

AEA Interim Task Force is Established: meeting is scheduled for Dec. 9, 10:00 a.m., in room 103, at the Capitol. The Committee website anticipates the agenda and live stream links will be available, but those are not yet posted. Check page 12 of the [RSAI Enrolled Bill List](#) chapter of the 2024 Legislative Digest for the list of items HF 2612 requires the Task Force to study. HF 2612 requires the Task Force to report findings by Dec. 31, 2024 and requires the report to include an examination and evaluation of the impact on AEAs and their operations and services made by legislation enacted in the 2024 Session. Sens. Cournoyer (co-chair), Donahue and Evans and Reps. Siegrist (co-chair), Ehlert and Stone are the legislative members. Additional Public Members are listed on the Committee's [webpage](#).

New Crop of Legislators: Now that Iowa House and Senate members are known, information will unfold regarding leadership and committee placements. Check leadership positions for any of your Representatives/Senators. So far, here is what we know:

- House Republicans maintain leadership: Speaker Pat Grassley, House Majority Leader Matt Windschitl, Rep. John Wills as Speaker Pro Tempore and Rep. Henry Stone as the Whip.
- Senate Republicans retain top leaders, with some new names in other positions: Senate Majority Leader Jack Whitver and Senate President Amy Sinclair stay on. Sen. Ken Rosenboom (former Ed. Committee chair) replaces Sen. Zaun as President Pro Tempore and Sen. Mike Klimesh is the Majority Whip. Sens. Carrie Koelker, Adrian Dickey, Lynn Evans (also new Ed. Committee chair), and Tim Kraayenbrink are Assistant Leaders.
- Senate Democrats elected Sen. Janet Weiner as Minority Leader, Sen. Bill Dotzler as whip. New Assistant Leaders are Sens. Cindy Winckler, Molly Donahue, Claire Celsi and Izaah Knox.
- House Democrats re-elected Rep. Jennifer Konfrst as House Minority Leader and plan to select assistant leaders in December.

Senate Republican Committee Chairs

- Appropriations: Sen. Tim Kraayenbrink, R-Ft. Dodge
- Education: Sen. Lynn Evans, R-Aurelia
- Local Government: Sen. Scott Webster, R-Bettendorf
- Technology: Sen. Charlie McClintock, R-Alburnett
- Ways and Means: Sen. Dan Dawson, R-Council Bluffs
- Education Appropriations Subcommittee: Sen. Jesse Green, R-Boone
- Administrative Rules Review Committee : Sen. Mike Klimesh, R-Spillville

House Republican Committee Chairs

- Administrative Rules Review: Rep. Chad Ingels, R-Randalia
- Appropriations: Rep. Gary Mohr, R-Bettendorf
- Economic Growth and Technology: Rep. Ray Sorensen, R-Greenfield
- Education: Rep. Skyler Wheeler, R-Hull
- Government Oversight: Rep. Charley Thomson, R-Charles City
- Higher Education (This is a new committee) Rep. Taylor Collins, R-Mediapolis
- Local Government: Rep. Megan Jones, R-Sioux Rapids
- State Government: Rep. Jane Bloomingdale, R-Northwood
- Ways & Means: Rep. Bobby Kaufmann, R-Wilton
- Education Appropriations Subcommittee: Rep. Austin Harris, R-Moulton
- Federal and Other Funds: (This is a new committee) Rep. Martin Graber, R-Fort Madison

Post-Election Advocacy: Thank goodness that's over!! After all of the ballots are counted and winners announced, advocacy begins again. Although the 2025 Session does not convene until Jan. 13, December is a great time for outreach. Send a note of congratulations to winners. Offer to be a resource. Schedule a meeting to talk about key issues impacting your district. Invite legislators (incumbents and newbies) to tour your school (see Show & Tell with Legislators resources below). The Secretary of State's list of General Election Candidates found here <https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/pdf/candidates/generalcandidatelist.pdf> includes campaign or personal email addresses and phone numbers, so you don't have to wait until the Session starts in January to reach out. Call or email for assistance if you need help getting started.

