



# School Leader Update

A MONTHLY JOURNAL  
FOR IOWA EDUCATORS

May 2017

Law expands ways to earn high school equivalency diploma

Unemployment hits those without high school diplomas especially hard.

Of the nearly 146,000 working-age lowans without diplomas, a full 10.7 percent are unemployed. That's compared to only 3.8 percent of those who hold at least a high school diploma.

Going back to earn a diploma can represent an obstacle. There's only one path to earning an equivalency diploma - the HiSET exam - which doesn't always recognize and support different learning styles, financial circumstances, life goals, and postsecondary and workforce aspirations.

That's about to change. With the signing of a bill into law, there eventually will be expanded ways in which lowans can earn a high school equivalency diploma (HSED). [Read](#) more.



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## A defining moment in Iowa education

Okay, I'll admit it. I'm a bit of a nerd. As a former social studies teacher, wonky policy details excite me. Executive orders issued by presidents and governors often fall in this category: items that are of interest to a subset of the population, which may grab headlines for a moment and then quickly recede into the background. In reality, though, executive orders can have a lasting and important impact.

Governor Branstad's [Executive Order 83](#), signed in October 2013, fits this description. Executive Order 83 has provided the foundation for how the Iowa Department of Education has approached the development of academic standards and assessments for nearly four years.

Executive Order 83 asserts that the Iowa Constitution encourages a strong educational foundation and that rigorous state standards detailing expected academic achievement are essential to provide a high-quality education. This statement provides a clear vision; Iowa values education and, as a state, defining what we want our students to know and be able to do is critical in ensuring all lowans receive a great education.

Beyond just providing a purpose statement for why academic standards are important, Executive Order 83 gives clear direction to the Department of Education and to local school districts in the development, adoption and implementation of standards. The order states that the adoption of state standards should be done in an open and transparent way with opportunities for lowans to review and offer input and that it is the responsibility of local school districts to make decisions related to curricula, instruction, and learning materials



**Director Ryan Wise**

*Continued on page 2*

## Iowa review team recommends new social studies standards

A state team charged with reviewing a draft of proposed statewide standards for social studies released its final report, which recommends that the draft standards become Iowa's new social studies standards. The Social Studies Standards Review Team's [report](#), as well as the [draft social studies standards](#), will go to the State Board of Education for consideration next month.

### *Continued from page 1*

consistent with state academic standards.

At the Iowa Department of Education, we have embraced this direction. We have facilitated reviews that led to the adoption of new science standards, updated literacy standards, and newly written social studies standards (which will be before the State Board of Education for adoption later this month). We are currently in the review process of recommended fine arts standards (which you can comment on [here](#)).

In each of these efforts, the Department has made transparency and public engagement paramount. We have held listening sessions around the state and have developed online surveys each time we have put a set of standards up for development and review. Thousands of Iowans have provided feedback into shaping the standards we want each of our students to achieve.

As the parent of a second-grader and fifth-grader, one of my favorite things to do when I am in schools is to visit second- and fifth-grade classrooms and report back to my kids what I observe (I know, my nerdiness is starting to show through again). Invariably, my children will say, "Hey, that's what I'm learning about!" And equally as often, the lesson based on the same standard was delivered in a different yet equally effective way. Iowans have struck the proper balance between articulating common outcomes and trusting local teachers and school leaders to achieve them.

In addition to clarifying that Iowa, not the federal government or any other organization, determines our state academic standards, Executive Order 83 also declares that the State of Iowa will choose the statewide assessment to measure how well students have mastered the standards. In the coming months, the Iowa Department of Education will take on this important task. Senate File 240 directs the Department to issue a request for proposal for the selection of a statewide assessment of student progress in English language arts, math and science to be administered in the 2018-19 school year and beyond. This legislation also describes the components – like cost, alignment with state standards and federal law, and the ability of the assessment to measure student growth and proficiency – that the Department must consider when selecting the assessment.

