

## UEN Call to Action

### Repeal of State Assessment SSB 1001

Jan. 13, 2017

**Assessment Proposal:** [SSB 1001](#) strikes Iowa Code sections that 1) authorize the State Board of Education and DE to determine a set of core indicators for Math, Reading and Science and require a state assessment to measure progress and 2) require an Assessment Task Force.

A subcommittee was held Thursday in the Senate. Sens. Sinclair, Rozenboom and Quirnbach heard testimony concerning the SBAC assessment. Sen. Sinclair said her concern was the cost of the test. She wants to avoid an unfunded mandate. Sen. Quirnbach asked questions about the amount of time and money already invested in beginning SBAC implementation. Most of the testimony from education stakeholders expressed concerns about the bill (ISEA, AEA, ISEA, IASB, UEN and RSAI.) There were representatives from the Assessment Task Force, including Sup. Jane Lindaman, Waterloo and Jo Ellen Latham, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Southeast Polk Schools, who addressed the subcommittee. Others (PEI, ACT) were in support of the bill. In the end, Sens. Sinclair and Rozenboom signed the subcommittee report, moving the bill forward to the Senate Education Committee.

**UEN Priority on Assessment:** UEN calls on the Legislature and Governor to fund an assessment system aligned to Iowa Standards and implement the recommendation of the Assessment Task Force to use the Smarter Balanced Suite of Assessments, measuring progress along the way, including attainment and growth. The UEN Issue Brief: *Assessment* is found on the legislative web page here: <http://www.uen-ia.org/attachments/issue%20briefs/2017/Assessment%202017%20position%20paper.pdf>

#### Assessment Advocacy Messages:

- 1) UEN supports a state assessment, aligned to content standards, funded by the state.
- 2) SBAC is costly because it is more than just a summative assessment. It is an assessment system, including formative assessment and links to the instructional digital library for teachers to use to find methods of successfully teaching all students.
- 3) An assessment system like SBAC satisfies two needs; data for accountability and for instructional improvement. As educators, we need to know how our students are doing.
- 4) Many local districts lack the capacity to have a coherent assessment system. A patchwork approach likely costs more and has less functionality than one the state can provide. Many UEN districts will be able to save the money currently spent on other assessments if a complete assessment system is implemented.
- 5) Alignment is critical and needs to be documented by an independent third party.
- 6) Many districts have already invested professional development time and staff hours in getting ready for SBAC.
- 7) So many other things in Iowa Code depend on state test scores. Will the Senate also propose elimination of the state report card, the third grade retention mandate, the need to document proficiency before taking a concurrent enrollment (community college) course, the dropout prevention criteria, or specific goals required in a district's C-plan (used to be called CSIP or Comprehensive School Improvement Plan), to name a few?
- 8) Federal law requires a state assessment aligned to our content standards.

Contact Senate Education Committee members and explain the importance of Assessment to the instructional process. Ask for them to defeat SSB 1001 in Committee. They will likely be home through the MLK day holiday, back to the Senate on Tuesday. The next Education Committee meeting is scheduled for 3:00 on Wednesday, January 18.

*Also, if you know a member of the business community who has been supportive of higher education standards and aligned assessment, encourage them to call or email as well.*

From the link below, you can access the Senators' individual pages to get email, phone and home address. They can also be reached when in Session. Call the Senate switchboard at (515) 281-3371 and ask to speak with them or leave a message. If you send a message to Education Committee leadership and they do not represent you directly, it's a good idea to CC your own senators so they also know your position.

- [Amy Sinclair](#) (R, District [14](#)), Chair
- [Jeff Edler](#) (R, District [36](#)), Vice Chair
- [Herman C. Quirnbach](#) (D, District [23](#)), Ranking Member
- [Jerry Behn](#) (R, District [24](#))
- [Tod R. Bowman](#) (D, District [29](#))
- [Mark Chelgren](#) (R, District [41](#))
- [Jeff Danielson](#) (D, District [30](#))
- [Robert E. Dvorsky](#) (D, District [37](#))
- [Thomas A. Greene](#) (R, District [44](#))
- [Rita Hart](#) (D, District [49](#))
- [Craig Johnson](#) (R, District [32](#))
- [Tim Kraayenbrink](#) (R, District [5](#))
- [Mark S. Lofgren](#) (R, District [46](#))
- [Liz Mathis](#) (D, District [34](#))
- [Ken Rozenboom](#) (R, District [40](#))

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

Thanks for your advocacy!

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