

Iowa Legislative Report
88th General Assembly, 2019 Session
Iowa Talented & Gifted Association
Week 2: January 21st - 25th, 2019
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The second week of the session was abbreviated by the Martin Luther King holiday and a statewide snow storm. The Legislature convened at 10 AM Tuesday, and both chambers adjourned quickly. Many legislators were still trying to return to the Capitol on Tuesday afternoon.

Neither chamber did any floor work this week but Wednesday morning started concentrating on committee and subcommittee work. During this time of session each year, subcommittees and committees are meeting on bills with an eye on upcoming deadlines. Legislators are already facing the first committee funnel is about a month away (**MARCH 8**) which is the final date for Senate bills to be reported out of Senate committees and House bills out of House committees. Bills that don't meet this deadline will be dead for the session unless they are budget or tax bills, with a few exceptions.

There was not a lot of activity in the **budget** subcommittees and meetings were organizational. Remember that spending levels are based on revenue projections from the Revenue Estimating Conference, a three-member panel that derives the budget projection using numerous economic indicators.

There was legislative buzz on one education issue this week. On Tuesday, Governor Reynolds announced a new computer science initiative for grade schools. Three Hundred Fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000) will be distributed in \$50,000 grants to six schools. The STEM Advisory Council and the Department of Education have partnered with businesses to award six elementary schools across Iowa with the computer instruction grants. The schools will be selected in each of the six STEM Council regions and eligible school systems will have at least one school with at least 40% of the students qualifying for free lunches. The program will offer students opportunities to learn new, basic skills. The six chosen schools will also serve as a statewide resource for teaching computer science in grade school. The Loess Hills Computer Programming School in Sioux City, which inspired the project, will receive \$50,000 to serve as a project resource and consultant.

Reynolds said in a release, "Tomorrow's workforce is sitting in the classroom right now. Computer Science is Elementary builds on our efforts to expand STEM education across Iowa, including a \$1 million fund to train our computer science teacher workforce. With a societal digital transformation under way, computer science is a new basic skill students must be competent in."

We are also happy to report that the weekly report of the House Majority Leader Hagenow focused on the importance of obtaining an increase in education funding for the next fiscal year. He also stated that The legislature has set a goal for establishing

funding levels for K-12 education within 30 days after the governor's budget is submitted. It is the professed goal to approve this funding within that timeframe, so Iowa schools can work on their budgets and planning for the next school year.

Finally, House State Government Chairman Bobby Kaufmann made a formal announcement that Iowa **House Republicans will not be proposing any changes to IPERS during the 2019 and 2020 sessions** which of course should be good news to our members.

Legislators finished the work week early on Thursday before heading back to their districts. Neither chamber met on Friday.

During this session we will be sending weekly email newsletters on Fridays that focus on legislative issues and topics of importance to the our board and members. We want to keep our members informed and involved during the legislative session because **having you active at the local level is IMPERATIVE for us to be successful at the capitol.**

Just a reminder to **find out who your two Legislators are** (Senator and Representative. Simply go to: "**FIND YOUR LEGISLATOR**" at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>. Enter your address on the right side of the page and you will get both your State Representative and your State Senator. **Click the two names and you will be taken to a site where you can find out all kinds of information about each person (district, home address, home phone, committees, etc).**

YOU CAN ALSO SIGN UP FOR THEIR WEEKLY NEWSLETTERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS. They are a wonderful source of information on what your legislators are thinking, what is important to them, and when they are conducting forums. Most legislators conduct forums back in their home districts on Fridays and on the weekends to seek constituent feedback on a variety of topics. **We strongly encourage attendance at forums. It is a very effective way to let legislators know we work in their districts and to advance and address issues that are important to us. A link to these forums can be found here:**

<http://www.iowahouserеспублиans.com/forums> **(click forums this weekend on that page)**

<http://iowahouse.org/forums/>

<http://www.iowasenaterеспублиans.com/events/>

<http://www.senate.iowa.gov/democrats/events/>

This it should enable you to have all of the information and talking points that our members need to visit with their legislators either during their forums or speaking to them individually about the important issues that affect us – both positively and negatively. We will also include **an excel file lists of pertinent bills before the**

legislature. THE BILLS ARE **HOTLINKED** SO YOU CAN SEE THE TOTAL BILL. We have initially registered as **MONITOR** on all bills so we can attend subcommittees. YOUR BOARD LEADERSHIP AND/OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CAN INSTRUCT US EACH WEEK TO **CHANGE MONITOR TO OPPOSE OR SUPPORT** at any time.

Thanks, and we appreciate your feedback – please contact us if you have questions.