminent threat of bodily injury to a student or another person in the classroom. Requires IEPs to be consistent with federal law. Requires parents of the classroom be notified but prohibits identification of students either directly or indirectly involved in the event. Requires the principal to request a meeting with the parent of the student causing the room clear, to meet with the principal, the teachers and other appropriate staff. Allows the classroom teacher to call for and be included in a review of the student’s IEP or BIP.
	+ **Reporting:** Requires a classroom teacher to report any alleged incident of violence or assault to the principal. Requires each school district to report to the DE an annual count of all instances of violence or assault by a student (in a school building, on school grounds or at a school sponsored event) and to report any time a student is referred for the use of or transfer to a therapeutic classroom. Requires reports to comply with FERPA (student records protections). The DE shall require the report include demographic information plus any other data necessary to comply with federal ESSA requirements. The DE is required to submit an annual report to the General Assembly by Nov. 1.
	+ **Immunity Provisions:** provides immunity from civil or criminal liability and whistle-blower protections for school staff (teachers and administrators) who report incidents of violence or assault. Grants an employee immunity from any disciplinary action by the employer or the BOEE imposed as a result of the physical contact. Applies the state’s whistle-blower protections to a teacher or administrator who reports. Allows physical contact to relocate a student who is causing a severe distraction impacting the educational experience of other students, relocating a student who is not responding to verbal or written instructions intended to change the immediate behavior of the student, or relocating the students exhibiting passive resistance behaviors.
	+ **Rules:** requires the state BOE to adopt rules to implement this section and allows for emergency rulemaking, such emergency rules being effective immediately.
	+ **Civil Protection Standard**: to prevail in a disciplinary action alleging a violation of this section or related school policy, requires the party bringing the action shall prove the violation by clear and convincing evidence.
	+ **Appropriations:** $500,000 to DE to develop standards and PD, $1,582,650 for the therapeutic classroom incentive, and $500,000 for transportation claims.

RSAI is registered in support of this bill and continuing to provide input through the process. The full Senate Education Committee voted unanimously for the amendment, but the bill was approved by the Committee on party lines, with 8 Republicans in favor and 5 Democrats opposed. The first subcommittee in the Senate Appropriations Committee met to further improve the bill. The House held its second subcommittee on companion bill HSB 598 and is expected to consider the bill in the full House Education Committee meeting next week.

