**UEN Legislative Update
March 4, 2022**

**Week Eight of the 2022 Session:** Governor signs the tax cut and transgender girls’ sports bills, several bills to address teacher shortages are in both chambers, other policy bills receive some action. This UEN Weekly Report from the 2022 Legislative Session includes:

* Tax Cuts Signed by the Governor
* Details of Teacher Shortage and Recruitment Bills
* Transgender Girls’ Sports Signed by the Governor
* Status of Governor’s School Choice Omnibus
* Other Policy Bills Moving Forward
* Advocacy Action Steps for This Week
* Links to Advocacy Resources

**Tax Cuts Signed by the Governor:** UEN is opposed to the Bill, which will reduce general fund revenue significantly, hindering the ability of the state to adequately fund schools and other essential state services. See last week’s report for a complete description of the details of the tax cuts. The Revenue Estimating Conference will meet on March 10 to revise the revenue estimate for the current year and for 2023 (the latter of which will change due to the implementation of this bill). We will let you know of any changes made to the revenue estimates in next week's report.

**Status of Bills to Address Teacher Shortages:** this table indicates the bill number with link, detailed description with UEN registration, and status.

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| **Bill Number** | **Bills to Address Teacher/Substitute Shortage/****Alternative Licensure** | **Status (3.3.2022)** |
| [SF 2291](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LGI/89/SF2291.pdf) | Para-educators may substitute in any classroom except Drivers’ Education with a waiver from BOEE 2021-22 school year (ARRC). Approved by Senate Education Committee 3.1.22. HF 2493 was amended to require the individual be paid the higher of the substitute per diem or their para wage. Approved in the House 99:0 and on the Senate Calendar with SF 2291. UEN supports.  | Senate Calendar |
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| [SF 2296](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LGI/89/SF2296.pdf) | IPERS Income Threshold for Re-employment is increased to $50,000 and the school board member conflict of interest threshold is increased to $20,000. SF 2266 was approved in the Senate 49:0, in the House, 99:0, sending it to the Governor. UEN is registered in support. | **To the Governor** |
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| [SF 2202](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=SF%202202) | Teach Iowa scholar program eligibility, Teacher Intern license for grades 6-12 issued by the BOEE, and the use of revenues from the district management levy for teacher recruitment costs. (Formerly SSB 3067.) Approved by subcommittee in Senate W&M Tuesday, 3.1.22. UEN is registered in support. | Senate Ways and Means Committee |
| [SF 2356](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=SF%202356) | Allows school boards to engage certain specified individuals to serve without compensation as substitute teachers. (Formerly SSB 3085.) Approved in the Senate 38:7, on 2.28.22. UEN is registered as undecided. | House Education Committee |
| [HF 2083](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=HF%202083) | Changes eligibility for Teach Iowa Scholar Program (no longer must be in top 25% of class) and specifies that half of the grants go to teachers in districts, charter and private school below 1,200 enrollment and half above. (Formerly HSB 519.) Similar to SF 2202 but without the Management Fund teacher recruitment program. Subcommittee of Sinclair, Kraayenbrink, and Quirmbach. UEN is registered in support. | Senate Education Committee |
| [HF 2081](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=HF%202081) | Eliminates requirement for PRAXIS test for entry to college education program and requires higher education institutions to notify graduates with PRAXIS scores below the cutoff that they may apply for an initial license. (Formerly HSB 520.) Passed the House 94:0 on 2.28.22. Assigned to the Senate Education Committee. (*Effective on enactment, so the date the Governor signs it, districts could employ teachers who were otherwise licensed but didn’t pass the PRAXIS*), UEN is registered in support. | Senate Education Committee |
| [HF 2165](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF2165&ga=89) | Last Dollar Scholars: makes part-time student eligible for Last Dollar Scholars financial support. Approved 99:0 in the House on 3.2.22. Attached to companion [SF 2129](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf2129) on the Senate Calendar. UEN is registered as undecided. | Senate Calendar |
| [HF 2398](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=HF%202398) | Permanent Teacher License for master’s or doctoral degree educators (no CEU’s required.) (Formerly HSB 656.) The Bill was amended on the House Floor to require charter schools and private schools to conduct background checks, to add a minimum ten-year work requirement for these teachers before waiving future licensure renewals, requires the BOEE to do a background check on these permanent teachers every 5 years and allows BOEE to charge a reasonable fee for the background check. Approved 99:0 and sent to the Senate. UEN is registered as undecided. | House Calendar |
| [HF 2421](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=HF%202421) | Creates a teacher intern license for grades 6-12 issued by the BOEE. (Formerly HSB 632.) Same requirements as Sect. 1 of SF 2202 Teacher Intern License. UEN is registered in support.  | House Calendar |
| [HF 2500](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=HF%202500) | Establishes a new temporary initial license to be issued by the BOEE. Lays out requirements which must be met for in-state vs. out-of-state programs. An applicant would receive a temporary initial license for one year prior to applying for a standard initial license. This Bill is tightly written to apply to one out-of-state provider and has the fewest requirements for any kind of quality or support for the teacher compared to similar programs in other states with this provider. (Formerly HF 2085.) (*Most in the education community opposed, including UEN. An amendment is filed to require the district to assign a mentor teacher.)* | House Calendar |