The Department recognizes the importance of this task; having a statewide assessment that aligns with our state standards and with classroom instruction is critical to improving teaching and learning. We look forward to this work. And we also appreciate the efforts of local educators to ensure the effective implementation of our state's academic standards.

As always, thank you for all you do to ensure your students receive a high-quality, Iowa education.



## C4K leadership webinar offered May 18, 1:30-3 p.m.

Collaboration for Kids (C4K) leadership webinars are offered monthly, allowing for ongoing opportunities for professional learning and support for state administrators and access to tools and resources necessary for leadership. The webinars put the learning into actual leadership practice, making connections and helping leaders to stay ahead of new initiatives, laws, and expectations through Differentiated Accountability.

The webinars have been developed by a team representing school leaders, Area Education Agencies, and the Iowa Department of Education who serve in various roles.

The team has designed the webinars based on the feedback and the needs of administrators and leaders in the field. Each webinar is focused on helping administrators navigate and align the demands of their time and provide a relentless effort in supporting instructional practices and improving student learning.

### Webinar topics, Thursday, May 18, 1:30-3 p.m.

**Leadership Healthy Indicators**

**Differentiated Accountability (DA) update and fall planning**

**Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) update**

**Self Assessment for Multi-Tiered System of Supports Implementation (SAMI) for schools update**

**Collaboration for Kids (C4K) Next Steps**

**Iowa Standards for School Leaders/Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (ISSL/PSEL) update**

Zoom link: <https://heartlandaea.zoom.us/j/3729173072>

[Link](#) to past and future webinars



# Changes to Iowa code of professional conduct and ethics

During the 2017 legislative session, the Iowa Legislature amended Iowa Code section 272.15 to add a fourth mandatory reporting ethics item in the instance of a disciplinary action:

- (a) Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating a romantic or otherwise inappropriate relationship with a student.
- (b) Falsifying student grades, test scores, or other official information or material.
- (c) Converting public property or funds to the personal use of the school employee.
- (d) Being on school premises or at a school-sponsored activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal drugs, unauthorized drugs, or alcohol.

Administrators must report any disciplinary action (written reprimand or beyond) against a Board of Educational Examiners-licensed employee for the behaviors listed above. The board may deny a license or revoke a license of an administrator who fails to report the termination or resignation for reasons as listed above.

For questions, contact Darcy Hathaway at 515-242-6506 or [darcy.hathaway@iowa.gov](mailto:darcy.hathaway@iowa.gov).

## Work-Based Learning Intermediary Report released

Work-based learning expands the walls of the classroom into the workplace, helping students see how classroom instruction connects to future career opportunities.

Iowa's system of 15 regional intermediary networks supports school districts within each region as a one-stop shop contact point for information on work-based learning. The recently released 2016 fiscal year [Work-Based Learning Intermediary Network Report](#) says Iowa's Intermediary Network and its partners provided work-based learning experiences, including internships, job shadowing, and workplace tours to 22,643 students across the state. In addition, a total of 41,806 students and 950 educators participated in educational activities funded through intermediary funds.



More examples of education-workforce innovations emerging across the state will be showcased this summer at the [Fast-Track Iowa's Future](#) conference. The one-day conference, scheduled for Wednesday, June 21, at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines, will focus on how to grow and improve school-business alignment, especially in STEM fields. For questions, contact Kelli Diemer at 515-281-3615 or [kelli.diemer@iowa.gov](mailto:kelli.diemer@iowa.gov).

# Professional development available for gifted education

Classroom teachers, language arts teachers, mathematics teachers, teachers of gifted programming and curriculum directors are encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities pertaining to gifted learners. Registration is at no cost to participants.

## Differentiating Mathematics Standards for Gifted Learners

Differentiation for Mathematics Standards for Gifted and Advanced Learners will be offered on May 22 and May 23 at the Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport, 6111 Fleur Drive, in Des Moines. Nationally recognized researcher and author Linda Sheffield is the presenter for each day. This professional development day is designed to add rigor, depth, complexity, creativity, and enjoyment to the Iowa Core Mathematics content and practice standards through engaging, practical, and differentiated support for gifted and advanced learners.

