



RSAI 2025 Legislative Priority: Operational Sharing Incentives & Efficiencies

Background: Operational function sharing is an incentive for districts and AEAs to reduce costs and expand services by sharing specified personnel. The weighting is equal to the regular program district cost multiplied by the number of students assigned to each position. The maximum number of additional weighting allowed regardless of the number of positions shared is 21 students, although the college and career transition coordinator weighting is exempt from the cap (a district could effectively generate 23 students’ worth of supplementary weighting if sharing that position). The legislature gave districts authority to share additional positions, but also reduced associated weighting (funding) for all positions in place in 2023, except for the superintendent position was increased by one student weighting. HF 68 School Choice and Education Policies, enacted in the 2023 Session, extended the sunset of the operational sharing incentives statute to the end of the 2034-35 school year. The last year schools would receive funding would be FY 2036 unless a future General Assembly acts to extend the weighting. The most recent DE [guidance](#) is dated October 2024.

Current Reality: For positions to be funded in the 2025-26 budget, the sharing agreements must have been in place and reported on the Oct. 1, 2024 BEDS enrollment. The positions and corresponding weightings are included in the following table:

Position Qualifying for Operational Sharing	FY 2022 Weighting in pupils	FY 2023 + Weighting in pupils
Superintendent management	8	9
Business management, human resources management, transportation management, operations and maintenance management	5	4
Curriculum director, master social worker, independent social worker, school counselor, special education director, mental health professional w/statement of professional recognition by BOEE, school resources officer (SRO)	3	2
Total of weighting for all positions:	55	43
Weighting Cap (Maximum a district can receive for all of the above combined sharing arrangements): \$7,826 per student X 21 students = cap of \$164,346 funding	21	21
College and career transition counselor/coordinator (weighting is exempt from 21-student cap) \$7,826 per student X 2 students = \$15,652 above the cap	3	2

Financial Impact: For FY 2024, a total weighting equivalent to 3,906 students, or \$29.8 million, was generated through operational sharing for 290 school districts. Six of Iowa’s AEAs also generated operational sharing weighting in the FY 2024 school year (AEA operational funding generates a minimum of \$30,000 and a maximum of \$200,000 per AEA).

Sharing Requirements: Positions must be shared for at least 20% of the normal, full-time contract hours for the position in the school year in each district or AEA requesting the supplementary weighting for sharing. The final year in which a supplementary weighting may be requested through the October 1 enrollment count (Fall BEDS) for this purpose is no later than the school year that begins July 1, 2035, unless extended by a future legislature. The Iowa Legislature sets the state cost per pupil and the Iowa Dept. of Management (DOM) includes the per pupil costs and weightings in the districts' Aid and Levy worksheets. DOM also sets the per pupil amount in the AEA budgets.

Other Sharing Partners: Districts and AEAs may share personnel with any Iowa governmental subdivision in addition to other districts and AEAs. If the district shares with a city or community college for example, and the district meets the minimum time of operational sharing (at least 20% FTE), then the district may include the related enrollment weighting in their Fall BEDS enrollment report to generate supplementary weighting. Other political subdivisions do not generate weighting for their part of the sharing. Only schools and AEAs qualify for the supplementary weighting. "Political subdivision" is defined in Iowa Code [257.11 subsection 5](#): as "a city, township, county, school corporation, merged area, area education agency, institution governed by the state board of regents, or any other governmental subdivision."

Funds generated through operational sharing are not required to be reported distinctly or expenditures accounted for in a separate fund. The DE rules specify that "additional funds provided through supplementary weighting for operational function sharing shall be used to increase student opportunities."

Operational Sharing Incentives

Operational Sharing Incentives should continue and be increased. The 21-student cap should be increased to allow access to new flexibility. Weightings should be sufficient to encourage and support sharing opportunities, with a 3-student weighting at a minimum per position. Reductions in weightings should be restored and/or additional weighting provided for districts to flexibly support critical positions.

The addition of new positions over the last few years, such as mental health counselors, work-based learning coordinators and school resource officers, demonstrates the value of continued sharing incentives for both efficiency and student opportunity. With recent significant pressures on schools for technology data protection and cybersecurity, an additional position of technology director should generate supplementary weighting within this program.

Some positions, such as those to address mental health or school safety, and expanded sharing options with AEA staff to replace services stressed by economies of scale and AEA restructuring, should be exempted from the cap (following the 2024 precedent, which exempted work-based learning coordinators from the cap).