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RSAI Region Meeting SE Region May 7, 2025



Call to Order & Welcome

RSAI Agenda - 2025 Regional Meetings

| RSAI Region | Meeting Date | Meeting Location | Meeting Time | Regional Representative |
|-------------|--------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| NW Region | 04/01/2025 | Prairie Lakes AEA 500 NE 6th Street Pocahontas | 11:30 Lunch; 12 Meeting | Justin Daggett |
| SW Region | 04/02/2025 | Green Hills AEA 212 E Coolbaugh St Red Oak | 11:45 Lunch; 12 Meeting | Paul Croghan |
| NE Region | 4/24/2025 | Ampersand Taproom, 110 South Frederick Oelwein | 2pm Meeting; 4pm Social | Nick Trenkamp |
| SE Region | 05/07/2025 | Fairfield Arts & Conv Center, with Great Prairie AEA 200 N Main St, Fairfield | 12 Lunch; 12:30 Meeting | Dan Maeder |



Agenda (call for approval)

- ❖ Introductions
- ❖ RSAI Overview and Processes
- ❖ Election to Leadership Group (if applicable)
- ❖ Election of Legislative Committee Reps
- ❖ Review of RSAI Bylaws
- ❖ Review of the 2025 Legislative Session To Date
- ❖ Discussion of Region Priorities for 2026 Session
- ❖ Brainstorming/Networking Discussion



Introductions (Current SE Region Leadership)

- ❖ Dan Maeder, Davis County CSD,
Leadership Group - SE Regional Representative (Term expires September 2026 but retiring this June 30)
- ❖ Scott Williamson, Eddyville Blakesburg Fremont CSD,
Leadership Group - At-Large Representative (term expires September 2026)
- ❖ Rich Schulte, Montezuma CSD,
Legislative Committee Representative (term expires June 2025)
- ❖ Mark Dohmen, North Cedar CSD,
Legislative Committee Representative (term expires June 2025)
- ❖ Mark Taylor, Centerville CSD
Legislative Committee Representative (term expires June 2025)
- ❖ Tom Messinger, Newton CSD
Legislative Committee Representative (term expires June 2025)
- ❖ Mike Van Sickle, Louisa Muscatine CSD
Legislative Committee Representative (term expires June 2025)



Introductions (RSAI & ISFIS)



- ❖ James Passick,
IT Director
- ❖ Ken Sturgis,
School Finance Director
- ❖ Larry Sigel,
School Finance Guru
- ❖ Margaret Buckton
RSAI Professional Advocate
- ❖ Jen Albers,
RSAI Support & Accountant
- ❖ Dave Daughton,
RSAI Grassroots Advocate



Introductions (all attendees)

- Name _____
- District Role _____
- One Sentence: What's the best thing happening in your school district today?



