

**RSAI Leadership Group Agenda**  
**April 15, 2016 RSAI**  
**ISFIS Office, 1201 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, Des Moines IA 50311 and GoToMeeting**  
**2:00 PM**

**I**      **Call To Order**

**II**      **Approve Agenda**

**III**      **Review/Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

**IV**      **Monthly business**

Membership and Invoice Pending Report: Jen  
Approve Monthly financials and bills to be paid  
Communications / media to report?

Bob to Secretary Northy

SAVE & Transportation equity in the news

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/politics/2016/03/31/tax-debate-how-much-enough-school-facilities/82482982/>

School Funding: RSAI in the news

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/politics/2016/03/22/education-deal-calls-225-percent-increase/82110812/>

**V**      **Legislative Update**

Priority Legislation Status

RSAI bill registration list

[Education Coalition: Set the 2018 Cost per Pupil before Adjourning](#)

Assessment Priority and Unfunded Mandate Conundrum. RSAI position.

**VIII**      **Mission Critical Actions**

Membership Renewal Notices

RSAI leadership group outreach communications with legislators – any to report?

IASB Conference Invite (Gregg)

Membership Outreach – recruiting new members and retaining members.

Planning for Summer Regional Meetings – dates and locations needed for each quadrant

Leadership Transition: intentions for leadership group 2016-17?

Planning for RSAI Reception in June. Invites from leadership group to sups/board presidents?

**IX**      **Other Business**

**X**      **Adjourn:**

**Meeting Dates:      May 4, 2016 5:00 PM**

**June 1, 2016 5:00 PM**

**July \_\_\_\_\_, 2016 Regional Meetings**

**June 15<sup>th</sup> 6:00 PM to 8:00**

**PM, RSAI Reception**

**evening before the ISFIS**

**Conference (June 16<sup>th</sup>),**

**FFA enrichment Center,**

**Ankeny**

Rural School Advocates of  
Iowa Summary of  
Membership Status  
**\*As of 4/3/2016**

2014-15 Final		
Numbers	Dollars	Status
46	\$ 45,000	Paid
2	\$ -	Comps
48	\$ 45,000	Total

Hamburg CSD, Western Dubuque CSD

2015-16 PAID YTD*		
Numbers	Dollars	Status
65	\$ 46,050	Paid
2	\$ -	Comps
67	\$ 46,050	Total

Columbus CSD, Hamburg CSD

Leads/Invoices Pending (3)(not included in #s above)

Atlantic CSD (new)  
Essex (lead)  
Lisbon CSD (renewal)  
Nashua Plainfield/Clarke (lead) Van  
Buren (lead)  
West Central CSD (renewal)

New 2015-16 Already Paid (included in #s above)

A-H-S-T CSD Algona  
CSD  
Central Decatur CSD  
Cherokee CSD Danville  
CSD  
Davis County CSD East  
Mills CSD Keokuk  
CSD Keota CSD  
Hampton-Dumont CSD  
Lousia Muscatine CSD  
LuVerne CSD  
Manson NW Webster CSD  
Martensdale St. Marys CSD  
Moulton Udell CSD  
Pleasantville CSD  
Prairie Valley CSD Tri  
County CSD Twin  
Cedars CSD Twin  
Rivers CSD West Fork  
CSD  
Western Dubuque CSD

Rural School Advocates of Iowa (RSAI)  
Interim Balance Sheet  
February 29, 2016

Current Assets

Cash - Wells Fargo Checking	4,578	
Accounts Receivable	-	
Prepaid Items	-	
Total Current Assets	<u>                    </u>	4,578

Other Assets

Other	-	
Total Other Assets	<u>                    </u>	-

**Total Assets**

**4,578**

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	-	
Advances from ISFIS	1,573	
Deferred Income	-	
Total Liabilities	<u>                    </u>	1,573

Equity

Retained Earnings	322	
Net Income	2,683	
Total Equity	<u>                    </u>	3,005

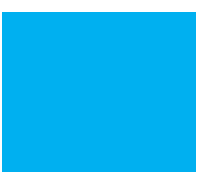
**Total Liabilities & Equity**

**4,578**



## 2015-16 Membership Pricing (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016)

<b>Standard Pricing:</b>	\$750 per district
<b>Whole Grade Sharing:</b> join (approx.. 25% discount)	\$550 per district if both
<b>Final Year of WGS before Reorg:</b> join (approx. 50% discount)	\$375 per district if both
Negative Spending Authority	\$0



