



## UEN Legislative Update April 10, 2025

This UEN Weekly Report from the 2025 Legislative Session includes:

- SSA to the Governor at 2% Plus
- HF 787 Education Omnibus Still Pending
- Cell Phone Restrictions and Math Initiative to the Governor
- New Property Tax Bills: Some Improvement and Some Remaining Concerns
- PK and Child Care Continuum Status
- Other Bill Action
- Dead Bills due to Second Funnel
- Advocacy Actions for the Week and Resources

### SSA to the Governor

In action this week, the Senate moved [SF 167](#) forward by amending the House's plan. The agreement increases per pupil cost at 2% (impacts regular program district cost and categoricals). Additional investments include:

- 1) \$5 per pupil applied to the minimum state cost per pupil, to close the district cost per pupil equity gap to \$135 (the House plan had included \$10 per pupil). The agreement increases spending authority and cash by \$1.5 million statewide to the 2/3rds of districts at the lowest DCPP, and \$1.4 million in property tax relief for those districts at a higher DCPP.
- 2) a 5% increase in the transportation equity fund, which is an increase of \$1.6 million for transportation equity, and
- 3) an increase in the operational sharing student weighting cap from 21 to 25.

The agreement did not include any one-time funding supplement, but the floor manager, Rep. Gehlbach, stated during the House discussion that he intended to include some one-time supplemental funds for schools in the appropriations bill process. The House then concurred with the Senate amendment, sending the bill to the Governor.

UEN was registered in support of the House proposal (which included an SSA increase of 2.25%, plus \$10 per pupil in student equity and \$22.6 million in supplemental funding) and opposed to the Senate proposal, which only had 2% SSA). See the [ISFIS New Authority Calculator](#) to determine the impact of 2% plus \$5 per pupil equity on your regular program budget and budget guarantee property taxes (if any.)

The following chart from the Fiscal Note published on the final version of SF 167 explains the individual impacts of various line items due to the provisions of SF 167. Note that the assumptions include a \$7.5 million reduction to AEAs, although typically, that reduction exceeds \$32 million by actions later in Session. Find the full Fiscal Note on the legislative website here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/FN/1525877.pdf>

**Figure 4 — SF 167**

**Legislative Services Agency: FY 2026 School Aid Estimates (Statewide Dollars in Millions)**

2.00%	Set a State Percent of Growth	State Supplemental Aid (SSA)	\$	157	
\$	5	Set additional dollars to SSCP separate from the SSA	Additional Dollars	\$	5
Yes	Select if the PTRP is renewed ("No" is current law)	Total Change	\$	162	
\$	0	Select AEA reduction in addition to current law (\$7,500,000)	FY 2026 State Cost Per Pupil (SCPP)	\$	7,988
\$	0	Transfer from Taxpayer Relief Fund FY 2026	Total AEA Reduction	\$	7,500,000

Program Funding:	FY 2025	Est. FY 2026	Est. Change	% Change
Regular Program District Cost	\$ 3,790.5	\$ 3,844.0	\$ 53.5	1.41%
Regular Program Budget Adjustment	15.5	24.3	8.8	56.99%
Supplementary Weighting (District)	129.7	141.8	12.1	9.34%
Special Education Instruction (District)	536.7	552.7	16.0	2.99%
Teacher Salary Supplement (District)	401.1	450.1	48.9	12.19%
Professional Development Supplement (District)	38.0	39.4	1.4	3.75%
Early Intervention Supplement (District)	41.3	42.8	1.5	3.75%
Teacher Leadership Supplement (District)	189.2	196.3	7.1	3.74%
AEA Special Ed Support District Cost	188.9	191.8	2.9	1.55%
AEA Special Ed Support Adjustment	0.8	1.2	0.3	40.50%
AEA Media Services	33.1	33.6	0.5	1.39%
AEA Ed Services	36.6	37.1	0.5	1.40%
AEA Sharing	0.2	0.2	-0.0	-0.48%
AEA Teacher Salary Supplement	18.6	18.9	0.3	1.72%
AEA Professional Development Supplement	0.0	0.0	0.0	
AEA Statewide State Aid Reduction	-32.5	-7.5	25.0	-76.92%
Dropout and Dropout Prevention	149.5	149.5	0.0	0.00%
<b>Combined District Cost</b>	<b>\$ 5,536.3</b>	<b>\$ 5,716.2</b>	<b>\$ 179.9</b>	<b>3.25%</b>
Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program	\$ 91.4	\$ 91.1	\$ -0.3	-0.30%