RSAI Overview and Process



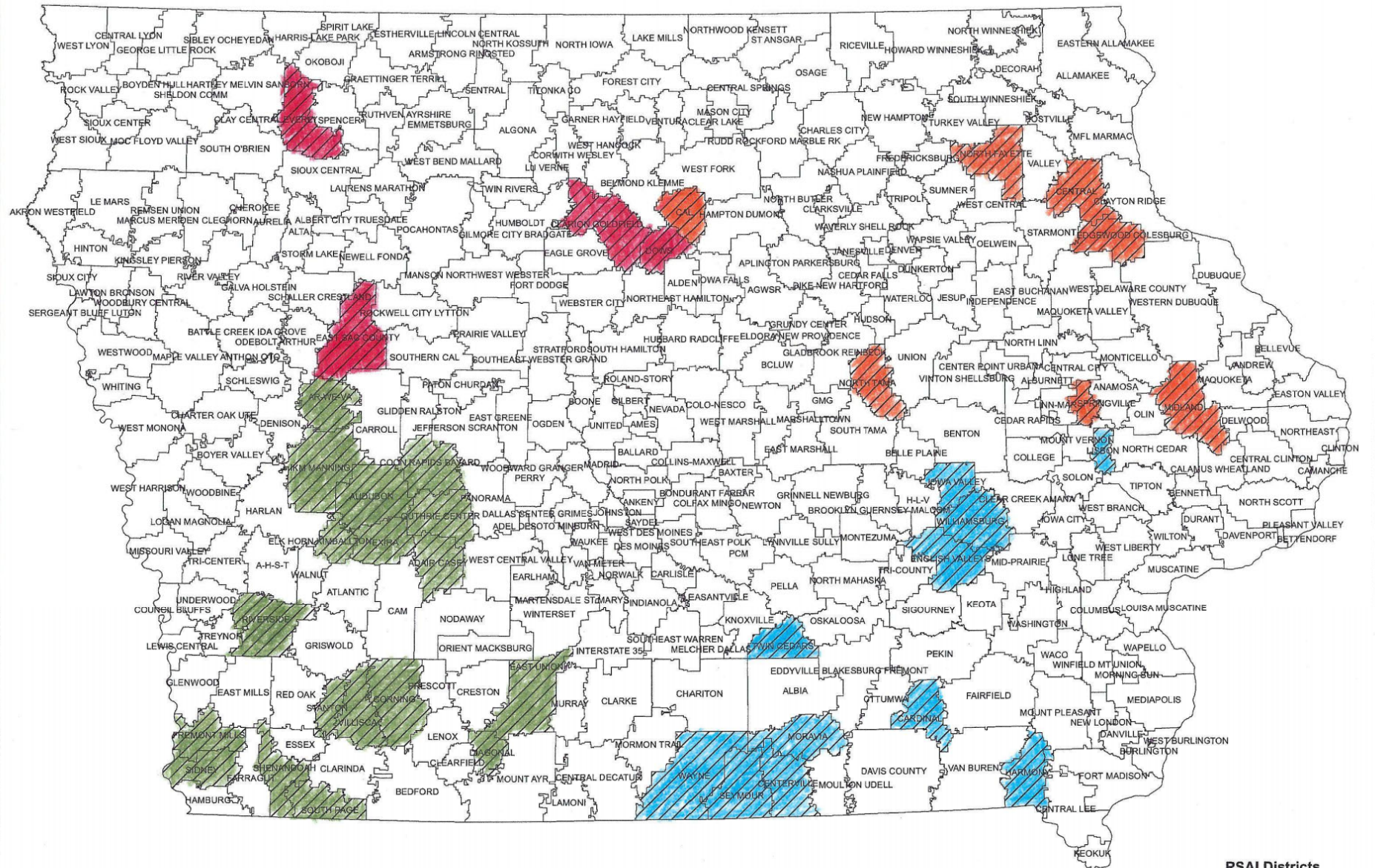
History of RSAI

The Rural School Advocates of Iowa began with a few rural school leaders getting together in 2013 to discuss many things:

- Why were rural school voices not represented in statewide decision-making?
 - Why did funding formulas not recognize transportation and sparsity factors?
 - Why did state policy always seem to have a “one-size-fits-all” approach that left little flexibility to rural schools?
 - What could rural school leaders do to change this situation to benefit students in rural schools?
- July 1, 2014 RSAI officially formed with 41 member districts