June 1, 2015

Dear Rural School Advocates of Iowa Members,

We are still concluding the 2015 Legislative Session as this membership renewal invitation comes to your school district. RSAI has much to celebrate, being an effective voice at the table for students in rural school districts. We checked another priority off our list of legislative priorities, as reported in your RSAI weekly legislative update:

**HF 646 PPEL Flexibility for Transportation Repair:** This bill allows districts to use PPEL funds to repair or maintain transportation equipment if the costs of the repair for a unit of equipment exceed \$2,500, beginning July 1, 2015. House and Senate both unanimously approved the bill, which was signed by the Governor on May 12.

There were six pieces of legislation addressing the issue of inequitable transportation expenditures in the Iowa House. Most received a positive subcommittee vote, but none was debated in the House Education Committee. Despite lack of further progress to the Governor's desk, we can celebrate that the awareness of this issue has been elevated. As of this writing, language in the Senate Education Appropriations bill, HF 658, requests an Interim Study Committee to consider issues of student equity, including but not limited to transportation expenditures. Additionally, another RSAI priority, extending

the sunset of the state penny for school infrastructure, SF 477, received a strong bi-partisan vote in the Iowa Senate, keeping it alive for consideration in the Iowa House next Session. With school funding yet unresolved and other issues on the table, there is much work for us ahead.

The Leadership Group of RSAI is grateful to you for your membership, your advocacy and your support. With membership growth at such a good pace, the RSAI leadership group voted to lower dues to \$750 per member district for the 2015-16 school year, which will face confirmation at the RSAI Annual Meeting on October 7, 2015, in Ankeny. We hope your district board members and superintendent can attend and help craft the priorities for RSAI to carry forward into the 2016 Legislative Session. The enclosed invoice is priced based on that leadership decision.

Please let your Regional Representative hear from you, regarding needs and concerns, or celebrating a strong educational success in your district. RSAI is a grass roots advocacy organization and counts on member participation at the regional meetings in July to begin crafting our legislative platform and this year in particular, determining the best transportation equity policy recommendation we can craft to move that issue forward in 2016.

With gratitude,

Dr. Robert Olson, Chair, RSAI  
Margaret Buckton, RSAI Professional Advocate



**RSAI**  
 1201 63<sup>rd</sup> Street  
 Des Moines IA 50311  
 www.rsaia.org  
 Tax ID#46-4855308

# INVOICE

Date	Invoice #
06/01/2015	RSAI1516

Customer
Adair-Casey CSD 3384 Indigo Avenue Adair, IA 50002-8575

Description	Total Due
<b>2015-16 RSAI District Membership Renewal</b> July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016	\$ 750
Discount for Shared District (if both districts renew)	-200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 550</b>

Please make checks payable to RSAI.  
 Mail checks to RSAI, c/o ISFIS, 1201 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311.

If you have any questions concerning this invoice, please contact us at (515) 251-5970.

## 2016 RuRal School advocates of Iowa legISlatIve PRIoRities

### Transportation

A cost equalization formula should compensate for excess cost of transporting students in rural districts. Transportation funds compete with educational programs in the school's general fund.

### State Penny for School Infrastructure

Extension or repeal of the sunset.

### At-Risk Funding

Appropriate sufficient funds to address an increasing At-Risk population and change the formula so that it reflects the actual number of At-Risk students.

### Standards, Assessment and Technology

RSAl supports the Iowa Core Content Standards and an aligned test, including technology and bandwidth required to adequately administer the assessment.

### Per Pupil Funding

Set state supplemental rate of growth no lower than 6% for the 2016-17 school year and 2017-18 school year.

### Operational Sharing Incentives

Maintain the incentives and provide additional capacity to school districts to improve educational outcomes for students.

### Equity in the Formula

Raise the state cost per pupil to the maximum district cost per pupil of all districts in the formula.

We aRe

**RuRal School advocates of Iowa**

### **OuR MISSION**

Advocate for students in rural schools to assure a fair, equal and quality education.

### **We WIll**

Collaborate with others to promote legislation that strengthens rural education for students.

### **OuR CoMMItMent**

Telling the stories of success and opportunity that rural schools provide to students.