* [**HSB 647**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hsb647) **Professional Licensing Qualifications** by State Government; this bill strikes specific provisions regarding disqualifications from holding a license on the basis of criminal convictions in many licensing statutes (Chapter 272 BOEE included). The bill also requires licensing boards to grant a professional license to a person from another state who establishes residency in Iowa, currently holds a substantially equivalent license from another jurisdiction, is in good standing regarding the license in prior jurisdictions, completed minimum education work and clinical requirements, passed an examination required in the prior jurisdiction, has not had their license revoked or voluntarily surrendered while under investigation, does not have an investigation pending, has not had discipline imposed unless the issue has been resolved, does not have a complaint, allegation or investigation pending, pays applicable fees, and does not have a qualifying conviction. The bill allows the licensing board to require an examination and submit fingerprints. Prohibits a person from receiving a license under these provisions from being eligible to practice in another state under a licensure compact. The bill is in the House State Government Committee, with a subcommittee recommending it move forward to the full committee. See [SSB 3122](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SSB%203122&ga=88) by the Governor. RSAI supports the concept of reciprocity for licenses, but would prefer the BOEE allow reciprocity from states with more similar standards rather than blanket reciprocity at this higher licensure level, so we are registered as undecided on the bill.
* [**HSB 559**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hsb559) **Teacher Preparation Reports** by Dolecheck (similar to SF 2010): Directs the State BOE to require colleges and universities with teacher preparation programs to report annually on Praxis test scores. The House Education Committee amended the bill to remove the requirement that students applying to the college of education have a minimum test score on the Praxis I to be admitted, but requires those teacher prep programs that administer the pretest to report test scores to the DE. SF 2100 in the Senate is a companion bill. RSAI will change registration to supportive with the addition of the amendment in the full Education Committee.
* [**HSB 576**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=hsb576) **ELL Weighting** by Education**;** this bill establishes two categories for weighting to support students with limited English proficiency into two categories based on students’ scores on the state ELL test. The bill defines both categories and assigns a supplementary weighting of 0.3 to the most struggling English-language learners and a supplementary weighting of 0.25 is assigned to those closer to proficiency. The current weighting for all ELL students is .22. The bill does not change the 5-year limitation of state aid, but also does not limit the ability of districts to request SBRC authority for excess ELL costs above the weighting or for additional time beyond the 5 years. The bill was amended an approved by the House Education Committee and moves to the House Calendar with a new number. RSAI is registered in support.
* [**HSB 644**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hsb644) **Community College Instructors Credentials** by DE; this bill would allow a community college instructor in a career and technical education field to teach, if the instructor has the degree required to work in that field of instruction (the degree is terminal) and the instructor has at least 3,000 hours of recent and relevant work experience in the area that the instructor is teaching. The bill was approved by the subcommittee and moves to the full House Education Committee. RSAI supports it.
* [**HSB 655**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hsb655) **Teacher Supplement Payments** by Education; this bill requires that the school district of residence pay to a receiving school district the TSS (the lesser amount of the receiving district and the district of residence) for open enrolled students. The bill does not require the payment for open-enrolled students in Internet courses. The subcommittee of Reps. Wheeler, Salmon and Mascher met and decided not to move the bill forward. RSAI is registered as undecided.
* [**HF 663**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hf663) **Education Savings Grants** by Gassman; this bill would create an education savings grant program, granting $2,000 to every student in kindergarten entering a private school or competent private instruction (home school) and for students who received such a grant in the prior year. The bill requires the student to be above average proficiency on state tests to continue to receive the grant. Defines allowable education expenses and allows any unspent funds upon graduation from high school is maintained in the student’s account to be used for higher education expenses until age 23, unless the student engages in military duty, preserving the funds for higher education expenses until age 27. RSAI is opposed to this bill. The subcommittee moved it forward on a 2:1 vote, now in the House Education Committee.
* [**HF 2147**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hf2147) **School BEDS Error Correction**s by Education; this bill was amended in the House Education Committee to significantly change it. The bill would allow a district to request the DE director to recognize and certify that an error made during BEDS reporting was an error, then requires the DE to submit certification to the BOEE what the correct reporting should have been, requiring the BOEE to make any necessary licensure adjustments based on the correct information. The bill moves to the House Calendar. RSAI supports it.
* [**HF 2169**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hf2169) **Bleeding Control Content** by Meyer: the subcommittee met on this bill and decided to amend it, rather than requiring each student to take a bleeding control course similar to existing CPR requirements, the bill would instead require the DE to add bleeding control content into the health educational requirements. RSAI was originally concerned about the unfunded mandate of this bill, but would move to undecided with this new plan. The bill is in the House Education Committee.
* [**HF 2192**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=hf2192) **Telehealth Payments** by Human Services; this bill requires health carriers to reimburse health care providers for telehealth services at the same rate as in-person services as of January 2021. The bill defines a student/mental health care provider relationship, protects student records and privacy, and allows the MH practitioner to share information with the school district if there is imminent danger. Approved unanimously in the House Human Services Committee, the bill is now on the House Calendar. A fiscal note was published this week describing the complicated details of private insurance billing and Medicaid reimbursements and can be found on the legislative web site [here](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/FN/1128304.pdf). RSAI supports this bill.
* [**HF 2201**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hf2201) **Sexual Orientation Instruction** by Salmon et al; this bill requires school districts to notify parents and provide instructional materials annual to parents with information about the instructional materials used in the student’s grade level, the procedure for inspecting the materials prior to use, and the process to excuse the student from instruction and receiving any materials. Also requires the school district to make the information about the instruction and any materials available to any organization requesting them, including the procedure for inspection or updating the materials. A Subcommittee of Salmon, Moore and Staed recommended the bill move forward to the full committee 2:1. The bill is in the House Education Committee. Since this would require much administrative work on the part of schools and applies to the entire curriculum, not just health curriculum, RSAI is opposed.
* [**HF 2308**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202308&ga=88) **Open Meeting Subjects** by State Government; the bill defines the content subject to open meetings to include budgetary duties: *“Meeting”* means a gathering in person or by electronic means, formal or informal, of a majority of the members of a governmental body where there is deliberation or action upon any matter within the scope of the governmental body’s policy-making or budgetary duties. Meetings shall not include a gathering of members of a governmental body for purely ministerial or social purposes when there is no discussion of policy or budgetary duties or no intent to avoid the purposes of this chapter. The bill was approved by the House State Government Committee and moves to the House Calendar. RSAI is undecided.
* [**HF 2348**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202384&ga=88) **Future Ready Act** by the Governor: this bill makes changes to the Future Ready Iowa Act. **The Division headers in bold impact K-12 education:**

