

Legislative News

January 30, 2006

Allowable Growth

The Iowa House of Representatives has voted to set the allowable growth rate for the 2007-2008 school year at 4 percent. The Senate is considering what their recommendation will be. Any differences in the allowable growth rate will be ironed out in a conference committee made up of members of the House and the Senate. It is important for PTA members to know that the national average for per-pupil spending is \$1,058 MORE than Iowa spends. Even with an allowable growth rate of 6 percent, it would take years for Iowa to reach the national average.

IOWA PTA SUPPORTS AT LEAST 6 PERCENT ALLOWABLE GROWTH FOR SCHOOLS – THIS IS CRITICAL!

Funding for schools comes from state money, local property taxes, and a small amount of federal money. A formula is used to determine the cost per student. Then funds are distributed to school districts based on the number of students in the district multiplied by the cost per student. The increase in the cost per student is set by the legislature each year and is called “allowable growth.” The ratio of state money and property taxes varies from district to district according to the funding formula. When the allowable growth rate is low, it often means higher local property taxes.

The legislature sets the rate for allowable growth, but if a school district is NOT growing – in fact if enrollment is declining – then they may not see any increase in funding. Some districts experiencing declining enrollment lose money from year to year.

Contact Your Senator!

We have been told by legislators that public comment on education funding has DECREASED. They MUST hear from parents about the problems that insufficient funding is causing for their schools and their children. Urge your senator to support 6 percent allowable growth. CONTACTING YOUR SENATOR IS EASY – DO IT TODAY!

Call Your Senator

Call to leave a message for your senator by calling (515) 281-3371

E-mail Your Senator

Most state legislators are very responsive to e-mail messages which makes this a very simple and effective method of communicating with your legislators.

Email addresses are created as follows:

firstname.lastname@legis.state.ia.us

Don't know who your legislators are?

Go to: <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/>

Click on Legislators on the left sidebar, then select

Find Your Legislator.

Simply enter your address to find your senator.

You MUST include your home address in your email, so they know you are a constituent!

“Great education is the best economic development investment our state can and must make if we hope to improve the quality of our workforce, the economic value of our state, and the attractiveness of our state to encourage new businesses to come to Iowa to prosper.” - from www.myiowaschools.org

Myiowaschools contains a wealth of information on state funding for Iowa schools. For the facts on education funding in Iowa, visit myiowaschools at http://www.myiowaschools.org/iowa_education_funding.asp Join the Public Education Advocacy Network by clicking the link at the bottom of the webpage.

National PTA Legislative Information –

- To receive National PTA's weekly e-newsletter, “*This Week in Washington*”, go to: capwiz.com/npta2/mlm/signup
- For information on National PTA issues, go to: http://www.pta.org/ia_issues.html

Iowa PTA Legislative Information –

- To subscribe to Iowa PTA “Legislative News”, go to: www.iowapta.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=legislative.network
- To view previous issues of the e-newsletter, go to: www.iowapta.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=updates.main