To register for May 22, click [here](#).

To register for May 23, click [here](#)

For questions, contact Rosanne Malek at 515-281-3199 or [rosanne.malek@iowa.gov](mailto:rosanne.malek@iowa.gov).



Join the movement to SEE, UNDERSTAND, TEACH, and CHALLENGE gifted and talented children from all backgrounds. Sign up to be part of the Giftedness Knows No Boundaries team.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR Gifted Children  
www.GiftednessKnowsNoBoundaries.org

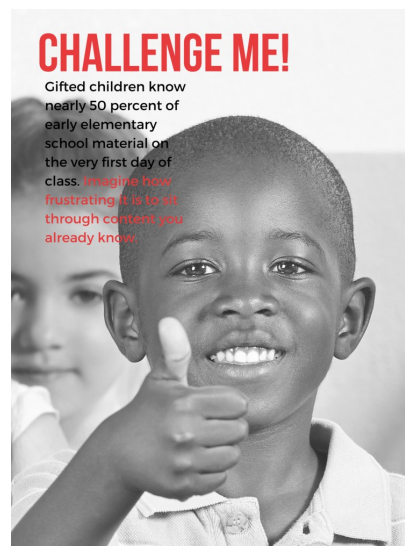
## Differentiating Writing Standards for Gifted Learners

Differentiating Writing Standards for Gifted Learners will be offered May 24 and May 25, at the Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport, 6111 Fleur Drive, in Des Moines. Nationally recognized researcher and author Elizabeth Shaunessy-Dedrick is the presenter for each day. This professional development will detail the developmental stages and challenges inherent to instructing writing to gifted and advanced learners.

To register for May 24, click [here](#).

To register for May 25, click [here](#).

For questions, contact Rosanne Malek at 515-281-3199 or [rosanne.malek@iowa.gov](mailto:rosanne.malek@iowa.gov).



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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR Gifted Children  
www.GiftednessKnowsNoBoundaries.org

## Register by May 2 for learning supports conference

The deadline is rapidly approaching for a May conference designed to build and promote effective learning support practices.

The Iowa Department of Education's 2017 Learning Supports Conference is scheduled for May 9 and 10. The conference will offer sessions on School-wide and Early Childhood Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Shared Visions, and Challenging Behaviors. Educators from preschool through the 12th grade are encouraged to attend.

The event will be held at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines.

There is no registration fee for the event, but there is a cash-only parking fee of \$8 per car.

Deadline to register is May 2. For more information or to register, click [here](#).

For questions, contact Amanda Winslow at 515-242-5104 or [amanda.winslow@iowa.gov](mailto:amanda.winslow@iowa.gov).



## Our Kids Summer Institute scheduled for June 13 and 14

The thirteenth annual Our Kids Summer Institute for teachers and administrators of English Learners (EL) is scheduled for June 13 and 14 at Waukee High School in Waukee. This annual conference, which features national and local experts presenting on K-12 strategies specific to English Learners, includes strands for both teachers and administrators.

This year's impressive line-up includes:

- Trudy Arriaga, noted as the first female superintendent of Ventura Unified School District, who has held that post for 14 years.
- Major Sean Quinlan is sure to inspire Our Kids attendees with his message of hope and helping students "win at life," both in and out of school.
- Amy Hewett-Olatunde, Minnesota's 2015 Teacher of the Year, who teaches at Limited English Achievement Program (LEAP) High School in St. Paul.
- Fern Westernoff of the Toronto District School Board, which boasts the world's largest English as Second Language program.

Additional featured topics include newcomer programs, family/community engagement, English Language Learners/Multi-Tiered System of Supports, ELs with disabilities, formative assessment for ELs, content area instruction for ELs, teaching strategies, supplemental technology resources, and many more.

Register [here](#).



## Schools wanting to start online programs? ILO can help

Iowa Learning Online (ILO) is piloting a new service to help schools take the first step to offering their own online service to meet local district needs. Schools can retain local focus by partnering with ILO. Iowa Learning Online provides the infrastructure and high school courses, and the local school provides the teacher.

