



## 2022 RSAI Legislative Priorities

**Adequate School Resources:** the increase in SSA should be no lower than 3.75% in FY 2023 due to abundant state surplus, maintain balanced state and local resources, be predictable, and assure adequate time for budget planning and staffing.

**Educator Shortage and Quality Instruction:** maximum flexibility to hire staff to provide great instruction, including several strategies to attract and retain quality staff; flexibility to meet offer and teach requirements, loan forgiveness programs, a special education generalist credential, creation of a Public Service CTE strand, hire retirees without IPERS impact, and elimination of barriers to licensure.

**Local School Board Authority:** locally elected leaders closest to the community are in the best position to determine the interest of students, staff and stakeholders. District leaders need maximum flexibility to provide a great education to all students. The Legislature, the Executive Branch and the courts should follow Iowa Code 274.3 and liberally construe statute to effectuate local control.

**Quality Preschool:** funding of quality PK at the 1.0 per pupil cost for full time or prorated proportionally and formula protections against budget and program impacts of PK enrollment swings (budget guarantee/on-time spending authority).

**Opportunity Equity:** resources based on at-risk need, in addition to enrollment. All school boards should have 5% dropout prevention funding. School districts should be granted spending authority for FRPL waived fees and Iowa should study the impact of poverty on educational outcomes.

**Sharing Incentives/Efficiencies:** extension of Whole Grade Sharing, Reorganization and Operational Sharing Incentives. The 21-student cap should expand to allow access to any new flexibility. Weightings should be sufficient to encourage and support sharing opportunities.

**Assessing and Addressing Staff/Student Social, Emotional and Behavioral Health:** access to funded mental health services for children and supports for staff. Address the shortage of mental health professionals and provide resources over the next two years for local districts to train school staff based on a local needs and community capacity to collaborate for a collective solution.

**Formula and Transportation Equity:** formula equity, closing the state and district per pupil gap within ten years and continued transportation equity support without burdensome reporting requirements.

**Internet Connectivity and Access:** expanded access to high-speed Internet for all Iowans including incentives, investments, and creative solutions to close the technology gap for students, businesses and community members in rural Iowa. Low income should not be a barrier to internet access.

(As approved by RSAI membership at the Annual Meeting on Oct. 26, 2021 and the Leadership Group on Nov, 19, 2021)