**UEN Legislative Update
February 16, 2024**

This UEN Weekly Report from the 2024 Legislative Session includes:

* UEN Priorities Surviving the Funnel Deadline
* Teacher Pay and AEA Overhaul Status
* House Committee Action
* Senate Committee Action
* Other Bills on the Debate Calendars
* Advocacy Actions
* Links to Advocacy Resources

**UEN Priorities PK, SSA, Open Enrollment Deadlines and School Start Date:**

* [**SF 2383**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202383&ga=90) **PK Weighting:** allows schools to count students below 185% of the FPL for PK weighting, phasing in from 0.5, to 0.75 to 1.0 over three years. Requires instructional hours to match (10, 15, 20). Allows parents of eligible children (low-income) to choose between half-day or full-day program. Approved by the Senate Education Committee and on the Senate Calendar. UEN supports as a priority. (House version, HF 2353, did not advance out of the House Education Committee.)
* [**SF 2258**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=sf2258) **School Foundation Aid**: No SSA increase number is in the bill, as it simply states that the legislature will enact SSA during the 2024 Session. The bill was approved in the Senate Education Committee on Feb. 7 and is assigned to the Senate Calendar. UEN is registered opposed. The SSA increase must at least meet inflation and be set in a timely manner.
* [**HSB 712**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=HSB712) **SSA:** sets the SSA percentage at 3% increase in the State Cost Per Pupil. The bill was amended in the House Education Committee to include the property tax replacement payment, whereby the State assumes what would otherwise be the property tax impact of the increase on the additional levy. The bill was approved by the House Education Committee as amended and will be assigned a new bill number and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is registered in support.
* [**SF 2010**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=SF2010) **School Start Date**: allows schools to start their Fall calendar beginning no earlier than the Tuesday following the conclusion of the state fair. The Subcommittee recommended amendment and moving the bill to the full Education Committee. UEN supports. This action is also a provision of the Governor’s Charter School bill described below. Although UEN supports the start date flexibility, we are registered opposed to the Charter school provisions.

**Teacher Pay and AEA Overhaul Proposals:**

The Senate and House each moved AEA Overhaul and Teacher Pay proposals through their respective Education Committees this week. See the bill descriptions below. UEN is registered as undecided on both proposals. Legislators working on these proposals say they are a work in progress. UEN continues to be at the table with suggestions and improvements for ensuring any changes are workable, possible to implement timely, and do not interfere with the priority of providing needed services to students with disabilities. We will keep you informed as the discussions unfold along the way.

**Committee Action House Education Committee:**

[**HF 2031**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202031&ga=90) **Pregnancy Education**: Requires Human Growth & Development (Sex-Ed) courses to include instruction on pregnancy and fetal development, including high-definition ultrasound and a video comparable to the “Meet Baby Olivia” video showing the development in the womb. Includes additional requirements. Approved 15-8 and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is opposed.

[**HF 2189**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202189&ga=90) **School Board Liaisons:** Requires school boards to appoint at least one student to serve as a liaison between the board, administrators, teachers and student, if the applicant meets requirements. Requires the liaison be allowed to sit in on meetings and to have access to non-confidential material. Requires boards to develop a selection process. Approved 22-1 and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is undecided.

[**HF 2347**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/lobbyist/reports/declarations?ga=90&ba=HF2347) **College Information:** In addition to many community college and university reporting requirements, requires high schools to give information to students in grades 11-12 students who are interested in college the reports from the community colleges and universities. Makes the school college and career transition counselor responsible for giving out copies of the report if the school has a college and career transition counselor. Excludes a shared college and career transition counselor from counting against the limits on supplementary weighting for operational sharing purposes. Approved 23-0 and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is undecided.

[**HF 2542**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=hf2542) **Student Data System and Count Date:** Requires DE to provide a new data information system for reporting and collecting information at no cost to the school district for the first year. Allows DE to charge up to $12 per pupil for year 2 (both public and nonpublic schools pay the fee) and no limit on future year fee. Would allow districts to purchase a SIS module that would play well with the state data collection system. Also adds March 1 as a second enrollment count date and requires budget enrollment to be based on the average of the Oct. 1 and Mar. 1 enrollment counts. With new budget timelines, lots of concerns were expressed about this second date’s workability for schools, DE and DOM. The bill was approved by the House Education Committee and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is registered as undecided. See SF 2367, approved by the Senate Education Committee and on the Senate Calendar.

[**HF 2543**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=hf2543) **Charter School, Open Enrollment, Facilities Right of Refusal and Charter School Board Membership: Division 1 Per Pupil Funding:** Sec. 1 increases the state cost per pupil to the current year amount and requires the school district to pay categorical funds, including TSS, PD, and EICS (estimated at just over $1,030 per pupil), to the charter school. (TLC and ELL weighting are required by current code to be included.) One of the theories of charter schools is that they can provide education more efficiently and for less money than the public school system. Sec. 2 requires the same funding be paid by resident school districts to the receiving districts pursuant to open enrollment.

