



A MONTHLY JOURNAL  
FOR IOWA EDUCATORS

# School Leader Update

January 2013

## Keeping our schools safe

A new school safety guide was put in place this year to assist schools in establishing plans to make their facilities, students, and staff safer. The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division prepared the guide in conjunction with several other groups and agencies, including the Iowa Department of Education. The guide covers everything from emergency preparedness to emergency supplies and outlines procedures to follow during a threatening event. All emergencies are covered in the guide, from severe weather to intruder alerts. The guide provides easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions. Find your guide at [http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=2769:iowa-school-safety&catid=666:highlights](http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2769:iowa-school-safety&catid=666:highlights).



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## Let's make 2013 a pivotal year

The new year is a time to reflect on meaningful changes we want to make and then committing to a strategy for achieving those changes.

A New Year's resolution can be about personal progress – for example, achieving a healthier weight or putting more money into savings – or it can be about improving the lives of others.

For me, this new year of 2013 holds a tremendous opportunity to move Iowa's education system forward for the sake of our children and our state's future. There is consensus in Iowa now that our schools must dramatically improve to restore our state's standing as a leader in education and to prepare our children for success in college, careers, and in life.



*Jason Glass, Director*

This month, Governor Branstad takes his education proposal to Iowa lawmakers for the 2013 legislative session. At the heart of this plan is a new vision for the teaching profession in Iowa.

This vision is about making sure our teachers are the best they can be. It is a vision that was set over the course of several months by a group of Iowans on the Task Force on Teacher Leadership and Compensation.

Some of the task force members discuss their vision in a new video on the Iowa Department of Education's website at [www.educateiowa.gov](http://www.educateiowa.gov). Please take a few minutes to tune in. I also encourage you to read the task force's recommendations if you haven't yet.

*Continued on page 4 ...*

## Student member for State Board of Education sought

The application and supporting documents for the student member to the State Board of Education are available on the Department's [website](#).

The term of the student member starts May 1, 2013, and ends April 30, 2014. The Board meets at least seven times during that term, with most meetings taking place in the Grimes State Office Building in Des Moines.

The deadline for submitting an application with all required documents is February 1.

Besides being a full-time, regularly enrolled 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade student in a public high school, the student must meet these requirements:

- Has a GPA of at least 3.0 (4.0 scale) or 3.75 (5.0 scale)
- Has attended his/her present high school at least the past two consecutive semesters (or the equivalent thereof)
- Demonstrates participation in extracurricular and community activities, as well as an interest in serving on the board.

## Iowa sees drop in NAEP vocabulary results

Iowa's student results on the vocabulary portion of the National Assessment of Educational Progress declined significantly from 2009 to 2011 at the fourth-grade level and were stagnant at the eighth-grade level, according to NAEP results released in December.

"These results are troubling for Iowa because vocabulary plays a critical role in reading skills and comprehension," Iowa Department of Education Director Jason Glass said. "Our NAEP reading scores have been flat since the early 1990s, and these vocabulary scores show we're not moving in the right direction. We must act on these results."

NAEP's vocabulary report represents the first comprehensive look at how well the nation's students understand word meaning. NAEP began to measure vocabulary as part of reading assessments in 2009. National NAEP results show a strong link between student performance on vocabulary questions and reading comprehension. Iowa's average score in fourth-grade vocabulary in 2011 (219) was statistically significantly lower than in 2009 (223), according to the report. The national average score (217) did not change from 2009 to 2011. Iowa's fourth-grade vocabulary scores dropped across the board, from disadvantaged students to white, relatively affluent students.

The state's average eighth-grade vocabulary score (266) did not change from 2009. The nation's average score (263) also was stagnant. Twelfth-grade students were not assessed in vocabulary in 2011. For more information about NAEP, visit <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.

## Nominations sought for science awards

The Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation, an arm of the federal government, is now accepting nominations for four agriscience awards and four life sciences awards, which will be presented in July in Washington, D.C.



These award competitions each have components for a scientist, a high school educator, and two high school students.



