**RSAI Legislative Update   
Mar. 16, 2018**

These updates are posted on the RSAI legislative web page at <http://www.rsaia.org/legislative.html>. Due to high volume of bills this funnel week, we will not have a weekly video update.

This update includes news about many smaller policy bills impacting rural school districts, but among them two RSAI priorities of assessment and flexibility. Other priorities, SAVE extension and Operational Sharing extension are waiting in the wings. This weekend, thank your legislators for forward progress on many of these priorities, and specifically mention SAVE extension and operational sharing. Let us know if you need assistance with any of your advocacy work. Thanks for all you do to advocate for Iowa’s children. [margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com](mailto:margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com)

[**HF 2438**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202438&ga=87) **and** [**SF 2216**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2216) **SAVE Extension:** these identical bills have received positive subcommittee recommendation to move forward to the full House and Senate Ways and Means Committees respectively, with amendment language in the works. We have expressed concern that all Revenue Purpose Statements are required to expire in 2023, yet 2/3rds of districts have current expiration dates of 2029. We are hearing there is support to eliminate the proposed increase in the Certification of Need threshold to 350 students in a district, (current law requires the CON for districts with enrollment below 250 students enrolled). We appreciate this legislative support to protect small schools from further hurdles. See the March 1 report for policy details in the bill. RSAI supports the extension of the state penny for another 20 years and appreciates the collaborative process underway. Continue to contact your legislators, both House and Senate, encouraging their support of the extension. An updated position paper has been posted on the RSAI web site [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/05618c1a553cb9c963e254aba92cffbb?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1). It includes specific references to SAVE fund for school safety and addition of the FY 2017 number of school bond issue elections, which shows the continued increase in property taxes as the window to bond against the existing sales tax is closing. RSAI is registered in favor.

[**HF 633**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf633) **Operational Sharing Incentives Extension,** a priority for RSAI, is STILL sitting in the Senate Appropriations Committee, likely not moving until deappropriations differences between the House and Senate for 2018 are resolved. Some concerns were raised this week about the future of this bill. However, Sen. Kraayenbrink, floor manager of the bill, mentioned in the Senate Education Committee, their intent to finish work on this bill. Call your senator and explain its importance. RSAI supports this bill. A position paper with talking points, background and fiscal impact is found [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/6a2c1097022a45a9a169ec2796f226a4?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1).

[**HF 2441**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF2441) **District Flexibility:** this bill requires DE guidance to follow statute or administrative rules, removes the DE from the process of approving district dropout prevention plans, requires school boards to approve local dropout prevention plans, sets up a process for the SBRC to approve modified supplemental amount for districts to fund their plans, expands the use of DoP funds for staff including but not limited to an expanded list (adds administrators, mental health and social workers, etc.), adds a provision that DoP can be spent on anything that the board determines directly benefits the needs of students participating in the program, and adds school security personnel as an allowable expense. The bill also allows early intervention and class size funds to be used for any general fund purpose. The bill also allows general funds to be transferred to the student activity fund to recondition safety equipment (for any year beginning or after July 1, 2016). The bill allows transfer of excess funds in a before and after school program account to the flexibility fund based on board resolution and requires a public hearing and some process. The bill specifies that items purchased by the HSAP may be used for other purposes in the district as long as they remain available for HSAP use. The bill also removes a 5-year limitation on lease of school property to other entities. This bill was approved by the Senate Education Committee and moves to the Senate Calendar with a technical amendment to conform required dates to the SBRC timeline, which DE requested in order to make this process workable and easier for school districts. RSAI is registered in support of the bill and the amendment.

