**CALL TO ACTION**

**School Funding Action & Advocacy**

**February 11, 2025**

**Senate Action:** The Senate approved SF 167 this morning, setting a 2% increase in the State Supplementary Assistance (SSA) rate. The bill moves to the House. A [Fiscal Note](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/FN/1521299.pdf) was published, stating that the cost to property taxes of the 2% is an increase of $58.2 million (3.33%) which includes a total of $25 million in budget guarantee property taxes, with 159 school districts on the budget guarantee at this level. It also stated the cost to the state is estimated to be $3.937 billion, an increase of $148.9 million (3.93%) which includes $49 million for additional Teacher Salary Supplement (TSS) to meet increased teacher salary minimums. *(Note: the Fiscal Note did not assume continuation of the AEA cuts from prior years. If they continue those cuts, which the Governor recommended in her budget, the total state investment will be $107 million, rather than the $148.9 million estimated in the fiscal note.)*

**House Action:** This afternoon, the House Appropriations Committee approved [HSB138](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LGI/91/HSB138.pdf), which is the House school funding proposal for SSA, now renumbered as [HF319](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%20319&ga=91). In addition to a slightly higher 2.25% SSA rate, the House proposal also includes several other investments:

* Increases the State Cost Per Pupil (SCPP) base by $10, to close the gap in SCPP and District Cost Per Pupil (DCPP), narrowing the current $140 difference to $130. For those districts above with higher DCPP, the $10 will provide property tax relief.
* Raises the Operational Sharing Cap from 21 to 25 pupils.
* Increases the Transportation Equity Fund, total amount appropriated to make all equity aid payments to cover the shortfall to get to the statewide average.
* Additional supplement of $22,591,274 for use by school districts for any general fund purpose, considered as miscellaneous income. The funding is prorated per pupil to school districts and is effective for the July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 school year (one-time, not ongoing).

House Democrats have called for a public hearing, which is scheduled for Thursday morning at 11:00 a.m. With challenging weather ahead, we are not encouraging people to travel to the Statehouse on Thursday morning, but if you click on the Signup Link below, you can leave written comments which go into the record of the Public Hearing.

02/13/2025 11:00 AM [Public Hearing](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/publicHearings) RM 103 [Signup for HF 319](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/publicHearings?meetingID=39697&action=viewOnlineSignup)

RSAI is registered in support of HF 319. The total amount of funding exceeds the current inflation rate, which is a benchmark in your funding priority. Although the House level is not enough to make up for a decade and a half of low funding, it is the highest offer on the table and has something for every district. We encourage members to submit a short note of appreciation for the House package, including a sentence or two about any of the following that are important to you and your students:

* what the 2.25% will mean for your district
* appreciation for the additional TSS funding
* if your district receives transportation equity funding, mention specific support
* if your district is at the state cost per pupil, explain the value of $10 per student more through your system
* if your district benefits from operational sharing, share your support of raising the cap to 25 students.
* if your district has a higher DCPP, let them know your taxpayers will appreciate the state picking that up, rather than paying for the $10 per student locally.

Encourage them to get this decision done quickly, as school districts have to submit their first budget notice to the county by March 5.

Also, send an email, text or note to your Representatives encouraging their yes vote on the House School Funding Package and a note to your Senators asking them to agree with the higher school investments from the House when it gets to them.

Submit your Public Comments here: [Signup for HF 319](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/publicHearings?meetingID=39697&action=viewOnlineSignup)

Find your Representatives here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/house>

Find your Senators here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/senate>