YOUR GUIDE TO THE 2020 IOWA LEGISLATURE

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What We Stand For

2020 Legislative Priorities

Through the IASB Delegate Assembly, Iowa school boards have set four priorities as most critical to address in the 2020 legislative session. They serve as a focal point for grassroots advocacy efforts of Iowa school boards and their association.

Focusing on Efforts to Support Student Well-Being

Mental Health: IASB supports increased funding and school-based access for mental health services to all Iowa students. This includes expanding workforce development of mental health professionals, providing a framework for telehealth behavior health services in schools, and addressing insurance reimbursement issues. Additionally, IASB supports the role of Iowa’s area education agencies in delivering training to school employees and providing mental health services.

Improving the Legal Structure of School Funding

School Funding Policy: IASB supports improvement to the school foundation formula, which defines in law the methods of school funding. Those improvements address inequities, provide needed flexibility, enhance timeliness of funding decisions, and ensure a balance of funding sources that is fair to taxpayers and stable and predictable for schools.
Ensuring Decisions on Growth in Funding Are Sufficient and Timely

Supplemental State Aid: IASB calls for legislators to make their decisions on growth in school funding by the deadlines set in law so that schools can responsibly plan local budgets. Legislators must also ensure the rate of growth is sufficient to support local district efforts to plan, create and sustain world-class schools.

Ensuring Expansion and Access to Early Education

Preschool: IASB supports increased funding to provide all 4 and 5-year-olds access to attend the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, including resources for transportation, wrap-around care and all-day preschool where appropriate. Legislators should also give districts the flexibility to use funds in order to provide the best outcomes for students.
Who You Need to Know

Executive Branch

Governor
Kim Reynolds (R)

Lt. Governor
Adam Gregg (R)

Legislative Branch

Senate Majority Leader
Jack Whitver (R), Ankeny
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House Speaker
Pat Grassley (R), New Hartford
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Senate Education Committee

Chair
Amy Sinclair (R), Allerton
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Vice Chair
Chris Cournoyer (R), Le Claire
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Ranking Member
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Republican Committee Members

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Who You Need to Know

House Education Committee

Chair
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Vice Chair
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Advocacy Insights from Legislators

These insights, culled from conversations with legislators, can help you better understand the process from the viewpoint of your locally elected official.

**Senator Chris Cournoyer**

“Don’t feel intimidated or shy about reaching out, just get to know your legislators. Develop a positive relationship and invite them into your schools.”

“Be positive and respectful.”

**Representative Ras Smith**

“Don’t be overly offended if someone thinks differently than you, it’s okay. That’s where constructive ideas come from.”

**Speaker-elect Pat Grassley**

“Attend legislative events in your community and express support for something you’re invested in, because we make a lot of decisions in those meetings when we come and meet with constituents.”
Advocacy Insights from Your Peers

We asked experienced board members to share some advocacy tips, because we know you value insights from your peers. Read on to learn what your fellow board members across the state are saying about what works for them. It may work for you too!

Glen Keppy, North Scott Board President

“Keep it simple. Legislators have heard it all, so ask how you can work together to understand issues and work to solve them.”

Liz Brennan, West Des Moines & Heartland AEA Board Member; IASB President-elect

“Legislators have to know so much about so many different issues, and if we don’t let them know the important things about education and what’s happening in our local area, they may not get to hear it. Advocacy is the only way to get things done.”

Sheri Benson, Former Newton & Current Heartland AEA Board President

“Thank your representative and senator for serving. Offer your help because even if they are members of an opposing political party, they still want to serve ALL their constituents.”

Perla Alarcon-Flory, Sioux City Board Member

“Invite your legislators to your schools to see the amazing things that are happening, as well as the challenges faced. Besides sharing district facts, have a personal story of how one student or one small group has been impacted by their decision making.”
Legislator Look-Up Tool
As an advocate, it’s important to develop a relationship with your senators and representatives. IASB offers a directory tool, Legislator Look-Up, to assist you in learning about, and communicating with, your legislators.

Advocacy in Action
IASB’s weekly Board Briefs email includes a recap during the legislative session, a video update from under the golden dome with our lobbyist, bill summaries and advocacy tips and tools.

Issue Toolkits
IASB offers resources to assist members with district-specific information related to current legislative issues, available at www.ia-sb.org/advocacy.

Social Media
Follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/IowaSchoolBoards) and Twitter (@IASB_Iowa) to stay current on education in Iowa during the legislative session.

Government Relations Team
The IASB Government Relations team works with lawmakers, tracks legislation and advocates for you at the Capitol.

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January 13: First day of session.

February 21: First Funnel—Bills can only move forward if they have been passed out of committee in their own chamber.*

February 24–28: Senate and House consider only their own bills.

March 20: Second Funnel Date—Bills can only move forward if they have been passed out of committee in the opposite chamber.*

March 23–27: Senate and House only consider bills from the opposite chamber.

April 21: 100th Day of Session—Traditional end of session.

*Appropriations and tax bills are not subject to funnel dates and can be introduced at any time.
IASB Advocacy Dates

2020 Day on the Hill
Jan. 28, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden and the Iowa State Capitol, Des Moines

IASB’s annual Day on the Hill is your day to lobby at the Capitol in Des Moines. It gives you an opportunity to meet with your local legislators to discuss legislative issues impacting public education, network with education leaders from across the state and learn new advocacy strategies.

Register today at www.ia-sb.org/dayonthehill.

Capitol Chats: Across the Aisle with IASB

In this new podcast series, we’ll explore topics essential to the 2020 legislature and advocacy efforts. You can listen directly from the IASB website or on your phone from wherever you get podcasts (Apple Podcasts, Spotify, etc.). Subscribe to the podcast so each new episode will automatically download to your phone!

Episode 1: Legislative Preview—Now available!
Episode 2: Advocacy Tips & Tricks—Now available!
Episode 3: Delegate Assembly Recap—Now available!
Episode 4: The State Budget Process—Now available!

Learn more at www.ia-sb.org/capitolchats.