Nominations are accepted online only. Deadlines and websites are as follows:

- **Agriscience Awards: January 29, 2013 at:** [www.agriscienceawards.com](http://www.agriscienceawards.com)
- **Life Sciences Awards: February 12, 2013 at:** [www.ccolumbusfoundationawards.org](http://www.ccolumbusfoundationawards.org)

Questions should be directed to Judi Shellenberger, the foundation's executive director, at 315-258-0090 or [judithmscolumbus@cs.com](mailto:judithmscolumbus@cs.com).

## National science and social studies work

A multi-state effort began in 2010 to develop a common set of learning expectations in the area of science that could be voluntarily adopted by states. These performance expectations are known as the Next Generation Science Standards ([NGSS](#)). These standards are based on the Framework for K-12 Science Education developed by the National Research Council. Also in 2010, an effort in social studies began to develop a common set of learning expectations in the area of social studies that could be voluntarily adopted by states. This is called the [College, Career, and Civic Life \(C3\) Framework for Inquiry in Social Studies State Standards](#) (<http://goo.gl/jEBvr>). The C3 Framework will focus primarily on inquiry and civic engagement and on supporting the disciplinary literacy standards in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

Iowa schools currently are required to provide each and every student an opportunity to learn the Iowa Core essential concepts and skills in science and social studies. Consequently, current efforts to implement these essential concepts and skills should continue. Iowa is in the beginning phases of considering whether to adopt the new standards. Official decisions can be made once the documents are finalized and released, possibly in the spring. The following is guidance to Iowa education stakeholders for how to proceed with their work in science and social studies:

- Continue current efforts to implement the Iowa Core Essential Concepts and Skills in science and social studies.
- Learn more about the [NGSS](#) and the [C3 Framework](#) by visiting the websites.
- Provide public input on these new standards this winter/spring by checking the Iowa Department of Education's website and Twitter for the latest information.

## Learn about Smarter Balanced pilot tests

The Smarter Balanced Consortium has developed a FAQ about the pilot tests that will take place during the spring of 2013 in Iowa and other states.

The pilot will be a computer-based administration in the content areas of English language arts/literacy and mathematics. Items are aligned to the Iowa Core and will include selected response, constructed response, and performance tasks.

A website specifically about the pilot testing is under development. In the meantime, the Smarter Balanced Consortium's FAQ can be found here:

[http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_download&gid=14704&Itemid=4434](http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=14704&Itemid=4434)

Questions also can be submitted to [SmarterBalancedPilot@air.org](mailto:SmarterBalancedPilot@air.org).

## Iowa educators needed for Smarter Balanced Digital Library project

The Iowa Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is hiring Iowa educators to review and vet materials as they are being developed for the Smarter Balanced Digital Library.

Iowa will have a network of approximately 90 educators across the state consisting of teachers, AEA consultants, and higher education pre-service instructors with expertise in English language arts, mathematics, English Language Learners, Students With Disabilities/High Needs, curriculum, and school administration.

Each team member will be paid approximately \$1,300 to \$1,500 for the online work that will be completed between now and September 2014.

Educators may apply by completing the survey at the following link: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Smarter\\_Balanced\\_Formative\\_Assessment](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Smarter_Balanced_Formative_Assessment)



## Response to Intervention coming your way

In the coming weeks, months and years, you will hear a lot about a research-based decision-making model called Response to Intervention, or RtI. RtI will be rolled out statewide through a collaboration among the Iowa Department of Education, the area education agencies (AEAs) and local school districts. This partnership is called Collaborating for Iowa Kids.

RtI is a decision-making framework composed of evidence-based practices in assessment and instruction. RtI is a process by which schools use data to identify the academic and behavioral supports each student needs to be successful in school and to leave school ready for life. The process calls for schools to provide all students with evidence-based instruction and interventions matched to their needs, as well as to monitor student progress.

RtI provides three levels of instruction. In Iowa, these tiers are labeled Universal, Targeted, and Intensive. Each of these levels provides increasingly intensive instruction, based on individual student needs, to support student progress toward proficiency in the Iowa Core.