RSAI Membership

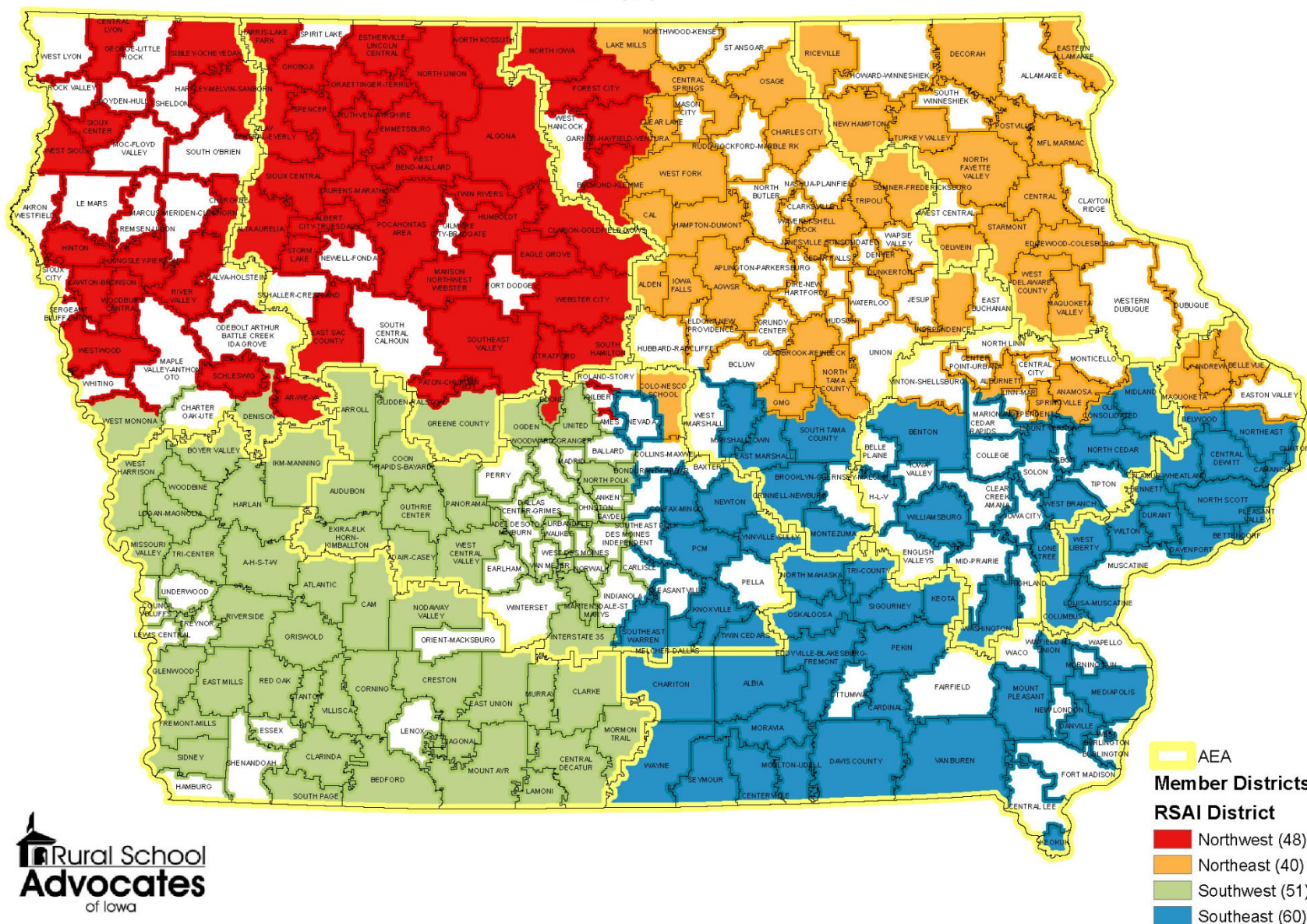
July 1, 2014



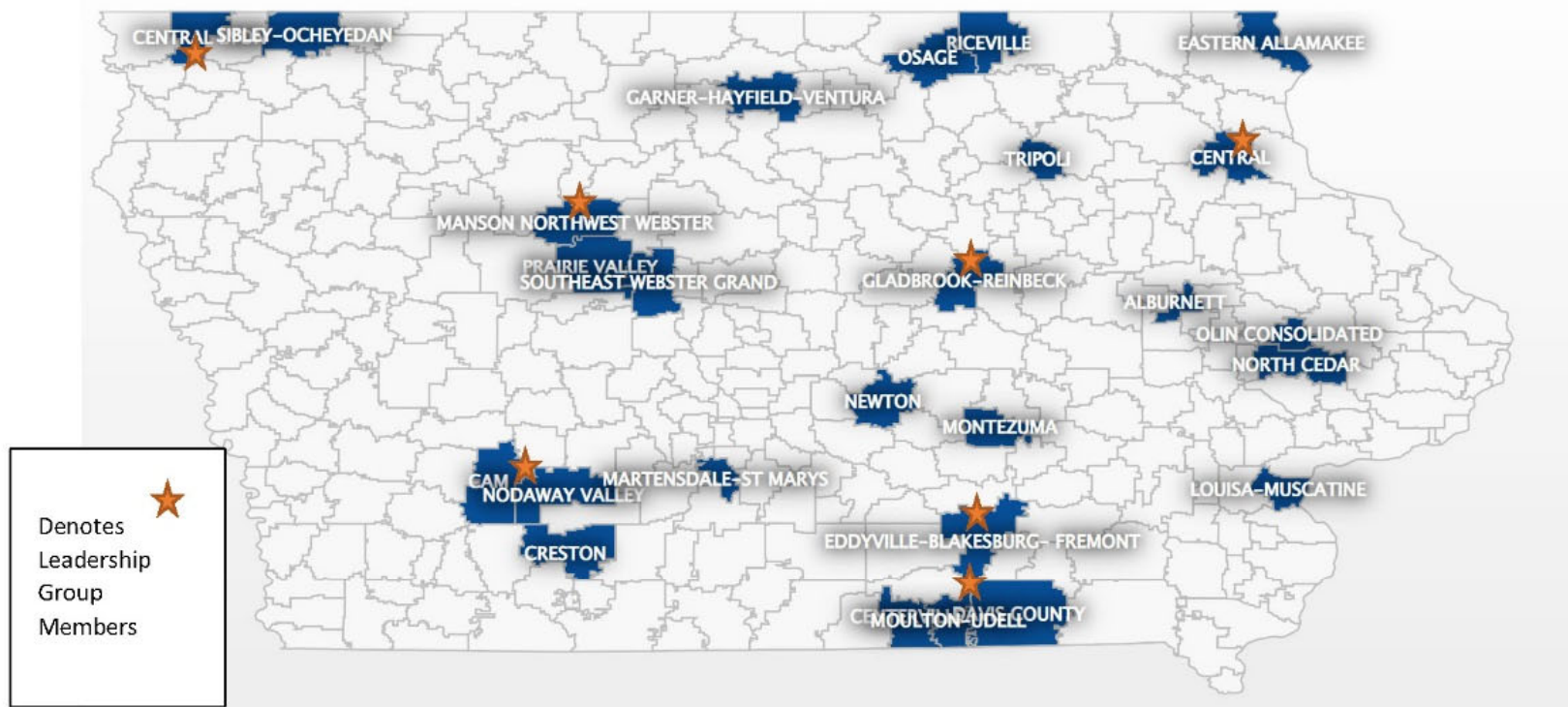
Date: 7/7/2014

RSAI Members 2024-25

As of 3/28/2025



2024-25 RSAI Leadership Group and Legislative Committee



| Leadership Group Members | | | Legislative Committee Members | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Region | Name | District | Region | AEA | Name | District |
| NE | Nick Trenkamp | Central/Eastern Allamakee | NE | Grant Wood | Will Dible | Alburnett |
| NW | Justin Daggett | Manson NW Webster | NE | Keystone | Barb Schwamman | Osage/Riceville |
| SE | Dan Maeder | Davis County/Moulton-Udell | NE | Central Rivers | Jay Marley | Tripoli |
| SW | Paul Croghan | CAM/Nodaway Valley | NW | Central Rivers | Ken Kasper | Garner Hayfield Ventura |
| At-Large | Brent Jorth | Central Lyon | NW | Northwest | Stan DeZeeuw | Sibley Ocheyedan |
| At-Large | Scott Williamson | Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont | NW | Prairie Lakes | Brian Johnson | Southeast Valley |
| At-Large | Caleb Bonjour | Gladbrook Reinbeck | SE | Great Prairie | Mark Taylor | Centerville |
| | | | SE | Mississippi Bend | Mike Van Sickle | Louisa-Muscatine |
| | | | SE | Central Rivers | Rich Schulte | Montezuma |
| | | | SE | Heartland | Tom Messinger | Newton |
| | | | SE | Grant Wood | Mark Dohmen | North Cedar/Olin |
| | | | SW | Green Hills | Deron Stender | Creston |
| | | | SW | Heartland | Bill Watson | Martensdale-St. Mary's |
| | | | | Plus all three At-Large Leadership Group Members | | |

RSAI Relationships

- RSAI is recognized as the Iowa affiliate of the **National Rural Education Association (NREA)** connecting members to rural school leaders nationwide, an annual conference focused on the needs and successes of rural schools



- Lends Iowa's voice to a collective effort in our nation's Capitol through membership in the **Rural Schools Collaborative**.



RURAL SCHOOLS
COLLABORATIVE

- Member of **Iowa Rural Development Council** to network and collaborative w/rural leaders across all areas of economic development.



Member Benefits

- ✓ Advocacy presence at the Iowa Capitol focused on RSAI priority issues
- ✓ Weekly legislative update reports and recap videos to share the latest news from the statehouse and calls to action when needed
- ✓ A voice to advocate with the executive branch and represent rural schools on various task forces and stakeholder committees convened by DE.
- ✓ Advocacy resources for local leaders to use, including position papers, advocacy tool kits, talking points, maps, and school finance estimates
