**UEN Legislative Update
Jan. 13, 2023**

In this UEN Weekly Report from the 2023 Legislative Session, find information about:

* Governor’s State Budget Recommendation
* Governor’s Condition of the State, SSA, School Choice and Other Education Policy Recommendations
* SSB 1022/HSB 1 Students First Act Bill Summary
* Public Hearing in the House on Education Savings Accounts
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**The 2023 Session Begins:** as the first year of a new biennium, this Session begins as a clean slate. No bills carry forward from last year. Bills will be considered dead for failing to progress by funnel deadlines in rules governing action in the House and Senate. See the timeline below for these important deadlines.

**Governor’s Budget and Recommendations FY 2024 Impacting Schools**

(source LSA’s  [Preliminary Analysis of the Governor's Budget and Recommendations — FY 2024](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LAGRP/1366505.pdf))

**Some State Budget Statistics**

* **Combined Reserve Fund Balances:** $830.6 million in FY 2022 (actual), an estimated $895.2 million FY 2023 and Governor’s Recommendation for $962.5 million FY 2024.
* **Taxpayer Relief Fund Balances:** $1.055 Billion in FY 2022 (actual), an estimated $2,705.9 Billion in FY 2023 and Governor’s Recommendation for $3.423 Billion in FY 2023.
* **Appropriation Recommendations:** The Governor is recommending total state General Fund Appropriations of $10.480 Billion for FY 2024, which is an increase of $271.8 million (3.3%) compared to FY 2023.
* **State Tax Credit Expected Claims Projection:** $401.4 million in FY 2020 (actual), an estimated $341.5 million in FY 2021 and Governor’s Recommendation of $370.5 million in FY 2022.

**Education Savings Accounts:** “The Governor is recommending an appropriation of $106.9 million for education savings accounts. The new appropriation would fund approximately 14,068 accounts at the Governor’s recommended State cost per pupil (SCPP) of $7,598.”

**State Foundation School Aid:** “The Governor is recommending an estimated General Fund appropriation of $3.651 Billion for State aid to schools in FY 2024, an increase of $82.8 million compared to estimated FY 2023.” Other details include:

* “This amount is intended to reflect a supplemental State aid percent of growth rate of 2.50% and includes a $17.1 million reduction to the Area Education Agencies (AEAs), which is in addition to the statutory reduction of $7.5 million currently specified in the Iowa Code.
* The Governor recommends a 3.0% increase for the Teacher Salary Supplement Program.
* The amount also reflects an adjustment to the Property Tax Replacement Payment (PTRP) funding which is estimated to increase from $175 to $196 per pupil.”

Reorganization of State Government: The Governor is recommending shifting a number of existing appropriations among State agencies, which she refers to as collective alignment. Examples within the education area include moving the College Student Aid Commission and loan forgiveness programs to the DE, moving Career and Technical Education to Iowa Workforce Development, and moving Early Childhood Iowa to Human Services.

**Governor’s Condition of the State Address State Education Policy**

(source Governor’s Website <https://governor.iowa.gov/press-release/2023-01-10/gov-reynolds-delivers-2023-condition-state>) As bills are introduced, we will share more details. These descriptions are quoted from the Governor’s [website](https://governor.iowa.gov/vision-iowa/education) with occasional UEN comments in italics

**Governor’s Vision for Education:**

* Iowa's public schools are the foundation of our education system. For most families, they are the option of choice – and they should be. But public schools aren’t the only choice, and for some families, a different educational path may be better for their children.
* Governor Reynolds believes Iowa’s investment in education should support the success of all students, including those whose families choose to enroll them in an accredited private school rather than a public school.
* Every child deserves the opportunity to succeed at school and in life. We should support whichever educational choice makes that possible.
* At the same time, we must set Iowa schools up for success and support the role of parents in their children’s education.

**Governor Reynolds Proposes:**

* Providing education savings accounts (ESAs) equal eligible students who choose to attend an accredited private school rather than a public school.
* Giving districts the option to give classroom teachers a raise by using unspent education program funds to supplement salaries.
* Eliminating burdensome or trivial requirements in Iowa Code that restrict schools and teachers from tailoring education appropriately for their students.
* Protecting the rights of parents as the primary decision-makers regarding their children’s education.

