## 2018 Draft Legislative Priorities

1. **Transportation Equity:**  Supports a mechanism that covers school transportation costs that does not unreasonably disadvantage property tax payers in property poor districts or compete with general funds otherwise spent on providing education to students. (No change from 2017 Session.)
2. **Equality in the formula:** RSAI supports raising the state cost per pupil to the maximum district cost per pupil in the formula. (No change from 2017 Session.)
3. **State Penny for School Infrastructure Extension:** RSAI calls on the Iowa Legislature to extend or repeal the sunset of the state penny for school infrastructure.   Since voters in Iowa’s 99 counties approved the sales tax for public schools, any change in use of the revenue in the extension should be dedicated to educational purposes only. (No change from 2017 Session.)
4. **Operational Sharing and Reorganization Incentives:** Rural students benefit from opportunities to achieve efficiencies, share capacity to operate, and redirect resources to educational programs. The Operational Sharing Incentives and Reorganization Incentives should be maintained and expanded to provide additional capacity to school districts to improve educational outcomes for students. (New wording)
5. **Funding and Flexibility for At-risk Students:** Resources for serving at-risk students should be based on need, such as the number/percentage of students eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunch, in addition to enrollment of the district. The current disparity in dropout prevention capacity ceiling, with some districts held to 2.5% and others allowed to access up to 5% of regular program district cost is unfair, arbitrary, and based on old history no longer relevant to supporting student needs.  Districts should be given flexibility in determining the expenditure of at-risk resources to support students to graduate college/career ready for success. [(No](http://nebula.wsimg.com/12a1a50fdd56a21498e48279bc620590?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) change from 2017)
6. **State Supplemental Assistance:**  Formula funding is especially critical to students in rural Iowa due to transportation costs, economies of scale, unique needs of students, mandates and compliance, the need for quality AEA services, and the ability to attract and retain staff in rural Iowa. The sustainability of a quality education in rural schools depends on the return of education as the state’s top priority with an investment of meaningful new resources to improve opportunities for students.  The resurrection of this priority will take several years of significant investment making sure that new mandates are funded outside of the formula and not instead of it.​​  [(New](http://nebula.wsimg.com/c15582a0d368a25acebc5ee6ed02153a?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) language)
7. **Quality Instruction for Rural Students:** In order to maintain student access to great teachers, rural school districts require maximum flexibility to meet licensure requirements. RSAI supports district authority to create online alternatives and allow dual enrollment courses to meet offer and teach requirements to ensure students in rural Iowa have access to great instruction and support district compliance with accreditation standards. RSAI also supports reinstatement of the teacher shortage loan forgiveness program and consideration of additional incentives to encourage teachers to work in rural schools.  [(New](http://nebula.wsimg.com/047dab7c1fd347bcc7661e563af7d545?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) language)
8. **Quality Preschool:** RSAI supports full funding of quality preschool.  Due to changing demographics in rural Iowa, significant transportation costs, and lack of quality day care access, quality preschool for three- and four-year olds should be fully funded. Preschool students should be included in the regular student count at 1.0 per pupil cost. [(No](http://nebula.wsimg.com/2d523bb533d59ae9a709f208d385f73b?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) change from 2017)