- ✓ Assistance with communications, letters to the editor or sample letters to legislators
- ✓ Easy to share information, such as RSAI Legislative Priorities Video, to inform school boards, staff, and stakeholders.
- ✓ RSAI is the state affiliate of the National Rural Education Association, which brings access to NREA research, updates about happenings in Washington, networking
- ✓ Free Summer regional meetings and RSAI annual conference in October.
- ✓ Authentic grassroots development of legislative priorities in a one district one vote democratic process.
- ✓ Free access to NASDTEC teacher licensure checks with your RSAI membership. Learn more about the program [here](#).
- ✓ Discount on ISFIS Policy-hosting Service
- ✓ Collective purchasing power as a group, attracting needed supports at discounted prices

***Networking, Sharing, Best Practice
Connections with other like districts***

RSAI Corporate Sponsors 2024-25



www.rsaia.org/corporate-sponsors

RSAI Annual Meeting

<https://www.rsaia.org/annual-meeting.html>

- Meet in October, hear reports, budget, fee schedule, elect officers, approve priorities
- Members get one vote per district (affiliate members, guests and nonmembers are welcome but asked to register so we have enough food)
- Outside speaker
- Network
- Share a good meal

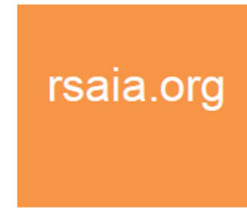


Election of RSAI Regional Representative to the Leadership Group (SE Region)

- **Dan's Regional Seat term expires Sept. 2026, however, we need a replacement effective July 1, 2025 to serve out the term, so election is needed.**

(There are no term limits in the Bylaws)

- Scott's At Large Seat expires Sept. 2026.
- Caleb's At Large Seat expires Sept. 2027.



Election of RSAI Regional Representative to the Legislative Committee

- Office is a 1-year appointment, but no term limits.
- By-laws allow additional representatives so each AEA has at least one.
- Representative attends August Legislative Committee Meeting in Des Moines, attends the October Annual Meeting, and supports legislative advocacy efforts throughout the Legislative Session.

*(Maps show membership & current representation.
Thanks to those serving during the 2025 Session!)*



Review of RSAI Bylaws

Any changes needed?

Process for Changes:

- Comments/recommendations are shared with the RSAI Bylaws Committee.
- Bylaws Committee make recommendations to the Legislative Committee.
- Legislative Committee makes final recommendation to members at the Annual Meeting (which requires a 2/3 vote for approval).



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Summary of 2025 Legislative Session (so far) RSAI Priority Action