**Education Savings Accounts**

* Parents who choose to enroll their children in an accredited private school will receive the amount of per pupil funds allocated annually by the State to use for tuition, fees, and other qualified expenses.
* Funds are deposited into an education savings account (ESA) each year until students graduate or complete high school or turn 20 years of age. Remaining balances are returned to the state general fund.
* Effective for the 2023-24 school year, per pupil funding will be $7,598 per student. *This is different from last year’s proposal, which was $5,500 per pupil with supplementary weighting, such as special education weighting, deposited into the parent’s ESA.* ESAs will be available based on the following eligibility:

**Year 1: School Year 2023-24**

* All kindergarten students
* All public-school students
* Private school students with a household income at or below 300% FPL, $83,250 for a family of four

**Year 2: School Year 2024-25**

* All kindergarten students
* All public-school students
* Private school students with a household income at or below 400% FPL, $111,000 for a family of four

**Year 3: School Year 2025-26**

* All K-12 students in Iowa, regardless of income

*SSB 1022 text states that students who haven’t attended a private school in the prior year would be eligible. This would also likely include home school students.*

Other student funding generated by categorical funding formulas will remain with public school districts. This will include funding for students who choose to leave their public school, and private school students living in the district – even though they won't be educated there. It’s estimated that Iowa’s public schools will retain approximately $1,202 per pupil in categorical funding for each student who attends private school.

*SSB 1022 includes the details. See the bill description below. Also note, there is a one-year delay before this funding would flow to school districts. Despite the retention of some specific categorical funds, school districts would lose spending authority for dropout prevention and instructional support, both tied to enrollment, and the per pupil allotment for SAVE/State Penny would also be lost for each student that leaves (or doesn’t opt into) public school to attend private school. The $1,202 is a state average. Individual district per pupil categoricals may vary.*

**Teacher Salaries:** Governor Reynolds proposes allowing school districts the flexibility to use unspent funding from Teacher Leadership and Compensation, Professional Development, and Talented and Gifted categorical funds to supplement teacher salaries.

 *In 2017, the legislature created similar flexibility, which allows transfer of ending balances from PD, PK, HSAP and any discontinued fund to the Flexibility Account for any general fund expenditure or a few other specific purposes. In 2021, HF 847 added TLC as an option. This new opportunity appears to have less process and adds TAG as an option.*

**Educational Flexibility:**Iowa code dictates numerous requirements that schools must meet. Eliminating those that are burdensome, trivial and provide little or no value to the educational experience will eliminate redundant reporting, allow greater flexibility in course credits, and encourage schools to offer options best suited to their students.

 *This proposal is likely referring to a rewrite of Iowa Administrative Rules Chapter 12, which includes directives for school offerings and courses, personnel, reporting, and many other requirements. No legislation is yet introduced.*

**Parent Empowerment:** Parents should have the ultimate responsibility and right to decide what’s in the best interest of their children, including when it comes to their education. Governor Reynolds proposes to define parent rights in law, require transparency, and set boundaries to protect Iowa’s children.

*This proposal will likely start with provisions from House and Senate action on parent rights during the 2023 Session.*

[**SSB 1022**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=SSB1022) **and** [**HSB 1**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=HSB1) **Bill Summary – Known as the Students First Act, this Proposed Governor Bill includes the following:**Division I Sec. 1: Shall be known as Students First Act

Division II Sec. 2: Allows the DE/State Board of Education to adopt rules to administer this Act.

Sec. 3: Includes students receiving Education Savings Accounts (ESA) in the resident student enrollment for purposes of determining Teacher Salary Supplement

Sec. 4: Includes students receiving Education Savings Accounts (ESA) in the resident student enrollment for purposes of determining Professional Development Supplement

Sec. 5: Includes students receiving Education Savings Accounts (ESA) in the resident student enrollment for purposes of determining Early Intervention Class Size Supplement

Sec. 6: Includes students receiving Education Savings Accounts (ESA) in the resident student enrollment for purposes of determining Teacher Leadership and Compensation

Sec. 7: Education Savings Account Program: Defines “nonpublic school” per Iowa Code 285.16 (this section allows private schools to be accredited either by the state or by an independent private accreditation agency approved by the State Board of Education.