Brad Breon, Moravia/Seymour,  
Superintendent, [brad.breon@rsaia.org](mailto:brad.breon@rsaia.org)

Gregg Cruickshank, RSAI Treasurer,  
Sidney/South Page, Superintendent,  
[gregg.cruickshank@rsaia.org](mailto:gregg.cruickshank@rsaia.org)

Kevin Fiene, RSAI Vice-Chair,  
I-35, Superintendent,  
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Lee Ann Grimley, Springville,  
Board President, [leeann.grimley@rsaia.org](mailto:leeann.grimley@rsaia.org)

Robert Olson, RSAI Chair,  
Clarion-Goldfield/Dows, Superintendent,  
[robert.olson@rsaia.org](mailto:robert.olson@rsaia.org)

Brian Rodenberg, Midland, Superintendent,  
[brian.rodenberg@rsaia.org](mailto:brian.rodenberg@rsaia.org)

Dan Smith, Harmony, Board Member  
[dan.smith@rsaia.org](mailto:dan.smith@rsaia.org)

Our collective voices are  
stronger together.



We represent the students,  
staff, taxpayers and  
communities in rural Iowa.

Lend your voice to the  
movement for quality  
rural education.

[www.rsaia.org](http://www.rsaia.org)

## We Will

**Educate** others about the value of rural education to the state's economy and future of Iowa as an educational leader in the nation and the world;

**Build** the capacity and understanding of other groups with similar interests on legislative and educational issues to create a strong voice;

**Share** best practices of great education programs while under the budget constraints of fewer students, how best to innovate, share and promote efficiency;

**Secure** adequate resources, academic and financial, to provide first class educational opportunities for students in

rural communities; and

**Maintain** local control through the flexibility and authority of locally elected School Boards.

## how

Locally through the advocacy of like-minded individuals and groups with our Legislators at home

## AND

At the Capitol through the services of a Professional Advocate to organize our collective voice and keep members informed.

## Funding Concerns

- Funding of education is based on enrollment, which, in rural Iowa, has been slipping for a long time. As enrollment declines, funding follows.
- Iowa population growth of 2% from April 2010 to July 2014 is behind the national average of 3.3%.
- In Iowa, we have 51.5 persons per square mile compared to the national average of 87.4, yet the Iowa funding system has no acknowledgement of population sparsity, transportation costs or understanding of necessarily rural schools in the school foundation formula like other rural states.
- 38 districts no longer exist at the end of 2015, reorganized or dissolved since 2000...all from rural communities.
- The challenge of attracting and retaining great teachers and staff, with many teaching positions declared "shortage areas", is even more difficult in rural communities.

Every General Fund Penny Rural Schools Spend for non-educational expenses, exaggerated on a per pupil basis in rural schools, is a penny or more we cannot use to educate our students! All Iowa students deserve a great educational opportunity, regardless of their zip code.

## Transportation Concerns

- Large geographic districts with relatively fewer kids combined with mandated busing siphons money from our educational fund.
- In some rural districts, transportation costs exceed 10% of the General Fund Budget.
- Budget pressures including sharing and consolidation efforts demand even more spent on transportation.

## Local Control

- Required to pay out of General Fund for Early Retirements of those 65 or older.
- Cannot repair the very things we use PPEL/SAVE funds to buy such as buses with the same funds.
- Flexibility in drop out prevention plans to target at-risk students' needs as determined locally.

## at-Risk

- Significantly rising poverty among rural Iowa families is creating additional pressures on schools where funding has not changed in years.
- From 2008 to 2015, Free & Reduced eligibility increased from 33% to 41% of total school enrollment.
- Meanwhile, drop out prevention changes capped districts at 2.5% - 5% of regular program district cost.





## 2015 Legislative Priorities and Action

At the RSAI annual meeting on October 25, 2014, members approved the following legislative priorities to guide advocacy during the 2015 Legislative Session. Action during the session is included in bold text below.

