**RSAI Legislative Update   
March 12, 2021**

In this RSAI Weekly Report from the 2021 Legislative Session, find information about:

* Charter Schools in the House
* Bills on the Move this week
* Three items still pending

**Legislative Funnel Deadlines**   
The second funnel deadline is April 2, by which time bills must be approved by a committee in the other chamber (House Files out of the Senate Education Committee and vice versa.) There are some exceptions, including appropriations bills, ways and mean (tax policy) bills, leadership bills and oversight committee bills. With that deadline approaching, much of this past week was spent on floor work in both chambers.

[**HF 813**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf813) **Charter Schools.** RSAI is opposed to this bill. If the second chartering option of charters founded by outside entities without school board approval is removed, RSAI would register in support. See the February 26 Weekly Report for a complete bill description. The bill is on the House Calendar awaiting possible amendment and debate.

See the RSAI Legislative Website for an [updated Call to Action](https://www.uen-ia.org/call-action-charter-schools-house-calendar) with talking points and directions to reach out to House of Representative members now through when the bill is debated.

See [ISFIS Analysis of NAPCS Report](https://www.iowaschoolfinance.com/system/files/members/Public/ISFIS%20-%20NEPC%20Review%20of%20NAPCS%20Report%20Summary%20-%20Feb%202021.docx) linked here, which includes additional information about the impact of charter schools across the country. This information is useful in responding to Representatives who reply to you with assurance that the Charter schools are public, that they can’t discriminate, and that they provide additional options for parents.

**Bills on the Move**

**Bills on the Governor’s Desk or Signed by the Governor**

* [**SF 130**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf130) **Temporary Exemption to Income Limit for Board Member Conflict of Interest** (signed 3/8/21) RSAI supports
* [**SF 160**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf160) **100% in-person Learning Option** (signed 1/29/21) RSAI undecided
* [**SF 231**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf231) **Special Minor’s Drivers’ License** (signed 3/8/21) RSAI undecided
* [**SF 261**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf261) **College Student Aid Commission Nonprofit Authority** (awaiting signature) RSAI undecided
* [**SF 269**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf269) **SSA at 2.4%** (Signed 2/23/21) RSAI opposes
* [**SF 285**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf285) **All Iowa Opportunity Scholarships** – suspension or delay of participation (signed 3/8/21) RSAI undecided
* [**SF 289**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf289) **Powers and Duties of School Boards** (signed 3/8/21) RSAI supports
* [**HF 308**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf308) **Eligibility for Senior Year Plus** (signed 3/8/21) RSAI supports
* [**HF 386**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf386) **Strikes School Reporting of Nonprofit Organizational Membership** (signed 3/8/21) RSAI supports

**Senate Floor or Committee Action**

* [**SF 466**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf466) **Providers for Concussion Management** approved in the Senate, 48:0, over to House. RSAI supports.
* [**SF 478**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf478) **First Amendment Rights and Prohibitions**; 33:14, over to the House. RSAI is undecided.
* [**SF 544**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf544) **Tiered ELL Weighting** (.21 and .26) is on the Senate Calendar. RSAI supports.
* [**SF 545**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf545) **Learning Recovery Task Force** is on the Senate Calendar. RSAI supports.
* [**SF 546**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf546) **Private Instruction/Drivers’ Education** 28:17, over to the House.

**House Floor of Committee Action**

* [**HF 228**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf228) **Voluntary Diversity Plans**: Subcommittee of Sens. Sinclair, J. Smith and Zaun met 3.11.2021 and recommended to move the bill forward, 2:1. HF 288 is on the Senate Education Committee agenda for Monday, March 15. RSAI is opposed.
* [**HF 294**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf294) **Telehealth Reimbursements Billing Parity:** Approved by the House 95-1, goes to the Senate. Assigned to the Senate Human Resources Committee with a Subcommittee of Sens. Edler, Costello and Mathis assigned. RSAI supports.
* [**HF 318**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf318) **Preschool for young 5-year-olds**: Begins with the 2022-23 school year. Approved by House 96-0. In Senate Ed Committee Subcommittee of Sens. J. Taylor, Cournoyer, and Quirmbach assigned. RSAI supports.
* [**HF 602**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf602) **School Activity Fund Transfers:** Passed 94-2. In Senate Education Committee with a Subcommittee of Sens. Goodwin, Giddens, and Kraayenbrink assigned. RSAI supports.
* [**HF 604**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf604) **Deaf Language Acquisition:** Approved by the House 96:0. In Senate Ed Committee with a Subcommittee of Sens. Rozenboom, Sweeney, and Trone-Garriott assigned. RSAI is undecided.
* [**HF 605**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf605) **Tiered ELL Weighting** (.21 and .26 funding), Effective for 2021-22. 96:0, goes to the Senate where it is attached to companion bill SF 544 on the Senate Calendar. RSAI supports.
* [**HF 642**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf642) **Special Education Director Operational Sharing**: Appropriations Subcommittee of Reps. Brink, Kerr and Winckler recommended to move the bill forward, 3:0 on March 11. RSAI supports.
* [**HF 675**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf675) **Substitute Certification Flexibility was** approved 93:0 in House. It is now in the Senate Education Committee with a Subcommittee of Sens. Sinclair, Goodwin and J. Smith assigned. The Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on Monday, March 15. RSAI supports.
* [**HF 734**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf734) **Advanced Dyslexia Specialists** IRRC Approps: In House Appropriations Committee with a Subcommittee of Reps. Kerr, Latham, and Steckman assigned. RSAI supports.
* [**HF 770**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf770) **Teacher PD** counts for CEUs was approved 92:0 in the House awaiting assignment to Committee in the Senate. RSAI supports.
* [**HF 778**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf778) **School Building Demolition Fund** is assigned to the House Appropriations Committee with a Subcommittee of Sorensen, Brink, and Konfrost assigned. The bill originally was funded by diverting SAVE revenue, but that provision was removed in the House Economic Development Committee. RSAI is registered as undecided.
* [**HF 793**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf793) **ROTC as PE Credit** originated in the House Veterans Affairs Committee. It was approved in the House, 92:0, and is now over to the Senate. RSAI is registered as undecided.
* [**HF 795**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf795) **Seizure Disorder Individual Health Plans** and Training Work Group was approved 91:1, now moves to the Senate. RSAI supports the addition of the workgroup to study all health-related PD requirements, but still opposed the bill due to the training mandate.
* [**HF 796**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf796) **Broadband Grants** is in the House Appropriations Committee. The Subcommittee of Reps. Sorensen, Hall, Thompson, Williams and Wills met on March 11, recommending full committee discussion, 4:0. RSAI is registered in support.