*These sections allow the resident district to count ESA recipient students in enrollment for purposes of TSS, PD, EICS and TLC categorical fund determination. For districts with no nearby private schools, this is of no benefit. For districts with private schools nearby, this estimate $1,200 per pupil offsets the loss of other funding that would no longer be generated if a student is no counted in regular enrollment. Since these per pupil supplements vary by district, your local mileage will vary. TLC is the only supplement with a consistent per pupil amount statewide. We estimated the total funds lost per pupil for the Ft. Dodge CSD in 2023, not included supplementary weighting such as special education, which totaled over $10,000. The ability to retain a portion would only partially offset the loss, but there is some benefit to eventually counting the students already in private schools as they become eligible for the ESA. There is a one-year delay in the funding impact for public schools. The categorical funding maintains expenditure requirements potentially modified to use for TSS purposes later in the bill. The budget impact per student leaving public school includes:*

 ***FY 2023 Costs for Ft. Dodge CSD Per Pupil***

*Regular Program District Cost Per Pupil $ 7,443*

*Professional Development Supplement Per Pupil $ 75*

*Teacher Leader and Compensation Supplement Per Pupil $  358*

*Early Intervention Class Size Supplement Per Pupil $  85*

*Teacher Salary Supplement Per Pupil $  648*

*Dropout Prevention Funding generated per pupil $  372*

*Instructional Support Levy funding generated per pupil $  502*

*State Penny for School Infrastructure per pupil $ 1,133*

*Minimum total lost for each ESA $10,616\**

*\*not counting supplementary weightings that also follow the student*

Sec. 7 also defines “Nonpublic school” defined in section [285.16](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/285.16.pdf).

*This Code section requires private schools to be accredited by either the state or an independent private accrediting agency. The following independent accrediting agencies are approved by the State Board of Education:*

* ***Cognia****(formerly AdvancEd)*
* ***American Montessori Society (AMS)***
* ***Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)***
* ***Christian Schools International (CSI)***
* ***Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS****)*
* ***National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA)***

Sec. 7 also specifies that “Qualified educational expenses” includes tuition and fees at a nonpublic school, textbooks, fees or payments for educational therapies, including tutoring or cognitive skills training, curriculum fees, software, and materials for a course of study for a specific subject matter or grade level, tuition or fees for nonpublic online education programs, tuition for vocational and life skills education approved by the department of education, education materials and services for pupils with disabilities from an accredited provider, including the cost of paraprofessionals and assistants who are trained in accordance with state law, standardized test fees, and advanced placement examinations or examinations related to post-secondary education admission or credentialing.

 *Last year’s proposal allowed expenses for computers and anything payable from a 529 savings plan, which would have included college. This year’s list does not include computers and 529 plan expenses. Also noteworthy, the ESA would provide for AP and other testing fees that many public-school parents pay for unless there is an exemption based on free and reduced-price lunch eligibility.*

Defines “resident” pupil as the same in 282.1, subsection 2.

*This Iowa Code section defines resident pupil for purposes of tuition payments to public schools.*

Defines the phase-in plan:

**Year 1: School Year 2023-24**

* All kindergarten students
* Students eligible for enrollment in grades 1-12 but not enrolled in a nonpublic school for the immediately preceding school year. *This would also likely include home school students wishing to enroll in private schools.*
* Private school students with a household income at or below 300% FPL, $83,250 for a family of four

**Year 2: School Year 2024-25**

* All kindergarten students
* Students eligible for enrollment in grades 1-12 but not enrolled in a nonpublic school for the immediately preceding school year.
* Private school students with a household income at or below 400% FPL, $111,000 for a family of four
* Students receiving an ESA in the prior year

**Year 3: School Year 2025-26**

* All K-12 students in Iowa regardless of income

**Defines terms and ESA requirements:**

  10. *a.* This section shall not be construed to authorize the state or any political subdivision of the state to exercise authority over any nonpublic school or construed to require a nonpublic school to modify its academic standards for admission or educational program in order to receive payment from a parent or guardian using funds from a pupil’s account in the education savings account fund.
  *b.* This section shall not be construed to expand the authority of the state or any political subdivision of the state to impose regulations upon any nonpublic school that are not necessary to implement this section.
  *c.* A nonpublic school that accepts payment from a parent or guardian using funds from a pupil’s account in the education savings account fund is not an agent of this state or of a political subdivision of this state.
  *d.* Rules adopted by the department of education to implement this section that impose an undue burden on a nonpublic school are invalid.
  *e.* A nonpublic school that accepts payment from a parent or guardian using funds from a pupil’s account in the education savings account fund shall be given the maximum freedom possible to provide for the educational needs of the school’s students, consistent with state and federal law.

