



A MONTHLY JOURNAL
FOR IOWA EDUCATORS

School Leader Update

Competency-based education grant application launched

The Legislature has directed the Iowa Department of Education to establish a competency-based education program that will award a total of \$100,000 in grants for schools and districts to develop, implement, and evaluate pilot projects.

Applications are being accepted through Friday, September 27. Districts and schools awarded the grants will become the Iowa CBE Collaborative.

The group will engage in collaborative inquiry to investigate, develop, and implement competency-based educational pathways for their students and create a framework to guide the statewide implementation of competency-based education.

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New director: Here's to a fantastic 2013-14

It's my favorite time of year, when schools have come to life after the summer break. Our classrooms and communities fill with that special energy and anticipation that comes with the new school year.

Each school year brings promise and a fresh focus on the importance of our work in education. This has been especially true for me, since I've just moved from the superintendent's office in the Saydel Community School District to the director's office at the Iowa Department of Education.

My roots in Iowa's education system run deep. My journey began in Mrs. Fereter's kindergarten class in Cedar Rapids, where I was born and raised. I was a first-generation college graduate in my family. I've viewed education in Iowa through the important lenses of student, teacher, school administrator and father.

I can't begin to express how honored I am to serve in this leadership role. As Iowans, we all care deeply about our students and schools. We understand the power of a great education and the potential it holds for the future of our students and our state.

In Iowa, we're also serious about continuous improvement throughout our education system. The hard work and compromise that went into the historic education reform legislation adopted by Iowa lawmakers last spring exemplifies our shared commitment.



*Brad Buck, Director,
Iowa Department of Education*

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Open enrollment tuition

The amount of open enrollment tuition for the 2013-2014 school year for a regular education student is \$6,001, which is the state cost per pupil from the previous fiscal year. For a student served pursuant to an Individualized Education Program, open enrollment tuition is calculated as the actual costs of the special education instructional program rather than the prior year's state cost per pupil amount. Open enrollment tuition is billed and paid on a quarterly basis. Under special circumstances that terminate or suspend open enrollment status, it is necessary to prorate tuition in a quarter on a per diem basis. More information about open enrollment can be found [here](#). Questions? Contact the Department's Eric Heitz at eric.heitz@iowa.gov or 515-281-4726.

Enter your school in the bullying prevention video contest

Last year's video contest as part of the Governor's Bullying Prevention Summit was so successful that another contest has been scheduled this year. The video contest is open to all Iowa students with one video entry per school. Entries are due October 10.

The Governor's Bullying Prevention Summit is scheduled for Nov. 4. The event is intended to explore practical next steps to better address the pervasive problem of bullying. Gov. Terry Branstad and Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds are hosting the summit, which is open to the public. For more information about the video contest or summit registration, visit <https://preventbullying.iowa.gov/>.

Changes to private instruction definitions, requirements

There were several important changes made to the law in Iowa concerning private instruction. The Legislature made changes to Competent Private Instruction, including changing some of the reporting requirements. The Legislature also created a new class of private instruction, called "Independent Private Instruction (IPI)."

These changes became effective on July 1. A new Private Instruction handbook incorporates those changes. Additionally, changes to administrative rules are anticipated. These changes were complex, and the Department may need to revise this handbook for future years. The Legislature may make additional changes to the Iowa Code. Any subsequent changes to the law will take effect on July 1, 2014, or later and will not be applied by the Department to this school year. For more information, please contact the Department's Elizabeth Calhoun at elizabeth.calhoun@iowa.gov or 515-281-8170.

Iowa's ACT results strong, but there's room for improvement

Iowa students continue to show strong results on the ACT, according to a nationwide release of assessment results.

Iowa tied with Wisconsin for the second-highest average ACT composite score among states that tested more than half of students in the class of 2013. Iowa and Wisconsin scored 22.1 out of a possible 36. Iowa's average composite score is unchanged from last year. Minnesota was first in the nation, with an average composite score of 23. The national average was 20.9.

Thirty-two percent of Iowa students met all four of ACT's college readiness benchmarks, up from 30 percent in the previous year. The benchmarks specify the minimum scores needed to show a student has a 50 percent chance of earning a grade of B or higher, or about a 75 percent chance of earning a C or higher, in a typical first-year college course in English, mathematics, reading and science. Nationwide, 26 percent of students met all four benchmarks. Read more on the Iowa Department of Education's [website](#).



Calling all social studies experts

Are you, or do you know someone who is a great social studies teacher or content expert? We are looking to expand our current Statewide Social Studies Leadership Team and want social studies teachers and other experts who are interested in creating a vision, and building upon that vision, for social studies in Iowa. Interested? Email the Department's Stefanie Wager at stefanie.wager@iowa.gov with your name, district, social studies background and the reason you are interested in being part of our work. For more information, Stefanie also can be reached at 515-725-7842.

Bridging the gap between the state and field

It's back-to-school for dozens of consultants with the Iowa Department of Education. That's because they are going to make monthly school visits in the coming year to get back in touch with the day-to-day operations of a school.

The visits are not intended to be for monitoring or other official business. Instead, the goal is to ensure the Department's consultants remain in touch with the real problems and successes facing educators in the field.

Consultants will be contacting district superintendents this month for recommendations for specific school sites.

The goals of the visits are to:

- Build stronger relationships with districts.
- Collectively increase the Department's understanding of the daily work inside schools and classrooms.
- Collectively increase our understanding of the issues and needs in districts.
- Use our increased understanding to inform our decisions about our work and what it will take to provide better services.

For more information, contact the Department's Mary Delagardelle at mary.delagardelle@iowa.gov.

