



Supplemental Materials: New or Amended Resolutions Submitted by Members

Amendments

PRESCHOOL

Sioux City: Students who continue to fall short of proficiency standards, are not prepared for success in school by the time they reach third grade. Research has shown that low-income children who experience high-quality preschool environments score better on third grade reading assessments than their peers without a strong preschool experience. We request additional preschool funds, including a consideration of an additional preschool weighting for low-income or non-English speaking students, and the flexibility in funds to support the costs associated with wrap-around services required for our neediest students and families.

ENGLISH LEARNERS

Sioux City: We need more funding and more years of funding to better prepare our students. Extending the length of eligible funding will increase the length of services provided to ELL students and help develop their proficiency in the English language so they can be successful in the educational setting. Evidence-based practice identifies seven years as the length of time needed to achieve academic English proficiency and acclimate students to the culture and educational environment. ELL students would benefit from additional time given the amount of learning required to achieve proficiency in a second language. The belief that children immersed in the English language will accelerate proficiency does not align with research. We believe that children benefit from learning in their primary language before a secondary language can be effectively taught, and this process takes time. The Sioux City Schools continues to enroll students from around the world. The critical needs of these students, in addition to learning English, are multiple and resource intensive. The ELL student graduation rate in the state is 79.3%, compared with Iowa's overall graduation rate of 91.4%. Additional resources are necessary to close this gap through the increase of ELL Weighting, especially for those ELL students well below proficiency.

MENTAL HEALTH

Bettendorf: The Bettendorf Community School District supports efforts to:

- Establish comprehensive school based mental health programs and the creation of a categorical funding stream designated for mental health professionals serving students as well as ongoing teacher, administrator, and support staff mental health training; and

- Expand comprehensive community mental health systems which offer preventative and treatment services.

Linn-Mar: Supports efforts to establish comprehensive community mental health systems to offer preventative and treatment services and comprehensive school mental health programs that include:

- Increased access for in-school and telehealth services;
- Increased access to mental health professionals via in-person or telehealth visits;
- Creation of a categorical funding stream designated for mental health professionals serving students and ongoing teacher, administrator, and support staff mental health training;
- Ongoing teacher, administrator, and support staff training to improve the awareness and understanding of child emotional and mental health needs;
- Increased utilization of school counselors as first-response professionals for students' mental health needs as described by the ASCA model*
- Expand state funding for mental health to include the hiring of additional school counselors to lower student to counselor ratios and increase short-term counseling and crisis intervention **
- Integration of suicide prevention and coping skills into existing curriculum;
- Expanding state-funded loan forgiveness programs to include mental health professionals who agree to provide services to schools including school counselors, school-based mental health therapists, school social workers;
- An ongoing mental health resources clearinghouse for schools and community providers; and
- Trainings that include a referral plan for continuing action provided by mental health professionals outside of the school district.

RATIONALE: School counselors are positions within schools that already have training and educational credentials in the areas of social-emotional learning and mental health but are often overlooked in this area. IASB should work with the Iowa School Counselor Association (ISCA) to include school counselors in discussions in the area of mental health, as well as to educate districts about the utilization of these positions to increase mental health services in schools.

*The school counselor's role as defined by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) in its national standards for school counselors states that the school counselor's role includes:

- Deliver instruction that proactively enhances awareness of mental health; promotes positive, healthy behaviors; and seeks to remove the stigma associated with mental health issues
- Provide students with appraisal and advisement addressing their academic, career and social/emotional needs
- Recognize mental health warning signs including changes in school performance and attendance mood changes, complaints of illness before school, increased disciplinary problems at school, problems at home or with the family situation (e.g., stress, trauma, divorce, substance abuse, exposure to poverty conditions, domestic violence), communication from teachers about problems at school, and dealing with existing mental health concerns
- Provide short-term counseling and crisis intervention focused on mental health or situational concerns such as grief or difficult transitions

