**RSAI Legislative Update
Feb. 2, 2017**

These updates are posted on the RSAI legislative web page at <http://www.rsaia.org/legislative.html>.

Work on FY 2017 Deappropriations was completed and sent to the Governor. Bills on RSAI priorities of extended operational sharing incentives and home rule begin the process. School Funding/SSA is being debated in the Senate this evening at 1.11%. Some policy bills progress through the system. Last week’s [Call to Action](http://nebula.wsimg.com/890c4eaca65e62cc2c2f8e0c9fda657c?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) on school funding remains active with House members through the weekend. A parent organization is looking for rural school parents to lead as steering committee members, join the group, sign a petition and/or lend their advocacy voice to support public schools. Thanks to all of the superintendents from RSAI districts that participated in the AEA lobby day last night and this morning! It was great to see you at the statehouse. margaret.buckton@isfis.net

**Deappropriations:** [SF 130](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/NOBA/851913.pdf) is approved in the House and sent to the Governor. There were no cuts to PK-12 education funding, so express thanks to legislators for sparing schools in the 2017 adjustments.

**School Funding:** [SF 166](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=SF166) and [HF 136](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf136) accomplish the following:

* 1.11% increase applied to the State cost per pupil for FY 2018. This is $73 per pupil increase, which leaves 179 districts with lower or negative enrollment growth on budget guarantee, costing Iowa taxpayer $23.6 million. There are 52 districts with negative new authority in FY 2018.
* 1.11% increase applied to each of the State categorical cost per pupil amounts for FY 2018.
* Provides additional property tax relief based on the per pupil increase that results from the establishment of the State percent of growth in FY 2018.
* Changes the Iowa Code requirement to set the growth rate in advance, instead requiring action within 30 days of the Governor’s budget release for the year beginning July 1 of the same calendar year.

A public hearing is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 6, at 11:00 in the Supreme Court Chamber, first floor of the Capitol. Speakers are limited to 3 minutes and comments may be submitted in writing. Here’s the [link](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/publicHearings?action=viewOnlineSignup&meetingID=24223) to sign up to speak or submit comments. Debate in the Iowa House is expected early in the week.

**Parents for Great Iowa Schools:** This new organization is working to generate parent understanding regarding the needs of public schools and encourage parent advocacy. A public forum was held on Monday, Jan. 30 from 7-8:15 PM in Des Moines. People who could not attend in person were able to view via Facebook live video.

See their web site <http://parentsforgreatiowaschools.com/> for possible advocacy actions, including a petition to sign. The group is interested in recruiting parents from all over Iowa, especially rural districts, as steering committee members.

**RSAI Priority Issues:**

**OPERATIONAL SHARING** Subcommittee in House: [HF 29](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF29) by Rep. Fisher, eliminates the sunset of the operational sharing incentives (extends indefinitely), removes the 5-year limitation on any positions shared and adds the position of principal among the sharing options. The subcommittee decided to not add the position of principal, hoping to move the extension forward. The bill would maintain the 21-student cap for sharing incentives. Thanks to Reps. Moore, Breckenridge and Dolecheck for moving the bill forward to the House Education Committee. RSAI supports this bill.

[**HF 26**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF26) **Home Rule** by Highfill. A subcommittee meeting met on Monday. This bill would allow school districts to exercise any board and implied powers not inconsistent with the laws of the General Assembly, related to the operation, control and supervision of their public schools. The bill excludes from the expansion of authority the power to levy a tax unless expressly authorized by the legislature. The bill states, “This chapter (274), chapter 257, Chapter 257B, and chapters 275 through 301, and other statutes relating to the boards of districts of school districts and to school districts shall be liberally construed to effectuate the purposes of subsection 1.” RSAI is registered in support. Additional conversations about flexibility are also ongoing.

[**HSB 17**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HSB17&ga=87) **Report Alcohol/Drug Abuse**: This bill was approved by the House Education Committee, 22:0. The bill requires that school administrators report disciplinary actions taken against a licensed school employee for being on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity while consuming, possessing, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the BOEE. A companion bill, [SSB 1017](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SSB%201017&ga=87) was approved in a subcommittee. RSAI is registered as undecided.

[**HF 28**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF28) **Financial Literacy** **Graduation Requirements**: Subcommittee of Carlin, Mommsen and Staed met. This bill requires one-half unit mandated, includes 9 paragraphs of specific content. Contrast that with ELA which says, schools must teach English-language arts with no description. The bill doesn’t eliminate any other graduation requirement. Since financial literacy content is already included in Iowa standards and because this would be an unfunded mandate, RSAI is registered opposed.

[**HF 110**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF110) **Safety Equipment:** This bill provides flexibility to use General Fund for safety equipment in addition to or instead of student activity funds. The group considered an amendment which includes funding flexibility for health care professionals. Subcommittee of Rep. Hagar, Brown-Powers and Jones discussed the option to merge this bill and [HF 17](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF17) **Mandate for Health Professional** during collision sport contest. Stay tuned. RSAI is registered in support of HF 110 and opposed to HF 17.

[**HF 20**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF20&ga=87) **Exploitation by School Employees:** Includes full-time, part-time, substitute employees with a license, certificate, authorization or a professional recognition and contract employees and volunteers with significant contact under those school employees covered by the provisions regarding sexual exploitation by a school employee. The amendment requires volunteers and contract employees to have routine contact with students to be included in this law. The bill was approved by the Judiciary Committee 14-4. RSAI is registered as undecided.

**Education Committee Members:** Find links to members of the Education Committee for the [Senate here](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=327) and the [House here](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=686)**.**

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 you legislators.

**The weekly Bill Tracker will be posted on the RSAI Legislative page early next week.**

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