Radon on the mind? Mark your calendar

The Eighth Annual Region 7 EPA/State Radon Stakeholders' Meeting will be held March 2014 in West Des Moines.

The meeting is being held at no cost for all those who have a stake in protecting the public from unnecessary exposure to radon in their homes, schools and businesses. It is the intent of EPA Region 7 and its partners – the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, and the Heartland Chapter of the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists – to bring stakeholders together to discuss common issues, provide insight into the future, understand the issues from other perspectives, share, educate and network.

The meeting will qualify for continuing education credit in the National Radon Proficiency Program and National Radon Safety Board in Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska. In addition, other CEU courses will be held on March 3 in association with the Stakeholders' Meeting. More registration information will be provided in early January.



Meet the state Board of Education's student member

Many high school students ponder their own futures in education. Edgar Thornton, a high school student from Iowa City, thinks about the state's future in education. Thornton, a senior at City High, has been appointed to serve a one-year term as the student member of the Iowa State Board of Education. His love of education and policy is deep-rooted, something he gleaned from his grandmother, who was an educator.

Thornton's term began on May 1 and will run for one year. The State Board of Education works in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education to provide support, supervision, and oversight for the state education system.

Attending meetings won't throw Thornton off track, since he's used to being busy with the National Honor Society, Boy Scouts, the school band and tennis team, in addition to academics. Below, Thornton gives some insight into his life and his thoughts on education:



How does education excite and challenge you as a student?

I am excited to just learn new things and remain academically conscious and motivated. I enjoy looking at education from a different lens, how it can be improved and to use that motivation to give my effort to the board. I want to learn more about education in Iowa from a governmental standpoint, and I consider myself naturally curious.

Who has inspired you to pursue education and serve your community?

I would say my grandmother. She was a minority growing up in the South during the Depression and after. She pushed herself to get a good education. She had two Ph.D.'s. She had Ph.D.'s in education and religion. Until the day she died, she pushed me and others around her.

Why do you think it is important for a student to be a member of the State Board of Education?

Having the position is important because they are in classrooms on a day-to-day basis. They see the resources and teachers in the classroom. Students are directly affected. They should speak up so people hear what they have to say.

How will you represent Iowa public schools while being a member of the State Board of Education?

It is impossible to represent every single student in the Iowa school system. I have been in the system a long time and achieving from a minority point of view. I want to represent it the best way I can. I want to look for small things that can be done to make things better and improve the quality of education.

What changes would you like to see made in the Iowa education system?

I would like there to be a shift in Advanced Placement (preparation and enrollment) for minority and low-income students. This way they will get out of school ready for a job or for college. They are the ones who need the education most.

What are your personal future goals?

I am definitely going to college. I am going to major in engineering and minor or double major in political science. I will probably go to a state school, possibly at Iowa or Iowa State. I see myself in the government, though. I see myself campaigning or working on policy and research.

Students, teachers invited to Constitution Day webinar

"The Constitution is a guide which I will never abandon." - George Washington

United States Constitution Day is September 17 each year. This year, the Iowa Department of Education has partnered with the Iowa Bar Association to help schools actively take part in celebrating the day. Join us at 10 a.m. on September 17 for a live webinar from a distinguished panel of experts on the Constitution and its impact in today's world. In addition to hearing from these experts there will be a Q & A time for students and teachers to ask questions. Check out www.educateiowa.gov as we get closer to the date for more information and to sign up to participate. If you miss the live event, the recorded webinar will be available on the website later that day.



Congress enacted legislation requiring all public schools to set aside one day during that week to teach all students about the U.S. Constitution and about citizenship. Iowa districts are already in compliance with the spirit and letter of the law by having secondary students take U.S. government. Iowa Code section 256.11(5)(b) requires that the government course cover the federal Constitution. This requirement applies to "each educational institution that receives federal funds." "Educational institutions" includes, but is not limited to, school districts and institutions of higher learning.

More information, including additional Constitution Day resources, is available at <http://tinyurl.com/k58xez7>. If your district is planning something special to celebrate Constitution Day or you have questions about Constitution Day resources, contact stefanie.wager@iowa.gov, social studies consultant at the Department. If you have legal questions about this matter, contact nicole.proesch@iowa.gov.

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The centerpiece of this new law is a teacher leadership structure that is the most ambitious of its kind nationally. This new statewide structure will transform learning in schools by strengthening, supporting, and empowering our dedicated teachers. The resources put into this structure truly represent an investment in people.

I really believe in what we're trying to accomplish as a state. As director, I'm focused on helping our education system implement this important work. We will do this in a way that respects and supports both the individuality of our Iowa communities and the vision and priorities set at the state level.

To learn more about Director Buck, check out his bio on the Iowa Department of Education's [website](#).

I also believe that building relationships is essential in this work. I look forward to getting to know the people at the Department of Education and in our area education agencies and schools, as well as parents, business leaders, legislators and other stakeholders.

It's so important that we all work together and keep the conversation focused on what's best for our students. Here's to a fantastic 2013-14 school year.

Data and Reporting

Fall BEDS Staff and Operational Sharing

Fall Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS) and Fall BEDS Staff are expected to open on September 3. The due date has been moved to October 15 to align with the reporting of staff for supplementary weighting.