* Requires parents to use ESA payments for tuition and fees prior to using for other qualified educational expenses.
* Allows parents to request ESA on or after Jan. 1 but on or before June 30 preceding the school year for which the ESA is requested by submitting application to DE. *This provision does not align with school district budgeting and staffing timelines. Budgets are required to be set and contracts offered at the end of the first quarter, beginning of the second. A Feb. 1 application deadline with Match 1 notice to parents and school districts would be ideal.*
* Requires DE to notify parents of approved pupils within 30 days. DE is also required, after processing all applications, to determine district of residence for all ESA recipients and notify DOM.
* Requires application annually (approval is for one year.)
* Sets ESA amount equal to state cost per pupil.
* Creates an ESA fund within the state Treasury under DE control. Appropriates funds equal to the number of ESAs multiplied by the SCPP beginning July 1, 2023 (standing unlimited appropriation).
* Grants powers to administer the fund to DE, including contracting with third-party providers, providing for electronic transactions, minimizing fraud and waste, create an individual account for every student and deposit funds into the account on July 1.
* Prohibits private schools from rebating any of the ESA fund back to parents/students.
* Requires DE to recover funds spent on prohibited items or fraudulently claimed. Requires the funds remaining when the student turns 18 or upon high school graduation, whichever is later, to revert to the State.
* Sets up a parent appeal process regarding any administrative decisions by the DE or third-party entity.
* Requires the state board to refer cases of substantial misuse to the AG for purpose of collection or investigation.
* Prohibits additional regulation of private schools and grants participating private schools maximum flexibility to meet the needs of students.

**Assessments:** requires recipients of an ESA to take all required state and federal tests and report the results to the student’s parent and the DE. Requires the DE to include analysis of the assessment results in the Annual Condition of Education Report.

*This requirement is one necessary piece of accountability, so parents can assess whether their child and students with similar needs as their child are succeeding in this environment. However, since private school control enrollment and can counsel a student out of the system who is not succeeding, we would expect the test scores to be satisfactory in the system. The private schools should also be required to report the departure of ESA recipients and be subject to expenditure and curriculum oversight and other regulations to which public schools are subject.*

Sec. 8: **Tax Exemption:** the bill exempts funds received in the ESA from state income tax liability.

Sec. 9: **Rules**: the bill grants emergency rulemaking authority to the DE to implement bill provisions.

Sec. 10: **Effective Dates:** Provisions of the bill are effective on enactment except for Sec. 11 tax exemption which is retroactively effective to Jan. 1, 2023 to apply to the 2023 tax year.

**Division III Sec. 12 School District Categorical Funding:** these sections specify that if categorical funds are used for TSS purposes, they are subject to the requirements of chapter 284 (TQ Committee, distribution to all teachers, etc.)

Sec. 13: Allows district to use all or a portion of PD funds for TSS purposes.

Sec. 14: Allows districts to use all of a portion of PD funds for TSS purposes.

Sec. 15: Allows districts to use all or a portion of TAG funds for TSS purposes.

*There is no section with similar direction for early intervention/class size funds specified earlier in the bill. Although this may be an oversight, the legislature in 2017 eliminated any restrictions on EICS funds and already allow them for any general fund purpose, so we do not believe that this additional flexibility is required.*

UEN Position and Rationale: UEN is registered opposed to both HSB 1 and SSB 1022. Although assumptions may differ slightly in a coming fiscal note to be written by Legislative Services Agency staff, we estimate the cost to the state of this ESA Proposal to be between $300-$400 million when fully implemented. The phase-in period aligns to the implementation of historic tax cuts, estimated to reduce the state general fund by $1.8 million in FY 2027 and more in subsequent years. UEN advocates for funds to be spent on improving access to preschool, creating a poverty factor in the school foundation formula, and adequately funding public education, all of which would be of greater benefit to Iowa taxpayers, workforce, economy and students than this proposal.

**Next steps for these bills:**Having been considered by the Senate Subcommittee of Sens. Sinclair (C), Donahue, Quirmbach, Rozenboom, and Zaun on Jan. 12, SSB 1022 will move forward to the full Education Committee. The next Senate Education Committee is on the schedule for Wed., Jan. 18 at 11:00. For the House version, the Education Reform Committee is on the schedule to meet at 2:00, also on Wednesday. They could meet as a “subcommittee of the whole” since the 5 committee members are also assigned as subcommittee members, which is a procedural way to combine the subcommittee and committee actions into the same meeting.

Since these bills are moving quickly, advocacy actions must be taken this weekend and early into the week. See the [UEN Issue Brief on Opposing School Choice Expansion](https://www.uen-ia.org/system/files/Public/IssueBriefs/UEN%20Issue%20Brief%20School%20Choice%202023.docx). Find the UEN Call to Action with specific talking points and advocacy actions on the UEN website at: <https://www.uen-ia.org/call-action-school-choice-bills-moving-fast>.