**Division II Right of First Refusal for School Property:** Requires school districts to give a right of first refusal to charter schools when selling or leasing property.Requires school boards to grant reasonable access to charter schools to use underutilized or vacant school property. Removes the application of chapter 297.22 from any deal between a school district and a charter school, which removes 7 public hearings from processes designed to inform the public. Prohibits the public from being able to petition to vote against the school board’s decision to sell or lease property to the charter school (that right to petition any sale of property is in current code for all other property sales). Requires school boards to publish on their website a report of vacant or underutilized property, including square footage of facilities, enrollment capacity of facilities, how facilities are currently used and vacant facilities.

**Division III: Charter Governance:** allows charter school board members to not be Iowa residents.

The bill was amended by the House Education Committee to remove a provision regarding the school start date. The Committee approved the bill, moving it to the House Calendar. UEN is opposed. See also SF 2368, on the Senate Calendar, which includes the school start date provisions.

[**HF 2544**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202544&ga=90) **Social Studies Subjects and Regents**: Includes a list of 14 items that must be taught in social studies in grades 1-6. The high school content includes a semester of civics with 9 specified items, United States History with 5 specific items, History of Western Civilization, Iowa History to be taught in grade 8, Economics, which must be taught in grade 8, requires certain historical documents be incorporated throughout. And so much more. The bill requires the Regents institutions to adopt a requirement that a student pass a civics exam before admittance. Requires the Regents to prohibit the universities from awarding credit for any course that requires students to take civics/political actions. The Committee approved the bill 13-10, moving it to the House Calendar. UEN is opposed. We value history and social studies but oppose very prescriptive curriculum and content written into the Code of Iowa.

[**HF 2545**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=hf2329) **DE Review of High School Graduation Requirements:** requires DE to review HS graduation requirements, core content and core curriculum, and make policy recommendations. Requires the policy recommendations to include a plan to eliminate the use of core content standards and return to the basics of reading, writing, arithmetic and US History and Civics, to make Iowa’s education standards the best in the nation in gathering input from relevant stakeholders including parents and teachers, to increase the quality of the instructional curriculum, find innovative ways to streamline testing, identify opportunities to equip high school graduates with sufficient knowledge of civics and US History so they are capable of discharging the responsibilities associated with US Citizenship, a way to make Iowa the most literate state in the US using systematic and sequential approaches to teaching phonetic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and text comprehension, a plan to eliminate the teaching of critical race theory and social-emotional learning. The DE is required to publish a link to its website that allows public and interested stakeholders to provide comments related to the comprehensive review, including comments related to each graduation requirement, core content standard, and educational requirement by grade level. The DE Director is required to convene committees to assist in the comprehensive review and provide recommendations related to the subject areas in the educational standards established in section 256.11 related. The Director is required to determine the membership of each Committee, and the bill requires each Committee to include four members of the general assembly (one member designated by the President of the Senate, the Minority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House and the Minority Leader of the House) as ex officio, nonvoting members. The bill was approved by the House Education Committee and moves to the House Calendar. UEN is undecided.

[**HF 2547**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202547&ga=90) **Chronic Absenteeism:** Requires the parents or guardians, and the student if an emancipated minor, if the student missed more than 10% of school in the prior school year for any reason, to meet with a representative of the school and a representative of the county attorney to develop and attendance plan. Requires the county attorney to provide information to the parents and/or student regarding truancy laws. The bill was amended during the committee meeting to remove provisions requiring DOM to withhold the regular program district cost in a subsequent year if 20% or more of students are chronically absent. The bill was amended and approved by the House Education Committee and moved to the House Calendar. With the amendment, UEN changed our registration from opposition to support.

[**HF 2548**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202548&ga=90) **World Language Pronouns:** prohibits the incorporation of gender-neutral language in high school world language instruction when the language uses a grammatical gender system. Approved on party lines and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is opposed.

[**HF 2553**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202553&ga=90) **High School Athletic Participation:** Requires public schools to allow a student from a private school who lives in the school district to participate in extracurricular competitions for the public schools, pursuant to an agreement between the schools. Includes a similar provision allowing a public school student to compete for a private school. Allows private schools to charge the student a fee. Prohibits the athletic unions from considering the enrollment of the student’s school when determining classification for the public school. The bill was approved by the House Education Committee and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is registered as undecided.