[**HF 2235**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF2235) **State Assessment**: this bill mandates use of Iowa Tests (next iteration, so Next Generation test) for our state assessment. The bill was amended and approved by the Senate this week, on a vote of 33:16. RSAI is opposed, concerned that the Next Generation Iowa Tests have not yet been confirmed to align to Iowa Core standards. Without such alignment, Iowa’s state ESSA plan is at risk of failing peer review, placing $96 million in Title I funds on the line. We remain unsure if AIR will sue the state for failure to award the RFP that picked their product as best meeting the required criteria. However, the amendment does restore provisions of SF 240 RFP requirements for summative assessment in the school year beginning July 1, 2018, requiring the Iowa Tests to:

* Assess mathematics and English Language Arts for grades 3-11, including reading and writing, and science for all students in grades 5, 8, and 10, in the last quarter of the school year.
* Assess the Iowa Core standards in both content and rigor
* Accurately describe student achievement and growth for school, district and state accountability systems
* Provide valid, reliable and fair measure of student progress toward college and career readiness
* Meet the summative assessment requirements of ESSA
* Be available for both computer and pencil/paper formats (math, science, ELA – both reading and writing)
* Requires peer review by an independent third-party evaluator to confirm alignment and the ability to meet the above requirements
* Requires Iowa Testing to make any adjustments necessary to meet the requirements if peer review finds the tests lacking

The amendment does not require that the test be computer adaptive. This bill goes back to the House Calendar. See last week’s [RSAI Call to Action](http://nebula.wsimg.com/3ab57ba1b67eadeff3815df30d7a43ac?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) for talking points and background and let us know if you believe the amendment addresses those concerns to your satisfaction.

**Funnel Survivors: Senate Files that met the deadline**

[**SF 2113**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2311) **Suicide Prevention Training:** this bill originally required one hour of training with licensure renewal for certified staff regarding suicide prevention. The House amended and approved the bill, which eliminates the Senate provisions and instead requires one hour of training annually for all licensed school personnel to include both prevention and adverse childhood experiences and crisis (ACEC) identification and intervention. RSAI is registered as undecided. The bill goes back to the Senate.

[**SF 2311**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2311) **Utility Matters:** this bill was amended through the Senate process to eliminate the solar provisions and requires an opt out of energy efficiency programs rather than an opt in. It was approved by the House Commerce Committee this week. The bill eliminates rebates, allows consumers to opt out of energy efficiency programs, and is estimated by the Office of the Consumer Advocate to increase the costs of energy for Iowans. Business and technology entities, including Google, Microsoft and Apple, local governments and others are registered opposed, along with others concerned about the impact, including RSAI and UEN.

[**SF 2318**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2318) **High School Credits:** this bill requires credit if a student completes a course at any level that is high school credit in the public school and allows the district to award credit from a course with a licensed teacher not employed by the district (another public district or private school or from another state). The House Education Committee moved this bill forward to the House Calendar.

[**SF 2324**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2324) **Pickups as School Vehicles:** this bill requires the DE to adopt rules to allow pick-ups under 10,000 pounds, carrying fewer than 9 passengers, to quality as Type III school buses. The bill requires all passengers to wear seatbelts and prohibits passengers from riding in the bed of the truck. The bill includes rules on passenger vans. Approved by the House Transportation Committee. RSAI is registered as undecided.

[**SF 2364**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2364) **School Security Plans:** this bill requires schools to work with local law enforcement and consider DE recommendations in planning plan emergency operations, including consideration of active shooter and natural disaster scenarios. The bill requires the plans to be in place by July 1, 2019, and requires the plans be of high quality including consultation provisions and notification of employees and other people in school buildings. The bill exempts the details of the plans from public records requirements. The bill requires district-wide plans and applies the requirement to nonpublic schools. The bill also requires that the school board review the plan annually and requires all school personnel conduct at least once per school year an emergency operations drill based on the emergency plan in each attendance center. Students may participate in the drill. The House Education Committee approved the bill. RSAI is registered in favor.

[**SF 2360**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2360) **Dyslexia Task Force:** this bill requires the DE to convene a Dyslexia Task Force to make findings and recommendations for legislation or administrative rules changes and make recommendations for specific role groups. The Task Force is required to consider but is not limited to student screening, interventions, teacher preparation and professional development, classroom accommodation and assistive technology. The report is due to the Governor and General Assembly by Nov. 15, 2019. RSAI is registered as undecided.