**Public Hearing in the House on ESA Proposal**

The House has called for a public hearing on HSB 1 Students First Act, at 5:00 PM in RM 103, Supreme Court Chamber, first floor of the Capitol.

Speaking time will be 2 minutes per individual and will alternate between pro/con for as long as possible (written testimony is encouraged but not required). If you sign up to speak, you must speak in person at the event. The meeting will be live-streamed via YouTube for those that might want to watch. The link will be provided 60 minutes prior to start of the meeting on The Iowa Legislative website, <http://www.legis.iowa.gov>. Persons wishing to speak at the public hearing must sign up electronically and indicate their position (con means opposed to the bill, which aligns with UEN registration) and persons wishing to leave comments may both do so at this public hearing link: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/publicHearings?action=viewOnlineSignup&meetingID=35789>

[**HF 1 Property Tax Reform**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=HF1)**:** This bill grants property tax relief to all property taxpayers through changes to the school foundation formula mix of property tax and state aid and limits property valuation growth. The bill:

* Lowers the Uniform Levy from $5.40 to $4.90 per thousand. Reduces the Additional Levy buydown for reorganization incentives to 40 cents the first year then 25 cents the second year ($4.40 and $4.65, respectively)
* Specifies that no class of property may have taxable value growth of more than 3%. This is currently the standard for Residential and Ag, now applies to Commercial, Industrial and Railroad. *This provision would reduce revenues that are levy limited (such as PPEL, PERL, and Bond Issue) and would require a higher levy rate to generate specified revenue for those levies that are not rate-limited (additional levy, cash reserve levy and management fund.)*
* For either a bond election or a PPEL election, requires the district to send out a notice to all property holders of the district of the ballot not less than 30 but not more than 45 days prior to the election. Requires the notice to include sample amounts for certain properties.
* Also requires the school district to designate and deposit in one or more funds of the school district an amount equal to or greater than ten percent of the total cost of the project or purpose for which the bonds are proposed to be issued. We are looking into the impact of this requirement.
* Specifies other provisions that would impact counties, but not school property taxes.

*The LSA will analyze the provisions and determine an estimated cost to the state general fund as the school foundation formula would be required to pick up more of the cost per pupil due to constrained valuation growth and lower levy rates. We suspect the cost to the state will be near $100 million.* ***UEN is registered opposed to this bill.*** *Iowa’s educational funding is already more concentrated at the state level than the national average. The continued shift from state to local funding increases the cost to the state of future SSA, categorical, and supplementary weighting authority necessary for school and student success.*

**Bills Introduced and Subcommittee Assignments if assigned:
House Education Committee**

[**HF 4**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF4&ga=90) **Teaching Licenses:** Requires the BOEE to issue temporary initial teaching licenses to candidates who complete an alternative certification program. Requires the BOEE to issue teacher intern licenses to candidates who complete a qualified college program for teacher interns. Requires the BOEE to allow a teacher intern to apply for a teaching license on the recommendation of the employing school and the college program. Strikes requirements for an applicant for a regional license be an Iowa resident if the applicant has an Iowa job offer. Requires the BOEE to allow candidate to be issued career and secondary authorizations before receiving a job offer. Requires the BOEE to issue temporary initial teaching licenses to candidates with an undergraduate degree who successfully complete an alternative certification program. Requires alternative teaching programs to operate in at least five states and for at least ten years. Requires the BOEE to treat candidates who have completed these programs and who receive an initial license in the same manner as those who finish traditional programs. Imposes the same requirements on candidates with a temporary license seeking licensing beyond that as are on candidates with an initial license seeking licensing beyond that. Subcommittee Stone, Gehlback, Madison. UEN is opposed since provisions concerning a 3-month online class to become a teacher are now included with legislation we had supported last year. If that provision is removed, we would change our registration to support.

[**HF 5**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF5&ga=90) **School Transparency:** Requires school boards and charter schools to make specific information available to parents, including review of curriculum and how to prevent a student from receiving certain instructional material; syllabuses and other course material; lists of library books and procedures to request the removal of a book; and professional development courses. Requires the DE to act on violations, including withholding state foundation aid payments. Includes additional procedures on removing school library books including the creation of a document to show parents the procedures. Includes a special education exception. Social Studies: Requires the US citizenship test be used as the assessment for the required HS government and civics class, Subcommittee Stone, Ehlert, Fry.