[**HSB 650**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HSB%20650&ga=90) **Governor’s Reading Initiative:** Requires teacher preparation programs to give the latest version of a specific 2012 Massachusetts test (Foundations of Reading assessment) to students in the program as a condition of completing the program (college diploma). Requires the BOEE to require current K-6 teachers to pass the test by 2027. Requires schools to notify parents in writing if a third-grade student is behind in reading progress and requires the notification to include the opportunity for the parent to request their child be retained in third grade. Allows the parent to request the student be retained in grade 3. Requires that students who are behind in reading get personalized reading plans and allows the plans to continue until grade 6. Approved 14-9 and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is undecided.

[**HSB 712**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HSB%20712&ga=90) **SSA Increase Per Pupil:** Sets the growth rate for state school aid/categoricals for the 2024-2025 school year at 3%. Was amended to continue the property tax relief payment to offset the cost of the 3% that would otherwise be included in the school district’s additional levy. Approved 15-8 and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is undecided.

[**HSB 713**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HSB%20713&ga=90) **AEA Reform**: this bill was introduced on Wednesday, was approved in a subcommittee Thursday afternoon, and then considered by the House Education Committee in their final meeting before the Feb. 16 funnel deadline later that day. The teacher salary provisions are included in a separate bill, HSB 714, detailed below. It contains the following Divisions regarding AEA reform:

**Division I DE Oversight**: creates a Division of Special Education in the DE. Defines the 13 FTES in Des Moines and requires 5 FTEs in each AEA for compliance for the FY 2024-25 school year (this is a smaller expansion of the DE than the Governor’s plan, which was estimated to include 139 FTEs and the Senate Plan).

**Division II AEA Provisions:** Requires AEA Boards to be advisory and requires AEAs be under “general supervision of the DE director”. Allows districts to contract with an AEA for services. Requires DE Director to approve evidence-based professional development offered by AEAs. Requires EA administrators to have a teaching license with a special education endorsement or a special education support personnel authorization by July 1, 2025. Limits the AEA chief administrator salary to no more than 100% of the average of superintendents in the AEA, effective July 1, 2024. Requires the AEA to submit the AEA budget to the Director of the DE by March 1 annually, who approves the budget, and by March 15, submits it to the state BOE for approval. If accreditation deficiencies are not corrected, requires the DE Director (rather than the AEA Board) to take one of two actions: 1) merge the deficient program with another AEA’s program or 2) contract with another AEA or public educational institution for purposes of the program delivery. Requires new AEA Accreditation Standards (almost identical to Senate list of standards) primarily in areas to provide support to school districts for improving instruction and lowering student achievement gaps for students with disabilities and state and federal compliance.

Division II also creates a Task Force to study AEAs and make recommendations on AEA property, media, education and special education services, what services AEAs should provide, special education services provided by the DE’s Division of Special Education, the overall organizational structure of special education services delivery, oversight of AEAs, accreditation standards, the timeline for changing staffing and oversight, and specifies task force members (which is likely to change during floor amendment).

**Division III Funding:** Beginning July 1, 2025, districts get Education Services, Media Services and Special Education Services funding. Requires special education services funding to be spent on special education services. Allows districts to use media services funding for special education maintenance of effort (MOE), and allows, but does not require, districts to contract with AEA. Requires districts to contract with AEAs for education services funding for July 1, 2025, but beginning July 1, 2026, districts are allowed to contract with an AEA for education services, could provide their own or find them elsewhere. Allows districts to use education services funding for MOE. Requires districts to contract with an AEA for special education services. Requires DOM to deduct school districts’ special education services carry forward from future year special education services amount (use it or lose it). Requires DOM to deduct AEA Teacher Salary Supplement per pupil from the school districts’ state aid and sends that to the AEA. Requires DOM to deduct AEA Professional Development Supplement per pupil and sends that to DE for evidence-based PD services.

**Division IV Shared Operational Functions:** Eliminates the ability of AEAs to participate in operational sharing with school districts effective July 1, 2024.

**Division V DE Requirements:** Requires DE to provide support to school districts in special education instruction, FAPE information and process to facilitate IEP development , professional learning and support materials and tools for IEP team participants, information to IEP teams that nonpublic school placement is appropriate unless the IEP requires another arrangement (we believe this provision should be amended to also reference federal law), provide professional learning and other materials for meaningful consultation, establish sustainable accountability and data collection systems related to special education to meet federal and state legal requirements and encourage innovative models to meet student needs, and provide an implementation plan for schools relating to strategies for identifying, evaluating and promoting and providing services that improve experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities.

The bill was approved by the House Education, 15-8 and moved to the House Calendar (not yet assigned a new number). Rep. Wheeler stated that this is a work in progress and they are open to improvements in the bill along the way. UEN is undecided.

