

# ISEA Suggested Caucus Resolutions

**I. We urge Congress and the President to amend the No Child Left Behind act to allow the use of multiple sources of evidence to assess student learning and school effectiveness, to restore a class size reduction program to give students more individualized attention, to increase the number of highly qualified teachers in our nation's public schools, and to fully fund its obligations to America's public school students.**

**RATIONALE:**

The goal of No Child Left Behind to improve student achievement is worthy. However, the prescriptive mandates in the law punish, rather than help, improve schools. It ignores what children really need: a full, well-rounded education, small classes, more parental involvement, up-to-date materials and textbooks, and quality teaching supported by quality professional development for teachers. NCLB relies exclusively on standardized tests to measure progress; fails to recognize children as individuals; redirects precious resources towards more bureaucratic paperwork; and reduces a child's education to a single test score.

**II. We call on Congress and the President to support full federal funding of special education.**

**RATIONALE:**

When the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act passed Congress 30 years ago, the federal government promised to provide 40 percent of the funding for special education. Current federal funding sits at 17 percent. States are left to pick up the difference, which takes money away from regular education programs at a time when overall funding is dropping dramatically.

**III. We oppose diverting public money from public schools to fund vouchers; tuition tax credits; or private, for-profit education businesses.**

**RATIONALE:**

As schools deal with continuous federal budget cuts, providing quality education may become a faint memory. Taking scarce public resources away from public schools at a time of greatly increased expectations is unacceptable.

**IV. We support maintaining professional salaries for educators and increasing the wages of support professionals in our public schools.**

**RATIONALE:**

The Iowa Legislature and Governor made a strong commitment to raise educators' salaries at Iowa's public schools, area education agencies, and community colleges in 2007 when they enacted the teacher quality funding for teachers and appropriated \$2 million for community college faculty. The Legislature and Governor need to roll the commitment to teachers into the Iowa school finance formula to make the promise of reaching 25th in the nation permanent. Community college faculty need additional increases of \$8 million so they can reach 25th in the nation as well. Additionally, the Legislature and the Governor need to make sure that public education in Iowa has adequate resources so that all educational professionals, including support professionals, who play such a vital role in Iowa's kids' education, can earn a competitive living wage.

**V. We support allowing the IPERS contribution rate to be determined by the system's actuary within a limit of 0.5 percent per year, creating an independent board of trustees, and funding to make the COLA for pre-1990 retirees and the favorable experience dividend for post-1990 retirees sustainable forever.**

**RATIONALE:**

The IPERS fund should have its contribution rate determined by its actuary and a reasonable limit of 0.5% per year adjustment will allow for prudent financial management of the trust fund and government resources. The IPERS trust fund currently does not have an independent board of trustees that represent the fiduciary responsibility of the members. This is key to proper oversight of this valued asset to the governments of Iowa and its employees. As for a COLA and the FED, it is incumbent upon the Legislature and Governor to make sure IPERS retirees can sustain a quality of life that isn't jeopardized by inflationary increases outside of their control.