UEN opposes this bill.

[**HF 8**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF8&ga=90) **Gender Instruction Prohibitions:** Prohibits schools and charter schools from including any instruction on gender identity or sexual orientation in K-3 education. Subcommittee Wheeler, Holt, Steckman. UEN opposes this bill.

[**HF 9**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF9&ga=90) **Gender Identity Prohibitions:** Prohibits schools from any accommodation for a student’s gender identity if differs from the identity on the student’s birth certificate without written permission from the parent. Prohibits withholding information related to a student’s gender identity or an intention to transition from a parent. Prohibits encouraging students to transition their gender identity. Subcommittee Wheeler, Boden, Steckman. UEN opposes this bill.

[**HF 10**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF10&ga=90) **School Abuse:** Requires mandatory reporters to report abuse of children over the age of 12. Requires the DE to develop for reporting on and investigating a school employee with an authorization, license or certification who may have committed certain felonies or acts. Establishes immunity for the school board or school authorities for discussing such incidents. Requires the BOEE to assess civil penalties against administrators for failures to follow the established process or for concealing an incident. Includes additional grounds for the BOEE to disqualify applicants or to revoke licenses. Requires the BOEE to notify schools about investigations and to investigate administrators. Requires schools to contact the BOEE about potential hires to determine if the person has been the subject of a complaint or investigation. Subcommittee Boden, Gustoff, Staed. UEN is undecided.

[**HF 12**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF12&ga=90) **School Government Curriculum:** Requires that comparative discussions of political ideologies that conflict with the ideas of freedom and democracy essential to the founding of the US be taught in HS government class. Subcommittee Holt, Buck, Hora. UEN is undecided until we learn more about this.

[**HF 16**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF16&ga=90) **Comprehensive Transition Scholarships:** Requires the College Student Aid Commission to develop a scholarship program for individuals over 18 with intellectual, developmental or learning disabilities and who are enrolled in a comprehensive transition program post-secondary program. Requires CDC to develop criteria and enact rules. UEN supports this bill.

[**HF 17**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF17&ga=90) **School Transfers**: Allows transfers between buildings for students who’ve been a victim of violence of sexual assault, requires the parent to request the transfer and requires school board to have policies allowing the school supervisor to approve requests, and makes the request for a period of at least one year. Assigned to the House Education Committee. UEN is undecided.

[**HF 39**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF39&ga=90) **Charter Sports:** Allows a student enrolled in a charter school to participate in extracurricular activities in the district of residence if the Charter Schools does not offer the activity. Counts the student in the public-school enrollment as 0.1 for funding. Requires state BOE to adopt rules. UEN is undecided.

[**HF 41**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF41&ga=90) **Open Enrollment Transportation:** Strikes requirements that a sending and receiving district agree to arrangements for transportation for an open-enrolled student. See similar SF 29. UEN opposes this bill.

**House State Government Committee**

[**HF 2**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF2&ga=90) **Public Fund Investment:** Restricts IPERS and other retirement systems and the Regents from contracting with public funds managers that take actions based on economic boycotts, or environmental or social criteria that is not solely based on the financial interest of the funds and the beneficiaries. Defines companies involved in the fossil fuel, firearms, ammunition, agriculture, timber and mining industries as protected. Includes other definitions. Bans granting proxy authority that violates this condition. Bans investments in companies that are engaged in economic boycotts. Bans state banks and credit unions from using theses improper factors in loan decisions. Gives the Attorney General enforcement powers. UEN is opposed.

**House Transportation Committee**

[**HSB 26**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HSB26&ga=90) **Driving Tests:** Allows persons qualified to give behind-the-wheel driving instruction but who are not licensed teachers to administer a final field driving test. See SSB 1028. Subcommittee of Wood, Bagniewski, Sorenson. UEN is undecided.

**Senate Education Committee**

[**SF 8**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF8&ga=90) **Core Curriculum:** Eliminates references to the Iowa Core Curriculum. Directs the State BOE to adopt standards on HS graduation, academics and related matters. Makes corresponding changes. Subcommittee Zaun (C), Donahue, Garrett UEN is opposed.

[**SF 9**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF9&ga=90) **Open Enrollment MSA:** Allows the School Budget Review Committee to approve supplemental aid to schools if 35% of the students in the district are open enrolled. Excludes online open enrollment. Includes other requirements. Subcommittee Zaun (C), Celsi, Cournoyer. UEN is undecided.