**Transportation Equity:** Supports a mechanism that covers school transportation costs with state and/or local funding that does not unreasonably disadvantage property tax payers in property poor districts or compete with general funds otherwise spent on providing education to students. **With at least 6 bills introduced in the House and language to study transportation in the Senate, there has never been more conversation about school transportation then during this session. Watch for 2015 Interim Committee to study this issue.**

**PPEL Consistency:** The repair of items allowed to be purchased with PPEL funds should also be an allowable PPEL fund expense. **HF 646 was signed by the Governor on May 15. One small but mighty step forward.**

**Funding and Flexibility for At-risk Students:** Resources for serving at-risk students should be based on need, such as the number/percentage of students eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunch, rather than enrollment of the district. Districts should be given flexibility in determining the expenditure of at-risk resources to support students to graduate college/career ready for success. **Education Appropriations bills in both House and Senate approved more flexible use of dropout prevention funds based on district determination of at-risk, still on the table.**

**State Supplemental Assistance 6%:** RSAI supports a goal to get Iowa's investment in education to the national average. Iowa is now more than \$1,657 per pupil below the USA average level of expenditure. Funding per pupil for the 2015-16 school year must be determined ASAP as the 2015 Session convenes and set at an adequate level, no lower than 6%. Per Iowa law, funding for the 2016-17 school year must be set within 30 days of the Governor's budget announcement in the 2015 Session. RSAI supports a per pupil increase for 2016-17 no lower than 6%. **School funding still pending as the 2015 Legislative Session closes down!**

**Operational Sharing Incentives:** Opportunities to achieve efficiencies, share capacity to operate, and redirect resources to educational programs, should be maintained and expanded to provide additional capacity to school districts to improve educational outcomes for students.

**Extension of State Penny for School Infrastructure:** RSAI calls on the Iowa Legislature to repeal the sunset of the state penny for school infrastructure. **SF 477 was approved by the full Senate, 37:13 and is sitting in the House Ways and Means Committee, still alive for discussion in the 2016 Session.**

**Please mark your calendar and plan to join us at the  
RSAI Annual Meeting on October 7, 2015  
From 5:30-7:30PM at the  
FFA Enrichment Center on the DMACC Campus in Ankeny.  
More details to come!**

# Advocate for your school – Join RSAI Today!

## Our mission:

**Educate** others about the value of rural education to the state's economy and future of Iowa as an educational leader in the nation and world;

**Build** the capacity and understanding of other groups with similar interests on legislative and educational issues to create a strong voice;

**Share** best practices of great education programs while under the budget constraints of fewer students, how best to innovate, share and promote efficiency;

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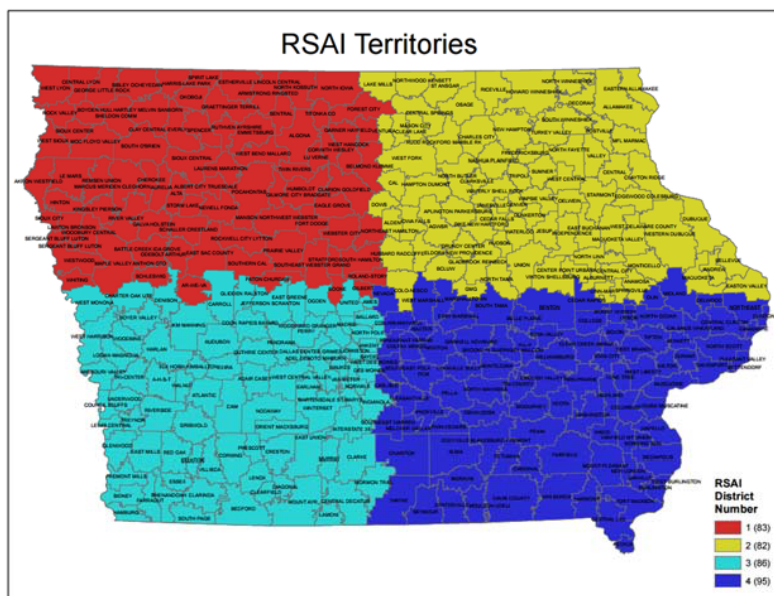
Contact your Region Director for membership and legislative priority details

**Northwest – Region 1:** Robert Olson, Superintendent, Clarion-Goldfield Dows CSD Email: [robert.olson@rsaia.org](mailto:robert.olson@rsaia.org) Phone: 515-851-1758

**Northeast – Region 2:**  
Lee Ann Grimley, Board Member, Springville CSD Email: [leeann.grimley@rsaia.org](mailto:leeann.grimley@rsaia.org); Phone: 319-551-0182