- Provide referrals to school and community resources that treat mental health issues (suicidal ideation, violence, abuse and depression) with the intent of removing barriers to learning and helping the student return to the classroom
- Educate teachers, administrators, families and community stakeholders about the mental health concerns of students, including recognition of the role environmental factors have in causing or exacerbating mental health issues, and provide resources and information
- Advocate, collaborate and coordinate with school and community stakeholders to meet the needs of the whole child and to ensure students and their families have access to mental health services
- Recognize and address barriers to accessing mental health services and the associated stigma, including cultural beliefs and linguistic impediments
- Adhere to appropriate guidelines regarding confidentiality, the distinction between public and private information and consultation
- Help identify and address students' mental health issues while working within the: ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors, ASCA Professional Standards & Competencies for School Counselors, and National, state and local legislation, which guides school counselors' informed decision-making and standardizes professional practice to protect both the student and school counselor
- Seek to continually update their professional knowledge regarding the students social/emotional needs, including best practices in universal screening for mental health risk
- Advocate for ethical use of valid and reliable universal screening instruments with concerns for cultural sensitivity and bias if state legislation or school board policy requires universal screening programs for mental health risk factors (ASCA, 2016) For a complete position statement on the role of school counselors and mental health visit

** The recommended ratio for school counselors is 250:1. The average ratio in Iowa is currently 370:1 with many counselors responsible for 400-500 students. Increasing the number of school counselors will lower current ratios and increase the ability of school counselors to provide short-term counseling and crisis intervention focuses on mental health or situational concerns such as grief or difficult transitions. [Learn more about the school counselor role and ratios.](#)

Sioux City: Additional efforts are needed at the state level to establish and fund comprehensive community mental health systems to offer preventative and treatment services and comprehensive school mental health programs that include in-school access for students to mental health professionals and provisions for reimbursement by Medicaid and private insurers. In addition, funding for additional and ongoing teacher, administrator, and support staff training to improve the awareness and understanding of child emotional and mental health needs is needed.

TEACHER RECRUITMENT & LICENSURE

Edgewood-Colesburg: Supports additional tools to attract individuals to the teaching profession, especially for teacher shortage areas including:

- Add: [Tax breaks for public servants](#)

Red Oak: Provide local Boards the flexibility to use district Management Funds for either early retirement programs or locally defined teacher recruitment incentives.

Sioux City: Adequate funding is essential for public schools to compete with the private sector for employees. Licensure reciprocity with other states enacted in the 2020 Session is a great start. In addition to adequate base funding, other steps must be taken to help schools meet the challenge of attracting and retaining tomorrow's educators and recruiting teachers that mirror the diversity in our students, including flexibility in certification requirements, acceptance of alternate evidence such as experience for Iowa licensure, loan-forgiveness for shortage areas or high-needs schools, creation of a public service track within Iowa's CTE plan, creative grow-our-own programs and a strong IPERS and employee benefits system.

SUPPLEMENTAL STATE AID

Bettendorf: The Bettendorf Community School District supports the protection of PreK-12 funding from future cuts and maintaining PK-12 public school funding as a top priority allowing districts to plan responsibly and budget for the future. It further supports setting the supplemental state aid:

- For FY 2024 by January 31, 2023;
- For FY 2025 and future budget years, at least 14 months prior to the certification of the school's district budgets; and
- At a rate that sufficiently supports local districts' efforts to plan, create and sustain world-class schools;

Supports a school foundation formula that:

- Has a method for establishing the supplemental state aid growth rate if it is not set within the statutory requirement;
- Reflects actual costs for special education services;
- Incorporates categorical funding; and
- Includes a mix of state aid and property taxes.

Sioux City: In order to fulfill the goal of regaining Iowa's number one in the nation education status and delivering world-class schools, the Sioux City Community School District supports the provision of adequate funding, which we know, spent wisely, will prepare our students for success. The Sioux City District supports a goal to get Iowa's investment in education to the national average, currently \$1,329 per pupil above Iowa's current level of expenditure. These resources are best delivered to schools through the school foundation formula, which preserves the most local flexibility in use of funding to benefit students. Funding for teacher leadership and other reform efforts will not deliver intended results if Iowa continues to short cut regular education investment for students. The Sioux City Community School District Board of Education also encourages the legislature to consider creative ways to provide flexibility in resources for school districts that may not require additional funding; examples of this nature could include reopening the concept of the Iowa Energy Bank, where school districts could borrow money to engage in energy efficient projects, repaying the loan through savings garnered from the higher levels of energy efficiency.