Districts wanting to take advantage of the operational sharing supplementary weighting must have all errors, including licensure issues, resolved and be certified by the due date. We will pull the full-time equivalent (FTE) from 2012-2013 and compare it to the FTE from the current year to determine which districts are eligible. The following are new position and assignment codes added to the Fall BEDS Staff collection for purposes of supplementary weighting:

- Position 650 School Administration Manager Assignment 50050
- A district can also use 550 Other Administrator and the new assignment code 40020
- School Administration Manager
 - Position 167 Transportation Director
 - Position 168 Operations and Maintenance Director

Below is the matrix we will use to pull FTE from 2012-2013 Fall BEDS Staff for the new 2013-2014 positions and assignments:

| 2013-2014 Position | 2013-2014 Assignment | 2012-2013 | 2012-2013 | 2012-2013 |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 650 – School Administration Manager | 50050 – School Administration Manager | 153 – School Administrative Support | | |
| 550 – Other Administrator | 40020 – School Administration Manager | 153 – School Administrative Support | 40007 – Administration – General | |
| 167 – Transportation Director | 99050 – Non-Licensed Staff | 139 – LEA Supervisors/Managers | 171 – Pupil Transportation | 175 – Transportation other than pupil transportation |
| 168 - Operations and Maintenance Director | 99050 – Non-Licensed Staff | 139 – LEA Supervisors/Managers | 181 – Operations and Maintenance | |

Other positions/assignments added to the 2013-2014 Fall BEDS Staff collection:

- Position 163 – Food Service Director (not included in Operational Sharing Supplementary Weighting).
- Assignment 40015 – Activities/Athletic Director (not included in Operational Sharing Supplementary Weighting) (to be used with position 550 – Other Administrator).

For questions regarding the matrix, contact Marlene Dorenkamp at marlene.dorenkamp@iowa.gov or 515-281-5507.

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Application documents are available on the Iowa Department of Education's [website](#).

For more information, contact Sandra Dop, the director of the Iowa CBE Collaborative, at sandra.dop@iowa.gov.

Data and Reporting continued

Test files for Student Reporting and Certified Enrollment

It is important to send test files of Student Reporting in Iowa (SRI) and Certified Enrollment during September to reduce the amount of time needed to complete fall reporting in October.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| September 4 | Opening of SRI and Certified Enrollment for practice files |
| September 25 | Closing of SRI and Certified Enrollment for practice files. |
| October 1 | Official count day and re-opening of SRI and Certified Enrollment |

Current documents and training materials are located [here](#).

If you have not yet registered to receive email notifications when new materials are posted to the SRI website or webinar training sessions are scheduled, click [here](#).

Fall training will be only through webinars. To view pre-recorded webinars, check out [Student Reporting in Iowa Tutorials](#). Be sure to download an updated 2013-2014 Data Dictionary from the [SRI website](#).

The SRI-related fall applications, VRF Data Collector, SRI, and Certified Enrollment, are located on the Iowa Education Portal at portal.ed.iowa.gov. You will need an A&A account to access the portal. VRF Data Collector is located under Pearson SIF-Works while Student Reporting in Iowa and Certified Enrollment are located under the Edinfo menu, Student Level Applications submenu.

During September, you should:

1. Fix all errors found in VRF;
2. Submit and approve data to SRI to review and fix any level 2 validations as well as verify reports; and
3. Approve data from SRI to Certified Enrollment as soon as level 2 validation errors have been resolved. This allows districts time to review the counts and begin to resolve inter-district conflicts (duplicate state IDs, missing students, incorrect resident districts, etc).

For assistance, contact one of the Iowa Department of Education's consultants:

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Margie Hanson | Gary Kirchoff | Rachel Kruse | Paul Miller | Carla Schimelfenig |
| 515-281-3214 | 515-281-6278 | 515-281-4153 | 515-725-2252 | 515-281-3111 |

Data and Reporting continued

New test replaces GED

A new test will replace the GED® in 2014 as the assessment required to earn a state-issued high school equivalency diploma.

The new test, developed by the nonprofit ETS, will be more affordable for Iowans and is aligned with statewide standards for what students in kindergarten through 12th grade are expected to learn in English language arts and math. The new test, called HiSET, was chosen in Iowa through a competitive-bidding process.

Iowans who have started the GED® any time since 2002 must move quickly to finish the testing series to avoid starting the assessment process over again. GED® Testing Service is phasing out its 2002 testing series at the end of 2013. The last official testing date in Iowa is December 13.

GED® Testing Service, which traditionally has been the only provider of assessments that count toward a state-issued high school equivalency diploma, shifted from a nonprofit to a for-profit enterprise in 2012, which prompted several assessment vendors to begin competing to provide the service in states.

HiSET was chosen by a state selection committee made up of education leaders from community colleges and the Iowa Department of Education. Iowa test-takers will pay far less to take HiSET in 2014. The cost will be \$50, with no charge for re-testing within a year. The 2014 GED® testing series will cost \$120.

Students will be able to take HiSET either in paper-pencil format or online throughout Iowa starting in January 2014. Online registration will open later this year.

Online exams initially will be available at the state's 15 community colleges, and online testing sites will expand over time.

The paper version of HiSET will be offered at all current GED® testing locations in Iowa starting January 2, 2014.

Those locations can be found on the following map online: http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2042&catid=182&Itemid=4257.

Iowans who need to finish the 2002 GED® testing series by Dec. 13 can access the same map to find a local testing site.

C-Plan is open and ready

Consolidated Plan (C-Plan) is open and ready for districts and nonpublic schools to complete the required components of the Annual Progress Report (APR), the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP), the Iowa Core Implementation Plan and District Developed Service Delivery Plan (DDSDP). The deadline for submitting the information required for these components is September 15. Data from the Iowa Department of Education needed to complete the reports will be uploaded no later than the beginning of September. C-Plan can be accessed through the Department's secure website.

Additional information for C-Plan, including up-to-date information on changes as well as help documents can be found on the Department's website at http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2583&Itemid=467.

