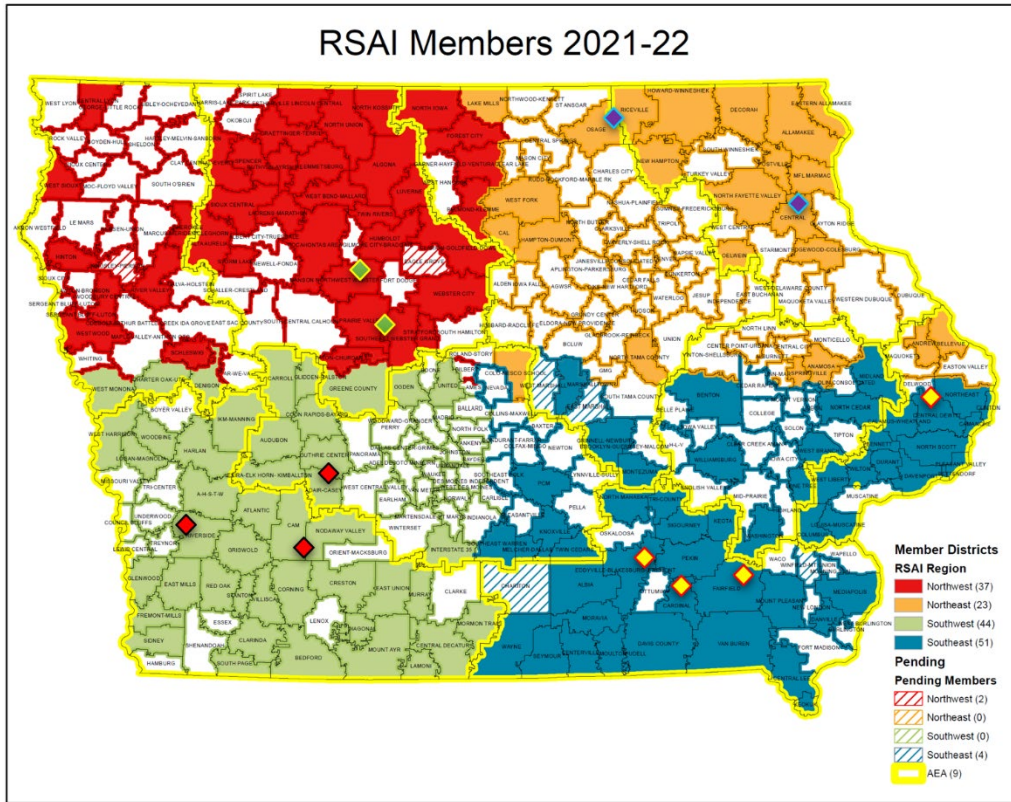


**New Process for Legislative Representatives to be elected at upcoming Regional Meetings:** With the change in bylaws at the last RSAI Annual Meeting, we are expanding representation on the RSAI Legislative Committee for FY 2023. RSAI has four regions, but with 9 AEAs, we have some missing voices we need to fill. There is no representative from either NW AEA or Grant Wood AEA currently on the legislative committee, as you can see by the map. And there could be more than one committee member from an AEA if each region that shared geography with the AEA elects someone. Come to the RSAI Regional Meeting with ideas for recruiting, nominating or volunteering to represent those areas needing a voice. See the list of meeting dates below. Registration link and more details on the RSAI website at <https://www.rsaia.org/region-meetings.html>.



RSAI Region	Meeting Date	AEA Partner	Meeting Location	Meeting Start Time
NW Region	April 5, 2022	Prairie Lakes AEA	Pocahontas	12:00 pm
NE Region	May 3, 2022	Keystone AEA	Elkader	12:30 pm
SW Region	May 4, 2022	Green Hills AEA	Red Oak	8:00 am
SE Region	May 4, 2022	Great Prairie AEA	Fairfield Arts & Convention Center, Fairfield	1:00 pm

## Legislative Session Still Going:

**School Choice:** SF 2369 Governor's School Choice Bill is now in the House Appropriations Committee. We still think the House will be challenged to come up enough votes and they may not even take it up. But we must keep advocating until the Session adjourns. There is a new carve out for rural schools that was amended onto the bill in the Senate. Here's what it did:

- Extends operational sharing through 2034 (currently last BEDS that counts Operational Sharing in the Oct. 2023, so its funded through 2024-25 school year).
- Adds SRO position equivalent of 3-student weighting (which really only means 2 students, or about \$15K, since a provision added last year lowered every weighting except for Superintendent by 1 student.)
- Sets up a new process to increase the 21-student cap to 24 students: District at the max can request the SBRC grant permission for increasing their cap to 24, based on demonstrated need for the position. It is then funded from the "Students First Operational Sharing Fund created in the bill."
- RSAI is still registered opposed to bill. There are a lot of talking points in the Call to Action on RSAI's web page, but in short:
  - Vouchers are not good for Iowa. If the legislature has \$55 million to invest in schools, they ought to invest that in public schools.
  - We will get the Operational Sharing extended down the road anyway. We can advocate for increasing the cap, too. Local control should be sufficient to add positions. Schools shouldn't need SBRC approval.

**Other things are tied up in the School Choice bill too, including elimination of Praxis.** Watch your email closely for updates. It would be good to call your Representatives and ask them to move the good pieces forward without the voucher provisions. See the updated Voucher Call to Action on the RSAI website for information and talking points.

A subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday on SF 2377 Teacher Recruitment Incentives, Intern License and Teach Iowa Scholar Eligibility:

The main portion of the bill which sent it to Ways & Means Committee is the Teacher hiring/retention incentive plan. It uses the Management Levy to provide an additional way to incentivize teachers to come to or stay in their schools. The Senate limited the incentives to no more than 10% of the starting teacher pay per teacher per year and required that the district commit to either Early Retirement or Teacher Recruitment for a 5-year period. The bill also prohibits districts from spending funds on both programs in the same budget year.

The 10% cap and the 5-year requirement tighten up the bill too far and in some ways gut the intent of the bill. We would definitely like to see the cap increased or removed, and ideally districts would be able to make a choice each year, whether to use the incentive plan or an early retirement plan.

Most districts already use the Management Levy for early retirement plans. It is our contention that hiring incentives could be considerably less costly than retirement plans and have no impact on property taxes through the management fund. Also, most school boards have no more interest in raising property taxes than the legislature does.

**RESOURCES:** Check out the RSAI website for Position Papers, weekly updates and other advocacy supports. Contact Dave Daughton or Margaret Buckton with any requests for assistance or specific advocacy responses to your legislators. See [www.rsaia.org](http://www.rsaia.org) for contact information and advocacy supports. Thanks for all you do for the students of your districts!