Division I: Future Ready Iowa Apprenticeship Training Program

Division II: Iowa Child Care Challenge Fund

Division III: Workforce Diploma Pilot Project for adults without HS diploma

**Division IV: Computer Science Instruction**

* Requires high schools will offer at least a one-semester computer science course by July 1, 2021 to meet offer and teach requirements. Allows the course to be offered online.
* Requires middle and elementary schools to offer computer science instruction in at least one grade level each by July 1, 2021, but does not require a pull out or separate course, allowing the content to be embedded in the classroom.
* Requires the DE to develop a K-12 state computer science plan by July 1, 2021.
* Requires school districts/nonpublic schools to develop K-12 computer science plans by July 1, 2021.
* Establishes a computer science work group to recommend how to strengthen computer science instruction and develop a statewide campaign to promote computer science to students.
* Appropriates $500,000/Computer Science PD Incentive Fund.
* Other sources of funding will enhance PD for teachers, providing curriculum and virtual instruction for students (Microsoft Settlement funds are estimated to generate $4.0 million).
* Note from the Governor’s Office: Teachers will not be required to earn endorsements to teach computer science, but will be offered training for teaching courses and integrating computer science into other subjects. Computer science is not a graduation requirement for students, but must be offered at the high school.

**Division V: Supplementary Weighting/Shared Operational Functions**

Adds work-based learning coordinators to positions that can be paid for with operational sharing. A fiscal note has not yet been written to estimate the impact of this additional operational sharing position. Those districts already at the 21 student cap would not be able to access this position unless one of their current shared positions changes.

Division VI: Future Ready Iowa Skilled Workforce Last Dollar Scholarship Program

**Division VII: Senior Year Plus Program and Postsecondary Enrollment Options**

Expands opportunities for high school students to earn college credit without families having to pay tuition by lifting the current annual 23-credit cap for concurrent enrollment. RSAI has expressed concerns about this provision as the supplementary weighting generated by concurrent enrollment does not fully cover the cost paid to the community college, and expects an amendment to limit the full-time option to programs authorized by districts in partnership with community colleges and private industry.

The bill was approved by the House Commerce Committee and moves to the House Calendar. Companion [**SSB 3077**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=ssb3077) is still in the Senate Commerce Committee. RSAI is registered as undecided on the bill, but working with legislators and the Governor’s office to amend the offer and teach requirements regarding online learning to obtain additional flexibility in fully implementing the intentions of this bill and the Senior Year Plus provisions mentioned above. If such amendment is approved, RSAI will change registration to support.