State Aid:	FY 2025	Est. FY 2026	Est. Change	% Change
Regular Program	\$ 1,989.4	\$ 2,025.4	\$ 36.0	1.81%
Supplementary Weighting	108.4	119.6	11.2	10.36%
Special Education Weighting	473.8	488.0	14.2	3.01%
Property Tax Adjustment Aid (1992)	6.4	6.2	-0.2	-3.64%
Property Tax Replacement Payment (PTRP)	126.8	137.3	10.5	8.29%
Adjusted Additional Property Tax - General Fund	24.0	24.0	0.0	0.00%
Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program	91.4	91.1	-0.3	-0.30%
Minimum State Aid	1.3	1.2	-0.1	-0.1
<b>State Aid from General Fund</b>	<b>\$ 3,787.6</b>	<b>\$ 3,940.4</b>	<b>\$ 152.8</b>	<b>4.03%</b>
Transfer from Taxpayer Relief Fund	\$ 13.9	\$ 0.0	\$ -13.9	-100.00%
Transfer from Economic Emergency Fund	8.0	0	-8.0	-100.00%
*Adjusted Additional Property Tax - SAVE Fund	29.0	31.6	2.6	9.06%
Foundation Base Supplement (FBS)	9.7	10.2	0.5	5.66%
<b>Total State Aid (Includes Non-General Fund)</b>	<b>\$ 3,848.2</b>	<b>\$ 3,982.2</b>	<b>\$ 134.1</b>	<b>3.48%</b>

Local Property Tax:	FY 2025	Est. FY 2026	Est. Change	% Change
Uniform Levy Amount	\$ 1,156.5	\$ 1,199.3	\$ 42.9	3.71%
Additional Levy	590.1	604.0	13.9	2.36%
<b>Total Levy to Fund Combined District Cost</b>	<b>\$ 1,746.5</b>	<b>\$ 1,803.3</b>	<b>\$ 56.8</b>	<b>3.25%</b>
Comm/Ind - Uniform Levy Adjustments	23.9	19.3	-4.7	-19.56%
Comm/Ind - Additional Levy Adjustments	10.1	0.0	-10.1	

Miscellaneous Information:	FY 2025	Est. FY 2026	Est. Change	% Change
Budget Enrollment	483,699	480,665	-3,033	-0.63%
Number of Districts with Budget Adjustment	140	157	17	12.14%
Percentage of Districts with Budget Adjustment	43.08%	48.31%		
Statewide Categoricals Total	\$ 688.2	\$ 747.5	\$ 59.3	8.61%
Property Tax Relief Payment Per Pupil	223	242	19	8.52%
Foundation Base Supplement Per Pupil	5	10	5	100.00%
Statewide AEA Funding	245.7	275.3	29.6	12.03%
Transportation Equity Program	31.1	32.7	1.6	5.00%

**Notes:**

Totals may not sum due to data duplication and exclusion. For example, other funds are provided by State Aid but not included in the State Aid section because they are represented in the Program Funding section listed above. The Transportation Equity Program is not included in State Aid totals.

Professional Development Supplement (PDS)

Area Education Agency (AEA)

\*Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) Fund

The provision for Minimum State Aid requires that the State provide at least \$300 per student.

Sources: Department of Management (School Aid File), LSA analysis and calculations.

### **HF 787 Education Omnibus Action (Includes TSS)**

The Senate amended and passed this week, the Governor's HF 787 Education Omnibus bill. The bill was approved in the House on March 18, nearly unanimously. The provisions of the bill include:

- TSS calculations, an error correction process for incorrect experience reported last year, and 2% growth (\$13.09 per pupil added to district TSS per pupil amounts after DOM calculates the amount needed to meet the new minimums, including the employer share of FICA and IPERS).
- Reinstates the TeachIowa Job posting site (strikes the requirement for school districts and AEAs to post job openings on the Workforce Development Site).
- Creates a mechanism for districts to receive reimbursement for high-cost out-of-state placements (DE takes enough off the top of state foundation aid for these high-cost placements, so all districts share in the cost).
- Sets a \$50K minimum pay for returning retirees.
- Provides student teaching flexibility for Intern Teachers.

The Senate amendment specified that the \$50K minimum for IPERS returning teachers applies to full-time teachers and also required the Job Posting in TeachIowa to comply with Iowa Code 216.6 (do not discriminate against a list of factors). The Senate passed the bill 47:0, sending it to the House. UEN is registered in support.

### **HF 782 Cell Phone Restrictions to the Governor**

The Senate also amended and passed this week, the Governor's HF 782 Personal Electronic Devices Restrictions bill. The Amendment requires the DE to provide model sample policies that would be compliant with the bill, that districts may use to inform their own local policy, by May 1. The bill was approved as amended by the Senate, 49:0, sending it back to the House. The House concurred, 92:4, sending it to the Governor. UEN was originally registered as undecided, but changed our registration to support as the bill was improved. We further appreciate and support the May 1 amendment.