**Southwest Region 3:**  
Gregg Cruickshank, Superintendent, Sidney & South Page CSD; Email: [gregg.cruickshank@rsaia.org](mailto:gregg.cruickshank@rsaia.org); Phone: 712-374-2141

**Southeast Region 4:**  
Brad Breon, Superintendent, Moravia & Seymour CSD Email: [brad.breon@rsaia.org](mailto:brad.breon@rsaia.org); Phone: 641-898-2291





## RSAI Legislative Update March 31, 2016

These updates are posted on the RSAI legislative web page at <http://www.rsaia.org/legislative.html>. Not much action this week as House and Senate rethink budget targets, getting ready for appropriations work. Thanks for all you do to advocate for Iowa's children!  
[margaret.buckton@isfis.net](mailto:margaret.buckton@isfis.net)

**School Funding:** SF 174 and SF 175 conference increases state cost per pupil and categoricals by 2.25% for FY 2017 was approved March 23, but still has not arrived on the Governor's desk for his signature. Thank legislators for getting it done, but encourage more timely action in the future. Next Step: **Set the FY 2018 state cost per pupil this year before adjourning.** Senate passed bills at 4% (SF2092/SF 2093). Ask House members to act.

**Education Coalition Fact:** Set State Cost per Pupil for 2018 before Adjournment! This publication explains the rationale for the timeline that exists in Iowa Code, the impact on planning if the timeline isn't followed, the recent history of missing the deadlines and new revenue setting process that requires REC to set the FY 2018 revenue estimate (which they set at 4.1% at their March meeting) so no better time than the present to act on the 2018 state cost per pupil. Find a link to this publication on the RSAI legislative page here: <http://www.rsaia.org/legislative.html> Share with legislators, stakeholders and parents to generate additional advocacy before the session adjourns. RSAI is part of the Education Coalition, comprised of AEAs, ISEA, SAI, RSAI and UEN.

**Water Quality and the State Penny for School Infrastructure:** The House Republicans presented an alternative for funding water quality, which would divert \$25 million current collected in sales tax to a water excise tax for water quality. This bill, HSB 654, would lower state general fund revenue by \$25 million and reduce SAVE fund revenue to schools by \$2 million. The House Ways and Means Committee approved the bill today. It will receive a new bill number soon.

**State Penny for School Infrastructure:** four bills that extend the state penny, along with other policies, are in the House Ways and Means Committee. No official action was taken this week, but conversations are ongoing. Continue to help your legislators understand how SAVE has reduced or prevented an increase in property taxes, how school leaders would appreciate flexibility to use some future SAVE funds for transportation or cost per pupil inequities, and the need to act soon as the bonding capacity window is shortening. See last week's newsletter for details about the bills and key policy questions on the table.

### Bills signed by the Governor:

[HF 2261](#) **Joint Investment Trusts:** this bill requires joint investment trusts to follow federal law and GASB standards. RSAI is registered in support and the Governor has signed the bill.

[HF 2336](#) **DE Technical Corrections:** this bill cleans up old Code references, deletes programs no longer operating, and makes technical changes. RSAI is registered as undecided and the Governor has signed the bill.

### Bills on the Move:

[HF2450](#) Parent Opt-in to Human Growth and Development this bill, by House Oversight, would require parents to sign permission for students to attend content or courses or conferences including human growth and development curriculum. RSAI is registered as opposed to this bill. The bill is on the House Calendar.

**[HF 2284 Voucher Pilot Project](#)**: this bill creates an appropriation for school savings accounts for nonpublic school students in Waterloo (120 low income students) and Sioux Center (70 low income students), provides just over \$5,800 per pupil and allows any funds remaining at graduation to be used for college. RSAI is registered as opposed to this bill. The bill is assigned a subcommittee, with Reps. Rogers, Deyoe and Mascher, holding their first meeting next Tuesday.

**[HF SF 2304 Boarding School Regulation](#)**: this bill sets up a process for state government to certify and monitor boarding schools. The bill is in response to occurrences at the Midwest Academy in southeast Iowa. RSAI is monitoring this bill which has been amended by the House Oversight Committee and moves to the House Calendar. RSAI Professional Advocate, [Margaret.buckton@isfis.net](mailto:Margaret.buckton@isfis.net) 515.201.3755

### **RSAI Leadership Group:**

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