**RSAI Legislative Update   
Mar. 22, 2018**

These updates are posted on the RSAI web page <http://www.rsaia.org/legislative.html>. The RSAI weekly Capitol Recap Video will return next week.

This update includes news about floor work in both the House and Senate following last week’s funnel deadline. SAVE extension gets Ways and Means Committee action in the Senate. Work on cuts for the FY 2018 budget concludes, leaving the door open for the Senate Appropriations Committee to extend Operational Sharing, HF 633. Meanwhile, another voucher bill is approved in a Senate Subcommittee. HF 2369, Bonding Elections in November, is still on the Senate Calendar, problematic for school districts. SF 475 was amended and approved in the House, allowing school districts to offer online learning options locally and allowing CTE community college courses to meet offer and teach requirements for smaller districts under some circumstances (requested by RSAI.) This weekend, thank your legislators for forward progress on many RSAI priorities, and specifically mention SAVE extension and operational sharing. Let us know if you need assistance with any of your advocacy work. Thanks for all you do to advocate for Iowa’s children. [margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com](mailto:margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com)

[**HF 2438**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202438&ga=87) **and** [**SF 2216**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2216) **SAVE Extension:** HF 2438 is still in House Ways and Means, while legislators are working on mostly technical amendments. SF 2216 was moved forward unanimously out of Senate Ways and Means Committee Wednesday, without amendment, but Sen. Dawson mentioned their intention to amend on the floor. They will take a close look at the House’s work to align if possible. With Committee approval, the bill has a new number [**SF 2393**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202393&ga=87). RSAI supports the extension of the state penny for another 20 years and appreciates the collaborative process underway. Continue to contact your legislators, both House and Senate, encouraging their support of the extension. An updated position paper has been posted on the RSAI web site [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/05618c1a553cb9c963e254aba92cffbb?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1). It includes specific references to SAVE fund for school safety and addition of the FY 2017 number of school bond issue elections, which shows the continued increase in property taxes as the window to bond against the existing sales tax is closing. RSAI is registered in favor.

[**HF 633**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf633) **Operational Sharing Incentives Extension,** a priority for RSAI, is STILL sitting in the Senate Appropriations Committee. Now that deappropriations differences between the House and Senate for 2018 are resolved and sent to the Governor, this bill should receive some attention. Some concerns were raised last week about the future of this bill. However, Sen. Kraayenbrink, floor manager of the bill, mentioned in the Senate Education Committee, their intent to finish work on this bill. Call your senator, especially if on the Senate Appropriations Committee, and explain its importance. RSAI supports this bill. A position paper with talking points, background and fiscal impact is found [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/6a2c1097022a45a9a169ec2796f226a4?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1). Find members of the Senate Appropriations Committee [here](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=324).

[**SSB 3206**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=ssb3206) **Vouchers:** this bill was considered in a subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Thursday this week, with Sens. Chelgren and Rozenboom recommending it move forward and Sen. Danielson opposing the recommendation. The bill does the following:

* Requires DOM to write rules to administer the program
* Creates an education savings account for each eligible student that applies by Jan. 15 in the prior year, equal to 60% of the regular program state cost per pupil, which is $4,039 in FY 2019 based on the 1% SSA set in HF 2230.
* Limits eligibility to incoming kindergarteners or students who have attended a public school for the previous two semesters, and allows prior ESA recipients to apply again. Funds remaining in the account may be used for higher education expenses in an Iowa college or university, until the student reaches 25.
* Requires that if a student is expelled from the nonpublic school, both the nonpublic school and the parent must report the expulsion and the parent is required to repay the voucher amount to the DOM, unless the student relocates residence to another community and enrolls in another nonpublic school.
* Does not require the nonpublic school to change admission processes, to admit all students, and specifically states that the bill is not intended to put demands on nonpublic schools to comply with any state requirements.