The critical components of RtI include:

- Robust, universal instruction in the Iowa Core;
- Universal screening (where all students are screened);
- Evidence-based, instructional interventions at the Targeted and Intensive levels;
- Progress monitoring; and
- Data-based decision-making.

Timelines for implementation will be determined by the Collaborating for Iowa Kids group as this work moves forward. For more information, go to the Department's RtI webpage: <http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?>

### ***Continued from page 1, Director Glass***

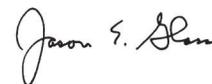
You'll find those on the Department's website as well.

The Governor's proposal for teacher leadership and compensation will be based largely on the task force recommendations. This plan will call for more support and career opportunities for teachers than ever before. It will help Iowa recruit and retain great teachers by offering a more attractive starting salary, as well as opportunities to advance into challenging leadership roles with additional compensation while staying connected to the classroom.

Right now, many talented people go into teaching to make a difference, but there aren't a lot of ways to move up. Too many of our teachers end up going into administration or leaving the profession completely.

This plan is about keeping teachers connected to their craft while creating pathways so that the most effective educators can work with their fellow teachers. Ultimately, it is about making a difference within the teaching profession for the benefit of both teachers and students.

You'll hear much more about the Governor's education plan in coming weeks and months. It's an exciting time to be in education in Iowa. Let's make 2013 a pivotal year for our schools. Happy New Year, and thanks for all you do on behalf of our state, our schools, and our students.



## Help us take inventory of Internet access in Iowa schools

The Iowa Department of Education will be kicking off an initiative January 15 called Iowa School Speed Test Month as part of the National Broadband Test in conjunction with Education Superhighway, a nonprofit organization that works to ensure that every K-12 public school in America has at least 100Mbps+ of internet bandwidth to take advantage of digital learning. To that end, the Department requests your participation in the test. There is no cost to participate.

The goal of the test is to take an inventory of the internet access at every one of Iowa's public K-12 school buildings. We need your help to ensure that every school in your district takes at least 10 School Speed Tests (ideally 50) from the school's network. From January 15 to February 15, everyone (administrators, teachers, technology coordinators, librarians or students) connected to a school's network can initiate the one-minute test by going to [www.SchoolSpeedTest.org/iowa](http://www.SchoolSpeedTest.org/iowa).

This information will be used to support our planning for next generation assessments (e.g. Smarter Balanced, English Language Proficiency Assessment 21, Dynamic Learning Maps, online Iowa Assessments) to be launched in 2014 and 2015. The information also will be used as part of our budget process to make the case for increased investment in internet access for our schools. When the test wraps up, your district will receive a report that summarizes the internet infrastructure available in each school and how prepared each school is for learning in the digital age.

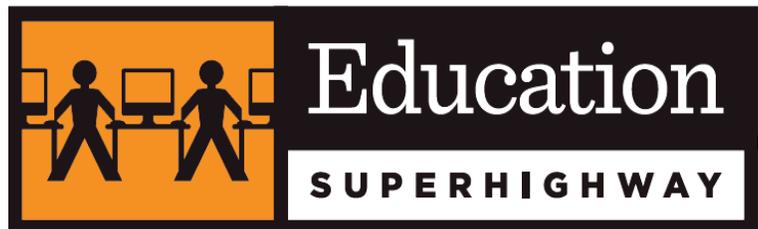
The results will be shared on the Department's website, with the Area Education Agencies, with Connect Iowa, with the ICN, and with the Education Superhighway to provide national broadband demographics.

