



A MONTHLY JOURNAL
FOR IOWA EDUCATORS

School Leader Update

December 2014

Getting to the core of what parents need to know about Core

Parents and the community are key components to students' academic success. And to that end, there's a section at IowaCore.gov directed at parents and the community.

Under the Parents and Community tab, there is a parents' guide providing an overview of what students will learn by the end of each grade as directed by the Iowa Core. The guide not only provides an explanation, but also gives parents an understanding of what is being taught, enabling them to reinforce lessons at home.

There also is a collection of resources provided by the Iowa Reading Research Center designed to help parents support their children's educational needs.



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Looking back, giving thanks

As 2014 draws to a close, I'm really inspired by the progress being made in Iowa to improve our schools.

Education may not have made as many headlines this year as it did during the education reform efforts of 2012 and 2013, but this year has been critical in terms of building on those plans and delivering on requirements. We're seeing the fruits of that work in several ways.

First, an assessment task force recently landed on a recommendation for a new state assessment following a year of investigating options for Iowa.

The task force recommended that the Legislature adopt the [Smarter Balanced assessments](#) for the 2016-17 school year. Related recommendations were made around preparing schools to give new assessments and gauging effectiveness of those assessments.

The Smarter Balanced assessments were developed by a consortium of states that believed a high-quality assessment can raise student achievement largely by providing schools the information and tools they need to improve teaching and learning.

When people talk about the advantages of Smarter Balanced, they usually mention its ability to measure students' progress toward rigorous academic standards. They also talk about its emphasis on complex, higher-order skills and the precision it provides a teacher in pinpointing a student's level of performance.



Director Brad Buck

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Iowa task force recommends new state assessment

Members of the Assessment Task Force have recommended that Iowa lawmakers adopt the Smarter Balanced assessments as Iowa's new state test for public and accredited nonpublic schools starting with the 2016-17 school year.

The task force also made recommendations around preparing schools statewide to give online assessments, funding for professional development and assessment tools, and monitoring effectiveness of the assessments.

Task force members cited several reasons they support the Smarter Balanced assessments, including the need for state test results that accurately reflect how students are progressing toward Iowa's statewide expectations for what students should know and be able to do. The assessments' online format also will generate valuable feedback about student progress that educators can use to refine their teaching approaches.

Read more about the [task force's decision](#).

Puzzled about duties of an equity coordinator? Read this

The Iowa Department of Education is hosting a statewide civil rights training March 23 that will address the duties of an equity coordinator. An equity coordinator is required in every Iowa school district and community college to oversee compliance activities under federal civil rights laws monitored by the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

Educational institutions often report to the Iowa Department of Education a lack of clarity about the role as well as the responsibilities and expectations the Department has for the position. Over the last several years, equity citations have been the most frequent areas of non-compliance cited during accreditation and focused equity visits.

The March 23 training will be held in Des Moines from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Iowa Events Center. Training will include:

- Knowledge of federal and state civil rights laws;
- Equity policies and procedures required by law;
- Dissemination of information to staff, students and community;
- Professional development for all stakeholders;
- Civil rights grievance process which is prompt and effective; and
- Monitoring of disaggregated data.

Special emphasis will be placed on closing the achievement gap, preventing and reducing bullying and harassment behaviors, and meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

Intended audiences include superintendents, equity coordinators, human resource specialists, principals, and counselors. Watch for your invitation, registration information and a detailed agenda.

For more information, contact Margaret Jensen Connet at margaret.jensenconnet@iowa.gov.



Need to hire a December teacher graduate?

December graduates may begin teaching or substitute teaching once their Iowa initial license has been issued. All Iowa Praxis II tests must be taken and passed prior to receiving an initial license or a substitute license.

If the candidate has completed a Board of Educational Examiners' background check, a license will be issued within 24 to 48 hours of receiving the licensure recommendation from the candidate's Iowa college. Licensure for out-of-state candidates may be delayed since it is less likely that they have completed the required Praxis II testing for Iowa.