Benefits to schools include:

- Leverage local teaching talent
- Low-risk, more affordable pricing without compromising local needs
- Access to ILO's top-notch and customizable online curriculum
- Courses all delivered on ILO's modern intuitive learning management platform
- Detailed program, course and student learning analytics for data-driven decision making
- Planning and implementation assistance from ILO's family of experienced online learning consultants
- Introductory teacher support
- Prepares school for a more globalized future



Seats in this pilot are limited. For more information about how ILO can help your school or district, contact Cale Roe at 515-782-7680 or [cale.roe@iowa.gov](mailto:cale.roe@iowa.gov).

## 'Social' studies: Making headway with kids on the spectrum

Walk into the preschool class of Libby Richardson and Mary Aull and you get the usual sense of unbridled energy emitting from 4-year-olds. They start their day with a rousing choreographed song, and then get busy with their day.

But, yet, there is something different.

Two children go to the center of the room. The others sit in a semi-circle, watching closely. One little girl taps the shoulder of a boy, and says his name. They make eye contact. They make small talk, and the girl then asks for an item that the boy has. Eventually, the boy acquiesces.



Preschoolers learn how to interact with all their peers.

Structured and purposeful activities put the kids in the front seat of learning to work with one another. They are, in fact, modeling social behavior in the form of sharing and requesting. There's no question the exercise benefits the three students in the classroom who are on the autism spectrum. But perhaps more important, the exercise also is teaching the typical students how to communicate with their three peers, ensuring maximum inclusion.

This work comes through a process known as LEAP, which is an acronym for a mouthful: Learning Experiences and Alternative Program for preschoolers and parents. [Read more.](#)

## International educators learn about education in the U.S.

March brought visitors to the state of Iowa from 10 different countries from around the world. These educators visited Iowa, along with several other states, to gain additional knowledge and expertise regarding specific topics related to the English language.

While in Iowa, this cadre of educators visited school districts, schools, the Iowa state Capitol, as well as other educational organizations within in our state. The Iowa Department of Education was one of the organizations honored to meet with this group of educational professionals.

Some of the areas of interest related to the Iowa Department of Education were:

- Understanding of American culture and history as context for the development of language;
- Observing the variation and distribution within the U.S. English language;
- Discussing shared challenges for English Language Learners (ELL) and teachers;
- Interacting with language teachers and exchange views on pedagogical methodology;
- Connecting with educational policy makers at the state level

The group's background ranged from university professor, department head, and director to public and non-public classroom teachers. The countries represented were Algeria, Bulgaria, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Poland, Senegal and Tajikistan.

Consultants from the Department's Bureau of Educator Quality and Standards and Curriculum with expertise in literacy, ELL, and social studies met with the educators for two hours to answer questions, provide an overview of literacy initiatives, ELL requirements and services, and the historical context of language.

Other topics of conversation that arose were the Iowa Core, teacher and administrator training, professional development, teacher resources, assessments, and Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM), to name a few. It was a shared professional experience for all involved and demonstrated the value of collaboration focused on meeting the needs of *all* students in a globalized world. While systems of education vary around the world, many of the same concerns, challenges, joys and the personal reward of education were similarly shared.

This visitation was in collaboration with the Iowa International Center, which works with the U.S. State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program to coordinate local agendas for people who are selected to participate in this program.

Each group that is hosted has a different focus and meetings are organized and planned so that local professionals in similar fields can share their work as well as learn about how similar work is done abroad. It is often discovered that local hosts and visitors have a lot in common and contact numbers and emails are exchanged, with invitations to visit their country.