For more information, contact Vic Jaras at [vic.jaras@iowa.gov](mailto:vic.jaras@iowa.gov) or check out Education Superhighway and the School Speed Test here:

[www.educationsuperhighway.org](http://www.educationsuperhighway.org)

[www.SchoolSpeedTest.org/iowa](http://www.SchoolSpeedTest.org/iowa)

<http://www.schoolspeedtest.org/video.html>



## New requirements for Iowa teacher candidates

In May of 2012, new statutory requirements for Practitioner Preparation Program Assessments were signed into law in the state of Iowa. The Iowa Department of Education began enforcement of this provision effective January 1 for graduates from Iowa institutions. The Iowa Board of Educational Examiners has developed a rule for out-of-state applicants that will reflect this same assessment requirement. The Praxis ID number for the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners is 7250. The statutory requirement, the test numbers that were chosen and the cut scores can be found here: [http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=477&Itemid=535](http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=477&Itemid=535)

This will have a great impact on new graduates seeking Iowa licensure next summer – they will need to pass the selected tests before the Board of Educational Examiners can issue any type of license. Candidates cannot begin teaching in Iowa without a valid Iowa license. There will be no provisional or temporary licensure given to those who have not met the Iowa assessment requirements. Please be aware that the processing time may be increased for out-of-state applicants due to the new assessments. For more information, contact Larry Bice of the Iowa Department of Education at 515-725-0101 or [larry.bice@iowa.gov](mailto:larry.bice@iowa.gov) or Joanne Tubbs of the Board of Educational Examiners at 515-281-3611 or [joanne.tubbs@iowa.gov](mailto:joanne.tubbs@iowa.gov).

# Data and Reporting

## Finalizing C-Plan

The last date to finalize plans within the Consolidated Plan, or C-Plan, for 2012-13 is March 1. Plans that have not been certified by the district and approved by the Iowa Department of Education (AEA for district-developed service delivery plan) by March 1 will no longer be accessible. Plans for the following school year (2013-14) will be available for districts/buildings to start entering data on March 15.

The C-Plan is the Department's effort to streamline the collection process of reports, data, and progress for districts and schools. C-Plan is a tool that districts and schools can use, not only for reporting and compliance to the Department, but also for local school improvement.

The plans included in C-Plan are:

- Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP);
- Annual Progress Report (APR);
- District Developed Service Delivery Plan (DDSDP);
- Schools and Districts in Need of Assistance (SINA/DINA); and
- Iowa Core Implementation Plan.

If you have questions about this process, contact your School Improvement consultant:

Keystone AEA	Holly Barnes, <a href="mailto:Holly.Barnes@iowa.gov">Holly.Barnes@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 242-6173
AEA 267	Eric Heitz, <a href="mailto:Eric.Heitz@iowa.gov">Eric.Heitz@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 281-4726
Prairie Lakes AEA	Cindy Butler, <a href="mailto:Cindy.Butler@iowa.gov">Cindy.Butler@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 281-5332
Mississippi Bend AEA	Holly Barnes at <a href="mailto:Holly.Barnes@iowa.gov">Holly.Barnes@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 242-6173
	Barb Byrd at <a href="mailto:Barb.Byrd@iowa.gov">Barb.Byrd@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 250-4724
Grant Wood AEA	Fred Kinne, <a href="mailto:Fred.Kinne@iowa.gov">Fred.Kinne@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 281-6293
Heartland AEA	Beth Happe, <a href="mailto:Beth.Happe@iowa.gov">Beth.Happe@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 281-3427
Northwest AEA	Beth Calhoun, <a href="mailto:Elizabeth.Calhoun@iowa.gov">Elizabeth.Calhoun@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 281-8170
Green Hills AEA	Janet Boyd, <a href="mailto:Janet.Boyd@iowa.gov">Janet.Boyd@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 281-3198
Great Prairie AEA	Barb Byrd, <a href="mailto:Barb.Byrd@iowa.gov">Barb.Byrd@iowa.gov</a> , (515) 250-4724

# Nutrition and Health Services

## Mini-grants for schools for Live Healthy Iowa Kids program

The Iowa Department of Education's Team Nutrition is offering \$500 mini-grants to schools in conjunction with the Live Healthy Iowa Kids program. Live Healthy Iowa Kids is a free 100-day program designed to encourage youth in K-12 grades to increase their physical activity levels and make better food choices. The \$500 mini-grants can be used to support healthy food intake and nutrition education during the 100-day challenge. Mini-grant applications and information can be found on the Team Nutrition webpage at [http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=373&Itemid=2962](http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=373&Itemid=2962).