[**HSB 714**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HSB%20714&ga=90) **Teacher Salaries:** Sets minimum teacher pay for FY 2024-25 at $47,500 and increases that to $50,000 for the FY 2025-26 school year. Sets minimum hourly wages for education support personnel at $15 per hour (caps the state expense for the minimum hourly pay at $14 million and requires DOM to prorate the shortfall to districts is the $14 million is insufficient to cover the cost). Requires DOM to calculate TSS per pupil necessary for each district to reach minimums, including the employer’s share of FICA and IPERS. Allows TSS to be used for educational support staff costs. Appropriates an FY 2024-25 Funding Supplement of $22 million, based on districts’ share of budget enrollment (estimated at $45.50 per pupil), to be used at the school district’s discretion to supplement teacher salaries and salaries and wages of education support personnel in a manner that promotes quality teaching and rewards experience. Approved by the House Education Committee unanimously and moved to the House Calendar. UEN supports.

**Committee Action Other House Committees:**

[**HF 2299**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=hf2299) **Open Records:** Authorizes a government to provide an open record in a reasonable format rather than the requested format. Does not require the government to supply a record that is available on its Internet site. Allows the government to send a notice of the availability on the Internet. Approved by the House State Government Committee 19-4 and moved to the House Calendar. UEN supports.

[**HF 2516**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=hf2516) **Governor’s Work-Based Learning:** Provisions impacting schools: Division II defines work-based learning internships for high school credit and allows experiences outside of school hours, including summer. Division III allows a student-teacher experience requirement to be reduced to four weeks if the teacher meets certain criteria. This specifically includes apprentices in the Teacher and Para Educator Registered Apprenticeship Grant Program (TPRA) or other intern program with significant para or substitute teaching experience. Approved by the Labor and Workforce Committee 15-1 and moves to the House Calendar. UEN is registered in support of Division III. See also SF 2260.

[**HF 2539**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202539&ga=90) **Open Meetings Fines:** Increases the range of fines for violations of the open meetings law, to $1,000 to $5,000. Requires a court to issue an order removing a member from a governmental body if the member has previously violated the open meetings law. Requires members of such bodies to take a course on open meetings and open records laws. Approved by the House State Government Committee 22-1, and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is undecided.

[**HSB 675**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=hsb675) **School Guards and Firearm Training:** Requires school districts with enrollment over 8,000 to employ at least one security guard, with a professional weapons carry permit, per high school. Encourages smaller districts to do so. Establishes a school security grant program with grants up to $50,000 to help pay costs. Requires guards to have live training at least quarterly. Allows other school employees to have a carry permit if the school has not opted out of professional permits for school employees. Requires the employee to have regular training. Includes immunity provisions. Amendment to remove the mandate that requires large schools to have an SRO or private security officer and instead encourages school districts to hire peace officers. Amended and passed, 13-8 and moved to the House Calendar. Still awaiting a new bill number. UEN was opposed to the original bill, but with the amendment, will change registration to undecided.

**Committee Action Senate Education Committee:**

[**SF 2041**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=sf2041) **School Administrator Contracts:** Requires contracts between school boards and school administrators to include a statement that severance payments will not be made if the administrator is found liable in a criminal, civil or administrative proceeding, except for simple misdemeanors or traffic tickets. Applies to contracts entered into or continued after the effective date of the bill. The bill was amended in the Committee, requiring the criminal act to be related to the duty of the administrator. Approved 15-0 and moved to the Senate Calendar. UEN was opposed to the original bill, but with the amendment, will change our registration to undecided when there is a new bill number.

[**SF 2364**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202364&ga=90) **Education Leadership Commission Reporting**: Strikes the reporting requirements for the Commission on Education Leadership and Compensation to the DE, Legislature and the Governor. Approved by the Senate Education Committee 15-0 and moved to the Senate Calendar. UEN is undecided. See Companion HF 2152 on the House Calendar.

[**SF 2365**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202365&ga=90) **BOEE Investigation Reporting:** Requires the BOEE to include the number of investigations of school employees who are not licensed or holders of certificates or authorizations that are referred to law enforcement in its annual reports. Includes protections for personal information. Approved by the Senate Education Committee 15-0 and moved to the Senate Calendar. UEN supports. See companion HF 2151 on the House Calendar.

[**SF 2367**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=SF%202367) **Student Data System and Count Date:** Requires DE to provide a new data information system for reporting and collecting information, at no cost to the school district for the first year. Allows DE to charge up to $12 per pupil for year 2 (both public and nonpublic schools pay the fee) and no limit on future year fee. Would allow districts to purchase a SIS module that would play well with the state data collection system. Also adds March 1 as a second enrollment count date and requires budget enrollment to be based on the average of the Oct. 1 and Mar. 1 enrollment counts. With new budget timelines, concerns were expressed about this second date’s workability for schools, DE and DOM. The bill was approved by the Senate Education Committee, 10-5, and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is registered as undecided. See HF 2542 on the House Calendar.

