



UEN Legislative Update *Sine Die* May 3, 2026

This UEN End of Session Report from the 2026 Legislative Session includes:

- Adjournment and What's Next
- Legislative Actions This Weekend
 - Property Taxes
 - Standings Appropriations
 - Other Bills
- Additional Session Information and Advocacy Resources

Adjournment and What's Next:

The House adjourned Sunday evening, May 3, at 6:11 p.m., with the Senate shortly after at 7:07 p.m. The last gavel out of Session is known as *Sine Die*, or without a time certain to return, which means the 2026 Legislative Session is done. It will take a few business days, or weeks, for the LSA staff to enroll all amendments into the final bill versions. The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House must sign the final official copies, which are then delivered to the Governor. The Governor will have 30 days to sign or veto any bills sent to her in this final week of Session. We will keep you posted on when bills impacting education are signed or vetoed.

What's Next? After the Governor signs bills, the implementation process begins. In some bills, the state Board of Education has to update or create new administrative rules. Once noticed to the public, the rules process typically takes about six months. The DE will distribute a letter to the field of legislative actions and may develop guidance regarding specific bills. Some local school board policies are required to be changed. The education community successfully lobbied to push out local district implementation deadlines, so hopefully, school districts will not have to experience a summer frenzy of policy changes as has been the case in the last several years. UEN staff will keep you informed as these many steps proceed. In some cases, we may have a call to action regarding administrative rules, so stay tuned for updates.

Learn More: ISFIS will have two Special Topic Webinars on the 2026 Session: 1) Appropriations, Property Taxes and Legislation with Budget Implications Impacting School Districts, and 2) Education, Government and Other Policy Legislation Impacting School Districts. Register using the [ISFIS Webinars Webpage](#).

Legislative Action This Weekend:

SF 2472 as amended by H-8495 Property Tax Reform:

The amendment, which incorporated the property tax deal between the House, the Senate, and the Governor, was distributed late this afternoon and is very complicated. We haven't digested the tax credits and other changes to property tax assessment, valuation, or levy limitations that impact cities and counties. In short, the provisions impacting school budgets and revenues follow:

- **Uniform Levy:** Sets the school uniform levy at \$5.10 per \$1,000 of net, assessed taxable value, in the school year beginning July 1, 2028. Lowers it further, to \$4.90 per \$1,000, for the school year beginning July 1, 2029. Sets reorganization and whole grade sharing incentives accordingly.
- **SAVE (State Penny for School Infrastructure):** Extends SAVE through 2071 and gradually increases the contribution of SAVE revenues that go directly to property taxes (July 1, 2026 = 12.5% of SAVE revenue to property taxes, then increases by 2.5% annually until it tops out at 25% in the school year beginning July 1, 2030). Thanks to everyone who contacted Senators in the last several days in response to Call To Actions, to make sure they heard the consequences of diverting SAVE revenue to property taxes without extending SAVE. Also requires the DOR to reconcile SAVE balances and pay out what revenue is owed.
- **UAB:** Requires school boards to limit unspent authorized budget (UAB or spending authority) to no more than 35% of the school district's authorized expenditures for the school budget year beginning July 1, 2026. Also requires school boards to have policies on ranges and maximum UAB. Allows (but does not require) SBRC to grant MSA for on-time funding.
- **TIF:** Adds the school the uniform levy to the list of school levies that are exempt from Tax Increment Financing (TIF) diversion, which means that property taxes paid on all property, including property in a TIF district, go to the school district. The PPEL, debt levy and ISL are already exempt in current Code. (Exempting the uniform levy should, theoretically, save the state significantly on state foundation aid, or at least offset some of the cost to the state of reducing the uniform levy.)
- **Taxpayer Statements:** Rewrites the Code section on taxpayer statement, effective for the July 1, 2027 budget, to simplify, provide taxpayers with their change in property taxes actually due, and in easy-to-understand language. Requires DOM to work with the League of Cities and the State Association of Counties to determine how to simplify for taxpayers.

Most notably, the Bill does not have the state take over the additional levy, does not lower voted levy maximum rates, and does not require any changes to the school Management Fund. Amended and Approved by the Senate 41:1. The House concurred in the Senate amendment 62:22, sending it to the Governor. UEN was undecided.

HF 2800 Standings Appropriations: the Bill includes the following provisions that impact education:

- **Nonpublic Transportation:** Freezes nonpublic school transportation at \$8,997,091 (same as 2026 so amounts will be prorated as claims exceed the funded amount).
- **ISL:** Zeroes out Instructional Support Program state funding (same as 2026).
- **Apprenticeships:** Allows the Iowa Department of Workforce Development to keep any carry-forward balances to operate and manage the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship.
- **AEA Cuts Made Statutory:** Combines the \$7.5 million statutory reduction and the \$25 million that has been reduced in the Standings Bill every year into a \$32.5 million statutory reduction. Specifies that, out of the \$32.5 million reduction, \$10 million is to go to the DE Division for Special Education. The Education Appropriations bill also

includes \$10 million for that Division. We have to look into this a bit more to understand.