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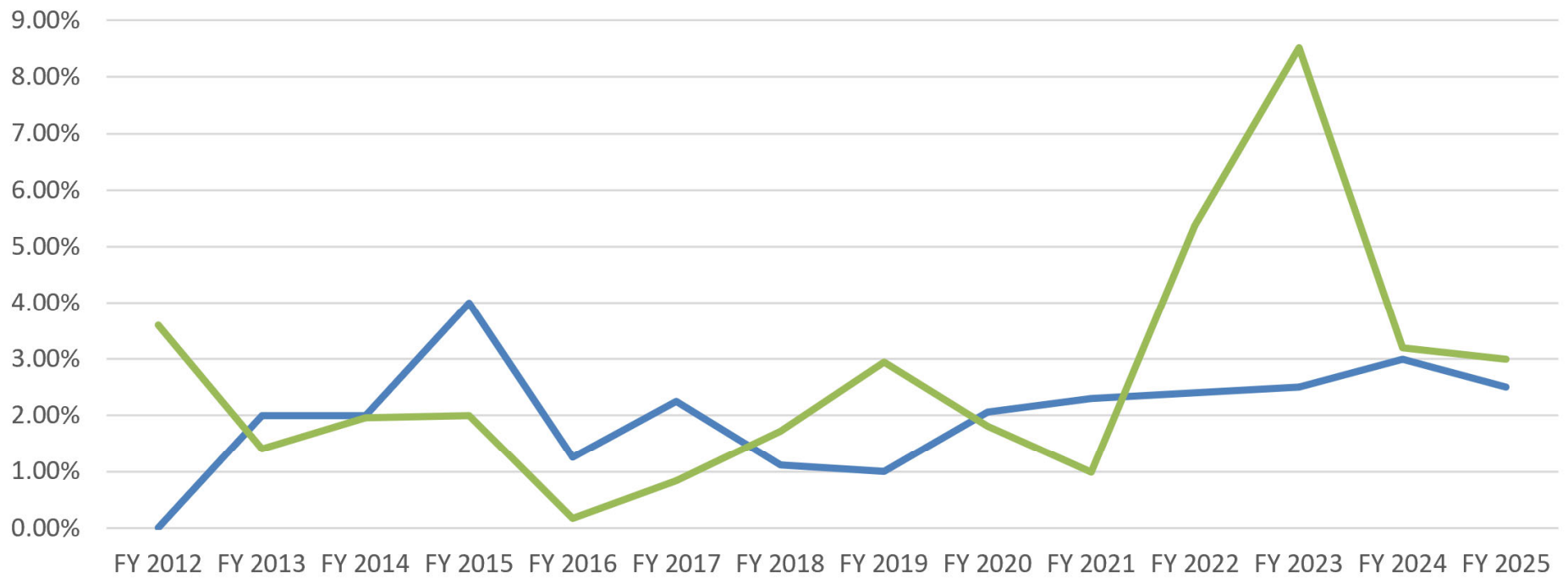
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SSA, Formula Equity, Operational
Sharing, Adequate Funding,
Teacher Pay, AEAs

SSA Status SF 167 Passed, not yet signed by the Governor

- Senate at 2% SF 167 (DCPP, Weightings, Categoricals, PK, DoP, ISL, ESAs)
- Adds more:
 - transportation equity
 - DCPP and SCPP inequity by \$5 PP (closes the gap to \$130 per pupil)
 - increases operational shared weighting cap to 25 students (currently 21)
- Supplemental \$14 appropriation for education support personnel in HSB 335 House Standings Appropriations Version

SSA v CPI



| Dates Of Arbitration Hearings Held For Non-Public Safety Units | CPI-U As Determined By US Department Of Labor (Advanced Six Months By EAB) |
|--|--|
| (Jan) 1/1-1/31 | 2.70% |
| (Feb) 2/1-2/28 | 2.60% |
| (Mar) 03/1-03/31 | 2.50% |
| (Apr) 4/1-4/30 | 2.60% |
| (May) 5/1-5/31 | 2.60% |
| (June) 6/1-6/30 | 3.00% |
| (July) 7/1-7/31 | 3.40% |
| (Aug) 8/1-8/31 | 3.10% |
| (Sept) 9/01-9/30 | 2.70% |
| (Oct) 10/1-10/31 | |
| (Nov) 11/1-11/30 | |
| (Dec) 12/01-12/31 | |

<https://eab.iowa.gov/public-collective-bargaining/impasse-mediation#consumer-price-index-cpi-for-midwest-region>

Teacher Shortage Priority

- **HF 787 TSS calculation** + SSA Growth + error correction for experience, but also includes:
 - TeachIowa Job Posting Platform Resurrected
 - \$50K for returning IPERS recipient retirees
 - Flexibility for student teaching for apprentice or other teachers with classroom experience
 - Out-of-state placement excess costs shared across the system
 - On House Calendar
- **SF 206 Management Fund for Recruitment and Retention** program is still stuck in Senate W&M (dead)
- **SF 286 NBCTP:** National Board Certified Teachers Program carry forward repurposed for Scholarships for Dyslexia Certification (HF 272) (Both bills in their respective Appropriations Committees and likely dead)

Board Authority/Local Control

HSB 31 [#] School Start Date & SF 250: bills that would have expanded flexibility are likely dead, approved by their respective Education Committees.

HF 392 Year-Round School Calendar for grades 9-12 on the Senate Calendar (or entire districts, since K-8 already allowed). Signed by the Governor.

HF 395 School Bus Driver Training: requires DE to accept proof of successful completion of entry-level driver training (ELDT) as long as the course included passenger endorsement training and school bus endorsement training curriculum. Requires DE and DOT to collaborate on administrative rules establishing minimum course requirements and standards. (Amended by Senate and on the House Calendar) Requires bus driver with CDL to have passenger and school bus endorsement. Allows school districts to determine if the bus driver must complete an additional course. Requires DE and DOT to establish minimum course content. If the district requires course completion, requires that the bus driver complete it either before employment or within 6 months.