Next step, full Appropriations Committee. Find background an talking points on RSAI website [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/449e52af3ba9f64925184531c7fb2291?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1). RSAI is opposed to this bill

[**SF 2117**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2117) **FY 2018 Deappropriations**: the House and Senate agreed this week to cut the current budget by $23.3 million and transfer another $10 million from the Iowa Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund to the state General Fund. The action leaves an anticipated ending balance of $31.9 million for FY 2018. There were no direct cuts to PK-12 education, although the $500,000 reduction to Community Colleges and $785,000 reduction to DE might have some indirect impact. Budget targets for FY 2019 have not yet been released, which is the next step toward work on the FY 2019 budget. RSAI is registered as undecided.

[**HF 2235**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=HF2235) **State Assessment**: this bill mandates use of Iowa Tests (next iteration, so Next Generation test) for our state assessment. The bill was amended and approved by the Senate this week, on a vote of 33:16. The House concurred in the Senate Amendment, sending it to the Governor. RSAI is opposed, concerned that the Next Generation Iowa Tests have not yet been confirmed to align to Iowa Core standards. Without such alignment, Iowa’s state ESSA plan is at risk of failing peer review, placing $96 million in Title I funds on the line. However, the amendment does restore provisions of SF 240 RFP requirements for summative assessment in the school year beginning July 1, 2018, which makes the bill better, requiring the Iowa Tests to:

* Assess mathematics and English Language Arts for grades 3-11, including reading and writing, and science for all students in grades 5, 8, and 10, in the last quarter of the school year.
* Assess the Iowa Core standards in both content and rigor
* Accurately describe student achievement and growth for school, district and state accountability systems
* Provide valid, reliable and fair measures of student progress toward college and career readiness
* Meet the summative assessment requirements of ESSA
* Be available for both computer and pencil/paper formats (math, science, ELA – both reading and writing) but does not require a computer adaptive test.
* Requires peer review by an independent third-party evaluator to confirm alignment and the ability to meet the above requirements
* Requires Iowa Testing to make any adjustments necessary to meet the requirements if peer review finds the tests lacking.

**Other bills receiving floor action this week:**

[**HF 2458**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2458) **Future Ready Iowa** to the Governor: the bill is created to strengthen workforce development by establishing a registered apprenticeship development program, a volunteer mentoring program, a summer youth intern program, summer postsecondary courses for high school students that are aligned with high-demand career pathways, an employer innovation fund, and future ready Iowa skilled workforce scholarship and grant program and fund. The bill was approved 98:0 in the House and 47:0 in the Senate, sending it to the Governor. There is no appropriation in the bill yet, but that is expected to occur in the appropriations process.

[**HF 2354**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2354) **Student Data Protection:** this bill prohibits third party vendors with access to student data from using that data for target marketing. The bill makes exceptions for educational use. With unanimous support in the House and Senate, the bill is sent to the Governor. RSAI is registered as undecided.

[**HF 2283**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2283) **Expiration date of new teacher license** is signed by the Governor. This bill ties the expiration date of a beginning teacher to the end of the school year rather than the teacher’s birthday. RSAI is registered in support.

[**HF 2196**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2196) **Prohibition of texting** while operating commercial vehicle is signed by the Governor. RSAI is not registered on this bill.

[**SF 2113**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2311) **Suicide Prevention Training:** this bill originally required one hour of training with licensure renewal for certified staff regarding suicide prevention. The House amended and approved the bill, which instead requires one hour of training annually for all licensed school personnel to include both prevention and adverse childhood experiences and crisis (ACEC) identification and intervention. The bill requires school boards to adopt rules to implement the training. RSAI is registered as undecided. The Senate concurred in the amendment, sending it to the Governor.

[**SF 2114**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2114) **DE Code Corrections,** including elimination of a mandated second local assessment, is sent to the Governor. RSAI is registered in support.

[**SF 2274**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2274) **DE Citations**, which requires the DE to cite state or federal code references when asking local districts to report data back to the DE, is sent to the Governor. RSAI is registered in support.