Once the bachelor's degree is conferred, candidates may apply for the substitute authorization while they wait to pass their Praxis II tests. This is limited to secondary and cannot be used for long-term subbing.

For more information, contact Joanne Tubbs at joanne.tubbs@iowa.gov.

Finalists for nation's highest honor in math, science teaching

Seven Iowa teachers have been named state finalists for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

The two science finalists are:

- Joshua Steenhoek, a fifth-grade teacher at Jefferson Intermediate School in the Pella Community School District
- Jessica Watson, a multi-age teacher at the Downtown School in the Des Moines Public Schools

The five math finalists are:

- Janna Bjork, a former third-grade math teacher who now teaches kindergarten English as a second language at Perry Elementary School in the Perry Community School District
- Ann Johnson, a second-grade teacher at Sageville Elementary in the Dubuque Community School District
- Molly Sweeney, a multi-age teacher at the Downtown School in the Des Moines Public Schools
- Tamara Bane, a former third-grade teacher who is now a high school instructional coach at Winterset Senior High School in the Winterset Community School District
- Tammie Cass, who teaches fifth and sixth grade math at Nodaway Valley Middle School in the Nodaway Valley Community School District

The Iowa finalists' applications have been submitted to the national selection committee. One math and one science award-winner may be selected to represent Iowa. Award-winners receive \$10,000 and a trip to Washington, D.C., where they will participate in recognition events and professional development programs.

Read more about the [teachers](#).



[Bane](#)

[Bjork](#)

[Cass](#)

[Johnson](#)

[Steenhoek](#)

[Sweeney](#)

[Watson](#)

5 schools honored for eliminating achievement gaps

Five schools from across the state were honored by the State Board of Education for their work to raise achievement among students who traditionally face challenges in the classroom.

The Breaking Barriers to Teaching and Learning Award was created by the State Board of Education. Each year, the award recognizes successful efforts to eliminate gaps in achievement among students.

This year's award-winners were recognized for having the highest proficiency rates statewide in math and reading among a specific subgroup of students, such as students who do not speak English as their native language and students from low-income backgrounds. State assessment data from five years were examined to confirm a positive trend for each school.

The schools that met this criteria are:

Cedar Falls High School, Cedar Falls Community School District: Recognized for its work with African American students. A full 78 percent of the school's African American students are proficient in math and reading, compared to a statewide average of only 52 percent.

Davis Elementary School, Grinnell-Newburg Community School District: Recognized for its work with students on Individualized Education Programs, or IEPs. The proficiency rate for Davis Elementary students on IEPs is 82 percent in reading and math. That compares to a statewide average of 43 percent.

Hillside Elementary School, West Des Moines Community School District: Recognized for its work with English language learners, or ELL. The proficiency rate for Hillside's ELL students is 70 percent in reading and math. That compares to a statewide average of 49 percent for the same group of students.

Riverdale Heights Elementary School, Pleasant Valley Community School District: Honored for its work with Latino students. Ninety-eight percent of Latino students are proficient in reading and math, compared to the statewide average of 62 percent.

Southeast Elementary School, Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District: Recognized for its work with students who come from low-income families. With a third of the school's student population qualifying for free and reduced-price lunches, 98 percent of those children are proficient in reading and math. The statewide average is 65 percent.

Interviews with school principals revealed a common thread between the honored schools: the use of evidence-based practices, a staff-wide commitment, high expectations and substantial teacher collaboration.

Reducing the achievement gap is one of the State Board of Education's top priorities.

Left to Right: Sally Kittleson (Southeast Elementary School, Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District), Dana Deines (Cedar Falls High School, Cedar Falls Community School District), Justin White (Davis Elementary School, Grinnell-Newburg Community School District), Robert Davis (Hillside Elementary School, West Des Moines Community School District), Jennifer Gertson (Riverdale Heights Elementary School, Pleasant Valley Community School District)



Microsoft Cy Pres program deadline is Dec. 19

The window to apply for funds available during the second Microsoft Settlement Cy Pres program closes Dec. 19. This program is focused on PK-3 literacy.

