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RSAI Region Meeting SW Region April 2, 2025



Call to Order & Welcome

RSAI Agenda - 2025 Regional Meetings

RSAI Region	Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Meeting Time	Regional Representative
NW Region	04/01/2025	Prairie Lakes AEA 500 NE 6th Street Pocahontas	11:30 Lunch; 12 Meeting	Justin Daggett
SW Region	04/02/2025	Green Hills AEA 212 E Coolbaugh St Red Oak	11:45 Lunch; 12 Meeting	Paul Croghan
NE Region	4/24/2025	Ampersand Taproom, 110 South Frederick Oelwein	2pm Meeting; 4pm Social	Nick Trenkamp
SE Region	05/07/2025	Fairfield Arts & Conv Center, with Great Prairie AEA 200 N Main St, Fairfield	12 Lunch; 12:30 Meeting	Dan Maeder



Agenda (call for approval)

- ❖ Introductions
- ❖ RSAI Overview and Processes
- ❖ Election to Leadership Group
- ❖ Election of Legislative Committee Reps
- ❖ Review of RSAI Bylaws
- ❖ Review of the 2025 Legislative Session To Date
- ❖ Discussion of Region Priorities for 2026 Session
- ❖ Brainstorming/Networking Discussion



Introductions (Current SW Region Leadership)

- ❖ Paul Croghan, CAM CSD & Nodaway Valley CSD,
Leadership Group - SW Regional Representative (Term
expires September 2025)
- ❖ Deron Stender, Creston CSD,
Legislative Committee Representative (term expires June
2025)
- ❖ Bill Watson, Martensdale St. Mary's CSD,
Legislative Committee Representative (term expires June
2025)



Introductions (all attendees)

- Name _____
- District Role _____
- One Sentence: What's the best thing happening in your school district today?