Please note: The bill requires local board policies to RESTRICT (not BAN) personal electronic devices during instruction. Also, the language from the original bill to include instruction in middle school regarding the impact of social media on students, was removed from the bill earlier in the process.

### **HF 784 State Mathematics Initiative to the Governor**

The House approved the bill on March 18, 82:6, sending it to the Senate. The Senate agreed on April 7, sending it to the Governor. UEN was registered as undecided. We have concerns about timelines and the order of implementation but agree with the need for focus and resources to improve mathematics achievement for students in Iowa.

### **New Property Tax Bills: Some Improvement and Some Remaining Concerns**

The House and Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairs introduced round 2 of property tax relief bills on Wednesday, HSB 328 and SSB 1227 respectively. A subcommittee of Reps.

Kauffman, Bloomingdale, McBurney, Wilson and Wulf has been assigned in the House. The Senate has not yet appointed subcommittee members.

At first glance, the new proposal does the following:

- Specifies a shorter phase-out period for eliminating rollbacks.
- Allows a higher growth (above 2%) for city and county levies if inflation measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is higher.
- Increases the homestead credit from \$25,000 (proposed in the earlier bills) to \$50,000. Current law sets a homestead credit at \$4,850. Doubling the homestead credit will offset some of the market value of residential property in particular.
- Since valuation should increase pretty significantly, the bills reduce the PPEL and Bond Issue/Debt Levy rates by half. The bills also allow the school board to pass a resolution claiming a higher levy is needed to meet indebtedness obligations.

ISFIS staff will review in detail and then update the ISFIS Property Tax Reform Memo with additional details. UEN was registered as undecided on the original proposals. We remain concerned about the state assuming the financial obligation of buying down the additional levy, making the cost of adequate SSA even higher for the state in the future, especially as income tax cuts are still being phased in.

### **PK and Childcare Continuum (Governor's Bill) Status**

The House and Senate each moved their childcare continuum bills (HF 623 and SF 445, respectively) to their unfinished business calendar. Although both bills were approved by committees earlier in the process, neither chamber has yet voted to approve the bill. Conversations and concerns continue about how the proposal will be funded, the impact it will have on shared visions/at-risk funding for 3- and 4-year-old preschool, and the inequity of the initial year funding (new community-based providers are funded in a start-up year based on the number of students enrolled by the count date, whereas public schools are funded based on the number of students counted in SVPP in the prior year.) Although this falls well short of the UEN priority of full-day funding for full-day PK, there could be some benefit to additional sections and working with childcare providers through this program, particularly if start-up funding was parallel for public schools or if some grants were for full-day PK. UEN is still registered as undecided.

### **House and Senate Action**

**HF 392 Year-round School Calendar Waiver:** Extends the current year-round school waiver process that applies to K-8 schools to include high school grades (9-12). See [Iowa Code 279.10](#) subsection 2 (a-d) for conditions required in a year-round calendar waiver application. UEN supports the bill, approved by the Senate and on to the Governor.

**HF 785 Charter School Board Members:** Allows one member of a charter school board to be a non-Iowa resident. Approved by the Senate Calendar and on to the Governor. UEN is opposed.

**[HF 844 Public Funds Depositories](#)**: Strikes IC 12C.6A, which is the requirement that banks or depositories where local governments invest their funds must demonstrate a commitment to serve the needs of the local community in which it is chartered to do business, including the needs of neighborhoods, rural areas, and small businesses in communities served by the financial institution. These needs include credit services as well as deposit services. UEN is undecided.

**[SF 275 Purple Heart Initiative](#)**: requires DE to establish a purple heart initiative to acknowledge school districts with extraordinary programs and services for students from military families. To the Governor. UEN supports.

### **Committee Action**

**[HSB 311 School Safety Expenses by Management Funds](#)**: House Ways and Means Committee amended and unanimously approved HSB 311. The bill allows management fund to pay for costs of monitoring entrances, safety software, SROs and security staff. UEN supports the bill.

**[SSB 1221 Supermajority Tax Constitutional Amendment](#)**: Senate Ways and Means approved SSB 1121 on party lines. Proposes an amendment to the Iowa Constitution requiring a 2/3 majority in the Legislature to approve a tax increase or impose a new tax. Requires that lawsuits challenging a legislative act be filed within a year of enactment. The bill is now renumbered as [SJR 11](#). The Amendment would require Iowa Voter approval before becoming part of the Iowa Constitution. UEN is opposed.