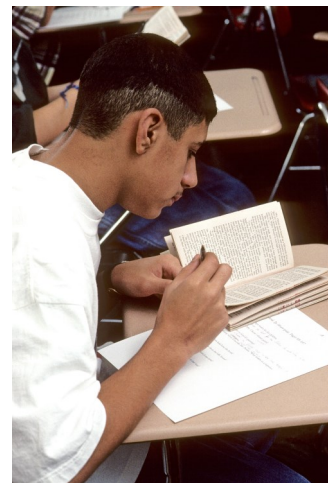
Make sure that you look for eligible schools, assurance letter, and additional information on the program including the allocation per student. This information is available on the [Iowa Department of Education website](#). The online application is available at <http://portal.ed.iowa.gov>. Make sure to send the assurance letter to John O'Connell as soon as possible before the December deadline.

If you have any questions, contact John O'Connell either via email at john.oconnell@mchsi.com or john.oconnell@iowa.gov or you can call him at 515-249-0334.

A change in credit earned prior to ninth grade

The Iowa Legislature last session made changes to Iowa Code 256.7a(26)(1) striking the requirement that high school credit earned before ninth grade is limited to math, science, English language arts and social studies. The change went into effect on Nov. 19.

Districts that have a local policy allowing credit prior to ninth grade may now elect to allow students to earn credit in any curricular area whenever that credit is earned. Here is the code:



281—12.5(256) Education program

I. Secondary credit.

(1) An individual pupil in a grade that precedes ninth grade may be allowed to take a course for secondary credit if all of the following are true:

1. The pupil satisfactorily completes the course.
2. The course is taught by a teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners for grades 9-12 and endorsed in the subject area.
3. The course meets all components listed in subrule 12.5(5) for the specific curricular area.
4. The board of the school district or the authorities in charge of the nonpublic school have developed enrollment criteria that a student must meet to be enrolled in the course.

(2) Neither school districts nor accredited nonpublic schools are mandated to offer secondary credit under this paragraph. If credit is offered under this paragraph, the credit must apply toward graduation requirements of the district or accredited nonpublic school.

December SBRC hearings delayed until January

Due to a conflict, the School Budget Review Committee hearings originally scheduled for Dec. 16 have been rescheduled to Jan. 21.

An update on Early Literacy Implementation

We continue to develop specific guidance, support documents and helpful tools to implement components of the Early Literacy Progression law ([Iowa Code section 279.68](#) and [281--Iowa Administrative Code 62](#)). To that end, we will provide regular updates directing you to important information, tools and resources.

This month, we have revised the [Early Literacy Implementation \(ELI\) page](#) on the Iowa Department of Education's website to include all materials from archived webinars. This includes the PowerPoint slides used as well as any one-page documents and templates for schools to adapt. This page also includes a list of upcoming webinars hosted by the Department.

This month, we will host two webinars as listed below. If you have identified an area in which a webinar is needed, email the Department ELI contacts.

- Evidence-based Intervention – Reviewed Intervention List: Dec. 4 from 2 to 3:30 p.m.
- Teacher Observation for Initial Identification: Dec. 12 from 10 to 11 a.m.

Webinars are hosted at this [website](#).

Look in January for the Department-hosted Iowa TIER-FAST-IGDIs Question/Answer Webinars throughout the duration of winter screening.

For more information, email your ELI contacts: Barbara Ohlund at barbara.ohlund@iowa.gov or Amy Williamson at amy.williamson@iowa.gov.

Students may participate in women's history essay contest

The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women is seeking entries for the 2015 Write Women Back into History Essay Contest from students in grades 6–9. The theme of this year's contest is "Weaving the Stories of Women's Lives."