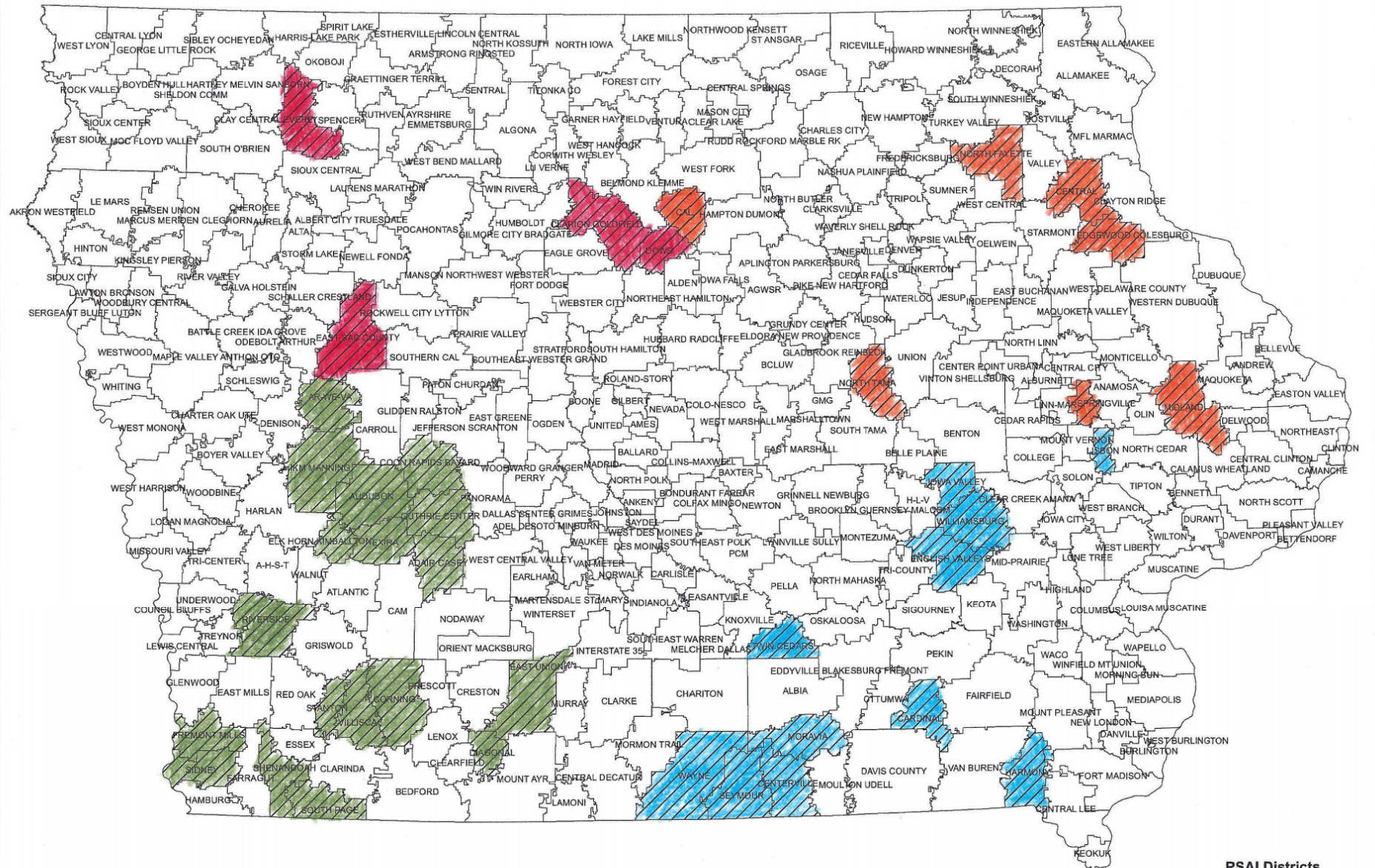
History of RSAI

The Rural School Advocates of Iowa began with a few rural school leaders getting together in 2013 to discuss many things:

- Why were rural school voices not represented in statewide decision-making?
 - Why did funding formulas not recognize transportation and sparsity factors?
 - Why did state policy always seem to have a “one-size-fits-all” approach that left little flexibility to rural schools?
 - What could rural school leaders do to change this situation to benefit students in rural schools?
- July 1, 2014 RSAI officially formed with 41 member districts