Back Row, left to right: Stefanie Wager (Social Studies Consultant), Linda Carroll (Bureau Chief), Karlans Camacho Cuevas (Dominican Republic), Abdelaziz Benkheddoudja (Algeria), Jobi Lawrence (ELL Consultant), Abdoulaye Diallo (Senegal), Tanya Rumenova Firkova (Bulgaria), Angel Gabriel Gonzalez Ortega (Paraguay)

Front Row, left to right: Anna Jurczak (Poland), Destiny El-dridge (Literacy Consultant), Olesya Alexeeva (Tajikistan), Efren Omar Miranda Zepeda (Nicaragua)

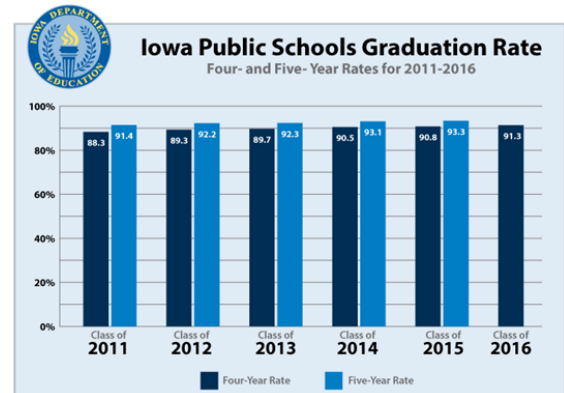


# Iowa's high school graduation rate reaches new high of 91.3%

Iowa's high school graduation rate has increased for the fifth year in a row while dropout rates edged up for the first time since the 2009-10 school year, according to figures released by the Iowa Department of Education.

State data show 91.3 percent of students in Iowa's Class of 2016 graduated within four years, up from 90.8 percent for the Class of 2015. Iowa's annual dropout rate was 2.8 percent in the 2015-16 school year, up from 2.5 percent in the 2014-15 school year. The state's 2015-16 dropout rate represents 4,154 students in grades 9-12.

Graduation rates and dropout rates can increase simultaneously because they measure different groups of students. The four-year graduation rate follows one class of students over time – for example, students in the Class of 2016 starting with their enrollment as first-time freshmen during the 2012-13 school year – while annual dropout rates represent the number of students who dropped out of grades 9-12 during one school year. [Read more.](#)



## It all adds up in 'BizTown'

Few people would argue that two plus two equals anything but four. If comprehending that was the only requirement for being truly financially literate, life for most people might be pretty straightforward and fairly easy. But in reality, financial literacy is indeed much more than just basic arithmetic.

No one knows this better than the fifth graders at Central Elementary in the North Polk Community School District. Thanks to the commitment and investment by the school district to ensure students receive financial literacy education, and thanks to the dedication and skill of fifth grade teachers Connie Boyd and Cathleen Watters, these 10-year-old future tax-paying citizens are



Student citizens of JA BizTown earned paychecks and lined up at the bank to conduct financial business.



Connie Boyd (left) and Cathleen Watters, fifth grade teachers at Central Elementary School, North Polk Community School District

well versed and equipped in the tenets of financial literacy -- knowing how to make appropriate personal economic choices, understanding the role of economy in society, and using entrepreneurial skills to enhance workplace productivity and career options.

Iowa school districts enjoy some flexibility in implementing classroom curriculum concerning the financial literacy component included in the 21st century skills essential concepts and skills outlined in the [Iowa Core](#). The North Polk School District made financial literacy a priority long before it was included in the kindergarten-through-twelfth grade statewide academic standards. The district's method of choice for fifth graders is the Junior Achievement (JA) of Central Iowa JA BizTown experience. [Read more.](#)

# Input sought on fine arts standards

Iowa Department of Education is seeking public input on fine arts standards that are under consideration in Iowa.

An online survey is open through May 12, following a state team's recommendation to get feedback on the [National Core Arts Standards](#). These standards were developed by the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, an alliance of national arts and arts education groups.

Iowa's Fine Arts Adoption Team convened earlier this year in response to public support for offering statewide standards that go beyond the mandatory subject areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and 21st century skills.

Fine arts standards serve as a guide for educators to provide a high-quality arts education for students in preschool through 12th grades. Fine arts include visual art, music, theater, dance and media arts. [Read](#) more.