In partnership with the Iowa Department of Education and the State Historical Society of Iowa, the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women within the Iowa Department of Human Rights invites students to participate in order to gain a deeper and more relevant appreciation of women's roles in history.

Winning essayists will be awarded prizes, announced on the floors of the Iowa House of Representatives and Senate. They will also be recognized at a special ceremony at the State Historical Building during Women's History Month, and each finalist will receive a certificate signed by the governor. All winners' names will be released to the media.

The deadline for entry is Jan. 23. Contest guidelines and entry forms are available online by clicking [here](#) or by contacting Kristen Corey at 515-281-4470, 800-558-4427 or women@iowa.gov.

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The next step for this task force is to complete a formal report by January. I'm very grateful to these stakeholders who came together around a challenging task and carried out a fair, transparent and thorough process.

Another area where we're seeing a lot of progress is in our work to make sure all children read well by the end of third grade.

The initial efforts have focused on an early warning system in literacy that helps schools screen all students, monitor the progress of students who are behind, and provide intensive intervention to students with a substantial deficiency in reading.

This fall, we went from having 10 percent of Iowa elementary schools implementing the early warning system to more than 90 percent.

Communication with parents is an important piece of our early literacy effort in Iowa, and soon we will provide materials to help schools do that.

Finally, our state's teacher leadership system, or TLC, continues to gain momentum.



As you know, we are phasing in the system statewide over three years starting with 39 school districts this year that enroll one-third of the students in Iowa.

For the next school year, 170 school districts have applied to be part of TLC. We expect to announce selected districts later this month.

As a former teacher, I know from experience that this is one of the most challenging professions. Teachers are the most important influence on learning inside schools, and the expectations have never been higher.

But we're also seeing unprecedented investment in our educators. Strengthening and empowering our teachers is at the heart of TLC.

As someone who has spent a career in Iowa schools, I have never been more energized about the direction education is taking in this state.

Thanks for all you do for Iowa's students and schools --- and on a personal note, I wish all of you a very happy holiday season.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tracy A. Bauer". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Iowa Learning Online's spring, summer registration opens

Iowa Learning Online's registration for the spring and summer semesters is now open. There is no cost to school districts and course lists are [available here](#). The spring semester starts Jan. 5 and ends May 8. Late registration is open until Jan. 13. The summer semester is from May 18 to July 17.

As courses and services available continue to expand into local school districts, Iowa Learning Online, or ILO, is hiring part-time teachers in all curricular areas including health, physical education, Chinese, Latin, Spanish, and physics. The ILO teaching opportunity fits well with educators who are looking for ways to grow as content experts and leaders in online teaching and learning. Send your resume and letter of interest to jonnie.becker@iowa.gov.



To learn more about how your school district can partner with Iowa Learning Online, [click here](#) for a 15-minute overview of the services.

Career technical education task force completes year one

The Secondary Career Technical Education (CTE) Task Force is nearing the end of its first year of work. The task force, which was mandated last year by the Iowa Legislature, was convened to review the condition of secondary CTE and generate recommendations aimed at reducing skill shortages, enhancing economic growth, and ensuring all students have access to high quality, globally competitive CTE programs.

The task force has discussed and reviewed various topics such as career guidance, work-based learning, teacher preparation, and the components of high-quality CTE programming. Over the course of the past year, the task force has moved toward a series of recommendations regarding career guidance and career academies. The task force will issue a final set of recommendations in November 2015 which will be presented to the Iowa Legislature during the 2016 legislative session.

For more information, contact Pradeep Kotamraju, bureau chief for Career and Technical Education, at pradeep.kotamraju@iowa.gov.

District puts some TLC in its teacher-leadership program

The Benton Community School District's teacher leadership program is working better than anyone anticipated: Student performance is already improving classroom by classroom just three months into the program.

But don't think it's a fluke. The success comes from long hours of planning, making sure all of the i's were dotted and t's crossed.

