**RSAI Legislative Update
Feb. 16, 2018**

These updates are posted on the RSAI legislative web page, along with the weekly Capitol Recap Video, at <http://www.rsaia.org/legislative.html>.

This update includes news about RSAI priority issues surviving this week’s funnel deadline, new bills that moved quickly to survive and a few that died due to the funnel, primary among that group, HSB 651 Education Savings Account/Charter Schools, which was pulled from the House Education Committee agenda Thursday. Anticipating floor work in both chambers on many of these priorities in the next week or two, now is the time to engage, thank your legislators for forward progress on many and share your concerns about others. Thanks for all you do to advocate for Iowa’s children. margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com

**SSA:** [HF 2230](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202230&ga=87), with 1%, is still in limbo with the Senate amendment on transportation and formula equity differing from the House concept on transportation and formula equality. Although both chambers are at 1%, it’s not final until they send it to the Governor and she signs it. Find the impact of 1% on your district with the ISFIS [FY2018 New Authority Report](http://www.iowaschoolfinance.com/system/files/members/Excel/New%20Authority%20Report%20FY%202019%201%25.xlsx)

RSAI is registered as undecided on this level of funding, with school leaders grateful to have been spared in the deappropriations process, but still keenly aware that continued consecutive years of low funding increases are disappointing and more difficult to implement every year. Certainly, the addition of the first year of transportation and formula equality by the Senate is appreciated. See the impact of that equity piece posted here: [SF 455 Impact Look-up Tool Transportation Equity](http://nebula.wsimg.com/016771a592399e96fe87ac6d4f7d2cc6?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) shows you the impact of the first year, directly applicable to this amendment. [SF 455 Impact Look-up Tool Formula Equality](http://nebula.wsimg.com/7bfa86a2d5b7fb558662e4563cd733f2?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1) shows you the full phased-in impact of formula equality. For purposes of year one impact, consider $5 per pupil.

[**SF 455**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=SF%20455) **Formula and Transportation Equity** was amended and approved in House Appropriations Committee Wednesday. This bill, a priority for RSAI members, provides a 10-year commitment to eliminate both inequities. The committee approved an amendment, [H-8010](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/AMDI/87/H8010.pdf), to the bill which provides $11.2 million for transportation for the districts with the highest per pupil transportation costs and the addition of $5 per pupil to the state cost per pupil to close the formula equity gap to $170 from high to low. The amendment does not set up a process or phase in period for closing the remaining $170 equity gap. RSAI is registered as undecided on the amended version, as this amendment does not significantly resolve formula equality and this transportation solution, although it helps many school districts including RSAI members, would not provide certainty for long-term transportation assistance. The current inequity disadvantages rural schools’ ability to provide staff and programs. This solution, although significant in terms of funding, may not be certain enough to commit rural resources to hiring staff or creating programs.

[**HSB 647**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HSB%20647) **SAVE Extension:** This bill was amended and approved in the House Education Committee today, all in favor save one (Rep. Wheeler.) The bill accomplishes the following:

* Extends the SAVE/state penny for school infrastructure to 2050.
* Allows a maximum of 10% to be used for Property Tax Equity and Relief (PTER) fund purposes, phased in by an additional 1% a year for each year in which sales tax revenues grow at least 2%; when fully phased in, it totals about $47 million for property tax equity. The PTER fund was created with the original SAVE bill in 2008 and buys down the highest additional school levies in the state for those school districts with the lowest property values supporting each student.
* Requires a public hearing for bonding using the sales tax revenue. If the public does not support the school board’s direction, there is a reverse referendum process, which sets a window of 14 days during which time citizens may attempt to collect signatures the greater of 100 or 30% of those voting in the last election required to call for a vote. This provision starts for bonds sold after July 1, 2018.
* Increases the certificate of need threshold from a district with fewer than 250 students to districts with below 350 students, but adds a requirement that SBRC consider cost benefit of repairing existing facilities and impact on students.
* Requires all revenue purpose statements to expire in 2023.  New revenue purpose statements would have to be approved and that still requires a vote of the public.
* Requires public hearing and a reverse referendum (same process as above) on athletic facilities not connected to the school that are categorized as new construction. This does not include repair or maintenance of existing athletic facilities.

The RSAI supports the extension of the state penny for another 20 years and appreciates that the process has started. RSAI Is registered in favor.

[**HSB 650**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=hsb650) **District Flexibility:** this bill removes the DE from the process of approving district dropout prevention plans, sets up a process for the SBRC to approve the requested modified supplemental amount for districts to fund their plans, and includes other flexibility provisions. RSAI is registered in favor of this bill. It was amended and approved by the House Education Committee.