**Three Items Still Pending: Online Learning/Virtual Snow Days, One-time Instructional Supplement, Educational Practices/Open Enrollment**

[**SF 467**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf467) **Online Learning/Virtual Snow Days:** this bill is on the Senate Calendar and would allow school boards to offer online/virtual instruction under certain conditions and allow up to 5 virtual days in place of inclement weather cancellations. The bill is awaiting an amendment to clarify that conditions of virtual learning, allowing districts to continue practices in place before the pandemic, and to specify infrastructure emergencies (such as a broken water main or natural disaster) to be added to inclement weather as a reason for virtual days. RSAI supports this bill.

[**HF 532**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf532) **Funding Supplement for In-person Instruction.** This bill is in the Senate Education Committee with a Subcommittee of Sens. Sinclair, Goodwin, and Quirmbach assigned. The bill appropriates $27.2 million for a one-time supplement, and then prorates the funding on a per pupil based on the budget enrollment count on Oct. 1, 2020 for instructional days served. The proration formula counts 100% in-person instruction of greater than 6 hours as one day, between 3-6 hours as a half day. If districts were in hybrid learning models, a day of more than 6 hours counts as half a day. There is no funding associated with 100% virtual instruction. The bill provides an exception for school districts impacted by the derecho storm requiring virtual instruction or a delayed start. Rep. Hite, floor manager of the bill in the House and House Education Committee Chair, explained the intent of the bill was to provide funding for the additional costs of providing 100% in-person instruction safely during the pandemic. RSAI appreciates the provision of funding for COVID-19 costs, but opposes the proration formula. RSAI school districts all had costs associated with the pandemic regardless of their Return-to-Learn model. RSAI opposes this bill. The Subcommittee will meet at 12:30 on Tuesday, March 16, to discuss the bill.

[**HF 808**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf808) **Education Practices and Open Enrollment:** this bill is on the House Calendar and received no action this week. RSAI is registered opposed, although we support aspects of the bill. Key provisions:

**Flexibility:** the bill allows school boards to transfer TLC ending balances to the Flexibility Account once the provisions of Chapter 284 are met. The bill also allows school districts to apply to DE for waivers of existing rules and statutes to try innovative practices. The flexibility initiatives may be funded with flexibility account balances or any other allowable funding. RSAI supports this provision.

**Education Tax Credits and Deductions:** The bill expands the tuition and textbook tax credits at a scaled-back amount compared to the earlier version of the bill. The bill expanding the tax credit to 25% of the first $2,000 and expands the eligibility to claim the credit to home school families. RSAI is opposed to this provision but appreciates this more modest approach than what was suggested in SF 159 Governor’s School Choice.

**Open Enrollment:** The amendment changes the varsity athletic eligibility wait period for students open enrolled from 90 school days to 90 calendar days, strikes that requirement that summer school days do not count toward the waiting period, and allows a student’s eligibility waiting period to be waived if agreed to by both the sending and receiving district. RSAI is undecided on both of these provisions. The amendment also adds to good cause for a late open enrollment that a student’s district of residence has a voluntary diversity plan in effect on January 1, 2021, and the open enrollment out of the district is for the school year beginning July 1, 2021. RSAI is opposed to this provision.

**School Board Role:** the bill specifies that it’s the school board’s responsibility for improving student achievement. RSAI is neutral on this provision.

**Work-based Learning Coordinator:** the billadds a work-based learning coordinator to shared operational functions. RSAI supports this provision.

**Connecting with Legislators:** Find biographical information about legislators gleaned from their election websites on the ISFIS site here: <http://www.iowaschoolfinance.com/legislative_bios> Learn about your new representatives and senators or find out something you don’t know about incumbents.

Find out who your legislators are through the interactive map or address search posted on the Legislative Website here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>

To call and leave a message at the Statehouse during the legislative session, the House switchboard operator number is 515.281.3221 and the Senate switchboard operator number is 515.281.3371. You can ask if they are available or leave a message for them to call you back.

**Advocacy Resources** To find Advocacy Resources such as Position Papers, RSAI Weekly Legislative Reports and video updates, RSAI Calls to Action when immediate advocacy action is required, testimony presented to the State Board of Education, the DE or any legislative committee or public hearing, and links to fiscal information that may inform your work, visit the RSAI legislative web page here: <http://www.rsaia.org/legislative.html>. Also, check out the new [RSAI Advocacy Handbook linked here](https://nebula.wsimg.com/4ea19def77546da168e8c2a7d2194fee?AccessKeyId=D081CCCCA2DCE3941176&disposition=0&alloworigin=1), and also available on the legislative page of the RSAI website

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