



RSAI Call to Action: Repeal of State Assessment SSB 1001 **Jan. 13, 2017**

Assessment Proposal: [SSB 1001](#) strikes Iowa Code sections that 1) authorize the state Board of Education and DE to determine a set of core indicators for Math, Reading and Science and require a state assessment to measure progress and 2) require an Assessment Task Force.

A subcommittee was held Thursday in the Senate. Sens. Sinclair, Rozenboom and Quirnbach heard testimony concerning the SBAC assessment. Sen. Sinclair said her concern was the cost of the test. She wants to avoid an unfunded mandate. Most of the testimony from education stakeholders asked the legislators to not support the bill (ISEA, AEA, ISEA, IASB, UEN and RSAI.) There were representatives from the Task Force who addressed the subcommittee. Others (PEI, ACT) were in support of the bill. In the end, Sens. Sinclair and Rozenboom signed the subcommittee report, moving the bill forward to the Senate Education Committee.

RSAI Priority on Standards, Assessment and Technology for Assessment: RSAI supports the Iowa Content Standards, including an aligned assessment and supports for the technology and bandwidth required to adequately administer the assessment. Assessments required by the state must be funded by the state.

RSAI Leadership Group Direction: The Leadership Group met on Jan. 11. After discussion, RSAI leadership group directed staff to lobby for the aligned assessment, even if state funding is not immediately forthcoming. If there is no appropriation (and we would certainly prefer there is one), RSAI is to request district authority in other categorical funds to pay for the assessment until such time as the state provides funding.

Assessment Advocacy Messages:

- 1) RSAI supports a state assessment, aligned to content standards, funded by the state.
- 2) Absent state funding (which is clearly our preference), RSAI requests flexible use of other funds until the state provides funding, but prefers the assessment to move forward.
- 3) SBAC is costly because it is more than just a summative assessment. It is an assessment system, including formative assessment and links to the instructional digital library for teachers to use to find methods of successfully teaching all students.
- 4) An assessment system like SBAC satisfies two needs; data for accountability and for instructional improvement. As educators, we need to know how our students are doing.
- 5) Many local districts lack the capacity to have a coherent assessment system. A patchwork approach likely costs more and has less functionality than one the state can provide.
- 6) Alignment is critical and needs to be documented by an independent third party.
- 7) Many districts have already invested professional development time and staff hours in getting ready for SBAC.
- 8) So many other things in Iowa Code depend on state test scores. Will the Senate also propose elimination of the state report card, the third grade retention mandate, the need to document proficiency before taking a concurrent enrollment (community college) course, the dropout prevention criteria, or specific goals required in a district's C-plan (used to be called CSIP or Comprehensive School Improvement Plan), to name a few?
- 9) Federal law requires a state assessment aligned to our content standards.



Contact Senate Education Committee members and explain the importance of Assessment to the instructional process. Ask for them to defeat SSB 1001 in Committee. They will likely be home through the MLK day holiday, back to the Senate on Tuesday. The next Education Committee meeting is scheduled for 3:00 on Wednesday, January 18.

From the link below, you can access the senators' pages to get email, phone and home address. They can also be reached when in Session at the Senate switchboard (515) 281-3371 and ask to speak with them or leave a message.

- [Amy Sinclair](#) (R, District 14), Chair
- [Jeff Edler](#) (R, District 36), Vice Chair
- [Herman C. Quirnbach](#) (D, District 23), Ranking Member
- [Jerry Behn](#) (R, District 24)
- [Tod R. Bowman](#) (D, District 29)
- [Mark Chelgren](#) (R, District 41)
- [Jeff Danielson](#) (D, District 30)
- [Robert E. Dvorsky](#) (D, District 37)
- [Thomas A. Greene](#) (R, District 44)
- [Rita Hart](#) (D, District 49)
- [Craig Johnson](#) (R, District 32)
- [Tim Kraayenbrink](#) (R, District 5)
- [Mark S. Lofgren](#) (R, District 46)
- [Liz Mathis](#) (D, District 34)
- [Ken Rozenboom](#) (R, District 40)

You may also wish to contact Senate and House Leadership: Their contact information is found here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/leadership>

Thanks for your advocacy!

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