Board Authority/Local Control

SF 277 Chronic Absenteeism Clean-up: Fixes certified letter issue, clarifies exceptions, has model policies for county attorneys, allows district discretion on school engagement meetings (focus on students for whom absences are impacting achievement). Signed by the Governor.

SF 444 WGS/Reorganization Extension through 2030: Exempt from the funnel (appropriations impact). Updated in the Property Tax Overhaul bills, so it's on their radar, but unknown if they will get it done this Session. (On the Senate Calendar, dead due to second funnel)

HF 579 At-Risk/ Dropout Prevention: Allows increase in cap gradually up to 5% if approved by voters, adding ½% annually. Approved by House and Senate Education Committee. In Senate Ways and Means Committee. Likely dead.

HF 522 Therapeutic Classroom Incentive Fund: Allows (but does not require) school districts to use grant funds for healthy foods and to improve lighting. (in Senate Education Committee dead due to second funnel)

Board Authority/Local Control

HF 856 Banning DEI Efforts: Prohibits state and political subdivisions from spending any money from any source on DEI, includes exceptions, creates a court cause of action. Prohibits any effort to promote, as the official position of the district, widely contested opinion referencing unconscious or implicit bias, cultural appropriation, allyship, transgender ideology, microaggressions, group marginalization, anti-racism, systemic oppression, social justice, intersectionality, neopronouns, heteronormativity, disparate impact, gender theory, racial privilege, sexual privilege, or any related formulation of these concepts. House Unfinished business calendar.

Operational Sharing Changes

- SF 167 raises the cap to 25 (awaiting Governor signature)
- SF 168: 3 positions outside of the cap (SRO, MH, SW). (On Senate Calendar, dead due to second funnel)
- HF 515: SRO at 4 pupil weighting instead of 2. (In Senate Education Committee, dead due to second funnel)

SF 583 Threat/Safety Assessment Teams: allows districts to have them and share information with other entities. Signed by the Governor.

Governor's Initiatives

HF 782 Cell Phone Restrictions: On House Calendar. (Social media impact curriculum for middle school and PD eliminated from the bill.) Senate amended to require model policies from DE be available by May 1. House approved. Governor signed it.

HF 784 Math Initiative: Requires DE to develop of family-centered resources to support mathematics learning at home and requires schools to assess students' mathematics proficiency three times a year. Requires schools to create individual math plans for students nonproficient on at least two of those three screeners. Requires progress monitoring every 2 weeks and defines prescriptive interventions for K-6 students until the student is proficient. Requires the DE to provide PD for schools with student proficiency needs, based on DE capacity. (Enrolled, but not yet signed by the Governor.)

Governor's Initiatives

SF 445 & HF 623 PK/CC Partnership: Creates a process for new providers of four-year-old PK, termed a community-based provider, to directly participate in the SVPP without school district partnership. Enables these providers to receive state preschool foundation aid directly. Provides funding for these community-based provider programs in the initial year of a program based on the number of students served (school district PK budgets are based on the prior year PK count and there is no funding for expansion). The bill transfers responsibilities from the child development coordinating council to the DE, requiring DE oversight and accountability for at-risk early childhood programs. Requires the DE to evaluate PK programs including curriculum and instruction, and to establish an accountability system. Establishes a pilot program for child care continuum partnership grants operated by the DHHS. Reduces number of Early Childhood Iowa Regions and repurposes some of the Shared Visions funding for more 4-year-old PK slots. Senate amended the bill to delay ECI governance changes until July 1, 2026 and to specify the funding changes. Approved by the Senate. On the House Calendar attached to HF 623.