- **Private PK Admin:** Fixes an incorrect date in HF 2754 regarding Private PK, beginning July 1, 2026, allowing the private preschools who start programs directly through the Department to use up to 5% for administrative costs of the program.
- **Jr. Fire Fighter Program:** Cleans up language for SF 2086 regarding the certification exam, which is called the Firefighter I certification.
- **Pediatric Cancer Research:** Appropriates \$3 million from the Sports Wagering Fund for pediatric cancer research.
- **Education Support Personnel Supplemental Salaries:** Did NOT include any appropriation from the General Fund or the Sports Wagering Fund for \$7 million for education support personnel supplemental salaries. (The Governor and the House had supported status quo funding of \$14 million, but the Senate wanted zero, so the compromise was the \$7 million that was included in the SSA bill earlier in the Session.)
- **Federal Grants and Loans Notification:** Requires notice to the appropriations committee chairs and ranking members for any applications from the executive branch to the feds for \$5 million or more.
- **AEA State Aid Payments:** Changes payment of state aid to AEAs to be quarterly (matches new cycle for school district payments that was approved in the SSA bill earlier in the Session).
- **Reorganization and Whole Grade Sharing Incentives:** Extends reorganization and whole grade sharing incentives to apply to any reorganizations or WGS agreements that take place on or before July 1, 2035.
- **Extracurricular Participation:** Gives the State Board of Education emergency rulemaking authority to implement HF 2591 extracurricular interscholastic eligibility, so rules will be in effect on August 1, 2026.
- **Waukee Valuation Error Correction:** Includes the ability to exchange cash reserve property taxes for another local levy only for a school district that experienced a reduction in valuation of more than \$100 million due to an error in FY 2025.

The Bill was approved by the House 58:26. The Senate approved it 29:11, sending it to the Governor. UEN was not registered on the Bill due to the timing of its publication.

Other Bills to the Governor:

SJR 11 Constitutional Amendment Income Tax Increases: Requires a constitutional amendment to appear on the November 2026 General Election ballot. Voters will determine if the Constitution is amended to require a 3/5ths supermajority in the Legislature for any future increase in income taxes. The amendment would not apply to sales taxes or property taxes. The resolution was approved by the Senate in April 2025, 32:15. The House passed it on May 3, 57-21. There is no Governor's action to sign or veto required. The Nov. 2026 election will include this ballot initiative. UEN is opposed.

HF 2493 Preschool for Young Children: the Bill expands Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) eligibility to include pupils who reach five years of age on or after March 15 but on or before September 15 of the calendar year in which they would be eligible to attend

kindergarten. The Bill applies to school budget years beginning on or after July 1, 2027 (FY 2028). The Bill was approved by the House, 88:2, on Feb. 26. The Senate agreed 46:0, on May 2, sending it to the Governor. UEN supported this Bill.

Additional Session Information / Advocacy Actions:

Look forward to additional resources, including those two ISFIS Special Topic Webinars (one on bills with fiscal impact and another with policy bills), to describe legislative action, define required school actions, report on Governor's signature or veto on any bills in the next 30 days, and the UEN Legislative Digest which will detail all of the 2026 Session activity impacting schools and provide links to important information important to implementation requirements. We will also prepare resources to connect with candidates, from returning veterans to newbies, as the November 2026 General Election approaches.

In the meantime, write a thank-you note for listening if you reached out to your legislators and bills were amended to reflect UEN's requests. You can also express gratitude for bills that provide additional flexibility to school districts.

We also truly thank all UEN members who paid attention to legislative action this Session! Thanks for connecting with your legislators and reporting their responses back to us. Thank you for repeatedly reaching out, even when it was hard or seemed hopeless. Your collective voices made substantial improvements to several big policy bills possible. In some cases, where policy directions seemed to go the wrong way, know that our work is never done. We will assess after the Session ends, set a list of priorities for the 2027 Session, and make every attempt to limit negative consequences possible as we prepare for next year.

Connecting with Legislators During the Interim: Legislators often step away from their legislative email addresses during the Interim. The best way to find out how to contact them during the interim is to send them a thank you note for their work this Session and ask them to let you know if they prefer text message, personal or work email, phone call, or their legislative email address to you to reach out to them when they are not in Session. If you do not get a response, double-check the Secretary of State's Candidates List below, which likely includes a campaign email and phone number (for all representatives and half of senators up for election in November).

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>

Secretary of State's List of Primary Candidates: Iowa Secretary of State, Paul Pate, has posted the final list of candidates for the June primary. Check it out, see who is running in your area. Contact information is included. Access that and save it now, so you can contact state officials at their home address or phone. Party conventions may still nominate candidates to run if there are no primary winners for some seats, so the list of general election candidates will eventually grow. See the list on the SOS website [here](#). Reach out to all candidates, regardless of party, and

encourage support for public education, including adequate funding and local flexibility to best meet students' needs.

Other UEN Advocacy Resources:

Check out the UEN Website at 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. Also, find the 2026 UEN Advocacy Handbook posted at www.uen-ia.org/advocacy-handbook.

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