### **Dead Bills**

The following bills have been rereferred to House Committees or have failed to achieve committee approval in the other chamber. See UEN Tracking for bill descriptions or to verify UEN registration:

- HF 166 Motto Display and two minutes silence
- HF 212 No Margarine or dyes in school lunch
- HF 382 16-year-olds providing childcare
- HF 513 8<sup>th</sup> graders in HS Sports
- HF 520 Full year of HS Government Class
- HF 521 Draconian Instructional Material Publication
- HF 522 Therapeutic Classroom Food and Lighting
- HF 769 Liquor sale at school functions
- HF 789 TSS follow Charter Students
- HF 791 Gun Safety Instruction
- HF 845 Bible Social Studies Course Regulation
- HF 859 RIF school policy requirements
- HF 877 Proof of Publication Process (open meetings)
- HF 880 Eligible Public Library/nonmember of national association to get funding
- HF 888 Private Instruction Flexibility (no limit on # of students)
- HF 900 Open Enroll Policy to consider EL capacity
- HF 929 Expanded definition of instructional materials/civil penalty

- HSB 31 Start Date Flexibility
- SF 168 Operational Function positions outside the cap
- SF 205 Start Date Flexibility
- SF 274 Cash payment for sports
- SF 389 Public Records Requirements
- SF 448 Bus Driver Training/certification flexibility
- SF 493 Prohibits Local Gov't from paying lobbyists
- SF 516 Technology Workgroup

### **UEN Advocacy Resources**

Check out the 2025 Session Advocacy Handbook, which has everything advocacy beginners and experienced pros can use to advocate with legislators, at the Statehouse or back in your district. Find the handbook on the UEN Advocacy Website here: <https://www.uen-ia.org/advocacy-handbook>

### **Advocacy Actions This Week**

**Start with a thank you!** Thank legislators for getting SSA to the Governor's desk and for including the \$5 DCPPE equity piece, the increase in transportation equity funding, or just for getting it done. Even though it's lower than UEN requested, we are grateful they came to a decision. Also, thank the House Ways and Means Committee members for their unanimous approval of HSB 311 Safety Expenses in the Management Fund. Thanks to both Senators and Representatives for the May 1 deadline for model cell phone policies as part of the Governor's Cell Phone bill, too.

### **Property Tax Relief Proposals:**

- Keep asking questions.
- Ask how the state will afford the bigger commitment to the school funding formula? How much property tax relief is enough?
- Brainstorm with them about unintended consequences. Can we prevent some bad outcomes (e.g., add in SBRC authority for a school board to levy the Management Fund in spite of the fund balance limitation for unusual circumstances)?
- Do they know the outcome, how this combination of ideas will change their own property taxes, or those of their neighbors, let alone entire school districts?
- Encourage a deliberate, careful review before jumping to change. It would be good to continue to work on these proposals over the interim rather than rush something through and discover an unintended consequence later.
- We appreciate the improvements in the areas of PPEL and Debt Levies, including removing them from the levies limited to 2% growth.

### **Suggested Amendments to Property Tax Bills:**

1. Allow districts to request the ability to levy more management fund revenue despite the proposed limitations if they can demonstrate unique or unusual circumstances (perhaps a destructive weather event and a lawsuit occur in the same year).

2. Pay for the additional levy buydown with funds out of the Taxpayer Relief fund to the state general fund can continue to pay for adequate school funding and other essential state services.

**TSS Calculations:** Decisions to continue teaching contracts and settle negotiations are dependent on knowing both the SSA rate and the TSS per pupil for a school district. (Thanks for SSA, but please get HF 787 TSS Calculation over the finish line in the House).

**Preschool:** Encourage both Representatives and Senators to not forget public schools when considering the Governor's Child Care Continuum bills. Those bills have not progressed in either chamber. Public schools need funding for initial preschool programs to expand access to preschool. Research shows that quality preschool for enough hours has great benefits (Perry Preschool Project, with \$17 returned benefit for every \$1 invested, had a minimum of 15 hours a week, which is 50% more time than Iowa's current SVPP funds). Your own district data on the benefits for those students in full-day preschool is really important to share. Iowa's neediest students not currently accessing either PK or child care might be best served in an all-day PK program. Serving these neediest students well will go far in achieving state priorities, including literacy and math outcomes. The Governor's grants and 1.0 weighting for most at-risk 4-year-olds are compatible policies, both necessary to establish a full continuum of care and instruction. Express thanks to House HHS and Senate Education Committee members for amending the bills to require licensed teachers in the new community provider authorized programs. See the [UEN 2025 Quality Preschool Issue Brief](#) for additional information.

**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 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>

### **Other UEN Advocacy Resources**

Check out the UEN Website at [www.uen-ia.org](http://www.uen-ia.org) to find Issue Briefs, these UEN Weekly Update 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).

### **Bill Tracker**

Check out our separate Bill Tracker for all the bill actions and details for the week, plus what bills are still moving.

**Contact Us**

Keep in touch with your questions, comments, and let us know about your advocacy actions.

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