Interim Update: HF 2545 Comprehensive Standards and Graduations Requirements Review Task Force has completed their three scheduled meetings, Oct. 23, Nov. 8 and 22. This committee has a longer duration, with an interim report, including initial findings and recommendations for policy changes, due to the Governor and Legislature on or before Dec. 31, 2024 and also, a final report, including findings and recommendations following public comment, due on or before July 1, 2025.

In addition to the Comprehensive Standards Committee and Graduation Requirements Committee, there is a third Committee to consider a Statewide Literacy Plan. Dir. Snow informed the committee members to expect to reconvene late next Spring. Continued work of the Task Force, including scope of the Committees' reviews, membership and agendas, is posted on DE's webpage here:

<https://educate.iowa.gov/hf-2545-comprehensive-review-task-force>

RSAI Advocacy Resources:

- 2024 RSAI Legislative Digest – to review anything that happened last session [2024 RSAI Legislative Digest - Complete Digest](#) - 9/19/2024
- One chapter of the Digest is the successes list, so discussion can lead off with a thank you, if that is appropriate. [2024 Legislative Digest - RSAI Legislative Successes](#)
- [Sample Questions for Legislators & Candidates](#) - Updated Fall 2024
- RSAI Priorities for the 2025 Session are found on the new RSAI 2025 Legislative Session webpage [here](#)
- Show & Tell With Legislators (joint effort of RSAI & SAI) includes these resources:
 - [Samples](#)
 - [Reporting Form](#)

Contact us with any questions, feedback or suggestions to better prepare your advocacy work.

Thanks to all of you for your energy and voice on behalf of the students in your schools!

RSAI 2025 Legislative Priorities:

This summary of RSAI 2025 Legislative Priorities, approved at the RSAI annual meeting, emphasizes the need for sustainable investment in Iowa's education system to meet rural school challenges of staffing, student needs, and equitable funding:

1. **Adequate Resources:** Increased State Supplemental Aid (SSA) is essential for Iowa schools to provide quality education that meets community expectations. The funding must be predictable, exceed inflation, and support effective budget planning.
 - **World-Class Education:** A 10% SSA increase (\$783 per pupil) is necessary to enhance education quality, reduce class sizes, and support staff retention.
 - **Sustain Current Status:** A 5% increase (\$392 per pupil) would help maintain competitiveness and address inflation.
 - **Continued Erosion:** A 2.5% increase (\$196 per pupil) would only partially cover rising costs, leading to potential cutbacks in services and staffing.
2. **Staff Shortages:** Policies must prioritize trust and improved compensation to attract and retain educators. Strategies include:
 - **Recruitment:** Flexibility for hiring incentives, grow-your-own programs, and continuation of apprenticeship grants which must be easier to administer.
 - **Retention:** Increased funding for salary supplements, flexibility and licensure simplification, continued IPERS improvements and support for mentoring and training.
 - **Competitive Compensation:** Addressing salary compaction issues and TSS inequities to ensure fair pay for all staff.
3. **Public School Prioritization:** Public schools should be adequately funded, and changes to Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) should ensure fair treatment between public and private schools.
4. **Addressing Student Needs:** All districts should be able to access 5% dropout prevention funding, and resources must focus on at-risk needs, with additional support for mental health services and poverty-related educational challenges.
5. **Quality Preschool Funding:** State funding for PK should be increased to 1.0 weighting for full time PK or half-time PK with wrap around services to ensure access and quality for all students, especially low-income families, and to empower parents of young children to enter the workforce.
6. **Incentives for Collaboration:** Extend incentives for whole-grade sharing, reorganization and operational sharing to enhance educational opportunities.
7. **Local Control:** Support local school boards in decision-making and provide flexibility to meet community needs.
8. **Equity in Funding Formula:** Address historical inequities in funding to ensure all students receive adequate resources.
9. **Bond Issue Simplification:** Require a simple majority to approve bond issues, offer additional special election dates, and remove the requirement for two votes to approve the total bond levy.
10. **Area Education Agencies (AEAs):** AEAs play a crucial role in supporting rural schools, and their funding and structure must be adequate to ensure continued support for essential services.