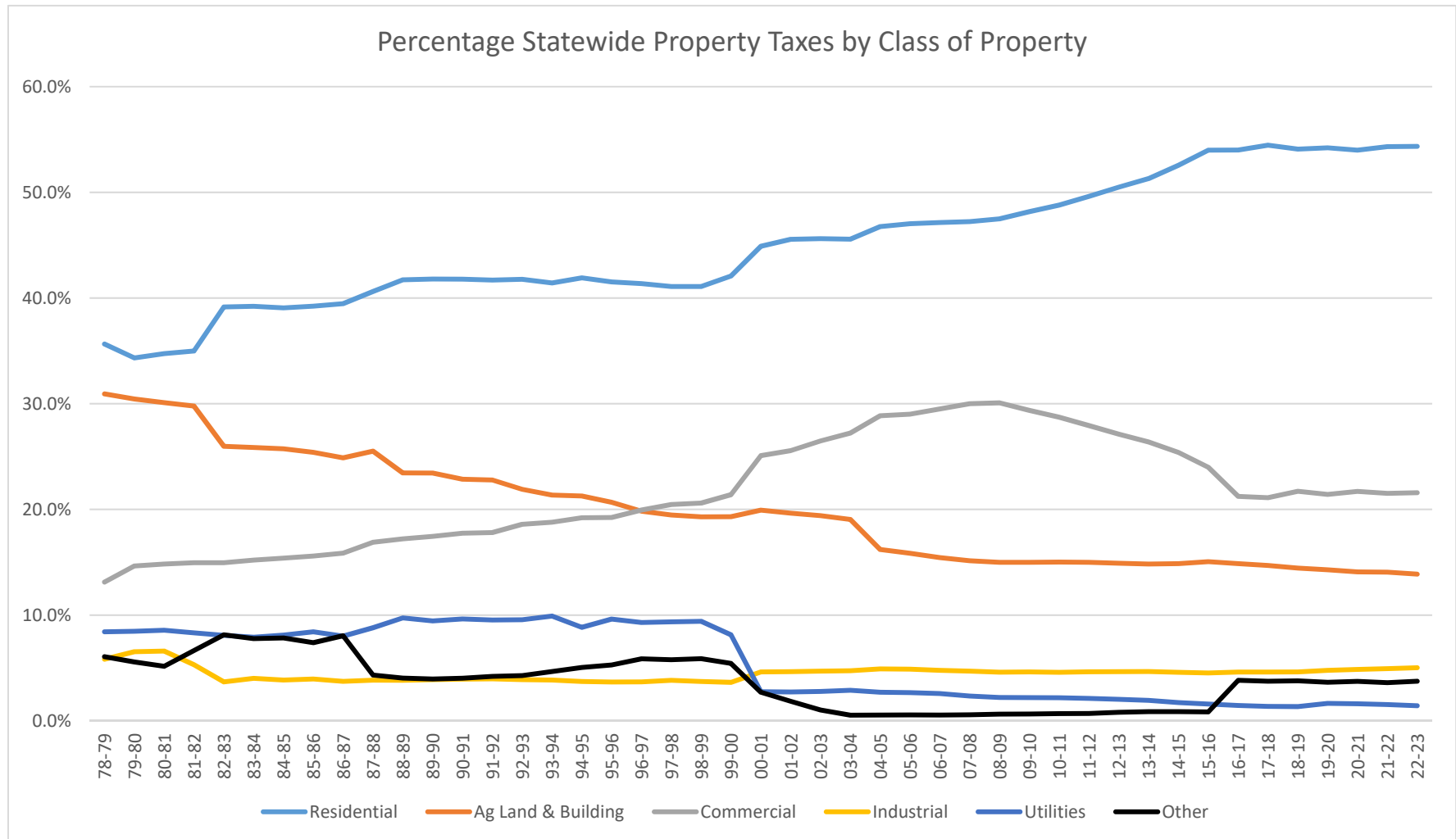


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Iowa School Finance Information Services

Property Tax Reform Round II Details, Concerns and Next Steps

Class of Property Discussion

- ~What has been the historical trend of taxes paid by class of property on percentage basis?



Source: Department of Management

PTR Round II New Bills

HSB 328 in House Ways and Means. Subcommittee of Reps. Kauffman, Bloomingdale, McBurney, Wilson and Wulf. **SSB 1227 in Senate Ways and Means.** Subcommittee of Sens. Dawson, Peterson, Rowley, Schultz and Winckler.

Details:

- Flips a switch: Eliminates rollbacks and cuts levy rates July 1, 2026. Doubles the homestead exemption to \$50K. Buys down school additional levy effective July 1, 2026. *Senate Amendment has 10 year phase out of rollbacks. Changes homestead exemptions to 25% not to exceed \$125,000 effective July 1, 2026.*
- Limits City/County Valuation growth, but allows more if inflation (CPI-U) is higher. Defines new construction and adds value of new construction above the 2% limit. *Senate Amendments changes some terms in new valuations and CPI-U growth limitations.*

PTR Round II New Bills

Impact on school bonding/infrastructure capacity:

- Halves PPEL and Debt levy rates July 1, 2026
 - 0.165 BPPEL (**Amendment sets 0.24**)
 - 0.67 VPPEL (**Amendment sets 1.18**)
 - 1.35 (**1.89**) and 2.025 (**2.84**) for bond issue thresholds
 - *Removes the blackout period or moratorium on votes from version I.*
 - Specifies that levies approved before July 1, 2026 are subject to these rates.
- Allows board resolution by April 30 preceding the budget year if debt obligation is due or refunded or refinanced. However, requires any refund or refinance in the year beginning July 1, 2025, cannot exceed 50% (**Senate Amendment 70%**) of the original levy rate. (*Does not remove IC 76.2 allowing levy above the rate limitation in law to make payments on debt.*)
- Cancels and redirects PTER diversion into the SAVE fund. Returns any remaining PTRP and PTER funds transferred back to SAVE or GF. (Somewhere between \$80-\$100 PP increase in SAVE capacity) **Senate Amendment uses PTER diversion to help pay for state cost of 100% Foundation Threshold.**

S Amendment lowers PPEL and Debt by 30% effective 7.1.26.