[**SF 12**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF12&ga=90) **Admin Budget Limitation**: Limits the administration costs for schools to 5% of the budget. Subcommittee Zaun (C), Cournoyer, Giddens. UEN is opposed.

[**SF 29**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF29&ga=90) **Open Enrollment** Transportation: Strikes requirements that a sending and receiving district agree to arrangements for transportation for an open-enrolled student. Subcommittee Rozenboom (C), Celsi, Evans. UEN is opposed.

[**SF 38**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF38&ga=90) **Achievement Gap Work Group:** Requires DE to convene a work group to study educational achievement gaps between racial and ethnic groups. Requires a report and recommendations by December 2023. UEN supports.

[**SF 39**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF39&ga=90) **Technology Impact Study:** Requires the DE and DHS to convene a work group to study impact of technology on students. Requires a report and recommendations by December 2023. UEN is undecided.

[**SF 53**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF53&ga=90) **Drop Out Prevention Funding:** Phases in an increase for the amount of the supplemental funding for schools to use for dropout prevention programs to 5% by 2027. Effective on enactment. UEN supports.

[**SSB 1023**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SSB1023&ga=90) **Computer Grants:** Allows recipients of computer science professional development grants to use the money in the fiscal year the grant is awarded through to September 30. Effective on enactment. Subcommittee Cournoyer (C), Evans, Trone Garriott. UEN supports.

**Senate Judiciary Committee**

[**SSB 1005**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SSB1005&ga=90) **Corporal Punishment Liability**: Gives immunity to a school boards, districts, AEAs, private and charter schools and the authorities in charge of those against liability for corporal punishment against a student to the extent that a school employee or volunteer has immunity and allows for the collection of damages for wrongful accusations to the same extent of a school employee or volunteer who has been wrongfully accused. Subcommittee Garrett (C), Petersen, J Taylor. UEN is not yet registered on this bill.

**Senate State Government Committee**

[**SSB 1036**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SSB1036&ga=90) **Public Record Requests:** Requires the custodian of public record, in response to a request, to promptly provide contact information, a date for the record release and an estimate of reasonable costs. Subcommittee Koeker, Bisignano, Cournoyer. UEN is undecided.

[**SF 23**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF23&ga=90) **School and City Primary Elections:** Requires primary elections for city and school elections. Requires parties to hold conventions to nominate candidates. Subcommittee Cournoyer, Giddens, Schultz. UEN is opposed.

[**SF 49**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF49&ga=90) **School Bond Elections:** Limits school bond election to the Regular School Election, every other November in the odd year. Subcommittee Salmon, Cournoyer, Weiner. UEN is opposed.

**Senate Technology Committee**

[**SF 31**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF31&ga=90) **Publication of Notices:** Strikes requirements for publication of certain notices in newspapers and allows the publication of such notices electronically on the website of the local government. Includes requirements for such notices. Requires the local government to have a method for electronic distribution. UEN supports.

**Senate Transportation Committee**

[**SF 24**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF24&ga=90) **Driving for Extracurriculars:** Allows a minor with a special school permit to drive up to 50 miles for an extracurricular activity instead of the current limits. UEN is undecided.

**Legislative Session Timeline:** Posted on the Legislative website here:<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/SESTT/current.pdf>

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**Advocacy Actions This Week**