[**HSB 651**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hsb651) **Education Savings Accounts (Vouchers) and Charter Schools:** this billcreates education savings accounts for nonpublic students and creates three kinds of charter schools. See last week’s report for an itemized description of the bill’s provisions. RSAI is opposed to this bill. Although originally on Thursday’s House Education Committee agenda, the bill was pulled from the list, due to lack of sufficient support to move the bill forward.

Thanks to RSAI members for responding to our Feb. 9 call to action opposing this bill! Other efforts at school choice could yet be considered, such as the 529 plans included in the Governor’s tax policy bill. Funding for school tuition organization tax credits to fund scholarships for low and middle income students could be increase or the threshold for claiming a tuition or textbook tax credit could be raised. SF 270 Diversity plans is also moving forward as a parent’s choice bill. We recommend continued attention and vigilance to the issue. Special thanks goes out to the Parents for Great Iowa Schools who have worked so very hard to engage the public on the importance of the priority of public schools!

[**SF 270**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf270) **Diversity Plans and Open Enrollment:** this bill would prohibit the five districts with diversity plans from regulating open enrollment out of the district based on the diversity plan. Davenport, Des Moines, Waterloo, West Liberty and Postville are the five districts. The bill was approved in the full Senate Education Committee, with all Democrats and Sen. Lofgren voting opposed. RSAI is registered opposed.

**The Budget:** [**SF 2117**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=SF%202117) **Deappropriations for FY 2018:** It is important to keep in mind that other entities depending on state funding are below prior year’s appropriation levels, such as community colleges and regents’ institutions. So far, SF 2117 does not directly impact PK-12 school districts, but the DE is facing another cut, this time $1.7 million.

The bill is on the House Calendar with a committee amendment [H-8012](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/AMDI/87/H8012.pdf), which is the House version of the bill. The House and Senate need to work out their differences for this bill to get to the Governor’s desk. Further work on the FY 2019 budget is unlikely to proceed pending a resolution on FY 2018. RSAI is monitoring this bill.

**Other Bills Surviving the Funnel:**

[**SSB 3001**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=ssb3001) **Education Reporting:** this bill requires the DE to cite the state or federal law or rule that requires certain information to be reported by school districts, AEAs, private schools and school employees and officials. This bill was approved by the Senate Education Committee and RSAI supports it.

[**SSB 3063**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=SSB%203063) **Executive Branch Agency Rules:** this bill requires executive branch agencies, such as the DE and Department of Revenue, to follow statute and prohibits agencies from enforcing rules not grounded in statute. RSAI is registered in support.

[**SSB 3119**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=ssb3119) **Civics Exams:** this bill requires students to pass the civics exam required of individuals applying for US citizenship as a condition of graduation from high school. The bill allows students to start taking the test in 7th grade. RSAI is registered opposed to this bill. We do not support additional use of high stakes testing and believe that local leaders are in the best position to determine course content and assessment. The bill was approved on party lines in the Senate Education Committee.

[**SSB 3156**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=SSB%203156) **Wage Statements:** this bill allows an employer to send a wage statement to an employee electronically. Allows an employee to notify the employer, in writing, of an inability to receive a statement electronically. Requires the notice be at least one pay period in advance and for the employer to use another permitted method. Approved in Senate Labor Committee.

[**SSB 3162**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=ssb3162) **Academic Ineligibility:** this bill directs schools and extracurricular organizations to make reasonable efforts that periods of academic ineligibility for a student run concurrently (so student in three different activities, for example, doesn’t have to sit out for 20 days at the beginning of each activity, if they have corrected the academic issue.) RSAI is undecided.

[**SSB 3180**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/publications/search/document?fq=id:923916&q=SSB%203180) **Dyslexia Taskforce:** this bill requires the DE to establish a dyslexia taskforce. It specifies the membership on the task force and requires the DE to staff it. RSAI is registered as undecided.

[**SSB 3186**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=SSB%203186) **Pickups as School Vehicles:** this bill requires the DE to adopt rules to allow certain pick-up trucks (under 10,000 pounds, fewer than 9 passengers) to qualify as Type III school buses. Approved in the Senate Transportation Committee. RSAI is monitoring the bill.

[**SSB 3194**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=%24selectedGa.generalAssemblyID&ba=SSB3194) **Teacher Preparation Scores:** this bill as amended requires DE to work with Praxis to set a scale score for successful completion of the teacher prep program. The bill was approved by the Senate Education Committee. RSAI is registered in support.

[**SF 2085**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=SF%202085) **High School Credits**: this bill, as amended in the Senate Education Committee, requires that a student who completes a unit of instruction for high school graduation requirements in the district, regardless of grade level, is deemed to have earned the credit. If the student has completed the unit in another school (public, private, or home school) the district may grant graduation credit to the student. RSAI is registered as monitoring the bill.