For more information about the DDSDP section of C-Plan, contact David Happe at 515-281-3576 or david.happe@iowa.gov. For questions about the APR or CSIP sections of C-Plan, contact Holly Barnes at 515-242-6173 or holly.barnes@iowa.gov or Cindy Butler at 515-281-5332 or cindy.butler@iowa.gov. Although SINA/DINA information is not due in C-Plan until November 1, questions may be directed to Karla Day at 515-281-7145 or karla.day@iowa.gov.

Early Childhood Preschool Programs

Quality Preschool Program Standards verification visits

Beginning in October and continuing through May, 36 districts and their community partners will receive an Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS) verification visit to ensure compliance with the requirements of Chapter 16, Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children (SWVPP). Early childhood consultants from the Iowa Department of Education, together with early childhood specialists from the AEAs, conduct the verification visits.

The IQPPS verification visit includes all district and community partner IQPPS classroom sessions serving preschoolers in:

- Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs
- Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) for children 3, 4 and/or 5 years old with an instructional Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Early childhood partnerships programs (such as community-based providers, child care, district tuition programs, etc.)



The IQPPS verification visit includes a district overview, classroom

observations, family interview, review of documents (Classroom Portfolios, the Program Portfolio, staff and child files) and a summary meeting. For more information on the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program or the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, click [here](#) or contact Penny Milburn at penny.milburn@iowa.gov or 515-281-7844, Jennifer Adkins at jennifer.adkins@iowa.gov or 515-725-2219 or Amy Stegeman at amy.stegeman@iowa.gov or 515-725-2273.



Correction in the Iowa Early Learning Standards 2012

A correction has been made in the Iowa Early Learning Standards 2012 (IELS). It was found that some information in the alignment of the IELS and the Iowa Core had been erroneously omitted. The pages have been corrected and are posted on the Iowa Department of Education's website at:

http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=681&Itemid=1571

Individuals who have a paper copy of the IELS 2012 may download and print the replacement pages for their book/manual (pages 149-176). An updated PDF of the complete IELS 2012 (with corrections) is also available for electronic users or those who may plan to print at a later date.

For more information, contact the Department's Kimberly Villotti at kimberly.villotti@iowa.gov or 515-281-4709 or Melissa Schnurr at melissa.schnurr@iowa.gov or 515-281-5751

Corrected PDFs are also available on Early Childhood Iowa and Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children websites.

SWVPP district reporting requirements

All Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs for Four-Year-Old Children (SWVPP) districts are required to provide updated preschool information to the Iowa Department of Education. This information is entered into the Early Childhood Application via the Department's Secure Reporting Site by September 15 each year prior to completing Student Reporting in Iowa.

Districts are required to address the 2013-2014 school year data, including information about the preschool program contact, district assurances (including partner collaboration, preschool integration and professional development), curriculum/assessment, preschool sessions, and session program standards. Information pertaining to *segregated* early childhood special education (ECSE) classrooms is also required to be entered on this site for SWVPP districts.

For more information on the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, go to http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=940&Itemid=1279 or contact Penny Milburn at penny.milburn@iowa.gov or 515-281-7844 or Jennifer Adkins at jennifer.adkins@iowa.gov or 515-725-2219.



Nutrition and Health Services

'Comfortable Cafeteria' webinar

Why should schools strive to support a pleasant and positive meal time rather than just getting the students fed? For plenty of reasons:

- When the environment is pleasant, students eat better, do better in their academic coursework, and have fewer behavioral problems.
- Many kids are undernourished, even if they are overfed. School meals provide key nutrients for students to grow and learn to their full potential.
- School meals help to develop healthy eating habits and acceptable meal-time behaviors.



Iowa Team Nutrition Program is sponsoring a Comfortable Cafeteria Webinar on October 2 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Dayle Hayes, award-winning author, educator and nutrition coach from Montana, will address a variety of meal-time scenarios and tips for positive meal-time practices.

A positive approach requires effective teamwork and communication among administrators, teachers, aides, school food service staff, students and parents. To register, [click here](#). For more information, contact the Department's Carrie Scheidel at carrie.scheidel@iowa.gov.

USDA Smart Snacks in School

As a part of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, the USDA has released an interim final rule, Smart Snacks in School effective July 1, 2014. It establishes nutrition standards for all food sold to students on campus throughout the day, outside of meals served as part of the School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs.

Iowa has had nutrition standards in effect for foods served outside of the meal programs since 2010, established as part of the Healthy Kids Act (HKA) of 2008. What does this mean for Iowa schools? The HKA nutrition advisory panel will meet this fall to review the HKA nutrition standards and will consider the new federal nutrition standards in making recommendations for change.

The Smart Snack standards complement the improved school meal standards. To find a comparison chart of USDA Smart Snacks in School and Iowa's HKA [click here](#). For more information, contact Patti Delger at patti.delger@iowa.gov.



Nutrition and Health Services continued

2013 eligibility guidelines for free and reduced-price meals

The policy for free and reduced-price school meals for children who are unable to pay the full price of meals has been released by the Iowa Department of Education. The meals are served through the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and the Afterschool Care Snack Program.

State and local officials have adopted family size and income criteria for determining eligibility (see chart below).