The deadline to submit a Team Nutrition mini-grant application is January 25. For more information, contact Patti Delger at [patti.delger@iowa.gov](mailto:patti.delger@iowa.gov) or 515-281-5676.



## Iowa School Breakfast Challenge – Year Two!

Students have trouble learning when they have empty stomachs. Research has demonstrated that eating breakfast helps students pay attention, improves academic performance, and leads to better behavior in the classroom. Many innovative methods of serving breakfast are being implemented across the state to help address barriers of school breakfast participation.

During the 2011-12 school year, the Iowa Department of Education partnered with the Midwest Dairy Council to encourage schools to increase their breakfast participation by at least 20 percent. The schools with the highest increase were awarded cash prizes provided by the Midwest Dairy Council. Here are the results:

**Gold (\$4,000):** United Community School District, Assumption High School, Dowling Catholic, and Cedar Falls Community School District

**Silver (\$2,500):** St. Thomas Aquinas, Preston Community School District, Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District, and Bettendorf Community School District



The challenge is being held again during the current 2012-13 school year:

- All school districts and nonpublic schools are automatically a part of the challenge.
- Participation will be based on the total number of breakfasts served per child enrolled.
- The district or nonpublic school with the greatest percent increase will be awarded cash prizes.



For more information about the challenge and resources to assist schools in expanding their breakfast participation, visit: [http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=2238:iowa-school-breakfast-challenge&catid=59:nutrition-programs&Itemid=4308](http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2238:iowa-school-breakfast-challenge&catid=59:nutrition-programs&Itemid=4308)

## Nutrition and Health Services continued

### Lunch Certification: Next Step – Validation

Certification documents for the additional 6 cents per reimbursable lunch keep rolling in. To date, 196 School Food Authorities (SFAs) across the state have submitted documents for review. Of those 196 submitted, 13 have been certified and are receiving (or will be receiving) the additional monies for those reimbursable lunches.

The Iowa Department of Education is required to conduct on-site validation reviews of at least 25 percent of certified SFAs. These reviews confirm that SFAs are serving meals that meet the new meal patterns. Consultants will review documents and observe meal service at breakfast and lunch for all grade groups and for each different menu. All certified SFAs will remain in the eligible validation pool for the entire school year, 2012-13.

Documents for the 6 cents may be submitted through the CNP2000 at any time. There is no deadline to apply, and SFAs that do not submit will be a higher priority next year for administrative reviews. Thank you to all who have submitted.

For more information, contact Angela Mitchell at 515-725-2626 or [angela.mitchell@iowa.gov](mailto:angela.mitchell@iowa.gov) or Amanda Miller at 515-725-2627 or [amanda.miller@iowa.gov](mailto:amanda.miller@iowa.gov).

### Just the facts, ma'am, on USDA meal pattern changes

In early December 2012, the USDA announced that for this year (SY 2012-2013) it has lifted the maximum grain and maximum meat/meat alternate limits on school lunches. This is the only change the USDA has authorized at this time. The calorie ranges are still in effect for all age and grade groups. All other requirements are still in effect. This means that daily and weekly minimum requirements for meat/meat alternate, grain, fruit, vegetable, and milk are all still in place.

The lift of the maximums on meat/meat alternate and grain offers some flexibility to School Food Authorities (SFAs) who are having difficulty finding products to fall under the maximums. The new guidelines allow SFAs to offer more meat and grain equivalents, more nutrient-dense foods, while staying within the calorie ranges.

The big thing to remember is that the calorie range still is enforced for all grade groups. The vegetable subgroups still exist with their component requirements. Everything is still the same, except SFAs can add more meat/meat alternate or grains if the calories allow. Students still must take half-cup fruit, or half-cup vegetable or combination of the two to equal a half-cup plus two other full components for a reimbursable meal.



For more information, contact your regional consultant or the Department's Angela Mitchell at [angela.mitchell@iowa.gov](mailto:angela.mitchell@iowa.gov) or Amanda Miller at [amanda.miller@iowa.gov](mailto:amanda.miller@iowa.gov).