[**SF 2342**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=SF2342) **Administrative Rules and Statutory Authority**: this bill prohibits all executive branch agencies from implementing or enforcing any standard, requirement or threshold, including any term or condition of a permit or license issued by the agency, unless clearly required or clearly permitted by state statute, rule adopted pursuant to this chapter, or a federal statute or regulation. The Senate concurs, sending it to the Governor. RSAI is registered in support.

[**SF 2364**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf2364) **School Safety Plans:** this billrequires plans in place by July 1, 2019. The bill requires local district to work with local law enforcement, emergency agencies, and to consider recommendations from DE and exempts the plans from Open Records law. The House amended the requirements for the annual safety drill, eliminating the requirement that all employees participate in the drill, giving options for what kind of drill it can be, adding a requirement that local law enforcement inform the board what is needed for the drill and requiring the board to approve the plan before a drill is conducted. The House amended the bill and sent it back to the Senate. RSAI is registered as undecided on the bill.

[**SF 475**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf475) **Education Omnibus Bill:** this bill includes online learning, CTE supplanting of local career and technical offerings under some conditions for small districts, student health working group, Bi-literacy seal for graduation, and limitation on DE guidance. The bill was amended in the House to include a mandate for one half unit of financial literacy in order to graduate and to prohibit an online school or provider from compensating parents for any decision to have their children enroll in the online school. RSAI is registered in support.

**Other bills of interest still in the mix:**

HF 633 Operational Sharing is still sitting in Senate Appropriations. Contact committee members and ask for their support.

Commercial and Industrial Property Tax Backfill bills haven’t moved since subcommittee action. Tax reform bills received no attention this week.

[**HF 2369**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf2369) **Limited Bond Election Dates**: 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 elections after January 2019. The Senate State Government Committee approved the bill. As this would restrict when schools could hold elections regarding bonding, likely bidding up construction costs, RSAI is opposed. The bill is on the Senate Calendar.

**Advocacy Actions this week:**

* Thank all senators, representatives and the governor for addressing the transportation and formula inequalities for school districts through SF 455. Include a thank you for setting 1% SSA at a time when the state budget is challenging.

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.

* Thank representatives and senators for passing SF 475, allowing all districts to offer online learning programs and especially allowing small school districts to work with community college CTE programs to meet offer and teach requirements when they cannot find a teacher to fill the CTE position and under other circumstances.
* Contact senators stressing the need to extend the operational sharing incentives, an RSAI priority, by moving HF 633 out of the Senate Appropriations Committee and getting approved and sent to the governor. This is an RSAI priority. See the RSAI position paper for background and talking points [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/6a2c1097022a45a9a169ec2796f226a4?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1). While you are connecting about HF 633, also remind them of the negative impact of vouchers on rural schools, SSB 3206. Share the map from the position paper found [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/449e52af3ba9f64925184531c7fb2291?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1).
* Continue State penny extension advocacy. Remind all legislators that extending the penny is critical to solve your infrastructure, school safety, equipment and technology needs without raising property taxes. An updated position paper has been posted on the RSAI web site [here](http://nebula.wsimg.com/05618c1a553cb9c963e254aba92cffbb?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1). Shore up members of the Ways and Means Committee in the House. See if your legislators are on the [House Ways and Means Committee Membership](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=683). Thank members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee for their unanimous support: [Senate Ways and Means Committee Membership](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=87&groupID=692).
* Contact senators and ask for them to oppose HF 2369 which limits school bond elections to the November election, rather than during the school special elections throughout the year. This bill limits local control, creates ballot fatigue with so many elections combined, increases delay and costs of construction, and has no lobbying entity registered in favor. See the lobbying declarations [here](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/lobbyist/reports/declarations?ga=87&ba=HF2369) and connect with your Senators this weekend.
* Connect one parent in your district to Parents for Great Iowa Schools. <https://p4gis.org/> They are helping parents find their advocacy strength in prioritizing public schools, both in terms of funding and state policy.

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