* **Always start with a thank you!** See the [**UEN 2022 Legislative Session Successes**](https://www.uen-ia.org/system/files/Public/UENDigests/UEN%202022%20Legislative%20Session%20Successes.pdf) and find one you are grateful for them accomplishing.
* **Shore up Education Savings Account Opposition: See the** [**UEN Call to Action**](https://www.uen-ia.org/call-action-school-choice-bills-moving-fast) **for more information, but in short:** Circle back with your legislators who’ve previously told you they opposed ESAs and reiterate key messages:
	+ ESAs shift funds from public schools to private schools, limiting or eliminating programs and opportunities for students in public schools.
	+ This program will cost between $300-$400 million, phased in at a time when historical tax cuts are estimated to lower state general fund revenues by 20%. If the legislature overextends (not just this proposal but also significant property tax relief), public schools will not be adequately funded.
	+ Vouchers don’t offer parents real choice. Private schools pick and choose who they accept. Public schools accept ALL students.
	+ Almost 75% of public schools are in rural areas with little to no access to private schools. Most families will be excluded from participating in a voucher program.
	+ Vouchers increase costs by creating two competing school systems. This is likely to reduce resources for public schools, which educate 90% of students.Public schools are accountable and transparent to the parents, the community they serve, and the taxpayers who fund them. Private schools do not have the same state requirements for accountability and transparency or oversight by taxpayers.
	+ The Governor’s 2024 Proposal is a costly and expansive voucher program.
	+ Iowa already has many parent choice options.
* **Explain the SSA numbers to your legislators, especially in light of inflation and workforce shortage. Talking points:**
* Supplemental state aid is the biggest source of per pupil funding in Iowa, but our funding has not kept pace nationally, putting our students and state at a disadvantage. Sufficient funding provides for a high-quality education that translates to a successful future and economic growth in our state. The Governor’s recommendation of 2.5% SSA only amounts to an estimated $82.8 million in statewide new money, below previous years’ investment in Iowa schools. Given multi-billion dollar reserves and high inflation, UEN requests an SSA that at least matches the inflation rate.
* Inflation and cost-of-living increases should be considered when determining school aid funding. School districts must pay competitive salaries to retain teachers and staff, especially during a labor shortage. The legislature should provide funding that considers the impact inflation has on recruiting and retaining school employees.
* Beware of property tax reform proposals impact on the future cost of state aid to schools. The funding source becomes the state general fund instead of local property taxes, but should not be considered as additional funding for schools.
* School funding is enrollment-driven and increases in enrollment impact the supplemental state aid amount. On the flip side, declining enrollment combined with low SSA means more rural schools will have to consolidate or face closure by the state because they depend on adequate state funding to remain open.
* Low SSA amounts also lead to more districts being eligible for budget guarantee, which shifts the funding burden to local property taxpayers. At the Governor’s proposed 2.5% SSA, 88 districts would be eligible for the budget guarantee at a total cost to property taxpayers of $7.9 million.
* Look to ISFIS tools to estimate impact on your regular program budget. This [ISFIS New Authority Calculator](https://www.iowaschoolfinance.com/system/files/members/Public/New%20Authority%20Report%20FY%202024.xlsx) allows the user to set the State Supplementary Assistant (SSA) rate and calculate the impact on Regular Program District Cost for FY 2024 for each individual district from a drop-down list. This [ISFIS New Authority Calculator](https://www.iowaschoolfinance.com/system/files/members/Public/New%20Authority%20Report%20FY%202024%20-%20All.xlsx) allows the user to set the SSA rate and calculate the impact for all districts for FY 2024 in a tabular format. Both updated December 2022.

Find more SSA information and talking points in the [UEN Issue Brief on Adequate Funding](https://www.uen-ia.org/system/files/Public/IssueBriefs/UEN%20Issue%20Brief%20SSA%20adequate%20school%20funding%202023.docx).

**Gratitude:** Tell your legislators and the Governor thank you for the preschool funding supplement through the SBRC. THANK YOU for getting that done. (We will need to do it again this coming year.)

**Connecting with Legislators:** To call and leave a message at the Statehouse during the legislative session, the House switchboard operator number is 515.281.3221 and the Senate switchboard operator number is 515.281.3371. You can ask if they are available or leave a message for them to call you back. You can also ask them what’s the best way to contact them during session. They may prefer email or text message or phone call based on their personal preferences.

Find biographical information about legislators gleaned from their election websites on the ISFIS site here: <http://www.iowaschoolfinance.com/legislative_bios> Learn about your new representatives and senators or find out something you don’t know about incumbents.

Find out who your legislators are through the interactive map or address search posted on the Legislative Website here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>

**UEN Advocacy Resources:** Check out the UEN Website at [www.uen-ia.org](http://www.uen-ia.org) to find Advocacy Resources such as Issue Briefs, UEN Weekly Legislative Reports and video updates, UEN Calls to Action when immediate advocacy action is required, testimony presented to the State Board of Education, the DE or any legislative committee or public hearing, and links to fiscal information that may inform your work. The latest legislative actions from the Statehouse will be posted at: [www.uen-ia.org/blogs-list](http://www.uen-ia.org/blogs-list). See the new [2023 UEN Advocacy Handbook](https://www.uen-ia.org/advocacy-handbook), which is also available from the subscriber section of the UEN website

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##### Senate Education Committee Members

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##### House Education Reform Members

* [Pat Grassley](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/legislator?ga=90&personID=6277) (R, District [57](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/DMP/1366234.pdf)), Chair
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Contact us with any questions, feedback or suggestions to better prepare your advocacy work:

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