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Iowa children need Equitable Funding

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Each year, funding is provided to Iowa schools through a school aid formula that was developed in the early 70's with the intentions of providing high quality education to each and every child, no matter where they lived in our great state. Much has changed

in education over the last 45 years since the school foundation formula was developed. Since then, other significant inequities in funding have crept in. Transportation is arguably the most significant.

Because of numerous school closings and consolidations over the years, transportation costs have become enormous in many rural districts. Because these transportation expenses are paid from the general fund - the same fund used primarily to educate children, less money is available to educate Iowa's children in rural areas across the state. For example, because Davis County CSD is so large geographically, we can't help but spend about \$350,000 above the average district cost of transportation. That means that Davis County CSD has \$350,000 less to educate Davis County children.

The big question is simple. Should how far a student rides a bus to school determine the quality of education he or she receives? I have yet to meet anyone who will openly say "yes" to that question. However, this practice is exactly what is happening across this great state.

Another major funding issue across the state is the difference in level of funding provided by the current formula. Some schools are provided as much as \$175 per student more than a neighboring school district might get. This is because we have failed to fully address the inequity in per-pupil funding that was allowed when our current funding formula was developed. Davis County students receive \$175 less than the best funded public school. That accounts for roughly \$208,000 less than some other schools our same size. How does that make sense?

If we care about each and every Iowa child, we can no longer stand by and ignore the enormous inequities caused by a lack of attention to our antiquated funding

formula. No matter what Iowa county or town we are from or what party we may represent, we are all Iowans who care about each other. We are highly respected as people of Iowa because of those values. Let's do the right thing and ensure equitable funding is provided for each and every Iowa child.