[**HF 2416**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=HF%202416&ga=89) **Transgender Girls Athletic Eligibility:** (Formerly HF 2309) prohibits transgender girls from participating in girls’ varsity sports in a nonpublic school, public school, charter school, community college, or state university and defines “sex” as the biological sex assigned at birth. The bill requires the Attorney General to represent, at no cost, private and public schools and employees against any lawsuit brought against them due to compliance. The [fiscal note](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/FN/1288070.pdf) states: “US DOE’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) issued a notice of interpretation on June 16, 2021, requiring that a recipient institution that received US DOE funds must operate its education program or activity in a manner free of discrimination based on sex, which is to encompass sexual orientation and gender identity. If a Title IX complaint meets applicable requirements and standards, the OCR will open an investigation allowing for due process, including the reasoning by a state as to why it should not lose federal funds. Opportunities for resolution agreement and an appeals process provide additional pathways for the state to settle the matter with the OCR without the loss of federal funds. Approved 55:39 in the House and 31:17 in the Senate. The Governor signed it on Thursday. The Bill is effective immediately. UEN is opposed.

**School Choice Status:**

The Governor’s School Choice Omnibus bill, received a new bill number coming out of the Senate Appropriations Committee with their approval on Monday, now [SF 2369](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LGI/89/SF2369.pdf). The House has split the Governor’s concepts into several bills, two of which remained on the House Calendar with no action, and the HSB 672 Voucher Provisions still in the House Appropriations Committee with no action. See the [UEN Call to Action](https://www.uen-ia.org/call-action-vouchers-are-not-iowa), for the latest talking points.

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| [HF 2498](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=HF%202498) | Governor’s Omnibus part 1 | A bill for an act relating to education, including modifying provisions related to open enrollment good cause siblings, teacher librarian endorsements, and the placement of children identified as requiring special education in competent private instruction. (Formerly HSB 705.) Registered as Undecided.  | House Calendar No action this week |
| [HF 2499](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=HF%202499) | Governor’s Omnibus part 2 | A bill for an act relating to education, including requiring the boards of directors of school districts to publish certain specified information (transparency Provisions) and modifying provisions related to required social studies instruction (high stakes graduation test). (Formerly HSB 706.) Registered as Opposed.  | House CalendarNo action this week |
| [HSB 672](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=HSB%20672) | Governor’s Omnibus Vouchers | Establishes a student first scholarship program (vouchers) and a student first enrollment supplement fund and includes a standing unlimited appropriation for up to 10,000 vouchers. No action in House Education. Was re-referred to Appropriations Committee. Registered as Opposed. | House Appropriations Committee. No action this week |
| [SF 2349](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf2369) | Governor’s Omnibus Vouchers plus Parts 1 and 2  | Establishes a student first scholarship program (vouchers) and a student first enrollment supplement fund (expected to be amended to instead increase operational sharing incentives typically used by smaller districts). Requires school boards to publish instructional materials, standards and whether standards are met and exceeded by grade, course and teacher, changes required social studies instruction including a high stakes test for graduation, and also changes some open enrollment provisions, teacher librarian endorsements, competent private instruction, and special education. Includes a standing unlimited appropriation for up to 10,000 vouchers. (Formerly SSB 3080.) Registered as Opposed. | Moves to the Senate Calendar |