* [**SF 438**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=SF438)**: Elimination of Mandates/Education Omnibus;** this bill was approved in the Senate in the 2019 Session on party lines and is in the House Education Committee. This bill eliminates several mandates on schools and cleans up irrelevant or redundant Code, but does not eliminate authority for school boards and administrators, staff, parents and families, to make decisions regarding the health and welfare of students. A strike-after amendment was considered in the subcommittee meeting on Thursday. Since this bill is a senate file approved last year, it is not subject to the upcoming funnel deadline. We will digest the amendment and report on changes in next week’s report. The bill includes the following provisions before the amendment:
1. Eliminates schools as the middle man for dental and vision screenings, lead testing, etc., reporting. Requires parents of both public and private students to ensure their child is appropriately screened. Allows schools to provide access to screenings. Requires providers who conduct screenings to submit data to DPH. Requires schools to provide information about screenings to parents. Allows DPH to release screening data to schools with parent consent. The implementation of these screening provisions is delayed until July 1, 2020 to allow DPH to set processes in place and request the resources necessary to take on this activity through the normal budget process. The Fiscal Note estimated a cost to the DPH of $1.2 million in the first year and $850,000 in the second year. Page 6 – strikes goal of 1 nurse for every 750 students.
2. Eliminates requirements for schools to use environmentally friendly (green) cleaning products.
3. Eliminates AEA public notice of budget in the newspaper to online with the intent of more appropriately reaching their broader audience not served by one newspaper.
4. Eliminates a requirement for school districts to publish a notice before entering into a loan agreement for an equipment purchase.
5. Eliminates a duplicative provision for loading and unloading buses.
6. Allows a school board to deposit proceeds of the sale of building or school site into any school fund other than the PPEL fund following a public hearing and board action. (about 37 districts for $1.2 million according to testimony to the Subcommittee 4.1.19)
7. Slightly limits reporting requirements around preschool reporting, but maintains the requirement for districts to report preschool experiences of kindergarteners.
8. Allows school districts to charge employees for DHS registry checks not to exceed the actual cost of the checks.
9. Repeals energy audit reporting requirements
10. Eliminates equipment purchase advance public notice.

RSAI is registered in support of the bill. The subcommittee of Wheeler, Dolecheck, Matson, T. Moore, and R. Smith met on Thursday and will continue to discuss the amendment.

* [**SF 2004**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2004) **Online Learning** by Dawson; this bill originally resuscitated ILO with a $500,000 annual appropriation and would have mandated that ILO offer Chinese as a course. A strike-after amendment and discussed changes to the amendment would allow the AEAs to coordinate and offer online learning, require districts that create their own online learning coursework submit that to the DE for confirmation that it aligns to core standards, and corrects a typo in the Iowa Code to allow districts up to two offer and teach courses be allowed online under certain conditions. Requires districts to pay the AEAs for costs of online courses accessed through the AEAs. Although currently registered as undecided, RSAI will likely register in support when we review the entire amendment. The bill is now in the Senate Education Committee.
* [**SF 2082**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=SF2082)**DE Technical Corrections** AKA Education Omnibus bill: this bill eliminates duplicative language in the Iowa Code, and modernizes language, all technical (nonsubstantive) corrections. The bill updates titles of members of the Child Development Coordinating Council, updates language on school district agency funds to name them custodial funds, updates provisions on special education related to open-enrollment and to shared-time provisions, and updates language on electronic access offered by the State Library. A subcommittee of the House Education Committee met this week and recommends the full Education Committee pass the bill. RSAI supports the bill.
* [**SF 2123**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2123) **Education Aid Adjustment** by Nunn: this bill makes a school eligible for an adjustment in state foundation aid if a property value adjustment made on appeal is at least $100,000 (2% of the property value in the district). Requires the property to originally be assessed at more than $5 million. The bill is in the Senate Ways and Means Committee and a subcommittee recommended it move forward. RSAI supports it. See Companion bill HF 2176.
* [**SF 2253**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2253) **Show Choir/Band Exemption** by Education: this bill allows a student in show choir or marching band to be exempt from PE requirements under certain conditions. RSAI is registered in support.
* [**SF 2258**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2258) **Proof of Guardianshi**p by Education: this bill relates to the documentation necessary to enroll a minor student in school. If the student is enrolled by someone in the district, this bill requires the individual to either submit a letter from the minor’s parent authorizing the person to enroll the student or proof of guardianship. The bill is intended to address sex trafficking of students and although well-intended, may have some unintended consequences. We have not yet confirmed that such paperwork must be submitted prior to enrolling and would delay a student’s education or create a barrier for students to enroll in school. RSAI is undecided.
* [**SF 2261**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2261) **Telehealth School Behavioral Services** by Education: this bill authorizes schools and AEAs to offer behavioral health screenings and services through telehealth. Requires insurance or Medicaid to pay the same for such telehealth services as for in-person services. Includes provisions to define appropriate provider/student relationships, communication with the school if there is a threat of danger to others or self, protection of student privacy and communication with parents and the student’s primary care provider. The bill was approved by Senate Education Committee. RSAI is registered in support.
* [**SF 2268**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2268) **Smoking/Vaping Age** by State Government: this bill raises the age for tobacco and vapor products to age 21. RSAI is monitoring this bill.