[**SF 2368**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=SF%202368) **Charter Schools:** See the description of HF 2543 above. However, the Senate bill includes Division III school start date, which makes the earliest school start date the first Tuesday after the final day of the Iowa State Fair. Approved by the Senate Education Committee, 10-5, and moved to the Senate Calendar. UEN is opposed.

[**SF 2378**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202378&ga=90) **BOEE Grooming Investigations:** Strikes the requirement that BOEE investigations about the misconduct of a practitioner involving behavior that led to an inappropriate or romantic relationship be down within three years of the conduct. Requires BOEE to report to law enforcement agencies when an investigation discovers a felony has been committed. Amended to specify the definition of grooming, and approved by the Senate Education Committee 15-0. UEN is registered as undecided. See Companion HF 2261 on the House Calendar.

[**SF 2383**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202383&ga=90) **Expanded PK Program:** Allows schools to choose between the 10 hours of instruction for voluntary preschool programs or adding expanded programs (15 hours of instruction, increasing to 20 hours in FY 2026) for children in families at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. Allows those families to choose in which preschool program to place their child. Changes the formula for preschool aid commensurate with the expanded hours (75% weighting for 15 hour program and 1.0 weighting for the 20 hour program). Amended and approved by the Senate Education Committee 14-1; UEN supports.

[**SSB 3073**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=ssb3073) **AEA Overhaul and Teacher Pay:** Amended the bill with a strike after amendment, which is not available online until a new bill number is assigned. The amendment, which is now the bill, requires the following five Divisions:

**Division I: Creation of the DE Division of Special Education and Assigned Duties:**

* Oversee the operation of each AEA to ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state special education laws, beginning July 1, 2025.
* Provide guidance and standards to AEAs for federal and state education initiatives, which the AEA must implement statewide, beginning July 1, 2025.
* Staffing Transition Plan: Requires DE, AEAs and DSE to develop a plan to transfer AEA employees responsible for compliance to the DSE. Requires the plan to include a description of how AEAs will accommodate any space needed in the AEA facility for employees of DSE.
* Requires DE to compile all transition plans and submit to the General Assembly by Jan. 1, 2025.

**Division II: AEA General Provisions:**

* Adds improving student achievement and closing student achievement gaps to the AEA mission.
* Requires that, in addition to the AEA board, the Division of Special Education governs the AEA to the extent described in 256B.3 Subsection 15A (*compliance with federal and state special education laws*).
* Allows AEAs to provide evidence-based PD services to public and nonpublic schools within their boundaries, subject to approval by DE Director.
* Timeline for Special Education: Requires school districts to request by Feb. 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, and requires AEAs to provide requested special education services in the following school year (beginning 7.1.25).
* Requires AEAs to provide media services.
* Requires the AEA to charge reasonable costs consistent with current market rates for education services, special education services, PD, and media services provided by the AEA board.
* Requires AEA Board to provide an annual report by Oct. 1 to DE and General Assembly, including description of progress the AEA has made to improve outcomes achieved by students receiving special education services and a description of how the AEA is focusing money it receives on providing services in the classroom.
* Limits the salary for AEA administrator to 125% of the average salary of superintendents of districts located in its boundaries (effective 7.1.24).
* By Jan. 1 of each year, to report to each school district within the AEA boundaries an accounting of funds received from the school district, including payments under 257.35 (special education flow-through and funds paid) for the previous fiscal year, a description of services AEA provided to the district and a calculation of those services per pupil for each category of service provided.
* Adds the Division of Special Education (DSE), beginning 7.1.2025, in addition to the AEA board, for governance purposes regarding special education compliance.
* Requires the Division of Special Education (DSE), in consultation with AEAs, to develop and establish an accreditation process for AEAs. Requires timely submission of information. Requires DSE to appoint the site visit team. Changes the oversight role of the state BOE to the DSE throughout. Requires the DSE to determine if the AEA meets accreditation standards. Allows DSE to grant conditions approval for a shorter time (regular approval for 5 years). Requires the DSE in cooperation with the AEA board to establish a remediation plan (Removes the step that the State BOE approve the remediation plan.) Allows the DSE to suspend accreditation during implementation of the remediation plan. If DSE determines that deficiencies have been corrected, requires DSE to reinstate accreditation. If not corrected, requires DSE to either merge the deficient program with a program from another accredited AEA or contract with another EAA or other public educational institution for program delivery.
* **Standards for accreditation effective July 1, 2025:** requires State BOE, in consultation with the Division of Special Education, to develop accreditation standards. Requires addition of reporting progress toward goals for students with disabilities. Requires PD be evidence-based. Requires standards to include curriculum development, instruction, and assessment services that address areas of reading, language arts, math and science, using research-based methodologies, for students with disabilities. Specifies support for early childhood service coordination is for families birth through age three. Requires timely submission of reports. Requires standards for AEAs to:
	+ support districts in setting goals and implementing actions to improve student learning for students with disabilities,
	+ support for all students with diverse learning needs eligible for special education, including direct services,
	+ support for schools and districts to ensure compliance with state BOE rules for special education,
	+ support to implement effective instruction for all students with disabilities through school technology services,
	+ support for students using educational programs and services in a manner that is consistent with the education standards established pursuant to section 256.11,
	+ support for staff development and adult learners using evidence-based PD in a manner that meets the professional needs of staff and adult learners consistent with standards adopted by the State BOE, and
	+ compliance with all relevant federal and state laws in the provision of services and supports to students with disabilities.
* Transition provisions: AEA accredited on or before July 1, 2025 state accredited.