Income Eligibility Guidelines Effective 7-1-2013

| Household Size | Free Meals | | | | | Reduced-Price Meals | | | | |
|--|------------|---------|---------------|-----------------|--------|---------------------|---------|---------------|-----------------|--------|
| | Yearly | Monthly | Twice a Month | Every two weeks | Weekly | Yearly | Monthly | Twice a Month | Every Two Weeks | Weekly |
| 1 | 14,937 | 1,245 | 623 | 575 | 288 | 21,257 | 1,772 | 886 | 818 | 409 |
| 2 | 20,163 | 1,681 | 841 | 776 | 388 | 28,694 | 2,392 | 1,196 | 1,104 | 552 |
| 3 | 25,389 | 2,116 | 1,058 | 977 | 489 | 36,131 | 3,011 | 1,506 | 1,390 | 695 |
| 4 | 30,615 | 2,552 | 1,276 | 1,178 | 589 | 43,568 | 3,631 | 1,816 | 1,676 | 838 |
| 5 | 35,841 | 2,987 | 1,494 | 1,379 | 690 | 51,005 | 4,251 | 2,126 | 1,962 | 981 |
| 6 | 41,067 | 3,423 | 1,712 | 1,580 | 790 | 58,442 | 4,871 | 2,436 | 2,248 | 1,124 |
| 7 | 46,293 | 3,858 | 1,929 | 1,781 | 891 | 65,879 | 5,490 | 2,745 | 2,534 | 1,267 |
| 8 | 51,519 | 4,294 | 2,147 | 1,982 | 991 | 73,316 | 6,110 | 3,055 | 2,820 | 1,410 |
| For each additional family member add: | 5,226 | 436 | 218 | 201 | 101 | 7,437 | 620 | 310 | 287 | 144 |

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Nutrition and Health Services continued...

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Households may apply for free or reduced-price meal benefits one of four ways:

- Students from households whose income is at or below the levels shown are eligible for reduced-price meals or for free meals. All children in a household may be listed on one application, which then can be returned to any one of the children's schools.
- Students from Food Assistance households and children who receive benefits under the Family Investment Program (FIP) are eligible for free meals. Most children from Food Assistance and FIP households will qualify for free meals automatically. These households will be notified of benefits in letters from their children's schools. Households that receive a letter from the school district need to do nothing more to ensure their children receive free meals.
- Some Food Assistance and FIP households will receive letters from the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS). Children listed in the letters will qualify for free meals, but parents must first take these letters to the children's schools.
- Food Assistance or FIP households that receive benefits but do not receive a letter from DHS must apply for free school meals on behalf of their children.



Only complete applications will be approved by schools. Applications may be submitted at any time during the year. If a family member becomes unemployed, the family should contact the school to complete an application.

Foster children are eligible for free meal benefits. Some foster children will qualify for free meals automatically through the State Direct Certification process, and their host families will be notified of these benefits. Families that are notified need to do nothing more to ensure their children receive free meals. Families with live-in foster children who are not notified but wish to apply for free meals will find instructions on the application form. Participants in the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals based on a completed application.

Households with children who are enrolled in the Head Start/Even Start Program or the Migrant Education Program or who are considered homeless or runaway by the school district's homeless liaison should contact the school for assistance with benefits. Individuals who are dissatisfied with a ruling by school officials can formally appeal, either orally or in writing, to the school's designated hearing official. The policy statement on file at the school contains an outline of the hearing procedure. School officials may verify the information in the application and that deliberate misrepresentation of information may subject the applicant to prosecution under applicable state and federal criminal statutes. Households should contact their local schools for more information.

Nutrition and Health Services continued

It's not just a school lunch. It's bigger than that.

A survey conducted on parents' knowledge of their children's nutrition shows that they are solidly engaged in the school lunch program. A full 84 percent are knowledgeable about the changes in school menus toward better nutritional standards.

The results of the survey, which were conducted through the Iowa Department of Education's Team Nutrition Program, have been used to develop resources as part of a school meal parent campaign. The campaign is for schools to communicate with parents about school meals, mobilize them to maximize their role-modeling potential, and provide resources to develop healthy habits at home.



Iowa parents of school-aged children were surveyed online to assess attitudes, beliefs and practices in regards to the school lunch program. To view the final report, [click here](#).

In August, school districts were mailed posters and flyers as a part of the campaign. Additional resources can be found by visiting <http://schoolmeals.educateiowa.gov>.

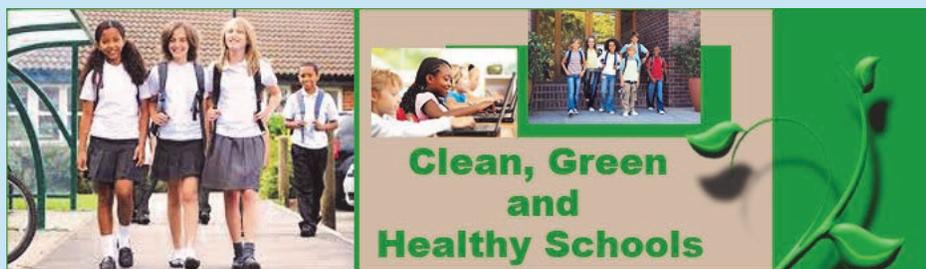
For more information, contact the Department's Carrie Scheidel at carrie.scheidel@iowa.gov.

EPA's Healthy School Initiative

More than 53 million children and about 6 million adults spend significant portions of their days in more than 120,000 public and private school buildings across the United States. Many of these buildings are old and in poor condition, and may contain environmental conditions that inhibit learning and pose increased risks to the health of children, staff and visitors.

EPA Region 7 offers a variety of free online resources to help professionals address these environmental issues. Go to <http://www.epa.gov/region7/citizens/schools/index.htm>.

Watch for the latest addition to this collection of helpful resources: EPA Region 7's "Healthy School Toolkit." The toolkit will be accessible soon through the same website. It will include environmental health outreach materials (fact sheets, easy-to-



understand topic-specific presentations, as well as lists of other helpful resources and contact information) all created for school professionals who want to learn and understand more about solutions for keeping school buildings clean, green, and healthy. For more information about the EPA's Healthy Schools Initiative, contact Kathleen L. Fenton at fenton.kathleen@epa.gov or 913-551-7874.