RSAI Membership

July 1, 2014



RSAI Districts

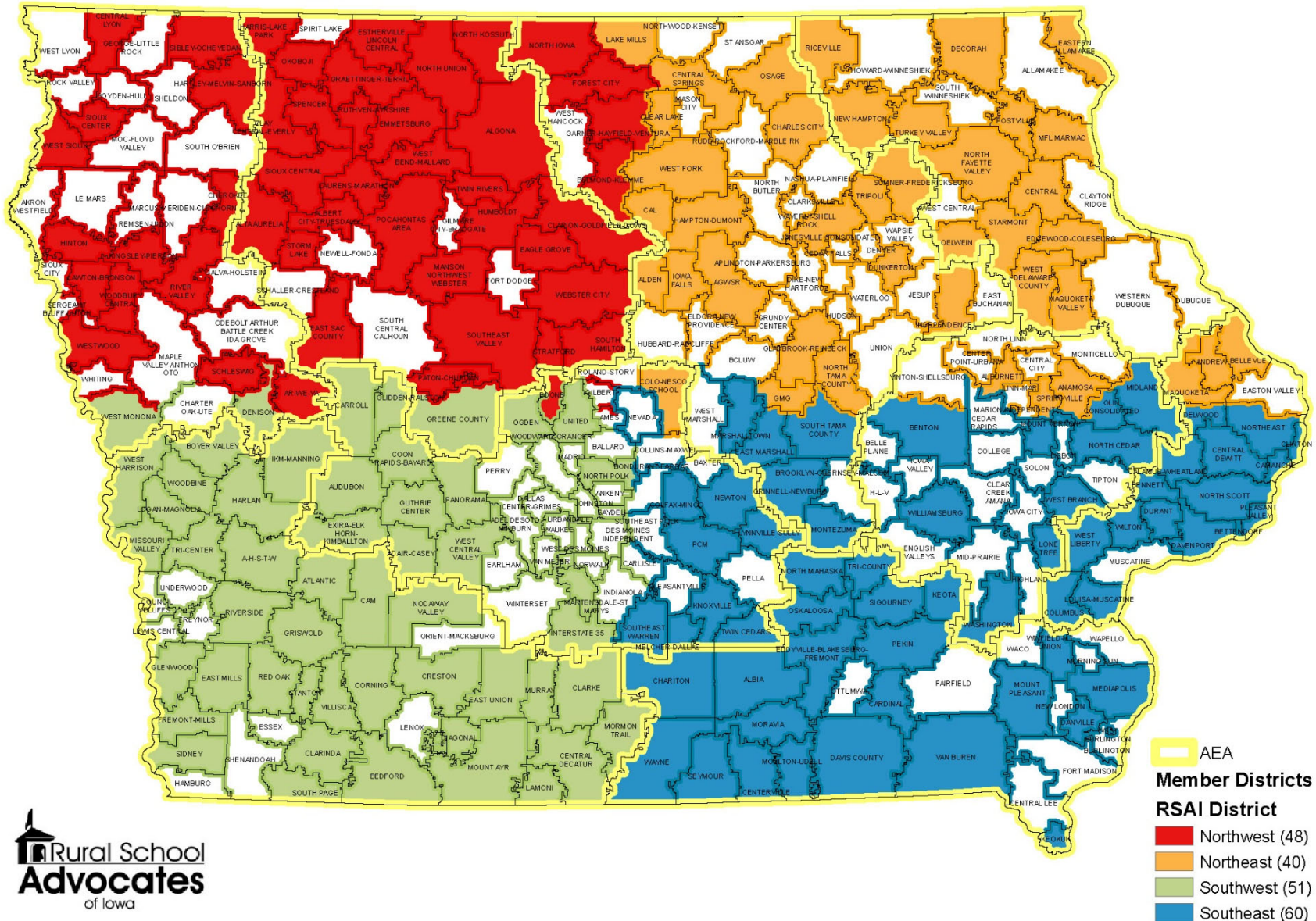
Members

FY 2015 Members (41)