**Funnel Survivors: House Files that met the deadline**

[**HF 648**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf648) **CTE Corrections:** this bill, approved in the House in the 2017 Session, was approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee. The bill restored deleted references, deems funds received by schools as miscellaneous income, allows the Career and Technical Education Regional Partnership to purchase supplies rather than reimburse schools for the purchase. RSAI is registered in support. The bill is on the Senate Calendar.

[**HF 2252**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LGI/87/HF2252.pdf) **Secretary of State Elections:** although this bill addresses many election issues not impacting schools, one provision is technical cleanup regarding the December special election, changing the date from the first to the second Tuesday in December of the even-numbered year. This is to avoid conflict with other local special elections. RSAI is monitoring the bill. The bill was approved by the Senate State Government Committee, so moves to the Senate Calendar.

[**HF 2253**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2253) **Lease Purchase Bids:** this bill requires that construction projects and improvements that are built by a private contractor under a lease or a lease-purchase contract with the state, local government, community college or Regents university be subject to competitive bidding law in the same manner that a public project is subject to competitive bidding. The bill includes an exemption for TIF projects. The bill was approved by the Senate State Government Committee and moves to the Senate Calendar. RSAI is registered as undecided.

[**HF 2276**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2276) **Sex Offenders on School Grounds:** this bill requires permission from the school principal for a sex offender on the registry to be on school property or school grounds. Current law only applies to sex offenders convicted of crimes against children. This bill expands the requirement to all sex offenders. RSAI is registered as undecided. The bill was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee and moves to the Senate Calendar.

[**HF 2280**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2280) **Praxis Tests:** this bill eliminates the requirement that a teacher score on the praxis test above the 25th percentile in order to be an Iowa licensed teacher. The bill applies retroactively to 2013, the first year that the Praxis requirement was in effect. The Senate Education Committee approved the bill and stated their intention to amend it to the Senate version, which would create a one-year waiver for a teacher with an Iowa job to pass the Praxis and a change to a cut score rather than a percentile ranking. RSAI is in favor of this bill.

[**HF 2354**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2354) **Student Information Protections:** this bill restricts third parties/vendors which receive K-12 student data from using that data to target marketing. The bill allows some limited uses, including improving educational opportunities, and includes restrictions on selling or disclosing the information. The Senate Education Committee approved the bill. RSAI is monitoring it.

[**HF 2369**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2369) **Limited Bond Election Dates**: this bill requires that elections to authorize bonds or local option taxes be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. It is effective for elections after January 2019. The Senate State Government Committee approved the bill. As this would restrict when schools could hold elections regarding bonding, likely bidding up construction costs, RSAI is opposed.

[**HF 2406**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=HF2406) **Social Workers Shared Weighting:** this bill allows school districts to share a licensed social worker and generate the equivalent of 3 students in operational shared weighting. The Senate Education Committee approved the bill. RSAI is in favor.

[**HF 2442**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF2442) **High School Collision Sports:** this bill requires DPH and the high school athletic associations to work together to develop training materials on concussions/BI. It requires coaches and referees to complete such training every two years. It also requires the development of information sheets for parents and guardians. The bill requires officials, coaches and/or a health professional remove a student from a contest if the student shows any sign of brain injury. The bill further requires the DPH, DE and the HS associations to develop return to play/return to learn protocols and requires school boards to adopt them for contests in grades 7-12. The bill requires districts to provide protective gear needed to participate in the contest (helmets, pads, etc.) The bill includes liability protections for schools that fully implement the protocols required and that have a licensed health care provider at contests (also provides liability protection for the HC provider if they are serving in a volunteer capacity.) Although RSAI leaders are concerned about student safety, the protocols are an unknown entity. We are not sure of the cost of implementing and concerned about the requirement for a health care professional to be at the contests when such positions may not be available to rural school districts. The bill was passed by the Senate Education Committee but Sen. Sinclair stated her intent to entertain amendments to minimize negative impact on schools, especially rural schools. RSAI is registered opposed

[**HF 2390**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2390) **World Languages:** this bill adds American Sign Language to the list of languages and changes Iowa Code references from foreign language to world languages throughout the Code. RSAI is registered in favor. The bill was approved by the Senate Education Committee.