[**SF 2174**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf%202174) **PE Requirements**: this bill allows a student (grades 1-12) to be excused from PE requirements if the parent requests in writing that instead, the student participates for at least two hours a week in physical fitness at a fitness center or sports club approved by the school district for this purpose. RSAI is registered as undecided.

[**SF 2253**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2253) **School Security Plans:** this bill requires schools to have school security plans for all school buildings in place by July 2019. The bill requires the plans to consider active shooter and natural disaster scenarios. The bill requires schools to consider recommendations from the DE, local law enforcement and emergency agencies. The bill was amended in the Senate Education Committee to eliminate a requirement that the plans be communicated to students during an assembly and to parents, to protect against providing the plan to those who might want to hurt students. The bill was approved unanimously in the Senate Education Committee as amended. RSAI is registered as monitoring the bill.

[**SF 2276**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202276&ga=87) **DHS Hotline:** this bill requires public school districts to post the DSH child abuse hotline telephone number where it can be easily seen by students. RSAI is registered in support.

[**SSB3093**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SSB%203093&ga=87) **and** [**HSB595**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HSB%20595&ga=87) **Utility Regulation Rollback**: the Senate Commerce Committee approved their version of this bill this week, now numbered as [SF 2311](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202311&ga=87), which is on the Senate Calendar. It does not look like the House Commerce Committee moved their version forward. We will confirm when bill tracking is updated on the legislative site next week. These bills are concerning for school districts. Biggest changes include the potential for more pass through costs from transmission to end customers instead of requiring utilities to negotiate on the consumer’s behalf and less time for the Iowa Utilities Board to review tariff changes. A provision of the bills would allow a utility to begin charging all customers who already have solar an extra $100/month, $1,000/ month, whatever surcharge they determined. The municipal utilities and RECs can effectively destroy the cost-effectiveness of solar by prohibiting net metering already, but current law prohibits their ability to discriminate in pricing to consumers who have installed solar. This would be extremely unfair for schools and others who already have solar in place, and would make it difficult for schools to know what to expect in the future if contemplating renewable projects. The bills are predicted by consumer groups to raise rates and minimize incentives to become more efficient and cost Iowa many jobs in green energy fields. RSAI is registered opposed.

[**HF 92**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf92) **Student Data Protection**: this bill prohibits operators from engaging in targeted audience advertising based on K-12 student data gathered by the operator on a website and includes restrictions on selling or disclosing the information. The bill was amended and approved by the House Education Committee. RSAI is registered as monitoring the bill.

[**HF 2006**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2006) **High School Collision Sports**: this bill requires the Department of Public Health and the High School Athletic Associations to work together to develop training materials on concussions and brain injury. The bill requires coaches and referees to complete such training every two years. The bill requires the development of information sheets for parents and guardians, requires a student to be removed from a contest if the student shows any sign of brain injury, and requires the development of a return to competition and a return to learning protocol. The bill also requires the district to provide protective gear and requires a health care professional to be at athletic contests. The bill adds liability provisions for schools that have a licensed health care provider at contests and for the health care provider. The bill was approved by the House Education Committee. RSAI is registered undecided.

[**HF 2072**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF%202072) **Operational Function Sharing for Social Workers:** this bill adds social workers to the list of positions that generate supplementary weighting if shared, but does not change the maximum cap of 21 students’ worth of weighting. RSAI is registered undecided on this bill. The bill was approved unanimously in the House Appropriations Committee.

[**HF 2176**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2176) **Suicide Prevention:** this bill requires school districts to provide training on suicide prevention for licensed school employees and for others with regular contact with students in grades 6-12. The bill requires the DE to adopt rules requiring schools to have protocols for suicide prevention. The bill was amended and passed by the House Education Committee. RSAI is registered as undecided on the bill.

[**HF 2358**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2358) **Student Liaisons:** this bill requires school boards to appoint student liaisons to attend meetings as a non-voting member. The bill was approved by the House Education Committee and RSAI is registered as undecided.

[**HF 2369**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202369&ga=87) **Referendum Times:** this bill requires that elections to authorize bonds or local option taxes be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. It is effective for measures after January 2019. The bill was amended and approved by the House Local Government Committee. RSAI is opposed.

[**HSB 561**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HSB561) **World Languages:** this bill changes references in the Code from “foreign languages” to “world languages” and includes American Sign Language as a world language. The bill was approved by the House Education Committee and RSAI supports it.

[**HSB 563**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hsb563) **Online Instruction**: this bill allows a home school student or private school student to access courses through Iowa Learning Online and requires the DE to set fees for participation. The bill was approved in the House Education Committee on party lines. RSAI is registered as undecided.

