**RSAI Legislative Update
Mar. 30, 2017**

**Highlights of this week’s action:** Funnel Week!! Bills had to clear the other chamber’s committee by March 31 (Senate bills out of House committee and vice versa) and many bills impacting RSAI members did just that. Gov. Branstad releases his revised budget to stay within the REC estimates for FY 2018. Some key RSAI priorities remain stuck in appropriations and ways and means committee, pending budget action. Flexibility bills continue forward progress.

**Advocacy Opportunities:**

* Keep talking to House Way and Means Committee members and all legislative leaders regarding extension of the State Penny. See HF 230 below.
* House Appropriations Committee members and all legislative leaders need reminders of the impact of transportation/formula equality and operational sharing incentives, but stuck in House Appropriations Committee. See SF 455 and HF 508 below.

**RSAI Website:** Legislative tab contains weekly reports, position papers, and other information to assist your advocacy efforts. **<http://www.rsaia.org/>**

**State Budget**

Gov. Branstad releases his revised budget, cutting another $173.3 million from the FY 2018 budget recommendation to comply with new REC estimates.

* **School Foundation Aid is** $3,183.7 million (reduction of $38 million from prior governor’s recommendation, but that’s because he recommended 2% and the legislature passed 1.11%, so that is not a reduction to what was already established. This number looks like continues the AEA cut of $15 million.) Governor recommends 2% SSA for FY 2019.
* **Community Colleges**: Actual 2016 $201.3 million. Revised FY 2017 is $199.5 million. The Governor’s revised recommendation lowers FY 2018 to $198.3 million.
* Eliminates $962K for **AEAs** (Iowa Core implementation)
* Delays $3.5 million for **DE’s Reading Coaching and Professional Learning** initiative
* Cuts **Regents** Universities $2.5 million more ($17 million lower than FY 2016 actuals)
* Delays **Medicaid** cost increases ($1.385B for FY 2016 Actuals, $1.286B revised FY 2018, FY 2019 recommends $1.414B) Governor saying that feds will absorb most of the privatized Medicaid shortfall, all but $10 million state dollars. Medicaid federal match rate also increases slightly, savings an additional $40 million that would otherwise be state dollars in FY 2019.

**Stuck Bills: Advocate at forums, call your legislators, send letters and emails on the following RSAI priorities:**

[**HF 230**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF230) **SAVE Extension still holding in House Ways and Means:**  this bill extends the SAVE sunset from 2029 to Jan. 1, 2050. See the RSAI web site for a position statement regarding the priority of extending the sunset and talk to House Ways and Means Committee members about moving this bill forward. Position Paper is found here: [Position paper found here.](http://nebula.wsimg.com/c6f25fa52d9da14421dfe628662fe880?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1)

##### House Ways and Means Members: find links to email addresses here. <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=683>

[**SF 455**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf455) **Formula and Transportation Equity:** the bill includes a 10-year phase-in to eliminate the $175 difference in the district and state costs per pupil and 10-year phase in to fund school transportation supplementary weighting, also over 10 years. Formula Equality  [Position paper found here.](http://nebula.wsimg.com/24a0782c18a63aa6bad9f17f7d35ed4d?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) Transportation  [Position paper found here.](http://nebula.wsimg.com/52c2d2006addab7f4b2beced93116fe5?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1)

[**SF 508**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=hf508) **Operational Sharing Incentives:** the bill eliminates the sunset of the sharing incentives and removes the 5-year limitation on sharing any single position. This is a priority for RSAI. [Position paper found here.](http://nebula.wsimg.com/0725ced1d1e69018cbaaa8618a8f1c2f?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1)

These two bills are priorities for RSAI members. Both are still in House Appropriations Committee, apparently flummoxed by the REC estimate and budget constraints. Please reach out to your representatives on this committee and reiterate the urgency of continuing the operational sharing incentives and beginning the work of closing these equity gaps in the formula and in transportation funding now.

House Appropriations Members: **find links to email addresses here.** <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=695>

**Here’s the latest activity on other bills of interest to RSAI members:**

[**HF 564**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF%20564) **Categorical Flexibility.** This bill expands allowable uses of several categorical funds. See last week’s report for details of the bill. It was approved unanimously in Senate Education Committee on Wednesday of this week, so survives the funnel deadline. RSAI is registered in support.

[**HF 565**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF565&ga=87) **Education Flex Account:** This bill allows districts to access certain categorical funds ending balances beginning June 30, 2018. See last week’s report for details of the bill. It was approved unanimously in Senate Education Committee on Wednesday of this week, so survives the funnel deadline. RSAI is registered in support.

[**HF 566**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF566) **Combining Election Dates:** This bill moves school elections to the same day as city elections, in November of the odd-numbered year. The fiscal note states that the bill may not lower election costs to schools, but may increase voter turnout. The bill is on the Senate State Government Agenda for Thursday afternoon and was recommended unanimously by the subcommittee, so is predicted to survive the funnel deadline. RSAI is concerned about board turnover and the limited time for training and orientation between a December organizational meeting of the board and the deadlines for setting school budgets and bargaining requirements, so is registered opposed.

[**HF 573**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf573) **Home Rule:** This bill allows a school district to exercise any broad and implied power, not inconsistent with state law/administrative rules, related to the operation, control and supervision of public schools in their district. The flexibility does not apply to taxing authority. See last week’s report for additional details. It was approved 12:2 in Senate Education Committee on Wednesday of this week, so survives the funnel deadline. RSAI is registered in support.

[**HF 563**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf563) **Collision Sports Training and Protocol:** See last week’s report for details of the bill. It was approved in Senate Education Committee on Wednesday of this week, so survives the funnel deadline. Although RSAI members are committed to student safety, we are still opposed and remain concerned that the protocol developed by the athletic associations is mandated and may have a cost associated with it.

[**SF 274:**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=SF274)  **Governor’s Computer Science Initiative:** Requires the state Board to adopt computer science education standards. Requires the Board of Education Examiners to establish a computer science teacher endorsement. Makes findings on the importance of computer education and states the intent to appropriate for an incentive fund for the 2018-19 school year. (Governor’s budget recommendation includes $500,000 for FY 2019.) Allows for gifts and federal funds to go into the incentive fund. Requires the state Board to adopt rules on high-quality computer standards for schools that receive money from the incentive fund. Requires the DE to establishes a computer science education workgroup to develop incentives for schools to offer high-quality computer courses. Participation is voluntary on the part of school districts and teachers. The bill was approved by the House Appropriations Committee, 18:7 and moves forward to the House Calendar. RSAI is registered as undecided on the bill.

[**SF 475**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sSF475) **Education Omnibus**: The bill allows school districts to offer online learning opportunities in several ways, eliminates the cap on open enrollment into the virtual academies, creates a bi-literacy seal for graduates proficient in at least two world languages, creates a student health working group and another working group to study AEA essential services, limits DE guidance, and contains two provisions specifically requested by RSAI:

* Provides offer and teach flexibility for online learning if no teacher can be found or if less than 10 students take a course, either through Iowa Learning Online or content developed locally.
* Allows community college course to provide CTE content in one subject area to meet offer and teach requirements for districts below 600 students enrolled.

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 your legislators.

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