

Note: This is the script that ISEA President Tammy Wawro used during a conference call with local presidents. The modified Slides presentation that you received was used with this script. Brady and Mitch's presentation at the Exec Board meeting and the Building Rep Council meeting used this as a framework.

Good evening Presidents. Thank you for taking time out of what I know is an already full calendar to be on this call today/tonight. I would not call us all together if I did not think we had very important items to discuss.

As you know in the election the Iowa Senate flipped from a pro-public education majority and we now have Republicans in control of the Iowa House and the Iowa Senate as well as the Governor's office. In addition, we will soon have Republican control of the US Senate, US House of Representatives and the Presidency. This is a new reality for us and one that requires us to work together on what might lie ahead.

Our objectives for having this call are to reiterate our desire to fulfill ISEA's mission- "To promote quality public education by placing students at the center of everything we do while advocating for education professionals"

We also want to explain how the election results may impact students and educators and to identify ways we as educators can stand together for our students and each other.

I want to be clear that the session has not begun and we have not seen bills that will be introduced yet, we are speaking about potential actions based on bills that have been introduced in the past, newspaper accounts of legislative priorities, and what we can glean from the Republican Party platform.

In reviewing those sources for hints at what might happen in Congress we think we could see the reduction or elimination of:

- special education funding
- Title I funding
- free and reduced lunch opportunities
- and PELL Grants/Student loans

We also believe the degradation of federal labor laws like workplace safety, union dues deduction, overtime rules, and minimum wage could be possible.

At the state level we could see the increased probability of inadequate funding for public education and the possible diversion of funds from public schools to charter schools, homeschooling, online learning, and private schools with vouchers or education savings accounts. This could potentially result in larger class sizes, school closings and/or salary/benefit reductions. In case you are not familiar with the concept of vouchers or education savings accounts some people talk about them like pinning the school funding check on the backpack of the student and allowing it to follow him/her to whatever learning setting their parents choose.

We also think we could see the elimination or weakening of collective bargaining rights for public employees- including public school employees. All salaries, benefits (insurance/leaves) and working conditions (hours/length of work year) could be dictated by the local school board with no educator input. This has happened in states like Wisconsin that have lost collective bargaining rights in the last few years.

We may also see a move to change IPERS from its current "defined benefit" format to a "defined contribution" format. (Basically think of it as moving to a 403b/401K format with no guaranteed minimum benefit).

As an association we could see the loss of payroll deduction for union dues.

All of this is on top of our concerns for good education policy that supports our students and our schools.

Republican Party Platform

- Liberty
3. We believe money should follow the child in education – whether that child attends public, private, parochial or home school- to assist parents financially in educating their children using the option best suited to their family’s educational needs. We call on the General Assembly to provide for tuition vouchers, tax deductions, or tax credits to permit parents’ choice in educating their children- without government intervention in the school curriculum.
- Commerce
3. We call for legislation that would eliminate all public sector unions.
- Government
14. We support the elimination of the following abusive and unconstitutional federal agencies: the IRS, the EPA, the ATF, the TSA, the BLM, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Education

What is ISEA doing?

Being proactive to lessen the impacts of potential changes by:

- Communicating messaging around potential changes in meetings at all of our 400+ locals across the state.
- Working with other states that have been through this
- Developing bargaining strategies for local chief negotiators
- Providing additional options for electronic funds transfer
- Meeting with legislative leaders from both parties
- Working with other labor organizations
- Collaborating with other education stakeholders

What can members do?

- Attend Legislative Conference to learn.....
- Switch to Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) for dues payment. This means your relationship will be directly with ISEA and not with the school district. This will ensure you continue to have a voice.
- Identify relationships you have with community leaders and legislators and share that information with the local president.
- Invite legislators to your classroom
- Recruit School Board members – if you know someone who lives in our community that would be right on teaching/learning issues and support the unions right to negotiate fairly, even when not required by law, reach out with their names to potentially contact them
- Be Engaged! Attend all association meetings, school board meetings, and legislative forums

Conclusion

All of us are stronger than one