

Iowa Valley Community College District 2020 Legislative Updates

By Cindy S. Schulte, IVCCD Director of Governmental Affairs



Week of March 1, 2020

K-12 FUNDING APPROVED

On March 4 the Senate and House passed Senate File (SF) 2142, which sets the K-12 Supplemental State Aid (SSA) at 2.30% for FY2021 year. The bill also extends the Property Tax Relief Payment (PTRP) an additional year, which has the state pick up any property tax growth in the Additional Levy portion of the school funding formula. SF 2142 increases K-12 funding by \$85.5 million or increases per pupil funding by \$158/pupil or to \$7,038 per pupil. The Iowa Legislature will spend about \$3.5 billion on public pre-K through 12 schools.

IWD LABOR SURVEY REPORTS GAINS IN BACHELOR'S DEGREES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) recently reported the results from its annual labor survey, which showed the percentage of working age Iowans with postsecondary education increased by 2.6% during 2019. In 2018, 57.6% of Iowans between the ages of 25 and 64 had completed some form of education beyond the high school diploma. The biggest gains were in bachelor's degrees and certifications in construction trades. The answers in the survey were provided by 5,414 Iowa residents. Less than 1.9% of

Iowans had less than a high school diploma, 20.2% had a HSED, 1.5% had vocational training, 15.3% had an associate degree, 28.0% had a bachelor's degree, and 11.5% had a graduate degree.

IOWA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE RANKING

On February 27 WorldAtlas.com published an article stating that Iowa had the 2nd lowest unemployment rate in the nation. Iowa's unemployment rate remained constant at 2.4% from January to June 2019 before increasing to 2.5% in July 2019. Vermont had the lowest unemployment rate in the country. The number of jobless Iowans increased from 43,770 people in August 2019 to 44,221 in September 2019.

STATE BOARD APPOINTS NEW MEMBERS

Last week, the Governor announced the appointment of 5 new members on the Iowa Department of Education State Board. The new members include John Robbins (Iowa Falls), Georgia Van Gundy (Waukee), Brian Kane (Dubuque), Hannah Groos (Student, Nevada), and Brooke Axiotis (Des Moines).

IOWA FEBRUARY STATE REVENUES

In February 2020, state revenue collections reflected a slight decrease of 7.1% or \$47.1 million less than what was collected in February 2019. The revenue collected remains ahead of the REC's projections from its December meeting of 2.1% growth for FY2020. In February, the state saw the following state revenue:

- Personal Income Tax – increased by 2.9%
- Sales and Use Tax – decreased by 1.7%
- The Iowa Department of Revenue paid out income tax revenue earlier than it did in 2019
- School infrastructure distributions were to local school districts were \$2.9 million lower than in February 2019

The Iowa Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) will meet on March 12 at 10 am in the Supreme Court Chamber (Statehouse).

ACTIVE LEGISLATION

House File 2568 – Cyber Crime – HF 2568 establishes a Cyber Crime investigation Unit within the Iowa Department of Public Safety. The Unit is charged with investigating crimes with a nexus to the Internet or computer technology, including crimes

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involving child exploitation and cyber intrusion. The Unit will conduct investigations and forensic analyses of criminal cases involving computer technology, research and provide training to assist other government agencies in prosecuting cases related to cybercrime, and provide investigative and prosecutorial assistance to other governmental agencies involved in cybercrime. Currently, the DCI oversees an existing Cyber Crime Unit that focuses primarily on investigations involving online exploitation of children and acts as Iowa's lead agency under the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. There are definitions in the bill which include:

- Minor – A person under the age of 18
- Distributor – A person who owns or operates an internet site or internet-based application
- Personal identification information – An unexpired student ID card, a valid Social Security card, an unexpired driver's license, an unexpired passport, a certified copy of a birth certificate, or other valid unexpired proof of identity.

The bill includes a section which pertains to internet distribution of obscene material to minors. HF 2568 was placed on the House Calendar for Debate on 2/29.

House File 2504 – Requiring Consideration of Antisemitism by Governmental Entities when Investigating Possible Discriminatory Acts – The bill addresses legislative findings by the Iowa Legislature that pertains to antisemitism and harassment on the basis of actual or perceived national origin, shared ancestry, or ethnic characteristics with a religious group, or remains a persistent, pervasive, and disturbing problem in a contemporary American society. Under HF 2504, state officials and institutions, including educational institutions, would have a responsibility to protect citizens from acts of hate and bigotry motivated by discriminatory animus, including antisemitism, and must be given to do so. Section 3 addresses the importance of governmental entities determining discrimination acts that are considered antisemitism. The bill states that in reviewing, investigating, or deciding whether there has been a violation of any law, rule or policy prohibiting discriminatory acts, a governmental entity shall take into consideration the definition of antisemitism set forth in Iowa Code Chapter 216F.3 for purposes of determining whether an alleged act was motivated by any discriminatory anti-Semitic intent. HF 2504 passed out of the House on 3/5 and was referred to the Senate.

LEGISLATION SENT TO GOVERNOR

SF 2142 – State Supplemental Funding – Passed the Senate and House on 3/4 and was sent to the Governor for her signature.

LEGISLATION SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR

SF 2144 – Supplemental Appropriations K-12 – SF 2144 was signed into law by the Governor on 2/13.

SF 2164 – School Funding Equity – SF 2164 was signed into law by the Governor on 2/25.

For more information about the activity during the 2020 legislative session please contact: Cindy Schulte, Director of Governmental Affairs

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