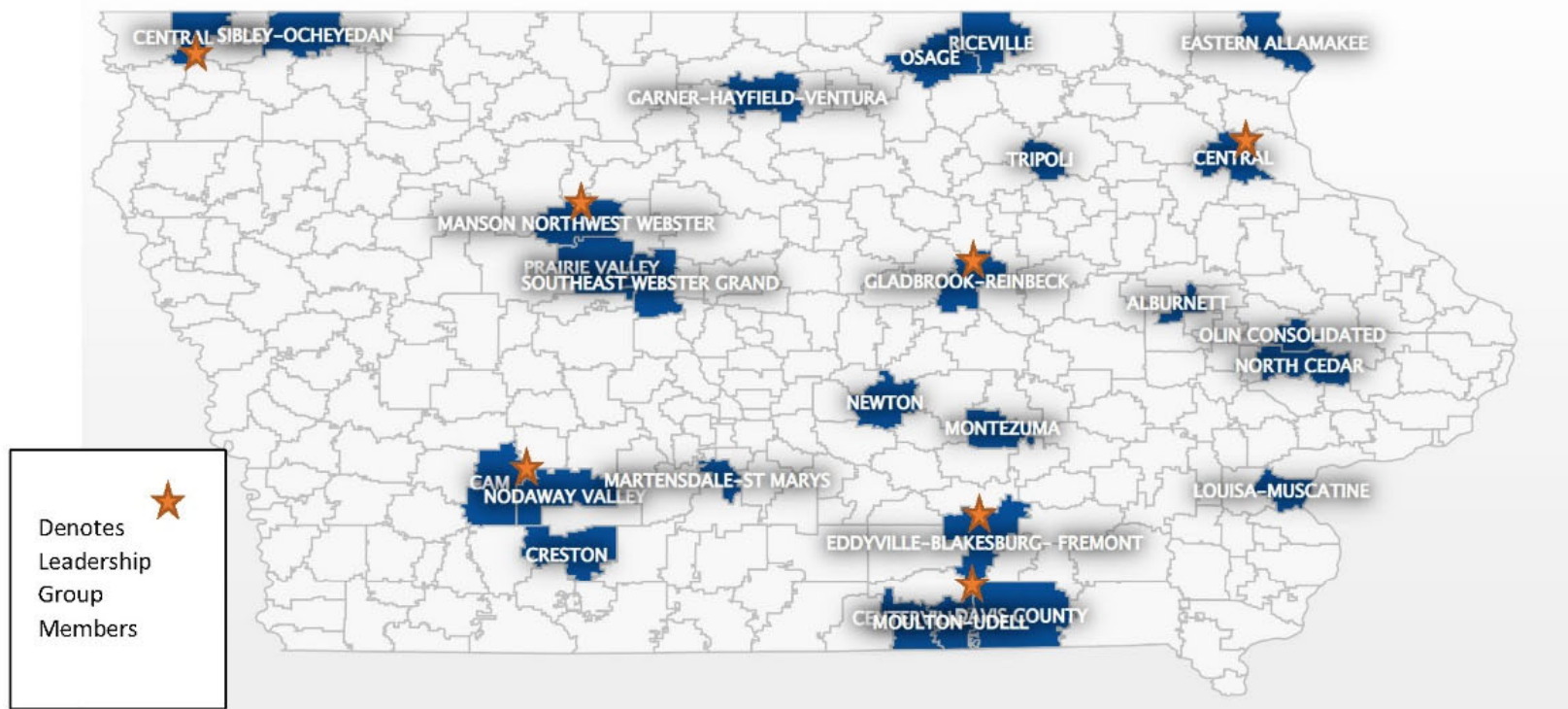
Date: 7/7/2014

RSAI Members 2024-25

As of 3/28/2025



2024-25 RSAI Leadership Group and Legislative Committee



Leadership Group Members			Legislative Committee Members			
Region	Name	District	Region	AEA	Name	District
NE	Nick Trenkamp	Central/Eastern Allamakee	NE	Grant Wood	Will Dible	Alburnett
NW	Justin Daggett	Manson NW Webster	NE	Keystone	Barb Schwamman	Osage/Riceville
SE	Dan Maeder	Davis County/Moulton-Udell	NE	Central Rivers	Jay Marley	Tripoli
SW	Paul Croghan	CAM/Nodaway Valley	NW	Central Rivers	Ken Kasper	Garner Hayfield Ventura
At-Large	Brent Jorth	Central Lyon	NW	Northwest	Stan DeZeeuw	Sibley Ocheyedan
At-Large	Scott Williamson	Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont	NW	Prairie Lakes	Brian Johnson	Southeast Valley
At-Large	Caleb Bonjour	Gladbrook Reinbeck	SE	Great Prairie	Mark Taylor	Centerville
			SE	Mississippi Bend	Mike Van Sickle	Louisa-Muscatine
			SE	Central Rivers	Rich Schulte	Montezuma
			SE	Heartland	Tom Messinger	Newton
			SE	Grant Wood	Mark Dohmen	North Cedar/Olin
			SW	Green Hills	Deron Stender	Creston
			SW	Heartland	Bill Watson	Martensdale-St. Mary's
				Plus all three At-Large Leadership Group Members		

RSAI Relationships

- RSAI is recognized as the Iowa affiliate of the **National Rural Education Association (NREA)** connecting members to rural school leaders nationwide, an annual conference focused on the needs and successes of rural schools



- Lends Iowa's voice to a collective effort in our nation's Capitol through membership in the **Rural Schools Collaborative**.



RURAL SCHOOLS
COLLABORATIVE

- Member of **Iowa Rural Development Council** to network and collaborative w/rural leaders across all areas of economic development.



Member Benefits

- ✓ Advocacy presence at the Iowa Capitol focused on RSAI priority issues
- ✓ Weekly legislative update reports and recap videos to share the latest news from the statehouse and calls to action when needed
- ✓ A voice to advocate with the executive branch and represent rural schools on various task forces and stakeholder committees convened by DE.
- ✓ Advocacy resources for local leaders to use, including position papers, advocacy tool kits, talking points, maps, and school finance estimates
- ✓ Assistance with communications, letters to the editor or sample letters to legislators
- ✓ Easy to share information, such as RSAI Legislative Priorities Video, to inform school boards, staff, and stakeholders.
- ✓ RSAI is the state affiliate of the National Rural Education Association, which brings access to NREA research, updates about happenings in Washington, networking
- ✓ Free Summer regional meetings and RSAI annual conference in October.
- ✓ Authentic grassroots development of legislative priorities in a one district one vote democratic process.
- ✓ Free access to NASDTEC teacher licensure checks with your RSAI membership. Learn more about the program [here](#).
- ✓ Discount on ISFIS Policy-hosting Service
- ✓ Collective purchasing power as a group, attracting needed supports at discounted prices

