



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Compulsory Attendance for 5-year-old Students

- The Iowa Department of Education has received questions about a 2012 change to Iowa's compulsory attendance laws. The 2012 amendment to the law provided the following:
"A child who has reached the age of five by September 15 and who is enrolled in a school district" is of compulsory attendance age unless the child's parent or guardian provides written notice to the school district of the "intent to remove the child from enrollment in the school district."
Iowa Code § 299.1A(2) (2013).
- This year, the Iowa Legislature adopted changes that place the same requirement on students enrolled in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program. Those changes have been signed into law with an effective date of July 1, 2013.
- The purpose of this amended state law is to allow a school district to remove from its enrollment a child who is not regularly attending the district's program. The amendment does not change the parameters of the program; it is intended only to hold parents accountable for ensuring regular attendance on behalf of their students. Requirements for program length and duration are set locally. The amendment allows school districts to provide a quality education for children and to efficiently allocate public resources. For more information, contact Mike Cormack at 515-281-3399 or mike.cormack@iowa.gov.