



Feb. 20, 2015

RSAI Call to Action

State Cost per Pupil Must Be Adequate and Set Timely In the 2015 Legislative Session

The Issue: The Legislature should follow the law which requires setting the cost per pupil within 30 days of today's release of the Governor's budget. RSAI is calling for immediate action this Session to set the per pupil cost for FY 2015-16 ASAP, no lower than 6%, and the per pupil cost for FY 2016-17 by Feb. 12, 2015, no lower than 6%. They are late. Timing is critical, but so is the amount of funding. Continue contacts to legislators through the next week.

Update this week: The House Education Committee amended the Senate bills on school funding, setting a 1.25% increase for regular program and categorical funds for FY 2016. The amendments were approved on a party line vote in committee with all republicans in favor and all democrats opposed. [SF 171](#) Sets state cost per pupil increase at 4% for FY 2016 (RSAI supports Senate 4%.) [SF 172](#) Sets categorical increase at 4% for FY 2016 (RSAI supports Senate 4%.)

TALKING POINTS: This Legislature must set the 2015-16 cost per pupil at 6%.

- Iowa ranks 35th in the nation in per pupil funding, \$1,612 below the national average per student in expenditures. In the 44-year history of the formula, in only two instances has the per pupil increase been lower than the House recommendation. World-class schools take something more than third-rate funding.
- Iowa's economy is strong, state coffers are full. Although we can never be certain about the future, we are certainly well positioned to sustain any significant economic challenge in the next several years. Iowa ranks 9th in the nation in reserve funds on hand, has the 12th highest growth rate in gross domestic product nationally, and ranks 9th in growth of per capita personal income nationwide.
- Increased costs typically run 3-3.5% annually, just to keep doing the business of school, such as keeping on the lights, meeting expectations in the Iowa core curriculum, paying staff, covering increased costs of insurance, transportation, retirement, books, technology and programs.

Virtual petition on adequate school funding: share this link with others in your school district or other Iowans you know supportive of funding education. <https://www.change.org/p/the-iowa-legislature-provide-adequate-funding-for-iowa-s-public-schools?>

Write a letter to your local newspaper explaining the information above in this call to action or share details from any of the education coalition funding facts of the week.

Parents, grandparents, staff and neighbors, you can help!

Call or email Gov. Branstad and Lt. Gov. Reynolds and your legislators and leave a message that schools need sufficient school funding, at least 6% per pupil, determined this session.

Office of the Governor: State Capitol | 1007 East Grand Ave. | Des Moines, Iowa 50319, Phone: 515.281.5211 | [Contact Us](#) (<https://governor.iowa.gov/contact/>)

- Find your legislator's contact information: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/Legislators/find.aspx>
- Email your legislators. firstname.lastname@legis.iowa.gov
- Call the House Switchboard. Leave a message for your representative at 515.281.3221
- Call the Senate Switchboard. Leave a message for your senator at 515.281.3371

RSAI Leadership Group: Brad Breon, Moravia/Seymour, Superintendent, brad.breon@rsaia.org; Gregg Cruickshank, Sidney/South Page, Supt, gregg.cruickshank@rsaia.org; Joel Davis, Coon-Rapids- Bayard, Board President, joel.davis@rsaia.org; Kevin Fiene, I-35, Superintendent, kevin.fiene@rsaia.org; Lee Ann Grimley, Springville, Board President, leeann.grimley@rsaia.org; Robert Olson, Clarion-Goldfield/Dows, Superintendent, robert.olson@rsaia.org; Brian Rodenberg, Midland, Superintendent, brian.rodenberg@rsaia.org