## Legislative Update

Contact Mike Cormack for all legislative items: [mike.cormack@iowa.gov](mailto:mike.cormack@iowa.gov) or 515-281-3399.

### Cormack at the Capitol

### Should we party like it's 1995?

When I was honored to be elected to the Iowa House of Representatives, I began serving the first of four terms in January 1995. Times were much different back then as the Governor of our state was the Honorable Terry Branstad, Democrats controlled the Iowa Senate, Republicans were in charge of the Iowa House of Representatives, and the state had underestimated revenue, with a large surplus in the bank. Wait, that sounds quite a bit like Iowa in 2013, 18 years later.

I have some memories that stand out from 1995. I remember arriving at my "parking space" as a freshman member, only to discover it was where the snowplow operators deposited the parking lot snow. It was a great place to park once early April rolled around and I learned to appreciate my six-block walk to work each day. I also recall as a fresh-faced 23-year-old member being stopped by security at the doors of the Iowa Senate because they had no idea that I was actually a lawmaker. I began to faithfully utilize my name tag to avoid such situations down the road. Also, it was nice to receive an actual paycheck on a regular basis and not to be a drain on the family resources from that point forward.



In terms of legislative action, I remember that year as one of accomplishment. Instead of gridlock, the final result was a 10 percent across-the-board income tax cut, increased spending in school technology, a higher allowable growth than in previous years and additional state spending in other areas. I think that's what Iowans want lawmakers of both parties to do, and that is to work for the common good, taking ideas from both sides and putting those ideas into practice.

Then and now, I value the state having reserve funds for cash flow and think we should err on the side of caution in spending the surplus in case future years are not as rosy for revenue. However, there is no value in hoarding revenue in Des Moines. Either it needs to go back into the hands of taxpayers because too much has been collected, or it needs to be spent on items that benefit the greater good of Iowans. Given the same dynamic in the past, lawmakers made the decision to do a combination of both. To me, that seems the most likely result of the divided government that we have in our state.

There also is a great opportunity for consensus on educational policy. The Task Force on Teacher Leadership and Compensation report provided a blueprint for our state to follow with input from a wide variety of stakeholders. If you haven't read the report yet, please do so. (You will find it at [www.educateiowa.gov](http://www.educateiowa.gov).) It is a consensus-based document, in that all members of the group endorsed the passage of it and agreed to the contents in it. It takes the best practices from high-performing educational systems that have shown success in practice. The task force worked in a deliberative manner with great care to the final recommendations in the report. Having been a part of that process, let me state clearly that it is the sincere belief of this group that this would be a positive measure that would help move Iowa education forward.

*Continued on page 10...*

## Legislative Update continued

The easiest way to think of the new funding stream is that each school district will receive a sum of money based on a fixed per-pupil amount. This will be a serious infusion of new funds to Iowa public school districts and would allow schools to engage in a compensation system not seen before here.

Director Jason Glass has used the “loose-tight” phrase to describe how there will be some minimal requirements that all districts must first do with the money, but beyond that, local discretion will be allowed in the spending of those funds. We want the dollars to go to the needs that best serve each school district, not a tight one-size-fits-all approach.

Last year, there were some positive elements that came out of the education reform package. But, many other ideas were left on the cutting room floor. Education reform went on a serious diet from the initial proposal to the governor’s desk. For this proposal to become law and to remain faithful to the serious work of the Task Force on Teacher Leadership and Compensation, it will take compromise from all political viewpoints to end gridlock and to get positive change done for the children of our state.

As the plan is rolled out this month, please read it with an open mind. My belief is that people will examine the work and be pleased by the proposed legislation, which reflects that effort of the task force committee.

Eighteen years ago, I was turned away from the Senate chamber because I was young and didn’t fit the mold of what a senator looked like. This legislation will look pretty new to Iowans and doesn’t fit the mold of traditional educational proposals.

Iowans have the opportunity to try to reverse our state’s stagnation. I hope that education proposals aren’t watered down or mutated into something that doesn’t look like what the task force had intended.