SCHOOL FUNDING POLICY

Council Bluffs: Consider adding this language from "Preschool" into this resolution: Supports an increase in funding from the current weighting of 0.5 to 1.0 full-time equivalent to increase the ability of districts to provide services such as full-day programming and transportation to ensure that all 4 and 5-year-olds have the ability to attend the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program.

Red Oak: Clarification on new open enrollment requirements, particularly the effective date of petition for change requirements for funding purposes.

Sioux City: Short of a state appropriation of an estimated \$72 million to cover this gap, the amount required for the state to assume the entire amount of DCPP already paid with property taxes in those districts that have authority plus the supplement for those districts that don't have it, there are other possible solutions that would promote equity without lowering the per pupil amount available for any school district. The Sioux City Community School District supports:

- Giving all local districts spending authority for the difference and allowing school boards to decide locally whether to fund it.
- Setting the state cost per pupil at the highest amount but lower the foundation percentage threshold from 87.5% to an amount that balances the impact on the state and on property taxes. Since many districts have sufficient cash, it is likely there will be little cash reserve levy impact for several years in many districts.
- The Legislature and Governor have made progress in the last three years, closing the gap by \$5, \$5, and then by \$10 per pupil in the most recent year. This is good progress, but will take an additional 15-16 years if the commitment to an additional \$10 per year is maintained. As the economy bounces back from the current COVID predicament, the state effort should be redoubled.
- A combination of two of the above would also be possible – simply put, we must have spending authority in the meantime, and we could close the funding gap over the long haul. In conclusion, in order to achieve equity, the funding formula must be updated to account for the status of poverty in our state, provide stability during times of low economic growth and supplement existing resources.

TAX BASE

Bondurant: We wish to oppose one tax entity's (the City of Altoona in their example) ability to eliminate a school district's ability to collect taxes on significant developments. Specifically, the TWO BILLION dollar Facebook/META property in our district. The city of Altoona has been using a 20-year complete abatement while collecting on a PILOT or Payment In lieu of Taxes. Meaning the city of Altoona collects a significant sum on the properties while ALL other tax entities receive nothing. They collect this significant revenue without calling it a tax.

SPECIAL LEVY FUNDS

Mount Pleasant: The Management Fund levy should have the flexibility to be used for school safety, specifically costs involved with hiring and maintaining a school resource officer.

LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY & DECISION-MAKING

Sioux City: The legislature already authorized local school boards to make these decisions, following the Governor's declaration of public health emergency in SF 2310. We would respectfully request that the Governor's next public health emergency respect the local control of school boards to determine what's best for our staff and students. We encourage the Legislature to continue to provide additional flexibility and authority for local school leaders to decide the future course which best supports the success of our communities and students.

New Resolutions

Creston: Transportation:

- a. Relax transportation regulations to allow for 12 and 15-passenger vehicles.
- b. Relax transportation regulations and allow an Iowa licensed driver to transport individual and small groups of students to educational services and home.
- c. Provide adequate funding to support training requirements for drivers

Creston: Student Teacher: Allow student teachers to provide licensed instruction under the supervision of a licensed instructor & administrator while being compensated in accordance with district master agreements.

Mississippi Bend AEA: Funding Equalization/Correction Iowa's Area Education Agencies request the correction of disparate cost-per-pupil amounts and antiquated pro rata reduction calculations. Any amendments should include an appropriation to ensure a "hold-harmless" funding scenario during the correction period.

Sioux Central: Additional funding for 24/7 residential students

Sioux City: Educational Savings Accounts: The Sioux City Community School District's Board of Directors believes that Iowa law provides sufficient choice through public schools, public charter schools, open enrollment, homeschool assistant, post-secondary enrollment options, and nonpublic school alternatives. Additional tax credits towards nonpublic tuition for investments in options without oversight are not necessary to provide choice to the families in Iowa. All schools that receive any public funds, including property taxes, state aid or federal monies, should be subject to the exact same governance and educational standards as the public school districts currently attain. The state should provide full funding to public schools to meet the evolving needs of public school students before even considering additional financial supports for non-public schools.