**Division III AEA Funding**

* For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, DOM deducts from State Aid to school districts and pays monthly to AEAs, all of special education support services funding (required to be used by AEAs for special education support services), 40% of media services funding, all of the AEA TSS and PD supplements, and 40% of educational services funding.
* For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and subsequent years, DOM deducts from State Aid to school districts 10% of special education support services funding (and requires school districts and AEAs to use special education support services only for special education support services), 40% of media services funding, all of the AEA TSS and PD supplements, and 40% of education services funding.
* Specifies that districts can contract with AEAs for media services and educational services or provide their own. Allows school districts to use unreserved media services and educational services fund balances for special education maintenance of effort.
* Specifies that the “enrollment served” means basic enrollment of all school districts within the boundaries of the AEA plus the number of nonpublic school pupils served by the AEAs.

**Division IV Initial Teacher Compensation: Establishes a new teacher pay minimum of $46,251.**

**Division V AEA Required Evaluations and Reports:** Requires AEA to report by Jan. 1, 2025, the progress made toward reducing executive administration, which is required to be reduced by at least 30% by July 1, 2026, and a proposal for reorganization of AEA services to centralize some services, including media services, and to create centers of excellence for other services. Also requires the Department of Administrative Services, in coordination with DE and AEAs, to report to the General Assembly an inventory of all real AEA property and facilities, an evaluation of the value of that property, and an evaluation of how the facilities are used by Jan. 1, 2025.

**Division VI TSS DCPP:** For Budget Year beginning July 1, 2024, specifies that TSS per pupil is the greater of 1) TSS for the base year plus TSS state amount for the budget year or 2) per pupil amount necessary, calculated by DOM, to pay for the $46,251 minimum teacher pay including employer costs of FICA and IPERS . For the Budget Year beginning July 1, 2025 and succeeding budget years, TSS is the TSS for the base year plus the SSA increase.

The bill was amended and approved, 10-6, and moved to the Senate Calendar, awaiting a new amendment. UEN is undecided.

**Committee Action Other Senate Committees:**

[**SF 2309**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202309&ga=90) **School Stop Sign Fines:** doubles the fines for failure to stop at a stop sign in a school zone. Approved by the Senate Transportation Committee unanimously and moved to the Senate Calendar. UEN supports.

[**SF 2331**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202331&ga=90) **Government Notices in Papers:** Requires that newspapers used to publish notice requirements be published in a physical format. Deems notice requirements to be met if the governmental body publishes notice on the internet, even if the newspaper fails to publish the notice. Requires the newspaper to refund any money paid for notices not published in a timely manner. Gives the IPIB jurisdiction over disputes about notice publication between governments and newspapers. Allows publication of notice on the internet if a sufficient number of regional newspapers do not exist. Strikes requirements on publishing in alternative papers. Amended and passed by the Senate Technology Committee, 8-4. Moved to the Senate Calendar. UEN supports.

[**SF 2332**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202332&ga=90) **Computer Science Graduation and Reporting:** Requires high school students in public, charter and accredited nonpublic schools to complete one-half unit of computer sciences as a graduation requirement, beginning with the graduating class of the 2028-29 school year. Allows schools to apply to the DE for a waiver through 2030. Requires the class be taught in a traditional in-person classroom to the extent feasible. Requires courses to meet or exceed standards adopted by the state BOE. Requires the DE to publish a list of computer science courses and course codes that satisfy the requirements. Requires school districts to report annually to DE, the number of teachers teaching computer science courses, including their credentials, courses and demographics, and the number of students by subgroup enrolled in computer science. The bill also expands the computer science professional development fund to reimburse teachers for computer science training tuition to include initial and intern teachers. The bill was approved by the Technology Committee 12-0 and moved to the Senate Calendar. UEN is undecided.