**Other Bills Moving Forward:**

[**HF 2137**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf2137) **MH Loan Repayments:** establishes a prescribing mental health professional loan repayment program in the College Student Aid Commission, similar to other loan repayment programs for health care professionals. Approved by House Appropriations Committee and now on the House Calendar. UEN is registered in support.

[**HF 2080**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf2080) **Operational Sharing**: increases superintendent weighting from 8 to 9, allows sharing services with a political subdivision or another school district even if the type of operational function performed for the school district is not the same as the function performed for the political subdivision or other school district. Both functions must be eligible for weighting or the function performed for the school district is special education director, and is effective upon enactment. The provisions would apply to the school year beginning in FY 2023. The first year of funding would begin in FY 2024. The Bill was approved by the House 94:0 and the Subcommittee of the Senate Education Committee moved it forward to the full Committee. UEN is registered as undecided.

[**SF 2128**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf2128) **ELL Terminology:** changes the terminology regarding English as a Second Language to English Learners (ELs) throughout the Code. Approved in the House 98:0, sending it to the Governor. UEN is registered as undecided.

[**SF 2279**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=sf2279) **Electronic Bids:** allows governments to accept bids electronically for public improvements. Approved in the House 99:0, sending it to the Governor. UEN is registered in support.

[**HF 2198**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf2198) **Child Care Working Age:** allows 16-year-olds to work/care for up to 10 children including zero with special needs, if the student has undergone a background check. House approved it 55:43 sending it to the Senate. UEN is monitoring this Bill.

[**HF 2495**](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=hf2495) **Post-Secondary Transition Scholarships**: requires CSAC to develop the program for individuals with intellectual disabilities aged 18-21. Approved in the House 99:0, sending it to the Senate. UEN is registered as undecided.

**Advocacy Actions This Week:**

* **Always start with a thank you!** See the [**2021 Legislative Session Successes**](https://www.uen-ia.org/system/files/Public/UENDigests/UEN%202021%20Lesiglative%20Session%20Successes.docx) on the UEN website and find one you are grateful for them accomplishing. Weigh in your support on the bills above regarding teacher recruitment. Tell your legislators and the Governor thank you for getting SSA decided at the beginning of Session so you can work on your budgets within the mandated timelines.
* **Funding:** now that SSA is done, **advocate with the Senate** to approve HF 2315, which provides $19.2 million in supplemental funding to help schools with inflationary costs. Explain that federal pandemic funds are (pick the one or two that apply to your district): 1) already exhausted, 2) obligated but waiting for labor/materials/other supply chain issues that have slowed HVAC construction or simply no applicants for instructional positions, 3) local district must have the funds to expend first, and then seek reimbursement, which can take time to properly document and obtain approval and for all districts, the federal pandemic funds are to be used through Sept. 2024, but then are gone. Adequate state funding would provide sustainability for many of the programs districts have been able to fund with the pandemic funds, but only for a limited time.
* **Shore up Voucher Opposition:** Circle back with House legislators and reiterate key messages:
	+ Use public dollars for public schools. Period.
	+ Public funds require public accountability and transparency.
	+ Private and public schools do not have a level playing field. If privates are to receive public money, they must have the same regulations and requirements.
	+ This is a slippery slope toward a costly an expansive voucher program.
	+ Iowa already has many parent choice options and financial support for private schools, scholarships and tax credits to help parents making that choice.
	+ The state has not been able to adequately fund one education system and should not commit to the hefty price tag of funding another.

**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.

**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 [2022 UEN Advocacy Handbook](https://www.iowaschoolfinance.com/system/files/members/Public/UEN/UEN%20Advocacy%20Handbook%20-%20Jan%202022.pdf), 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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