PTR Round II More Details

- Eliminates wind rollback (taxed on 0-25% of net acquisition cost for 6 years, then at 30% going forward.) Will jump to 100%.
- Adds Education Services and Media Services amounts to combined district cost (becomes state aid with 100% of foundation threshold)
- Lowers school formula levies:
 - Regular foundation base set at 100%
 - Special education foundation base set at 100%
 - Reorg incentives (cuts the three thresholds in half) *(Senate Amendment cuts three thresholds to 70%)*
 - Sets uniform foundation levy at \$2.97 *(Senate Amendment at \$4.48662 per \$1,000 taxable valuation.)*

PTR Round II More Details

- Management Fund
 - Requires districts report to SBRC if ending balance exceeds 100% FY 2025 total expenditures by Nov. 15, 2025.
 - Requires SBRC to review and determine appropriateness of establishing Management Fund unexpended fund balance limitations for fiscal years beginning on or after July 1, 2027. Requires SBRC to make recommendations to GA by Feb. 1, 2026.
 - Limits Management Fund Taxing Authority based on unspent balances beginning July 1, 2027.

PTR Round II More Details

(Phases down management fund carry forward balance limitation on budget year levy)

| Fiscal Year | Maximum Allowable Fund Balance (% of Prior 3-Year Avg. Expenditures) |
|-------------|---|
| 2027-28 | 180% |
| 2028-29 | 175% |
| 2029-30 | 170% |
| 2030-31 | 165% |
| 2031-32+ | 160% |

To calculate the maximum for FY 2028, take the average expenditures of FY2024, FY2025, and FY2026, multiply by 180%, and subtract 2026 unexpended fund balance

How much MF Ending Balance is Justified?

- Cash flow and balance aspects both at play
- Property, Casualty & Loss Premiums due July 1
- Local Government Risk Pool due by July 31
- Equipment Maintenance Insurance Program (Break-Fix)
- Reserve of Deductibles (higher wind and hail deductibles now required)
- Planning ahead for early retirement plan and actual early retirement expenditures
- Planning ahead for possible litigation judgement/claims (any examples of significant judgments ordered? Court Costs?)
- Increased premiums due to bad workers comp experience?
- Do refunds paid by insurance impact ending balance?

Next Steps

- The Subcommittees of the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees must schedule a meeting to move the bill forward to the full Committee. **Senate Subcommittee met 5/7/2025. Sen. Dawson said they are still taking input and this is not yet the final version.**
- The Ways and Means Committees will have to meet and move the bills forward.
- Once a bill is approved by W&M, the LSA fiscal staff is required to publish a fiscal note, which estimates the impact of the bill's provisions on the state budget and local governments.
- The Full House and Senate bodies will need to approve the bill in each chamber in an identical form.
- Find any and every opportunity to contact legislators.

Next Steps

- Talk to your financial experts about possible impact on your district.
- Check out the W&M Committees for any of your Reps. and Sens.
 - Senate:
<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=91&groupID=692>
 - House
<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/committee?ga=91&groupID=683>

Talking Points

- Take precautions to prevent unintended consequences (e.g., add in SBRC authority for a school board to levy management fund in spite of the limitation for unique or unusual circumstance)?
- How does this complicated proposal change their own property taxes, or those of their neighbors, school district constituents?
- Encourage a deliberate, careful review of the impact. Continue to work on these proposals over the interim rather than rush something through and discover an unintended consequence later.
- Schools appreciate improvements in the bill, including removing PPEL and Debt Levies from the 2% growth limit. However, cutting those levies further than valuations will grow, lowers PPEL and debt levy capacity statewide (significantly for many school districts.)

Talking Points

- Bad timing: Elevated school safety needs, cybersecurity/technology expenses, and the need to right-size facilities for changing enrollment all mean schools need every bit of PPEL and Debt capacity their voters are willing to approve.
- Setting PPEL and Debt at 2/3rds of prior levy rates would be closer to current statewide capacity (but there will still be some losers). Using the SAVE for state funding of formula rather than as support for schools means more losers.)
- There is not a significant change to agricultural land valuation. Rural schools will be the most hurt by changes to PPEL and Debt Levy capacity.
- Pay for the additional levy buydown with funds out of the Taxpayer Relief Fund, (not SAVE) to ensure the State can continue to pay for adequate school funding and other essential state services.



Legislative Priorities Discussion: (Tracking form in your packet)

Find the 2025 RSAI Priorities list in the packet or on the RSAI website at:

<https://www.rsaia.org/2025-legislative-session.html>

1. Are there any that need to be removed?
2. Any that need to be added?
3. Any significant (or suggested) policy or direction changes on those already on the list?

Small group or whole group discussion. We can go through them one at a time or consider the whole list with one vote. It's up to the attendees to decide how to proceed.



RSAI Legislative Priorities 2026

See the RSAI website meeting tab for more information such as RSAI Legislative Digest, Position Papers which will be updated after language is finalized during the process, Legislative Priorities, and this PPT and meeting minutes on the Regional Meeting tab. <http://www.rsaia.org/>

Suggestions and recommendations from the Regional Meeting Attendees will be compiled and shared with the Legislative Committee. Legislative Committee will recommend final priorities for approval by members at the Annual Meeting in October.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR VOICE on behalf of rural students!

- Watch for RSAI Legislative Digest
- RSAI Priority Survey later this Summer
- Stay connected through the Interim
- Let us know what you need to beef up your advocacy efforts.
- See you in October at the RSAI Annual Meeting!

Professional Advocate

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