[**SF 2333**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=SF%202333&ga=90) **Educational Land Sales:** prohibits various governmental bodies, including school districts, from adopting or enforcing a deed restriction or ordinance that prohibits the lease or sale of the property to an education institution planning to offer educational services. Requires that if a nonpublic school is the highest bidder on a property for sale, that the school district must sell the property to the nonpublic school. Approved by the Senate Local Government Committee 8-4 and moved to the Senate Calendar. UEN is opposed.

[**SF 2374**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=sf2374) **Union Recertification Elections:** Requires PERB to decertify a public union if an employer fails to file with PERB a list of eligible voters and the union does file an objection through the court system within five days. Approved by the Senate Workforce Committee 7-5, and moved to the Senate Calendar. UEN is registered opposed.

**Other Bills on the Calendar:**

[**HF 255**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=HF255)**Alternative Pathways:** specifies requirements for higher education programs that offer a Teacher Intern License, requiring pedagogy training and work under a teacher leader, including during co-teaching and planning time. Also creates a new Temporary Initial Alternative License, which would apply to completers with a bachelor’s degree who obtain a certificate from only one provider, the American College of Teacher Certification, which is an online program without student teaching or practicum experience. Although required to have a bachelor’s degree, the bill does not require the participant to have a BA in the content area of their license. Specifies the requirements for the program and that the BOEE treat this license equal to other teaching licenses. Moves to the Senate Calendar with a significant amendment [S-5005](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/AMDI/90/S5005.pdf), which requires pedagogy training and classroom experience, resolving our major objections. UEN was opposed to the original bill, but will likely change our registration if/when the amendment is attached.

[**HF 2081**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF2081&ga=90) **Agricultural Science:** Allows instruction in agricultural science classes to count as science instruction for offer and teach requirements. Approved by the House Education Committee and moves to the House Calendar. UEN supports.

[**HF 2197**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF2197&ga=90) **Holocaust Education**: Requires schools, beginning July 1, 2024, to include education about the Holocaust, antisemitism, religious intolerance, personal responsibility, the leading role of the US armed forces, including African Americans, Native Americans and Asian Americans, in defeating the 3rd Reich and liberating concentration camps and to provide PD to teachers, and requires DE to report for the year July 1, 2024 school district compliance with this requirement. Approved in the House Education Committee and moves to the House Calendar. UEN is opposed, not because we believe it is wrong to educate students about the these topics, but because we do not appreciate very specific content language in the Iowa Code.

[**HF 2278**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=HF%202278) **Open Enrollment Transportation** by Education: strikes the requirements that a sending and receiving district agree to arrangements for transportation for an open-enrolled student. Amended to only allow a receiving district bus into the resident district by no more than 2 miles, limited to only pick up students whose resident is closer to the receiving district’s attendant center than their own, and limits to school districts below 2,000 students, unless a small district comes into the larger district to pick up students, than the larger district can do the same. Amended and passed, 20-2. Moves to the House Calendar. UEN registration is now undecided (although originally opposed, the amendments minimized the potential for harm to urban districts). Formerly HF 134.

[**HF 2377**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=HF%202377) **Dyslexia Endorsement Grant:** Appropriates $335,000 to DE for grants to help teachers obtain an advanced dyslexia specialist endorsement. Amended and passed 23-0, and moved to the House Calendar. UEN supports.

[**HF 2393**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202393&ga=90) **Student Dental Exam:** Exempts dental exams for students from restrictions on physical exams, which would otherwise require written, advance parental permission, similar to exemptions for hearing and vision. Passed 23-0 and moved to the House Calendar. UEN supports.

[**HF 2396**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202396&ga=90) **School Pronouns:** Prohibits schools and charter schools from disciplining employees, contractors or students for the use of a legal name or the failure to use a personal pronoun. Allows an employee who is terminated to sue for reinstatement and to seek civil damages in three times the amount of back pay. Passed 13-10 and moved to the House Calendar. UEN is registered opposed.

[**HF 2398**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=HF%202398) **Public Officer Bond:** Allows a public officer to purchase an insurance policy in lieu of posting a bond. Requires the policy to substantially meet the bond requirements. Allows for the reasonable expenses of the insurance policy to be paid for by the government to the extent the expenses of the bond would be covered. Allows an officer who fails to post a bond to be suspended for failing to do so, and to be removed after a reasonable time if the bond is not posted. Passed by the House Local Government Committee, 21-0 and moved to the House Calendar. UEN supports.

[**HSB 585**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=hsb585) **School Start Date:** Allows the earliest school start date to be the Monday preceding August 23 if August 23 is a weekday. Passed by a vote of 21:1. Moves to the House Calendar. UEN supports. Awaiting a new bill number.

[**SF 2105**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=SF2105)**Operational Sharing:** increases the maximum amount of additional weighting a school district may receive for sharing operational functions from 21 to 29 students. Approved unanimously by the Senate Education Committee. UEN is registered as undecided.