**New Bills**

[**SF 2206**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2206) **Education Grants** by Carlin; this bill would allow any student who attended a public school designated for comprehensive support and improvement for ESSA purposes for the prior two semesters, or a student who previously received an education grant, equal to 60% of the regular program cost per pupil. The bill sets up a process within the DOM to create each student’s account. If the student is expelled or withdraws from the nonpublic school, the student is no longer eligible for the grant. The bill includes a process for the DOM to recover funds disbursed to the parent if the student is expelled or withdraws from the nonpublic school. RSAI is opposed to this bill. The bill was assigned a subcommittee of Sens. Behn, Rozenboom and Celsi and is in the Senate Education Committee.

[**SF 2207**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2207) **School Bullying** by J. Smith; this bill requires the state BOE to adopt rules regarding district and nonpublic school bullying and harassment reporting, to be reported annually through BEDS and posted on an internet site. Requires the reporting to indicate whether the nature of the incident was electronic, verbal, relational, physical or motivated by bias against a trait or characteristic of a student. Establishes a competitive grant for research-based training contingent on an appropriation of $250,000. Adds social networking sites to the definition of bullying by electronic means. The bill gives school districts authority but does not mandate that they investigate an alleged incident of bullying or harassment that occurs outside of school, off school property, or away from a school function or school-sponsored activity, and permission but not a requirement to refer the matter to appropriate community based agencies including but not limited to social services agencies, law enforcement, and nonprofit agencies. Requires the DE to convene a public-private work group of representatives of state and local agencies, citizens, community groups, and organizations who have experience and expertise in the areas of anti-bullying education, research, and training. The work group, after reviewing existing research, data, and strategies, shall provide recommendations to the DE regarding best practices, training, resources, additional research needs, data collection, changes to state law and administrative rules, and any other matters to enhance statewide school climate improvement and bullying prevention, awareness, and intervention. Specifies the membership of the work group. A report to the Legislature is required by Dec. 13, 2021. RSAI is registered as undecided. The bill is in the Senate Education Committee with a subcommittee of Sens. Sinclair, Behn and J. Smith assigned.

[**SF 2217**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2217) **PK Enrollment** by Quirmbach; this bill sets of a tiered weighting system for PK, maintaining the existing 0.5 weighting for at least 10 but no more than 14 hours a week, increasing the weighting to 0.6 for 14-18 hours weekly, and sets a 0.7 weighting for 18 or more hours of instruction weekly. It applies to school budget years beginning July 1, 2021. RSAI is registered in support. The bill is in the Senate Education Committee.

[**SF 2218**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2218) **ESL Weighting** by Quirmbach; this bill removes the 5-year limitation for state aid associated with ELL students and increases the weighting from 0.22 to 0.3 beginning with July 1, 2021 school year. RSAI supports. The bill is in the Senate Education Committee.