[**HF 2467**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2467) **School Meals and Lunch Shaming:** this bill allows schools to use money from Flex accounts to pay for student meal debt. The bill requires schools to notify parents at least twice a year, and if the student has five unpaid lunches, may notify them of free and reduced price lunch application. The bill encourages schools to offer students reimbursable lunches unless the parent authorizes withholding lunch. The bill requires schools, if practicable, to determine at the beginning of a lunch line whether a student has funds for a lunch, and prior to the replacement or disposal of a lunch. The bill prohibits posting lists of students who cannot pay for lunch or otherwise shaming or identifying those students or prohibiting the students from various school activities. The bill allows school districts to use the Setoff procedures through the Iowa Department of Revenue to collect debts over $500 that are more than two years old. RSAI was originally registered opposed, but as much of the mandated requirements became permissive through House action, RSAI is now registered as undecided. The bill was approved by the Senate Education Committee and is now on the Senate Calendar.

**Bills to the Governor:**

[HF 2283](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2283): Teacher Licensure Expirations for Beginning teachers to coincide with school year rather than birth date.

[HF 2196](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2196): Commercial Texting While Driving prohibited except in emergency situations.

**Bills that died due to the Funnel:** a few noteworthy mentions of the 128 bills still in the Education Committee of the House and 78 bills in the Senate Education Committee follows.

[SF 2367](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2367) **School District Residency for Military Children**

[SF 2359](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2359) **School Diversity Plans**

[SF 2341](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=SF%202341) **Mandated Civics Exam for High School Graduation**

[SF 2274](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=sf2274) **Requiring DE to site code references in data collection reports**

[SF 2137](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=sf2137) **Extended school bus times**

[SF 2283](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=sf2283) **AEA Consolidation**

[SF 2063](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=sf2063) **and** [SF 2064](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=sf2064) **School Start Date Changes**

[HF 2398](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=hf2398) **TLC Instructional Rubrics**

**Bills exempt from the Funnel:**

[HF 633](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf633) Operational Sharing Incentives Extension. RSAI supports.

[HSB 678](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hsb678) and [SF 2081](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2081) Commercial and Industrial Property Tax Backfill Phase-out: See last week’s report for details. RSAI is registered as undecided.

[SF 2382](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2382) Senate Tax Reform Package is in the House Ways and Means Committee. RSAI is registered opposed.

[HSB 671](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HSB%20671) Governor’s Tax Reform Package is in the House Ways and Means Committee. RSAI registration is pending analysis of a fiscal note yet to be published.

[HF 2438](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202438&ga=87) and [SF 2216](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2216) SAVE Extension: RSAI is registered in support of both.

**Advocacy Actions this week:**

Senate Switchboard # 515.281.3371

House Switchboard # 515.281.3221

From links above or the legislative page <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators> , find email addresses, home mailing address and home/work phone numbers for you legislators.

* Thank all senators, representatives and the governor for addressing the transportation and formula inequalities for school districts through SF 455. Include a thank you for setting 1% SSA at a time when the state budget is challenging.
* Contact senators stressing the need to extend the operational sharing incentives, an RSAI priority, by moving HF 633 out of the Senate Appropriations Committee and getting approved and sent to the governor. This is an RSAI priority. See the RSAI position paper for background and talking points [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/6a2c1097022a45a9a169ec2796f226a4?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1).
* Continue State penny extension advocacy. Remind all legislators that extending the penny is critical to solve your infrastructure, school safety, equipment and technology needs without raising property taxes. An updated position paper has been posted on the RSAI web site [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/05618c1a553cb9c963e254aba92cffbb?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1). Shore up members of the Ways and Means Committees to support the bill and move it out of committee. See if your legislators are on these committees. [House Ways and Means Committee Membership](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=683) [Senate Ways and Means Committee Membership](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=692)
* Contact senators and ask for them to oppose HF 2369 which limits school bond elections to the November election, rather than during the school special elections throughout the year.
* Connect one parent in your district to Parents for Great Iowa Schools. <https://p4gis.org/> They are helping parents find their advocacy strength in prioritizing public schools, both in terms of funding and state policy.

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