



Iowa Association of School Boards®

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### Members of the AEA Task Force:

As implementation of HF 2612 has begun, IASB wants to ensure our school district members are able to access, use, and afford valuable AEA services. As with any significant legislation, there have been several areas of concern and challenges that we want to highlight as items of discussion for the task force:

- **The importance of having a list of core services that will be provided by each AEA.** This ensures districts can adequately plan and budget for the services they will purchase from the AEA in addition to the services they will have to purchase from another provider. While districts appreciate the flexibility of funds offered by this legislation, most would prefer to reliably buy certain services from the AEA. This is essential for both school district and AEA planning. When AEAs provide a guaranteed service to all districts, it highlights the efficiencies and lower costs offered to districts by the AEA.
- **The 60/40 division of educational services and media services funds should remain in place.** The delivery of tax funds generated by these two levies is slated to be 100% to the districts for the 2025-2026 school year. Our concern is that this will provide much more uncertainty about availability of core services from the AEAs.
- **Flexibility for the AEAs to offer additional services as requested by the districts they serve.** While there are services universally needed across the state, there are some services that may be required in only one AEA or by one school district. The differences in district needs should allow AEAs to respond to those needs on an individual basis.
- **Flow of money to non-public schools for educational and media services.** AEAs have reliably served students in non-public schools and must continue to do so; however, the new flow of money has created an inequity for districts with a large non-public school enrollment. The 40% of educational and media services money that is allocated directly to the AEA out of a district's total educational and media services amount is used by both the public school district and non-public schools for services. Once that money has been "spent" by both, the public school district must begin using the 60% of money allocated directly to the district. We want to ensure all districts have equal opportunities to utilize AEA services and are not limited by less funds as a result of supporting non-public school students.
- **Ensure special education services do not become a fee-for-service model.** While HF 2612 does not move special education services to this model, we want to reiterate the importance of an AEA providing all special education services to a district, no matter how much funding that

district is directly flowing to the AEA. This efficiency is especially important for smaller and more rural districts who cannot afford the services on their own or cannot find a provider of these specialized services outside of the AEA.

HF 2612 has not been fully implemented, so the full impact has not been felt by both school districts and AEAs, but these are the top concerns for our members as the school year has progressed. We will still have further questions as the funding structure becomes permanent and services provided by AEAs are narrowed or changed. We recommend continuing to study and review the AEA system as a whole over the next year in order to make fully informed recommendations going forward. Another year will provide time to gather what is and is not working since we are still early in implementation of the new law. The goal of improving achievement for students with disabilities is a worthy one, but it is important to consider all the factors that impact achievement when making large scale changes.

Sincerely,

Michelle Johnson  
IASB Government Relations Director