Legislative Update

Contact Mike Cormack for all legislative items: mike.cormack@iowa.gov or 515-281-3399.

Cormack at the Capitol Change is inevitable (“Weird Al” excepted)

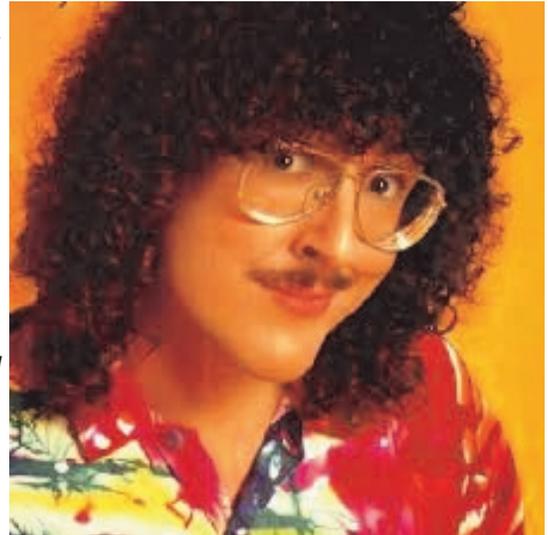
If we can count on anything in life, it is change. That thought came to me recently while attending a concert at Hoyt Sherman Place.

For those who have never been to Hoyt Sherman Place in Des Moines, it is a stately building with artwork and tea sets adorning the halls and walls. Acting as the sentinel to the historic Sherman Hill neighborhood, Hoyt Sherman Place’s green lawn leads elegantly up the hill to the brick auditorium where many artistic endeavors have graced the stage over the years. You can almost hear the violins welcoming you to a night of the arts as birds flutter by in song.

It is also where I saw “Weird Al” Yankovic perform last month with his collection of music parodies. When we left the concert, the crowd was high-fived by Darth Vader and Storm Troopers. It made about as much sense as watching announcers in tuxedos addressing the “ladies and gentlemen” in the crowd at a boxing match.

My thought throughout the night was that when Hoyt Sherman constructed this structure in 1877, he could never have imagined the wave of Hawaiian shirts that would invade his home to hear “Weird Al” belt out *My Bologna* or *I Want a New Duck!*

But our world has changed. So, too, have things changed at the Iowa Department of Education.



As most reading this well know by now, Dr. Brad Buck has emerged as the new director of the Department. My personal change is that I went from being his boss as a taxpayer in the Saydel Community School District to an employee in one move. Looking back, I’m glad I didn’t send any nasty messages to the superintendent then! Actually, I was quite pleased with how my district has been moving forward under his leadership and look forward to working with him.

I think back to my years in education, and change was a constant theme in personnel. There are always adjustments with new bosses; all bring their own styles. It isn’t different from the teacher-student relationship. When I became a full-time teacher, it took most of the first year for students to quit comparing how we did things to the teacher they previously had. There was nothing wrong with that, and it is a compliment to the previous teacher. Over time, students came to view my style of teaching as the way a social studies classroom was done. When it was my turn to leave, I made sure to tell my students to give the new teacher a chance and that he or she would have different ways of doing things.

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Legislative Update continued

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We shall do the same upon Dr. Buck's arrival at the Department. I ask Iowans to give him a chance to settle into this position, to put his talent and skills into action, and to give him a fair chance. I think that is the Iowa way and will occur. Dr. Buck has the opportunity to put into practice the funding and vision of the bipartisan Legislature. He will put his own stamp on this and, I believe, will be an important part of helping make this new approach to education succeed for Iowa students.

Change happens all of the time. The new changes in Iowa educational law come with a new leader. I don't expect it to be as shocking as hearing "Weird Al" croon *Eat It* at a formal center for the arts. But it will work. With the help of local Iowa schools, I look forward to seeing Dr. Buck lead us into a new era of excellence in Iowa education.

State panel to study teacher, administrator evaluation

Nineteen Iowans will serve on a state council to study and recommend new statewide systems for evaluating Iowa teachers and school administrators. The Council on Educator Development was established as part of [House File 215](#), the landmark education reform bill adopted by Iowa lawmakers. For more information on state commissions and task forces established as part of 2013 legislation, visit the Iowa Department of Education's [website](#).

Members of the Council on Educator Development are as follows:

Jon Sheldahl, Chief Administrator, Great Prairie Area Education Agency, Ottumwa

Tammy Wawro, President, Iowa State Education Association, Des Moines

Dana Schon, Professional Learning Director, School Administrators of Iowa, Clive

Stephen Miller, Employment Consultant, Iowa Association of School Boards, Des Moines

Bev Smith, Human Relations Director, Urban Education Network of Iowa, Waterloo

J. D. Cryer, Field Experience Coordinator, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls

Dave Versteeg, Superintendent, Montezuma Community School District, Montezuma

Jimmy Casas, Principal, Bettendorf Community School District, Bettendorf

Michelle Lettington, Executive Director of Curriculum and Professional Learning, Waukee Community School District, Waukee

Carol Farver, Principal, Newton Community School District, Newton

Elaine Baughman, Special Education Teacher, Harlan Community School District, Harlan

Joel Illian, Special Education Teacher, Pekin Community School District, Packwood

Derek Schulte, Business Education Teacher, Southeast Polk Community School District, Pleasant Hill

Billy Strickler, Elementary Teacher, Fairfield Community School District, Fairfield

Byron Darnall, Bureau Chief, Iowa Department of Education, Des Moines

Patty Link, Parent and State Director, Students First, Des Moines

Joanne Tubbs, Licensure Consultant, Iowa Board of Educational Examiners, Des Moines

Robin Trimble-White, Director of Teacher Education and Professor, Grand View University, Des Moines

Tom Buckmiller, Professor, Drake University, Des Moines

Non-Voting Members:

Herman Quirnbach, State Senator, Ames

Joni Ernst, State Senator, Red Oak

Ron Jorgensen, State Representative, Sioux City

Cindy Winckler, State Representative, Davenport



Legal Lessons

Contact Nicole Proesch for all Legal Lessons items: nicole.proesch@iowa.gov or 515-281-8661

Happy fall (*unofficially*)!