[**SF 2222**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2222) **Poverty Supplemental Aid Study** by Wahls; this bill requires the DE to establish a study committee to consider supplementary weighting for students from low-income families. Specifies the membership of the Committee. Requires a report with recommendations to the General Assembly by January 15, 2021. RSAI is registered in support. The bill is in the Senate Education Committee.

[**SF 2235**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2235) **Dyslexia Specialists and Board** by Behn; this bill requires the State BOE to adopt rules in collaboration with the Iowa Reading Research Center, prescribing standards and procedures for the approval of practitioner prep programs affiliated with the IRRC and that offer prep programs for the advanced dyslexia specialist endorsement issued by the BOEE. The bill prohibits the state BOE from approving practitioner prep programs for such an endorsement if the program is not affiliated with the IRRC. Requires the DE to designate one FTE for a dyslexia consultant and specifies duties and qualifications of the consultant. Creates an Iowa Dyslexia Board to guide, facilitate, and oversee implementation of dyslexia instruction in Iowa and make recommendations for continuous improvement. Specifies areas of recommendations and membership of the board and requires an annual report every November. Requires BOEE, in consultation with the IRRC, to establish an advanced dyslexia specialist endorsement. Requires AEAs, subject to appropriation, to dedicate at least one full-time equivalent position to maintain a dyslexia specialist by July 1, 2024. Absent the appropriation, each AEA is encouraged to employ such a specialist. Requires by July 1, 2024, all AEA employees with a license, certification, statement of recognition, or authorization other than a coaching authorization, issued by the BOEE, to complete the IRRC dyslexia overview module. After that date, all new hires to the AEAs have one year to complete the module. Defines dyslexia. Requires by July 1, 2024, school boards to require all employees with a teaching license or special education endorsement, or PK-3 levels endorsement, to complete the IRRC dyslexia overview module. All such licensed new hires to school districts after July 1, 2024 have one year to complete the module. The bill is in the Senate Education Committee. RSAI would likely support the AEA support and clarity of rules, but is concerned about the unfunded mandate surrounding mandated training, thus registered as undecided.

[**SF 2246**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2246) **Rural Teacher Loans** by Mathis et al; this bill establishes a rural teacher loan forgiveness fund, including definitions of rural areas with high need based on teacher shortage as determined by DE, eligibility for the loans if a student in enrolled in a teacher prep program and maintains a 3.0 GPA, and provides for repayment of the loan at 25% annually for four years if after graduation, the teacher is employed in a rural school district. The bill is in the Senate Education Committee. RSAI supports it.

[**HSB 680**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=HSB%20680) **Deaf Language Acquisition** by Dolecheck; this bill requires the DE to hire an Early Language Development Coordinator and requires the development of tools to assess the language and literacy acquisition skills of young deaf children. Establishes duties of the coordinator, including the development of language milestones. Requires the development of a resources for parents and dissemination of information to parents. Creates an advisory committee. Requires recommendation by July 2021 and annual reports. Similar to HF 2349. RSAI is registered as undecided. The bill is in the House Education Committee.

[**HF 2370**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=hf2370) **Poverty Supplemental Aid Study:** this bill by Matson requires the DE to establish a workgroup to study the creation of a poverty weighing supplement for K-12 education. Specifies membership of the committee, requires the DE to staff the workgroup and requires a report to the General Assembly by Jan. 2021. The bill follows the recommendation of the School Finance Interim Committee which suggested such a study committee. Similar bill [SF 2222](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=88&ba=sf2222), also new this week, is similar. In both versions, RSAI is included to invite a representative to be on the work group. RSAI supports this bill, now in the House Education Committee.

**Connecting with Legislators: See the RSAI Jan. 23, 2020 weekly** [Report](http://nebula.wsimg.com/794dd24bbc0c3bd2c451079c6920a003?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) **for information about legislator biographies, contact information and committee assignments.**

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