The Benton school district was one of 39 districts approved to participate in the state's new Teacher Leadership and Compensation system through a \$50 million legislative appropriation. Eventually all districts will be able to participate, at an annual cost of \$150 million.

Read what [Benton Community](#) is doing.



Dropout Verification and Winter Student Reporting in Iowa

The Dropout Report for all public school districts and nonpublic schools reporting through Student Reporting in Iowa (SRI) opens Wednesday, Dec. 3. The deadline for certifying dropouts is Dec. 17. The Dropout Verification application displays all dropouts from Oct. 1, 2013 through Sept. 30, 2014.

For more information explaining who is counted as a dropout, refer to [Add E - Dropout Definition 14-15](#) under the fall 2014 section on the [Student Reporting in Iowa website](#). The application is similar to the dropout report in prior years. The Dropout Report is the basis for the annual dropout rate calculated for each school. This is not the same as the Dropout Prevention/Modified Allowable Growth application that is also currently available. However, both the Dropout Report and the Dropout Prevention/Modified Allowable Growth application have nearly the same deadline date.

The VRF testing window also opens Dec. 3 for Winter Student Reporting in Iowa and will remain open through Friday, Jan. 2. The testing window allows for the opportunity to ensure your student and course information is valid (passes the error checks). Once again, winter SRI will require public school districts and nonpublic schools in SRI to submit data for all students (PK – 12). The production site opens in January for the official winter SRI reporting.

Also note that VRF is being updated. If you upload SRI files for your school or district, you will want to attend one of the 8 sessions listed below to learn how to view and download your errors and warnings.

Important Dates to Remember:

December 3 – December 17 Dropout Report

December 3 – January 2 Winter Student Reporting in Iowa (SRI) testing window

January 6 – January 30 Official Winter Student Reporting in Iowa (SRI) collection period

CTE Courses in a Program will be completed in conjunction with January’s Winter Student Reporting in Iowa submission.

December training will be available through live webinars according to the schedule below:

	Wednesday, December 3	Thursday, December 4	Friday, December 5	Monday, December 8
8:30 a.m.				VRF Changes
9 a.m.	VRF Changes			Dropout Report
9:30 a.m.	Dropout Report			
10 a.m.		VRF Changes		
10:30 a.m.		Dropout Report		
11 a.m.			VRF Changes	
11:30 a.m.			Dropout Report	
12 p.m.				
12:30 p.m.				
1 p.m.	VRF Changes			
1:30 p.m.	Dropout Report			VRF Changes
2 p.m.		VRF Changes		Dropout Report
2:30 p.m.		Dropout Report		
3 p.m.			VRF Changes	

Simply click the session title to join the webinar at the time listed.

Early Childhood Preschool Programs

Applying for Shared Visions grants

All preschool and parent support programs – including those funded in previous years – must apply for fiscal 2016 Shared Visions Grants. The grants will be awarded on a competitive basis contingent upon the state appropriation.

Due to limited funding, it is not likely that all applicants will be awarded grants.

The application for Shared Visions Parent Support Programs will be available on the Iowa Grants website on Jan. 8. Instructions for the application, guidance documents, and information regarding the process and timeline will be posted on the [Shared Visions Parent Program web page](#) as it becomes available.

The application for [Shared Visions Preschool Programs](#) is available through the web page.

Questions submitted in writing to Amy Stegeman at amy.stegeman@iowa.gov will be addressed in a *Frequently Asked Questions* document and made available on the Shared Visions Parent Program web page.



Applications for new preschool programs begin in January

School districts not currently participating in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program may apply to become part of the program. The new application to begin a preschool program in 2015-2016 will be posted in January 2015. This application will be due May 15.

School districts currently participating do not need to reapply.

For information about the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children, contact

Jennifer Adkins at jennifer.adkins@iowa.gov or 515-725-2219,

Penny Milburn at penny.milburn@iowa.gov or 515-281-7844,

or Amy Stegeman at amy.stegeman@iowa.gov or 515-725-2273.

