

## UEN Call to Action School Funding Adequacy and Timing Jan. 31, 2017

**Education Funding Proposal:** [HSB 55](#) and [SSB 1028](#) were entered into the legislative system late last week, described as “bill shells”, to which amendments would be applied. The House and Senate had identical amendments, presented in committees Monday afternoon/evening. Rep. Rodgers, in the House Appropriations Subcommittee, described the assumptions of what were amended onto the bill shell in Appropriations Committee:

- Sets the cost per pupil increase at 1.11%, which is estimated to cost a net \$40 million in state commitment once the TLC cost in the formula of \$54 million is offset by the elimination of TLC grant funds in the education appropriations budget.
- Majority caucus intent to continue to absorb what would otherwise be a property tax impact to increasing the state cost per pupil.
- Continuation of \$15 million cut to AEAs (that will be in the Standings appropriations bill, not in this one.)
- Change in the timing of the decision, requiring the legislature to set the cost per pupil within 30 days of the release of the Governor's budget in the base year (for the upcoming school year beginning July 1 of the state school year but not for the subsequent year.)
- Given these assumptions, the LSA staff estimates a \$73 increase in the cost per pupil, for a new state cost per pupil of \$6,664 for FY 2018.
- The bills, as approved by committee, are now [SF 166](#) and [HF 136](#).
- UEN is registered opposed to both bills.

### Talking Points:

- **Start with thank you's:** Thank you for not cutting PK-12 education in the deappropriations for FY 2017. Thank you for working on education funding now to meet the 30-day deadline for FY 2018. Thank you for working on inequities in the system, including transportation, inequality in the formula and needs of students (poverty, English-language learners, PK) as well as flexibility.
- **It's not just this year:** FY 2018 will be the 7<sup>th</sup> out of 8 years in which the cost per pupil was set lower than the continued cost of doing business.
- **Schools are being asked to do more:** Iowa schools are working hard to educate all students, have the highest graduation rate in the nation with more than 90% of students graduating with their class. However, students have greater needs than ever before, increasing poverty, more language challenges, mental and other health challenges, yet increasing expectations for success in Career and Technical Education, preparation for workforce or post-secondary success.
- **Return on Investment:** investments in education **net a return on investment bigger than commensurate investment results in the stock market**<sup>1</sup>.

**Contacts: Please contact all Representatives and Senators, regarding the importance of investing in public education and the success of Iowa students.** From the link below, you can access individual legislative pages to get email, phone and home address. They can also be reached when in Session. Call the Senate switchboard at (515) 281-3371 or the

House switchboard at (515) 281-3221 and ask to speak with them or leave a message. Find your legislators' contact information here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>

You may also wish to contact Senate and House Leadership: Their contact information is found here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/leadership>

**Engage Parents:** Share this information with parents and explain what happens in your school district with 1.1% increase in the cost per pupil. Encourage them to call, write letters or email their legislators.

**Business Leaders:** *if you know a member of the business community who has been supportive of local education issues and your schools, encourage them to call or email as well.*

**UEN Priority on funding:** Invest in Iowa's Future: Adequate funding is required to fulfill the goal of restoring Iowa's first in the nation education status. Adequate funding is required to deliver world-class learning results for students. Adequate funding is required to develop a world-class workforce to secure Iowa's economic future. Iowa's investment in public education should mirror Iowa's economic growth and make up for shortfalls when the economy is robust. A strong school finance system requires commitment to the following principles:

- Primacy – set it first.
- Adequacy – set it high enough to deliver a successful future for students
- Equity – improve fairness (transportation, formula equality, poverty and ELL needs)
- Flexibility – give local leaders authority to decide how best to spend funds on students
- Supplement not supplant – make sure it's real new resource for schools
- Cost controls – consider the impact of expenditure reforms on local schools' ability to attract and retain qualified staff in the classroom.

The UEN Issue Brief: *Funding Adequacy: State Percent of Growth* is found on the UEN legislative web page here: <http://www.uen-ia.org/attachments/issue%20briefs/2017/Assessment%202017%20position%20paper.pdf>

Thanks for your advocacy!

Lew Finch, UEN Executive Director

[lfinch@mchsi.com](mailto:lfinch@mchsi.com)

319.329.0547 Cell

Margaret Buckton, UEN Lobbyist

[margaret.buckton@isfis.net](mailto:margaret.buckton@isfis.net)

515.201.3755 Cell

<sup>1</sup>National Bureau of Economic Research, *The Effects of School Spending on Educational and Economic Outcomes: Evidence from School Finance Reforms*, written by C. Kirabo Jackson (Northwestern University), Rucker C. Johnson (Northwestern University) and Claudia Persico (University of California-Berkeley), <http://www.nber.org/papers/w20847>