



# PEI

**PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS OF IOWA**

March 29, 2011

Dear PEI Member,

Time is taking its toll on a number of bills in the Iowa Legislature. This Friday, April 1 is the second funnel period, which means most bills must be out of the committee process in the opposite chamber of where the bill originated. Numerous bills will not survive the second funnel since neither chamber is looking to move legislation from the other. There has been virtually no compromising which could result in the least productive session in decades. Following the second funnel, budget negotiation and compromise begin and there is a major chasm dividing consensus which could drive this session into the month of May.

As we had anticipated, HF 525, which contained changes for collective bargaining and arbitration, died in the senate labor committee. [HF 534](#) passed the Iowa House on Tuesday with bi-partisan support. This bill changes Iowa's school calendar from a required 180 days to 1080 hours instructional and passing time, but does not include teacher conferences or lunches. This legislation allows districts an opportunity to consider going to a 4 day school week, which may give those that are struggling a better opportunity to remain operational. The current Iowa Code provision for the student start date still stands at September 1, but a district may submit a request to begin sooner.

HF 535 has yet to have a subcommittee meeting in the Senate. This is the governor's preschool bill that passed the house several weeks ago. Time is ticking on this bill and it appears that it may die in the Senate. If that is the case, the current program will stand and the debate will be about funding of the program. This could risk underfunding and yet there is not room for program cuts which may force districts to unearth money in order to meet the state's requirements. This is hypothetical, but the chances for passage of HF 535 looks very slim, which will contribute to an exceedingly interesting April. We will continue to monitor the preschool situation and keep you informed as things develop.

Moving through a house education subcommittee on Thursday, [SF 437](#) stabilizes an online academy for talented and gifted students. This bill will allocate money to the University of Iowa to continue the federally driven program already in existence that has lost its funding. [SF 453](#) changes high school graduation requirements by allowing middle school

students who are capable of taking high school courses the opportunity to take them for credits towards their high school diploma.

The three new Iowa Board of Regents appointees testified to the Senate Education committee on Wednesday. This is one step of many that the appointees will go through for Senate approval. The governor appoints the members and the senate confirms. The Branstad appointments are Bruce Rastetter, the CEO of Hawkeye Energy, Katie Mulholland, the superintendent of Linn-Marr schools, and Nicole Carroll, the former president of the Carroll Community School Board.

At the end of next week we will have a good idea of what is going to pass this session. Look for an email next week that will give a large overall update of the funnel survivors and what potential changes they will bring. Following that update the budget battle continues and we will do our best to show you what funding schools can expect for next session. Even though there is talk of removing all tax-credits, it is yet possible for the debate on the teacher tax credit to surface.

Thanks!  
Greg Baker  
PEI Representative and Lobbyist

## **\$20 - \$11 FOR 2011**

Beginning April 1 and ending September 1, 2011  
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**Recruit a Professional member and earn \$20**  
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There will be more details soon.

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