## It's not just a PE class, but a classroom full of possibilities

If you are thinking of observing the Fifth Annual Every Kid Healthy Week, you might do well to visit Mark Jungmann's physical education class.

That's because Jungmann, who teaches at West Elementary in North Polk Community School District, takes PE to a whole new level.

On one particular day, the gym was transformed into a camp site.

Students worked in teams to complete the task of each station such as fishing, finding firewood, attacking wild animals, hiding food from a bear and a favorite...camping under the stars that included a parachute

converted into a tent. The students were prompted by choreographed music when it was time to wrap up the task, reset for the station, and move to the next.



Physical education at West Elementary is based on the following formula: Cooperation + Problem Solving + Positive Communication = Team Work, which supports the 21st Century Learning Skills.

[Read](#) more.

## Data and Reporting

### Spring state student reporting is under way

The flowers and trees are in bloom, and it is again time for state student reporting.

#### Important dates

**April 17**— VRF/SRI/AYP test sites opened

**May 11**— Spring VRF/SRI/AYP test sites close

**May 15**— Spring VRF/SRI/AYP production sites open

**June 20**—Spring 2017 certification deadline (public and nonpublic)

**June 21**—Spring 2017 AYP certification deadline (public districts only)

Spring Student Reporting in Iowa (SRI) is focused primarily on:

- 1) Graduates
- 2) Attendance
- 3) Non-fall Supplementary Weighting for courses; and
- 4) Discipline removals

Spring SRI data are also used for:

- 5) Participation Rate and Full Academic Year calculations for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP); and
- 6) Regular Education Foster Care Claim

#### Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Although there will be no determinations made in AYP this school year, public districts are still required to verify subgroups, participation, and full academic year status in the AYP application.

#### Training

A half hour Zoom session for new SRI staff will be held on Thursday, May 4, at 1 p.m. All may attend by clicking [SRI Spring 2017 Zoom Session](#). Feel free to contact an SRI consultant if you have questions.

### Title II, Part A: End of the year reimbursements

Submit your final Title II, Part A 2016-2017 claims via [www.iowagrants.gov](http://www.iowagrants.gov) by June 15. Make sure to upload a cover letter and a financial general ledger showing expenditures and finance codes. For questions, contact Isbelia Arzola at 515-281-3954 or [Isbelia.arzola@iowa.gov](mailto:Isbelia.arzola@iowa.gov).



[IowaGrants.gov](http://IowaGrants.gov)

## Data and Reporting continued

### Survey for first year-teachers and their principals

The Iowa Department of Education, in partnership with School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) and the Iowa Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, is conducting a state-wide survey of first-year teachers and their principals.



The survey will gather information on specifics about how well the beginning teacher is prepared to teach. The information collected will be used by all Iowa teacher preparation programs for program improvements. SAI will use the information to assist administrators in recruiting, supporting and retaining beginning teachers. The Department will use the information for teacher preparation standards and guidance.

Each principal with a first-year teacher was sent an email with two survey links: one for each first-year teacher and one for the principal. All three agencies ask principals to complete the survey at the earliest convenience and encourage first-year teachers to do the same. For information, contact Larry Bice at 515-725-0101 or [larry.bice@iowa.gov](mailto:larry.bice@iowa.gov).

### Survey for parents of children receiving special education

Does your school facilitate parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities? Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) requires states to report the percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who answer yes to that question. The Iowa Department of Education is gathering these data as a census for both students with and without a disability using a three-question survey.

The Department has requested the assistance of the Area Education Agencies (AEA) to disseminate the survey link and instructions to principals, nonpublic administrators and preschool program contacts. AEAs will provide the information for dissemination and monitor the response rate to ensure that this year's survey is conducted as a census.



The survey will be open until June 30. The survey link has been distributed to parents. For questions, contact Meredith MacQuigg at 515-494-5610 or [meredith.macquigg@iowa.gov](mailto:meredith.macquigg@iowa.gov).