[**SF 2258**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=SF%202258)**SSA:** Establishes the state percent of growth and the categorical state percent of growth for the budget year beginning July 1, 2024, without a percentage (shell bill). Still contains the 30-day deadline, which was February 9. Senators discussed moving parts of the educational budget (teacher pay minimums, operational sharing, PK and others) as delaying the determination of the amount. UEN is registered opposed. Governor Reynolds’ budget recommended a 2.5% increase. The bill is on to the Senate Calendar.

**Advocacy Actions This Week: School Funding, AEA Overhaul Changes, Quality Preschool:**

**Adequate School Funding:** Contact legislators regarding SSA, the House’s 3% alone would fall short but the commitment to fund teacher salary increases and an additional supplemental appropriation of $22 million is good. See the UEN Issue Brief for additional information.Now that the Senate Education Committee has a bill on the Senate Calendar, send senators a note or call to set SSA to match the House recommendation of 3%, and confirm a commitment for additional teacher pay. Additional Supports:

See the UEN website for an [UEN Issue Brief](https://www.uen-ia.org/system/files/Public/IssueBriefs/UEN%20Issue%20Brief%20SSA%20adequate%20school%20funding%202024.pdf) providing education funding history, comparing total Iowa education expenditures per pupil, which most recently ranked our state as 35th in the nation, now spending more than $3,000 per student LESS than the national average, and including some talking points to help you advocate with your legislators. *UEN’s Legislative Priority supports an SSA rate that at least matches the inflation rate schools are experiencing.*

**FY 2025** [ISFIS New Authority Calculator](https://www.iowaschoolfinance.com/system/files/members/Public/New%20Authority%20Report%20FY%202025.xlsx) allows users to set the SSA rate and calculate the impact for all districts for FY 2025 on your regular program (not including special education or other supplemental weightings or categoricals). Enter the SSA percentage increase and your Budget Enrollment and you can compare to the new money you’d receive if the SSA rate matched inflation (either 3.1% for CPI and 4% for Core Inflation) compared to the Governor’s Recommendation of 2.5%.

**Governor’s AEA and Teacher Pay Bill:** Now that the House and Senate versions are through committees, discuss preferences in each policy. In short, the House version has longer implementation timelines and a smaller transfer of power to the Department of Education, but does not give districts local control over special education flow-through dollars (requires those services be contracted through an AEA). Keep talking about the priorities of local control, limited state government authority, sensible timelines, and ensured provision of district and AEA capacity to provide needed services for students with disabilities. Stay tuned for more information.

**Quality Preschool and Other UEN Priorities:** in every communication, find a way to mention Quality Preschool, and Teacher and other Staff Shortages. SF 2075 Expanded Preschool is on the Senate Calendar (phases up to 1.0 weighting for students below 185% of the federal poverty level). Contact Senators to support it. Find Issue Briefs and other resources on the UEN Advocacy website to find talking points or other resources to share when you meet with policymakers.

**Charter School and Open Enrollment Funding and Right of First Refusal on School District Property:** UEN is opposed to these bills, HF 2543 on the House Calendar and SF 2368, which would require categorical funds TSS, PD and EICS to follow students.



This chart shows the variance in categorical funds per pupil. Although the State Cost Per Pupil, or SCPP, is the floor for regular program district cost, the other categorical funds do have districts below the state cost per categorical. The range is based on different allocation formulas when the funds were grants, rather than categorical. Other inequities in dropout prevention, instructional support and district cost per pupil further confuse the concept of per pupil equity. UEN opposes the increase of funding for Charter Schools and has serious questions about the variance of per pupil categoricals related to open enrollment funding without further study. Especially since the teacher pay proposals use TSS to distribute funding, this will create an even deeper inequity in the per pupil amount of TSS, it would be prudent to study these equity implications before changing the distribution for charter schools and open enrollment. Ask your representatives and senators to amend the categoricals out of the bill until they better understand the implications of teacher pay and other inequities.

Additionally, eliminating the public hearing and bidding process for property sale or lease to charter schools is wrong. Removing the ability of the public to petition and challenge the board’s decision to sell property to charter schools, but allowing the petition and vote process for every other sale of property is unfair, and requiring districts to give a right of first refusal to charter schools on sale or lease of property would not respect the needs of school boards to work with local governments and economic development authorities within their district to best meet the needs of the entire community.

**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 Issue Briefs, UEN Weekly Update Legislative Reports and Videos, 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 [2024 UEN Advocacy Handbook](https://www.uen-ia.org/advocacy-handbook), which is also available from the subscriber section of the UEN website.

Contact us with any questions, feedback or suggestions to better prepare your advocacy work:

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