[**HSB 660**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HSb660) **School Meals:** this bill allows schools to use money from the flexibility accounts to pay for the costs of student meal debt. The bill requires schools to notify parents a least twice a year, and if the student has five unpaid lunches, of the availability of free or reduced price lunch programs. The bill requires the school to offer students reimbursable lunches unless the parent authorizes withholding lunches from the student. It requires schools, if practicable, to determine at the beginning of a lunch line whether a student has funds for lunch, prior to the replacement or disposal of a lunch. The bill prohibits posting lists of students who cannot pay for lunch or otherwise shaming those students. The bill was amended and approved unanimously in the House Education Committee. RSAI is registered as monitoring this bill.

[**HSB 663**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HSb663) **TLC Rubrics:** this bill requires a school district with an approved comparable system within Teacher Leadership and Compensation plan (which is 331 out of 333 school districts), to implement a framework or instructional rubric by the 2019-20 school year. The bill requires schools to report to the DE annually. The bill also requires the DE to issue guidance, but was amended in committee to state that school districts may follow the guidance (meaning they are not required to.) The bill was authored by the DE. Dir. Ryan Wise explained during the subcommittee meeting that about 40% of districts already use these frameworks or rubrics, citing examples such as Marzano’s Instructional Framework, Authentic Intellectual Work, or TAP, and that those districts using such a framework are making great strides in implementing TLC in ways that improve instruction. He also stated that the DE’s intent was not to pick a framework and require it, but to defer to local districts on what framework would be most helpful to the local district’s plan. Dir. Wise also stated his intent to make the reporting requirement as minimal as possible, just asking a question about how it’s going for the school district. RSAI was originally registered as monitoring the bill, but with the changes in the amendment, will move our registration to support.

**Future Ready Iowa** legislation appears in both the House and Senate.

[**HSB 602**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CMargaret%5CDesktop%5CUEN%5CLegis.%20Tracking%5Cthe%20Iowa%20Employer%20Innovation%20Fund) and [**SSB 3087**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SSB%203087&ga=87) **Future Ready Iowa** were both approved in their respective Commerce Committees. The bills create legislation based on the Future Ready Iowa Alliance recommendations intended to reach the goal of having 70% of Iowa's workforce with education or training beyond high school by the year 2025. The identical bills establish several things contingent on appropriations: 1) establishes the Future Ready Iowa Apprenticeship Development Program, including requiring the Economic Development Authority to give financial assistance to help small and medium sized businesses with apprenticeships. 2) creates a volunteer mentoring program. 3) establishes the Iowa Employer Innovation Fund to improve training. The bills require the state Workforce Development Board to report annually on high demand jobs. The bills also establish the Future Ready Skilled Workforce Last-Dollar Scholarships, to be administered by College Student Aid Commission. RSAI has not yet registered a position. Let us know your thoughts.

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.

**Advocacy Actions this week:** Suggested actions:

* Thank all 50 senators for continuing their push for solving the transportation and formula inequalities for school districts over the long haul.
* Contact House members, especially on the [Appropriations Committee](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=695) and thank them for their vote on moving SF 455 forward as amended, but encourage them to consider the long term commitment.
* State penny extension. Thanks to the House Education Committee members, who, with the exception of Rep. Wheeler, supported the 20-year extension, moving HSB 647 forward. Also thanks to this group for HSB 650 District Flexibility.
* Revisit the RSAI [Issue Brief on School Choice](http://www.uen-ia.org/attachments/issue%20briefs/2018/School%20Choice%202018%20Issue%20Brief.pdf). Thank your legislators if they committed to you that they opposed HSB 651. Although this issue is dead for this year, it will not go away until Iowans are educated about the impact it has on public schools.
* Ask all House members to oppose HF 2369, which restricts local government bond issues to only the November election. Delay in bond issue approval increases the costs of construction projects.

**RSAI Contacts**

RSAI Professional Advocate, margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com 515.201.3755

Robert Olson, Chair, Clarion-Goldfield/Dows, Superintendent, robert.olson@rsaia.org ,

Paul Croghan, East Mills and Essex Superintendent, pcroghan@emschools.org ,

Lee Ann Grimley, Springville, Board President, leeann.grimley@rsaia.org ,

Dennis McClain, Clay Central Everly, Superintendent, dmcclain@claycentraleverly.org

Laurie Noll, Fairfield, Superintendent, laurie.noll@fairfieldsfuture.org

Dan Smith, Harmony, Board President, dan.smith@rsaia.org

Duane Willhite, Superintendent, North Fayette Valley, dwillhite@nfv.k12.ia.us