

Majority Leader Report

By Matt Windschitl

structure standpoint to make buildings safe for students and teachers. Along that same line, the bill prevents districts from bonding to build athletic stadiums or facilities unless and until their facilities are up to date with the school safety building standards from the task force. Safety and security should be the priority.

This bill also deals with how schools can get help or send for help if an emergency arises. Schools are allowed to have a mobile panic alert system if it can connect to emergency services and integrates with local public safety answering points. This is a mobile phone application districts can utilize. The Governor's office previously developed a grant program for emergency radios. Many schools took advantage of that grant, but some did not. The Governor's office has said that they plan to re-open that grant program to make sure all schools can have access to funding for the radios. If schools do not take advantage, they will be required to use their own funds.

This bill establishes two grant programs. The first is a three-million-dollar Firearm Detection Software grant program run by the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. The grant program provides funds to school districts of varying sizes to help offset the cost associated with purchasing, installing, operating software that meets these requirements:

- *Designed to alert and detect district employees

and first responders if there is a visible, unholstered firearm on a property owned by the school district.

- *Designed to integrate with a district's existing security camera infrastructure.
- *Was developed in the U.S. without any of third-party data or open-source data.

The second grant program is the School Security Personnel Grants for Infrastructure, Equipment, and Training. This grant program states that if the bill is passed, it will provide school districts

grants to purchase infrastructure and equipment related to employee permits to carry weapons, facilitate the training associated with employee permits to carry weapons, and to provide stipends to employees who participate in the training associated with employee permits to carry weapons. Districts who choose to enhance school security this way will have additional expenses and House Republicans want to help cover those costs to truly make schools a safer place for students and staff.

Washington, Cerro Gordo, Webster, Jackson, Al-lamakee, Ringgold, Johnson, Linn, Wright and Warren counties. Location details can be found on the program website.

The one-hour session is free and explains the responsibilities of being a private well owner, how to test your well water quality and who can help, common contaminants found in Iowa and factors that can affect well water quality.

About 7% of Iowans, or 230,000 individuals, rely on private wells as their home's main water source. Annual testing of well water is recommended by ISU Extension and Outreach, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Yet, only 5-10% of Iowa households with private wells test their water quality annually.

Why should you test your well annually?

Here are a few reasons why testing well water is important. It all boils

down to knowing what you are drinking:

- *Testing your water annually will help keep you, your family, pets, livestock and others safe. Some pollutants are odorless and tasteless and will not be removed by boiling water.
- *Pollutants like bacteria, arsenic and nitrate are found at elevated levels in 10-30% of private wells in Iowa.

What to Expect after Sudden Job Loss

For some people, a sudden job loss might be a welcome relief from a difficult situation or may offer the time to reflect on their career and what they really want. But for most, a job loss can have a significant emotional impact, says David Brown, behavioral health state specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

"Losing a job due to a plant closure or some other sudden layoff can be overwhelming and stressful," Brown stated and offered the following suggestions that may help individuals to cope positively with stress and loss.

- *Find social support. Social support plays a critical role in helping people manage adversity. Such support from mentors, family and friends is critical because anxiety and depression can sometimes accompany job loss.
- *Take care of your needs. Keep a regular sleep schedule and eat nutritious meals and snacks. Exercise is also an important remedy for stress.
- *Take a break. Turn this into an opportunity to get away and visit friends or family.
- *Maintain a routine. With unstructured time, you may feel like you are

a little lost. You then need to set your own routine. Every morning, get right out of bed, take a shower and get dressed.

- *Give it time. Griev-ing the loss of your job and adjusting to unemployment can take time. Learning to manage your experiences and feelings is a continual process.
- *Apply for jobs, but don't overdo it. It is easy to look at career websites or job boards and apply for everything. But, when applying for jobs, choose quality over quantity.

Many community mental health centers or nonprofit mental health providers offer a sliding pay scale or financial assistance on the basis of your ability to pay. You can find local mental health professionals by going to www.iowamhdsregions.org/," Brown said.

Consider calling the Iowa Concern Hotline. This resource from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach offers confidential assistance and referral for stress, legal questions and financial concerns. Iowa Concern can be contacted toll-free at 1-800-447-1985 or at <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/iowaconcern/>. Interpretation services are available.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notices Protect Your Right To Know

	NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING -PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY Proposed WHITING Property Tax Levy Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025	
Location of Public Hearing: Board Room - 1st Floor	Date of Public Hearing: 4/1/2024	Time of Public Hearing: 07:00 PM
Location of Notice on School Website: https://www.whitingcsd.org/school-board		

At the public hearing any resident or taxpayer may present oral or written objections to, or arguments in favor of the proposed tax levy. After the hearing of the proposed tax levy, the Board will publish notice and hold a hearing on the proposed budget.

	Current Year	Final Property Tax Dollar Levy FY 2024	Budget Year	Effective Property Tax Dollar Levy (No change in Property Tax Dollars Levied) FY 2025	Budget Year	Proposed Property Tax Dollar Levy FY 2025
General Fund Levy	1	1,106,279		1,106,279		1,407,568
Instructional Support Levy	2	68,492		68,492		67,120
Management	3	347,718		347,718		135,166
Amana Library	4	0		0		0
Voted Physical Plant and Equipment	5	98,130		98,130		103,839
Regular Physical Plant and Equipment	6	48,333		48,333		51,145
Reorganization Equalization	7	0		0		0
Public Education/Recreation (Playground)	8	0		0		0
Debt Service	9	0		0		0
Grand Total	10	1,668,952		1,668,952		1,764,838
	Current Year	Final Property Tax Rate FY 2024	Budget Year	Effective Property Tax Rate (No change in Property Tax Dollars Levied) FY 2025	Budget Year	Proposed Property Tax Rate FY 2025
Grand Total Levy Rate		11.39503		10.76853		11.38723
Property Tax Comparison	Current Year	Property Taxes	Proposed	Property Taxes		Percent Change
Residential property with an Actual/Assessed Value of \$100,000		623		528		-15.25
Commercial property with an Actual/Assessed Value of \$100,000		623		528		-15.25

Note: Actual/Assessed Valuation is multiplied by a Rollback Percentage to get to the Taxable Valuation to calculate Property Taxes. Residential and Commercial properties have the same Rollback Percentage at \$100,000 Actual/Assessed Valuation.

Reasons for tax increase if proposed exceeds the current:

The district's cash reserve levy was increased to offset the cost of special education costs not funded by the state.