***Networking, Sharing, Best Practice
Connections with other like districts***

RSAI Corporate Sponsors 2024-25



www.rsaia.org/corporate-sponsors

RSAI Annual Meeting

<https://www.rsaia.org/annual-meeting.html>

- Meet in October, hear reports, budget, fee schedule, elect officers, approve priorities
- Members get one vote per district (affiliate members, guests and nonmembers are welcome but asked to register so we have enough food)
- Outside speaker
- Network
- Share a good meal



Election of RSAI Regional Representative to the Leadership Group (SW Region)

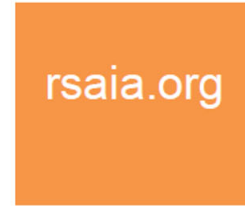
- Paul's term expires Sept. 2025
so election is needed.
- **Nominees & Vote**



Election of RSAI Regional Representative to the Legislative Committee

- Office is a 1-year appointment, but no term limits.
- By-laws allow additional representatives so each AEA has at least one.
- Representative attends August Legislative Committee Meeting in Des Moines, attends the October Annual Meeting, and supports legislative advocacy efforts throughout the Legislative Session.

*(Maps show membership & current representation.
Thanks to Deron & Bill for serving during the 2025
Session!)*



Review of RSAI Bylaws

Any changes needed?

Process for Changes:

- Comments/recommendations are shared with the RSAI Bylaws Committee.
- Bylaws Committee make recommendations to the Legislative Committee.
- Legislative Committee makes final recommendation to members at the Annual Meeting (which requires a 2/3 vote for approval).



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Summary of 2025 Legislative Session (so far) RSAI Priority Action



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SSA, Formula Equity, Operational
Sharing, Adequate Funding,
Teacher Pay, AEAs

SSA Status:
Which emoji is
most apropos?