I am happy to report that Sophia has made it through her first day of kindergarten. And Mommy made it through, too. I felt a little better knowing that she was happy to see me when I picked her up; she made a new friend, enjoyed her lunch, and she also made me a picture, which is now proudly displayed on my office door. I look forward to filling up my door with more of her artwork as the year progresses. With any luck, she will be a free-spirited artist when she grows up and not an attorney.

For those of you sad to see summer go, let me remind you of all the wonderful things fall has to offer. It happens to be my favorite time of year! I love to wake up on a cool fall morning to the crisp Iowa air and drink a pumpkin spice latte while strolling around the farmers market. Playing in the leaves with my kiddos is a family favorite. And who doesn't look forward to Iowa football? Yes, I am a fan of the Hawkeyes! GO HAWKS! However, I root for the Cyclones when they are not playing us, so I still claim to support both if asked.

Hopefully, when the beginning of your school year settles in, you will all have time to get out and enjoy yourself this fall, which *officially* starts September 22.

Quick, easy-reference matrix for common residency issues

| Situation | Resident? Enroll? | Other remarks |
|---|--|--|
| Student lives with someone other than parent/guardian because of family problems or personal problems – not for school reasons. | Yes – student is a resident and must be enrolled tuition-free, without requiring guardianship papers. | Emergency contact – must be someone who can make a decision about the student (parent or court-appointed guardian, e.g.) or who can quickly contact the decision-maker. Report cards, communiqués from school still go to parent, unless parent gives written permission to school to send documents to person with whom student resides. |
| Same as above, but the student is in district for school purposes (athletics, other extracurriculars, not doing well in former school). | Not a resident; per Iowa Code § 282.6 the district must charge tuition and may not include student on certified enrollment. | Same comments as above. |
| Same as first row, but the student is in the district neither for school purposes nor because of personal or family problems (e.g., student is playing in a hockey league). | Depends. Factors to consider include: 1. Does student intend to return to parent's home in near future? How frequently does child return to parental home to visit? 2. Does parent furnish significant financial support for child? | Same comments as previously. Creating a legal guardianship does not affect whether the student is a resident. It merely clarifies who gets information from the district and who can make decisions for a minor child. |

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Legal Lessons continued

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| Situation | Resident? Enroll? | Other remarks |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>3. Does parent still have authority over child?</p> <p>Most of the time, these students are not going to be residents and must be charged tuition. An exception may exist for a student who is 18 or older and who sets up his/her own household (all above questions would have to be answered in the negative).</p> | |
| <p>Student lives with parent(s) in District A, but is with a relative (not a parent) before and/or after school in District B.</p> | <p>This does not establish residency in District B.</p> | <p>If parents want student to attend District B, they must file an open enrollment request.</p> |
| <p>Student resides with court-appointed guardian.</p> | <p>Doesn't automatically make the student a resident for purposes of 282.6; still need to determine why the student is in the district.</p> | <p>The rights of a court-appointed guardian are superior to those of the parents; guardian is emergency contact and is the recipient of all documents from school. Therefore, make sure this is a legal guardianship (as evidenced by a court order signed by a judge or by "letters of appointment" signed by clerk of court with seal of court).</p> |
| <p>Student splits time equally between parents who live in different districts</p> | <p>Student is a resident of both districts, but only one district gets to include the student in its September count. It's permissible for the districts to determine which one will count the student and that district can reimburse the other.</p> | <p>This really gets complex when the child needs special education.</p> |
| <p>Family moves into district from another country.</p> | <p>Children in the family are residents of district, regardless of whether they are in the country illegally and even regardless of whether the family's presence in the U.S. is legal.</p> | <p>U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1972 that a free education must be provided to resident children, even if they are in the country illegally. A district cannot require any documents from this family that it would/could not request from any other family. That is, you may ask for proof of birthdates and relevant health information. Period.</p> |

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Legal Lessons continued

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| Situation | Resident? Enroll? | Other remarks |
|--|--|---|
| Student with dual citizenship (of which U.S. citizenship is included) moves into district. | Whether this student is a resident depends on why the student is in the district. If living with a parent for purposes of making a home, the student is a resident. If living with another relative or even a guardian for purposes of going to school, the student is not a resident. | This student will not have a visa, because the student is a citizen. But remember that citizenship is not relevant to the issue of who is a resident. |
| Family refuses to give street address, just gives P.O. box. | 282.6 requires districts to charge tuition; without proof of residency (P.O. Box is not proof of residency in district), charge tuition and hope that gets the parents' attention. | There are legitimate reasons why a family would want its street address kept confidential; however, districts must have proof of residency and can still take measures to protect this information. |
| Student lives with a foster family. | Is a resident of the district for purposes of receiving a tuition-free education. | Under Iowa law, foster parents are not guardians (unless there is a separate order). The Department of Human Services (DHS) is custodian for placement in foster care; unless parental rights have been terminated by a court, the natural parents still have the right to participate in meetings and receive reports. Call local the DHS office (the one that made the placement) and get some guidance in writing. |

Custody, court orders, and requests for records

All too often, AEAs and school districts are confronted with parents or guardians who disagree about educational decisions for a student. With rare exception, the parties are just trying to do what is right for the child. For those difficult situations that occur, AEAs and school districts must consider whether a court order or decree appoints a particular person to make a child's educational decisions. Here are some general legal considerations to consider:

No Court Order. According to Iowa family law, in the absence of a court order, presume both parents have equal decision-making power, even if the child lives with one parent more than the other parent.