Nutrition and Health Services

New HealthierUS School Challenge: Smarter Lunchroom

Schools are encouraged to apply for an award through the new HealthierUS School Challenge: Smarter Lunchroom. The new application requires less menu paperwork, which foodservice directors are excited about.

The award can get your school recognized nationally and earn monetary awards.

The HealthierUS School Challenge: Smarter Lunchrooms honors schools that have created healthier school environments through the promotion of nutrition and physical activity.

Students who have healthy eating habits and get regular physical activity are more likely to perform better academically. The award criteria were recently updated to reflect Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards and incorporate Smarter Lunchrooms techniques to guide healthier choices.

Learn more about this award [here](#) or contact Patti Delger at patti.delger@iowa.gov or Carrie Scheidel at carrie.scheidel@iowa.gov for more information.



Health profiles survey a success



Thank you to the 256 middle and high school principals and the 257 health teachers who completed the 2014 School Health Profiles Survey. With response rates of over 70 percent, we should have weighted data which means the results can be generalized to the state of Iowa.

The profiles monitor the current status of: school health education requirements and content; physical education and physical activity requirements; school policy related to tobacco, HIV, and nutrition; family and community involvement; and school health coordination. Data are used by educators and health professionals to assess and compare policies across the United States, plan professional development, and to seek funding and support for health-related policies.

Nutrition and Health Services

Winter weather, indoor recess and Iowa Healthy Kids Act

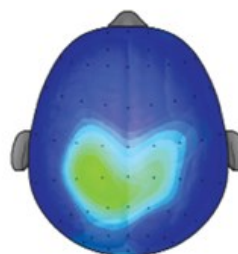
The [Iowa Healthy Kids Act](#) went into effect at the start of the 2009-10 school year and requires students in kindergarten through grade 5 to engage in physical activity for a minimum of 30 minutes each school day. Physical education classes, recess, and classroom activity breaks can be counted in the minute requirement.

Each school has its own policy as to when students stay in from recess due to the weather. Kids need physical activity every day no matter the weather conditions. When the weather is not cooperating to allow for outdoor recess what is a school to do?

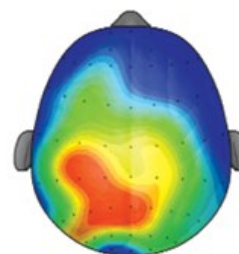
We encourage schools to do their best to provide active indoor recesses. While this can be challenging, it's also important. There is a positive correlation between amount of time spent being physically active and academic performance. For more information, view the [Wellness Impact Report](#). For active indoor recess ideas, [click here](#).

Cognitive Effects of Exercise in Preadolescent Children

Average composite of 20 students' brains taking the same test after sitting quietly or taking a 20-minute walk.



After 20 minutes of Sitting Quietly



After 20 minutes of Walking

Verification collection report is now open

The Verification Collection Report (VCR) is now open on IowaCNP. School Food Authorities, or SFAs, are to report their verification results to the state agency by Feb. 4.

All SFAs participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, not just those completing verification activities, must fill out the appropriate sections of the Verification Collection Report.



To access the VCR, log onto IowaCNP and choose Applications and then select Verification Report. You will then select modify to the right of School Year 2014-2015. An instructional webinar, along with a PowerPoint presentation on how to complete the VCR, are posted at the Iowa Department of Education's [website](#).

If you have questions, contact your area consultant or Deb Linderblood at 515-281-5663 or deb.linderblood@iowa.gov.



Legal Lessons

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

The weather outside is, well, you know

Winter fun

As you know, we've already had the first snow of the season. On that first day my 4-year-old Liam came bouncing into the room at 6 in the morning, on a Sunday, and demanded a snowball fight. He did not want to wait. I assured him that as soon as Mommy was up and moving around we would go outside. Apparently my assurances did nothing for him. As I was getting dressed he proudly stomped into my room in full winter wardrobe. He had his little Spiderman boots on, his snow pants, a coat, and a gorilla-faced hat on. "Mommy we have to go now before it melts!" He made it really hard to say no. It's a good thing my husband was already up and outside. They only played for an hour but when he came in with his little red cheeks, he was ready for hot cocoa and marshmallows. Liam is definitely ready for this winter weather. I, on the other hand, like to sip my cocoa and snuggle on the couch. It's a good thing I have kids to remind me what it's like to be a kid. I hope this December you take time to get out in the snow with the kids.