My full expectation for this session is that the Iowa General Assembly works together and gets action done for this state. After this proposal comes forward, provide your input to lawmakers on both the positive and negative aspects of this plan as you see them.

Contact me with any questions or comments as they come forward, as well. The opportunity exists for substantive new resources and policies that can change Iowa’s education for the better.

Will we take that step forward or stay mired in gridlock? That is a decision for my old group, the Iowa General Assembly, to decide.





## Legal Lessons

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

### Guns on school grounds? Not in Iowa

#### **Iowa Code section 724.4B Prohibits Firearms on School Grounds with Few Exceptions**

In the wake of recent events, the Iowa Department of Education has received several inquiries about whether it is lawful to carry a weapon on school grounds if the carrier has a permit to carry. In January 2011, certain amendments to the Iowa Code provisions governing carrying weapons went into effect. In short, the amendments made it easier to get a non-professional permit to carry weapons in the state of Iowa. However, even if a person has a non-professional permit to carry weapons, Iowa Code section 724.4B clearly prohibits firearms on school grounds.

Iowa Code section 724.4B specifically states that bringing weapons onto the grounds of a school is a class D felony. The only exceptions to having a firearm on school grounds are if:

- The person is a peace officer, member of the armed forces or National Guard, or correctional officer, who is carrying the weapon in connection with his or her duties as such; or
- The weapon is unloaded, inside a closed and fastened container or securely wrapped package or in the luggage or cargo compartment (i.e., trunk) of a vehicle; or
- The school has specifically authorized the person to bring the weapon onto school grounds, such as for purposes of conducting an instructional program regarding firearms.

Moreover, Iowa Code section 724.7, as amended, specifically states that a permit is not valid where possessing or carrying a firearm is prohibited by state or federal law. Under federal law, it is generally unlawful to possess a firearm in a “school zone,” subject to exceptions similar to those in the Iowa Code described above. 18 U.S.C. § 922(q)(2). “School zone” includes the grounds of any public or private elementary or secondary school, as well as all public property within 1,000 feet of such a school. 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(25).

In summary, unless an exception applies, both state and federal law clearly prohibit firearms on school grounds regardless of whether a person has a lawful permit to carry a weapon.

#### **Questions on Iowa Code Section 724.4B and Other Means of Protection**

The Department has received many questions regarding fact-specific situations relating to application of Iowa Code section 724.4B and other means of protection that can be used in schools, on school grounds, or at school events. There is no “one-size-fits-all” answer to these questions. Besides relevant state and federal laws that apply, there also may be local school board policies and local law enforcement policies to consider. Superintendents and school districts should contact their local school attorneys to discuss these issues on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, local law enforcement and school resource officers should contact their department, city attorney, county attorney, and/or U.S. Attorney for guidance on these issues.

## BoEE website needs updating

It is time to remind staff to check the demographics listed on the Board of Educational Examiners website. Licensure renewal reminders are sent electronically 14 months before the expiration of the license. However, if an out-of-date email address is listed, the reminder will bounce back.

The link on the website is titled "Update My Information" at [http://www.boee.iowa.gov/how\\_do\\_i/update\\_my\\_information.html](http://www.boee.iowa.gov/how_do_i/update_my_information.html).

To change a name, legal documentation must be submitted (such as a marriage certificate). Also, degrees cannot be changed online.

## Calendar

January 1	• Juvenile Home Educational Program Budget
January 1	• Last date to certify reorganization or dissolution action effective July 1
January 3	• Winter student-level reporting test site closes
January 7	• Winter student-level reporting site opens
January 10	• CTE courses in a program opens
January 15	• Dropout Prevention Program for MAG—Notification of approval of submitted application
January 31	• Winter student-level reporting certification deadline
January 31	• CTE courses in a program closes
February 1	• Last date for boards to sign whole grade sharing agreement for next school year
February 1	• Last date to request authority to charge administrative cost to the special education program for the subsequent fiscal year
February 1	• Dropout Prevention Program— Last day to resubmit an unapproved application

*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](mailto:OCR.Chicago@ed.gov)*



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