

2026 Legislative Priorities



Supplemental State Aid (SSA): Set SSA at a minimum of 5% to provide equitable public education for every student regardless of race, disability, identity, socioeconomic status, or ZIP code. Funding should address achievement gaps and unpredictable enrollment numbers, keep pace with increased expenses, reduce class sizes, and allow for competitive salaries and benefits for all education professionals. *(ISEA Educator Bill of Rights: Professional Respect, Fair Compensation, Quality Resources)*

Protect and Strengthen Iowa Public Retirement System (IPERS): Keep our defined benefit pension system for all Iowa's public-school employees. Strengthen and enhance benefits by studying implementation of an annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for regular IPERS members. *(ISEA Educator Bill of Rights: Secure Retirement, Fair Compensation, Professional Respect)*

Educator Quality and Respect: Maintain highly qualified professionals who reflect the diversity of our students and communities. Incentivize entering the profession and retain seasoned professionals. Increase educator preparation and collaboration time, increase salaries for all educators, remove burdensome mandates that do not benefit students. Respect educators as the dedicated, highly trained professionals they are, ensuring that student and educator performance is never reduced to just a test score. *(ISEA Bill of Rights: Professional Respect, Fair Compensation, Secure Retirement, Collaborative Leadership, Professional Growth, Professional Collaboration)*

Effective Use of Public Dollars: Public education is the cornerstone of the Republic, providing individuals with the skills to be informed and engaged in our communities. We oppose expansion of private school vouchers and should hold administrators and consumers of the Education Savings Account (ESA) program accountable. This includes implementing reporting and transparency measures, ensuring appropriate oversight of our tax dollars. *(ISEA Bill of Rights: Quality Resources, Community Support)*

Student and Educator Mental Health: Promote effective working conditions where all educators are trusted, valued, and fairly compensated. Address the mental health needs of students and staff, including adding more evidence-based resources like school counselors, school nurses, behavioral specialists, and social workers. Implement safety protocols for disruption-free learning and a safe school environment, with buy-in and support from administration, including clear, consistent, and up-to-date processes for addressing disruptive behavior and intentionally violent acts. *(ISEA Educator Bill of Rights: Professional Respect, Manageable Workload, Fair Compensation, Safe and Healthy Work Environment, Quality Resources, Community Support, Collaborative Leadership)*

Community College Funding: Increase compensation for quality full-time faculty and funding for affordable tuition for all students pursuing further education or preparing to join the workforce immediately. *(ISEA Educator Bill of Rights: Fair Compensation)*

Area Education Agencies (AEA): Engage with members in partnership with students, parents, and community allies to promote, protect, and strengthen public education and support the AEA system. Ensure further changes are not implemented without input from all stakeholders. *(ISEA Educator Bill of Rights: Community Support, Professional Collaboration)*

Preschool Access: Expand access to preschool for every 4-year-old with a greater statewide focus on the importance of early childhood education, including early literacy and other foundational skills. *(ISEA Educator Bill of Rights: Community Support, Professional Collaboration)*

For more information, contact Melissa Peterson, ISEA Legislative and Policy Director. Melissa.Peterson@isea.org

ISEA Mission Statement Advocate for policies and practices that elevate the profession and public education while placing students at the center of everything we do.