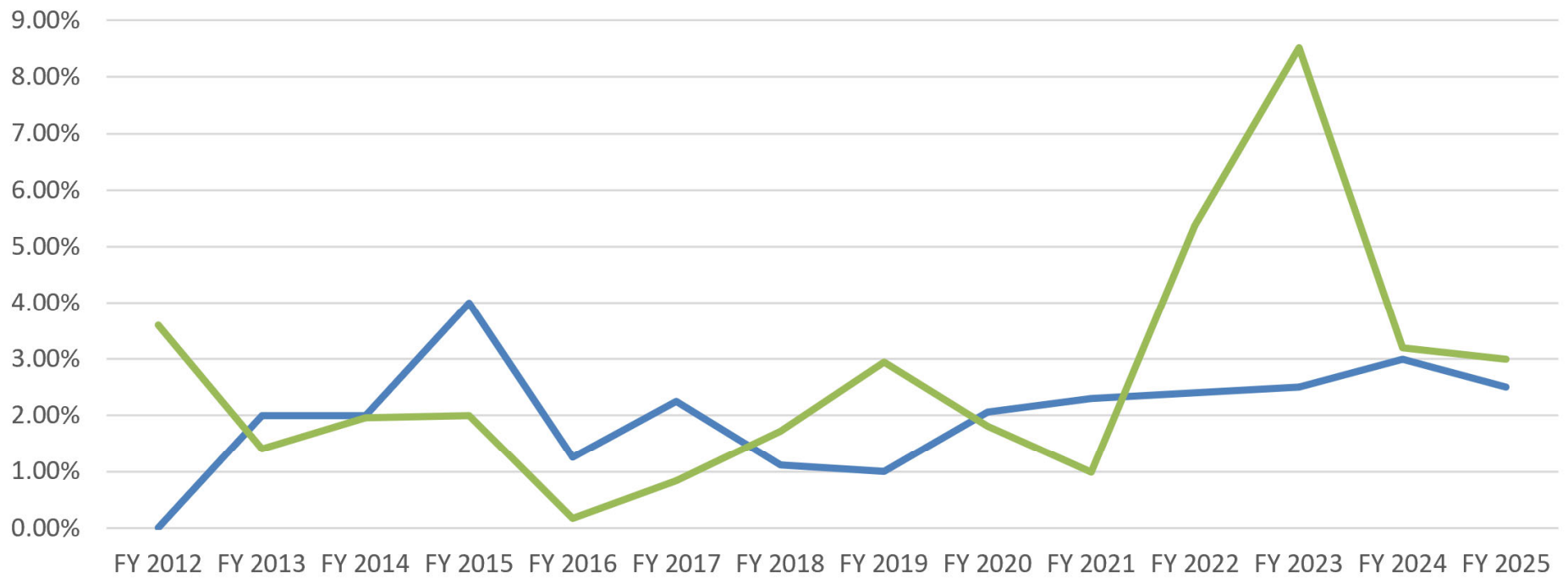
FEELINGS CHART

 SCARED	 HAPPY	 SAD
 ANGRY	 EXCITED	 WORRIED
 SURPRISED	 SILLY	 FRUSTRATED

SSA Status

- Senate at 2% SF 167 (DCPP, Weightings, Categoricals, PK, DoP, ISL, ESAs)
- House at 2.25% +++ (Amendment [S-3004](#) is attached to SF 167) is still on the Senate Calendar. Adds more:
 - transportation equity
 - DCPP and SCPP inequity by \$10 PP (closes the gap to \$130 per pupil)
 - increases operational shared weighting cap to 25 students (currently 21)
 - 22.6 million one-time funding supplement for inflationary costs.
- No word yet on compromise or resolution.
- Keep on advocating, gentle persuasion applied relentlessly. Send a succinct message. You need to know now and you need enough.

SSA v CPI



Dates Of Arbitration Hearings Held For Non-Public Safety Units	CPI-U As Determined By US Department Of Labor (Advanced Six Months By EAB)
(Jan) 1/1-1/31	2.70%
(Feb) 2/1-2/28	2.60%
(Mar) 03/1-03/31	2.50%
(Apr) 4/1-4/30	2.60%
(May) 5/1-5/31	2.60%
(June) 6/1-6/30	3.00%
(July) 7/1-7/31	3.40%

<https://eab.iowa.gov/public-collective-bargaining/impasse-mediation#consumer-price-index-cpi-for-midwest-region>

Teacher Shortage Priority

- **HF 787 TSS calculation** + SSA Growth + error correction for experience, but also includes:
 - TeachIowa Job Posting Platform Resurrected
 - \$50K for returning IPERS recipient retirees
 - Flexibility for student teaching for apprentice or other teachers with classroom experience
 - Out-of-state placement excess costs shared across the system
 - On Senate Calendar
- **SF 206 Management Fund for Recruitment and Retention** program is still stuck in Senate W&M

Board Authority/Local Control

HSB 31 [#] School Start Date & SF 250: bills that would have expanded flexibility are likely dead, approved by their respective Education Committees.

HF 392 Year-Round School Calendar for grades 9-12 on the Senate Calendar (or entire districts, since K-8 already allowed). (On Senate Calendar.)

SF 448 Bus Driver Training: allows school board flexibility to hire a driver without requiring certification. If a bus driver fails a test or doesn't renew, they could still work for a district that doesn't require certification. (In House Education Committee)

HF 395 School Bus Driver Training: requires DE to accept proof of successful completion of entry-level driver training (ELDT) as long as the course included passenger endorsement training and school bus endorsement training curriculum. Requires DE and DOT to collaborate on administrative rules establishing minimum course requirements and standards. (On the Senate Calendar.)

Board Authority/Local Control

HF 579 At-Risk/ Dropout Prevention: Allows increase in cap gradually up to 5% if approved by voters, adding ½% annually. Approved by House. In Senate Education Committee. (Subcommittee 4/1/25 at 12:30)

HF 522 Therapeutic Classroom Incentive Fund: Allows (but does not require) school districts to use grant funds for healthy foods and to improve lighting. (In Senate Education Committee)

SF 277 Chronic Absenteeism Clean-up: Fixes certified letter issue, clarifies exceptions, has model policies for county attorneys, allows district discretion on school engagement meetings (focus on students for whom absences are impacting achievement). (Approved by the House Education Committee 4/1/25)

SF 444 WGS/Reorganization Extension through 2030: Exempt from the funnel (appropriations impact). Updated in the Property Tax Overhaul bills, so it's on their radar, but unknown if they will get it done this Session. (On the Senate Calendar)

Board Authority/Local Control

HF 856 Banning DEI Efforts: Prohibits anything DEI for state entities including political subdivisions, includes exceptions, creates a court cause of action. Prohibits any effort to promote, as the official position of the state entity, widely contested opinion referencing unconscious or implicit bias, cultural appropriation, allyship, transgender ideology, microaggressions, group marginalization, anti-racism, systemic oppression, social justice, intersectionality, neopronouns, heteronormativity, disparate impact, gender theory, racial privilege, sexual privilege, or any related formulation of these concepts. (In Senate Education Committee)