Court Order with Specific Language about Educational Decisions. If a court decree specifically grants a parent exclusive power to make educational decisions, follow that provision. (Orders with such specific language are relatively rare; school officials should never take a parent's word that the language exists.)

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Court Order with No Specific Language about Educational Decisions. In the absence of specific language about educational decisions, look for the following language or terms:

1. “Joint Custody.” If there is a court order (divorce decree, final custody decree, temporary custody and visitation order) that grants parents “joint custody” or “joint legal custody,” the parents have equal decision-making power, even if the court order provides that the child lives with one parent more than the other. See Iowa Code § 598.1(3).
2. Sole Custody. If there is a court order granting one parent “sole custody,” “legal custody,” or “sole legal custody,” that parent acts as the child’s parent for IDEA purposes, even if the child lives for a significant amount of time with the other parent. See *id.* § 598.1(5).

Juvenile Court Orders. Juvenile court orders may change frequently, and may change the authority of biological or adoptive parents to make educational decisions. If questions arise, contact the local DHS office for additional information or clarification.

Domestic Abuse Protective Orders. Courts frequently issue domestic abuse no-contact orders on a temporary basis. Those orders frequently grant custody of minor children to the protected party, and prohibit the abuser from having any contact with the children. See Iowa Code § 236.5. Unless the order otherwise specifies, consider the protected party as the only party who can make educational decisions for the child, until the order is modified or expires. Sometimes, courts issue domestic abuse protective orders as part of a divorce case. In those cases, the domestic abuse protective order will not discuss custody but will refer to other orders in the case, which should be consulted.

Quick, easy-reference matrix for custody and request for student records under Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

| Who is making the request | Wants access to records (including parent/teacher conference) | Wants access to child (including picking child up, having lunch with child at school) |
|---|--|--|
| Custodial Parent (children live with) | Receives all information, report cards, notes home, etc. | Full access to child, subject to attendance center rules. |
| Non-Custodial Parent (children do not live with) Note: The Iowa Supreme Court states that it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to “feed” information about school and school activities to the non-custodial parent. However, FERPA requires you to respond to a request from either parent. You do not have to send information to the non-custodial parent if that parent has not asked for anything. | Per FERPA, the non-custodial parent has same rights as custodial parent to child’s records. If the custodial parent doesn’t want the other parent getting records or attending parent/teacher conferences, put burden on the custodial parent to provide a court order that limits other parent’s right to access records. Do not make the non-custodial parent produce an order that states that s/he is entitled to access; the law gives him/her access absent an order to the contrary. | If the terms of the court decree or order clearly and specifically state that the non-custodial parent has visitation at the time and date requested, it’s OK. If the decree or order just states “liberal and reasonable visitation,” consult your school attorney. |

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| Who is making the request | Wants access to records (including parent/teacher conference) | Wants access to child (including picking child up, having lunch with child at school) |
|--|---|---|
| Step-parent – married to custodial parent | No independent rights of access; must access via spouse. May attend parent-teacher conference (if spouse consents) with or without spouse. | OK only with the consent of spouse; do not have to get consent of non-custodial parent. |
| Step-parent – married to non-custodial parent | No independent rights of access; must access via spouse. May attend parent-teacher conference (if spouse consents) with or without spouse, unless there is a court order to the contrary. | If the decree is specific as to time and date of visitation and if non-custodial parent (spouse of step-parent) consents, the step-parent may pick up children. If decree is not specific, only OK with consent of custodial parent. |
| Grandparents, any relatives | If a grandparent or other relative is the guardian, OK. If not, put burden on relative to get written consent from either parent (assuming the parent could access the records) or a court order or decree. | If grandparent or other relative is the guardian, OK. If not, put the burden on the relative to get written consent from the custodial parent or a court order that is specific as to times and dates. Remember: the Iowa Supreme Court has said that grandparents have no rights to visitation with a grandchild without the consent of the parent. |

School Safety Tips brought to you by the Iowa School Safety Coalition (ISSC)

Special Event Security & Visitor Procedures

This month, the focus area is on Special Event Security and Visitor Procedures. Please see the attached Bulletins from ISSC below.

[ISSC Bulletin School Security Visitor Program](#)

[ISSC Bulletin Special Event Security & Safety Planning](#)

Students with Disabilities

For questions regarding students with disabilities, contact Thomas Mayes at 515-242-5614 or thomas.mayes@iowa.gov.

Calendar

Coming soon: Teacher leadership system planning grants

Check your email the week of September 3 for news about the planning grants that will support public school district efforts to develop a local teacher leadership and compensation plan.

Iowa lawmakers established the Iowa Teacher Leadership and Compensation System this year in House File 215. Read the Department's guidance on this issue [online](#) (look under "Guidance & Updates").

- September 1 • New Regional Academy applications due
- September 1 • Updates to the vehicle information system due
- September 15 • C-Plan deadline for CSIP, APR, DDSDP & IC-IP
- September 16 • Begin corrective action plan if CAR,SES, and ATR not filed
- October 1 • Begin corrective action plan if CAR,SES, and ATR not filed based on valid extension

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, gender, disability, religion, age, political party affiliation, or actual or potential parental, family or marital status in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d and 2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.). If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, please contact the legal counsel for the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, telephone number 515/281-5295; or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661, telephone number 312-730-1560, fax 312/730-1576, e-mail: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov



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