In this winter edition of Legal Lessons, I bring you some appropriate topics for this time of year. Here is some information on snow days, Appeal Case Update, and a Dear Colleague Letter issues by U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education on the intersection of IDEA and ADA.

Snow days

Since we have already seen temps in the negatives this year, and it is scarcely December, it seems appropriate to revisit snow days before we are well into the winter season.

For those schools and districts that are still operating a school calendar based on 180 days this year, remember that

you are not allowed to add hours and minutes onto the school day in order to make up for snow days. There is no authority in the law which would allow this. Nor do we have the authority to approve a waiver of the law. Any changes to this law would have to come through the Legislature.

However, for the schools and districts that have chosen to operate their school calendars on 1,080 hours, you now have the flexibility you need to add hours and minutes onto the school day to help make up for snow days. This added flexibility may prove to be needed this year if the early-winter preview is any indication.

Regardless of the way you count your instruction, remember the primary responsibility of instructional leaders is to provide learning time for students. Providing this time requires providing full days and hours of instruction for students. We want to make sure that our students are not missing out on anything because they have missed a few days of school.



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Appeal Case Update

Here are two recent open enrollment appeal decisions pertaining to pervasive harassment and serious medical conditions that were recently decided by the State Board of Education. These two cases focus on the procedures that the districts followed when reviewing the open enrollment application. Here are two important takeaways from these cases:

1. The resident district must act first. The law contemplates that the resident district is in the best position to make a decision about an open enrollment application filed on the basis of the student being a victim of pervasive harassment or having a serious medical condition since the student is attending its district.
2. When a district receives an application for open enrollment where the parent has alleged either pervasive harassment or a serious medical condition, the board must review the application in light of the standards outlined by the board. If a district does not apply the appropriate standards, the case may be remanded back to the local board to apply the appropriate legal standard.

The following cases are instructive for school districts:

[*In re: Open Enrollment of S.K., 27 D.o.E. App. Dec. 538 \(2014\)*](#)

[*In re: Open Enrollment of S.H., 27 D.o.E. App. Dec. 545 \(2014\)*](#)

Dear Colleague Letter on the intersection of IDEA and ADA

The United States Department of Education (along with the U.S. Department of Justice) on Nov. 12 issued a Dear Colleague Letter and a frequently-asked-questions document on the interrelationship between the Americans with Disabilities Act's "effective communication" requirement and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In 2013, the Ninth Circuit held that "a school district's compliance with its obligations to a deaf or hard-of-hearing child under the IDEA" does not also necessarily establish its "compliance with its effective communication obligations to that child under Title II of the ADA." The letter adopts the Ninth Circuit's rationale (not surprising: the United States filed an amicus brief in support of the students). Take-away message: For students with disabilities related to hearing, seeing, or speaking, "effective" under the ADA may be a different standard than "appropriate" under the IDEA.

[Dear Colleague Letter](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Ninth Circuit Opinion](#)

Students with disabilities

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

Teachers find they love the Core

The Core-and-more battle cry in educating students on Individualized Education Programs turned to boots-on-the-ground reality this fall as teachers unpacked the Iowa Core in earnest. That's because the Iowa Core is now required in all schools, all grades.

And though teachers found it daunting at first, they are finding they love it.

Read why two teachers, one from Ames, the other from Madrid, embrace the [Iowa Core](#).



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



www.educateiowa.gov

Iowa Department of Education

400 E 14th Street
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Ph: 515-281-5294
www.educateiowa.gov