

Legislative Update and Advocacy

Background

In a statement of philosophy, the National School Board Association (NSBA) outlines four key roles for school board members that can ensure both excellence and equity in public schools. Those four key roles are as follows:

- ☆ VISION — setting the vision for education in the local community;
- ☆ STRUCTURE — establishing the structure and environment to implement the vision;
- ☆ ACCOUNTABILITY — establishing academic standards to achieve the vision, assessing performance progress toward achieving the vision, and formulating strategies to help marginal or failing students; and
- ☆ ADVOCACY — being the preeminent advocate for the public schools and their students.

One means for school board members to advocate for public schools is through regular contact and influence with our state legislators.

Legislative Priorities

Our legislative priorities as a school board include the following:

- Funding and support for mental health services in Iowa schools and across the state.

(IASB Resolution 7) Supports efforts to establish 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.

- Fund all schools on the same per-pupil amount.

<p>Area Per-pupil Amounts are as Follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$6,736 Belmond-Klemme ▪ \$6,749 West Hancock ▪ \$6,766 Clarion-G-D ▪ \$6,787 West Fork ▪ \$6,849 Eagle Grove ▪ \$6,901 CAL
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- Defeat vouchers
- Remove the arbitrary cap on Dropout/At-risk funds. Other school districts get 5% of their per-pupil budgets to spend on dropout prevention. Belmond-Klemme was arbitrarily capped at 4%.

Legislative Report

Several new things are happening in the Iowa Legislature this year. For example, the Senate Education committee is considering SF 2065. This bill would allow school districts to exceed the maximum levy amount from the ISL (Instructional Support Levy) for the cost of a school resource officer (SRO). It requires a board resolution stating the intended use of the additional ISL funds and an election to increase the levy above the 10% amount.

I will have an oral report on recent legislative action the night of the meeting.

Contacting Legislators

The table below shows our two state legislators and their contact information.



Representative Terry C. Baxter
Iowa House District 8

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