Operational Sharing Changes

- SF 167 House Amendment raises the cap to 25 (On Senate Calendar w/SSA)
- SF 168 3 positions outside of the cap (SRO, MH, SW). (On Senate Calendar)
- HF 515 SRO at 4 pupil weighting instead of 2. (In Senate Education Committee)

Governor's Initiatives

SF 22 Cell Phone Restrictions: On House Calendar. Social media impact curriculum for middle school and PD eliminated from the bill. (Senate amended to require sample policies from DE be available by May 1. Back to the House.)

SF 450 & HG 784 Math Initiative: Requires DE to develop of family-centered resources to support mathematics learning at home and requires schools to assess students' mathematics proficiency three times a year. Requires schools to create individual math plans for students nonproficient on at least two of those three screeners. Requires progress monitoring every 2 weeks and defines prescriptive interventions for K-6 students until the student is proficient. Requires the DE to provide professional development to improve math instruction for schools with student proficiency needs. (The Civics test requirement was amended out of the bill in the Senate Education Committee. On the Senate Calendar.)

Governor's Initiatives

SF 445 & H F623 PK/CC Partnership: Creates a process for new providers of four-year-old PK, termed a community-based provider, to directly participate in the SVPP without school district partnership. Enables these providers to receive state preschool foundation aid directly. Provides funding for these community-based provider programs in the initial year of a program based on the number of students served (school district PK budgets are based on the prior year PK count and there is no funding for expansion). The bill transfers responsibilities from the child development coordinating council to the DE, requiring DE oversight and accountability for at-risk early childhood programs. Requires the DE to evaluate PK programs including curriculum and instruction, and to establish an accountability system. Establishes a pilot program for child care continuum partnership grants operated by the DHHS. (On their respective calendars.)

Property Tax Overhaul

SSB 1208 and HSB 313

- These bills place cities and counties under an expenditure limitation similar to schools.
- Eliminates Residential Rollback over 5 years. Residential values will go from being taxed on 47% of the value to 100% and the Homestead tax credit will increase from \$4,850 to \$25,000. (School district taxable valuations will go up).
- Lowers Uniform Levy from \$5.40 to \$2.97 by FY 2030 (\$2.43 decrease.) Decline in the rate is roughly offset by Increase in the valuation from more residential value being counted. Sets the Foundation Percentage to 100% over 5 years (eliminates controlled foundation portion of the Additional Levy, \$1.71/thousand). This is the provision in school property taxes that will deliver approximately \$375 million in property tax relief.
- Limits the ability to levy additional Management Fund property taxes based on large carry-forward balances.
- Any property tax rate limited by law to a specific rate can only be imposed if it was previously imposed in FY 2026 and limits growth to an additional 2% of the actual property tax dollars certified compared to the prior year (would include board PPEL, voter PPEL, Debt Services and PERL).
- SAVE fund capacity may actually improve as this legislation stops the SAVE fund payment for property tax relief.



Legislative Priorities Discussion: (Tracking form in your packet)

Find the 2025 RSAI Priorities list in the packet or on the RSAI website at:

<https://www.rsaia.org/2025-legislative-session.html>

1. Are there any that need to be removed?
2. Any that need to be added?
3. Any significant (or suggested) policy or direction changes on those already on the list?

Small group or whole group discussion. We can go through them one at a time or consider the whole list with one vote. It's up to the attendees to decide how to proceed.



RSAI Legislative Priorities 2026

See the RSAI website meeting tab for more information such as RSAI Legislative Digest, Position Papers which will be updated after language is finalized during the process, Legislative Priorities, and this PPT and meeting minutes on the Regional Meeting tab. <http://www.rsaia.org/>

Suggestions and recommendations from the Regional Meeting Attendees will be compiled and shared with the Legislative Committee. Legislative Committee will recommend final priorities for approval by members at the Annual Meeting in October.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR VOICE on behalf of rural students!

- Watch for RSAI Legislative Digest
- RSAI Priority Survey later this Summer
- Stay connected through the Interim
- Let us know what you need to beef up your advocacy efforts.
- See you in October at the RSAI Annual Meeting!

Professional Advocate

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