### Bullying and harassment data reporting due in early July

June 30 marks the end of the reporting period for bullying and harassment data for the 2016-17 school year. District superintendents will be contacted to submit certified aggregate counts for their district in early July. Public districts and nonpublic schools will be required to submit total counts for each data element for incidents occurring between July 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017.

To best understand the reporting requirements, instructions for collecting aggregate counts, examples and a template for building and district use can be found on the [Department's website](#). Make sure to communicate this information to building level users to help ensure that the data reported are valid and reliable. For questions, contact Meredith MacQuigg at 515-494-5610 or [meredith.macquigg@iowa.gov](mailto:meredith.macquigg@iowa.gov).

# Early Childhood Preschool Programs

## Save the Date: Early Care and Education Fall Institute

Learn about early childhood research and initiatives, take advantage of the resources of supporting agencies, and learn from national experts and each other at the Early Care and Education Fall Institute, Sept. 22-23, at the Prairie Meadows Conference Center in Altoona.

The Iowa Department of Education will once again be co-sponsoring the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children Fall Institute titled "Power to the Profession."

The institute is open to all professionals who work with infants and children, from birth to 8 years old, including staff and consultants from Early ACCESS, Area Education Agencies, Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs, Early Childhood Special Education programs, and Shared Visions programs. School administrators, elementary teachers, and other early care educators and providers should also consider attending.



For more information, visit the [Iowa AEYC website](#) or contact Betsy Lin at 515-725-2039 or [betsy.lin@iowa.gov](mailto:betsy.lin@iowa.gov).

## MyTeachingStrategies™ GOLD Assessment System

Any public school district, non-public accredited school, registered or licensed child care/preschool, registered child development homes, Head Start agency or Area Education Agency in Iowa is eligible to participate in the Iowa administrative Umbrella Agreement with Teaching Strategies for MyTeachingStrategies™ GOLD.

The three required checkpoint dates for the 2017-18 school year will be Nov. 17; Feb. 23; and May 25, (2018). Programs utilizing the discounted subscription price under the Iowa Umbrella Agreement have agreed to adhere to procedures related to the GOLD® Online Assessment, including state identified checkpoint dates.



Guidance and procedures regarding GOLD® may be found on the [Teaching Strategies in Iowa web page](#) and the [Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program web page](#) under the subheading Assessment.

For information about GOLD® checkpoints, contact Kimberly Villotti at 515-281-4709 or [kimberly.villotti@iowa.gov](mailto:kimberly.villotti@iowa.gov) or Teaching Strategies Tech Support for Iowa at 866-246-5913.

## Nutrition and Health Services

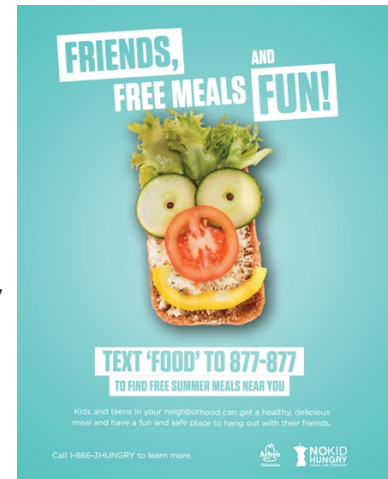
### Summer Food Service Program outreach

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 requires all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program to conduct outreach to households on the availability and location of summer meals.

Why is this important? Learning does not end when school lets out and neither does the need for good nutrition. Summer meals provide a healthy option for all children, but especially those at risk for hunger.

Even if your school does not participate in the Summer Food Service Program, you are required to provide information on summer feeding sites in your area. As trusted community organizations, schools are ideal places to market summer meals. Schools can outreach their own summer meal sites and outreach meal sites in surrounding areas by:

- Sending informational flyers home with children
- Sending letters or emails to parents or guardians
- Including summer site location information in school newsletters
- Posting a link to the Summer Food Rocks Site Finder and the National Hunger Hotline phone number and text option on the school's webpage and social media pages
- Promoting summer meals via the school's robo-call system
- Promoting summer meals on electronic message boards in front of the schools



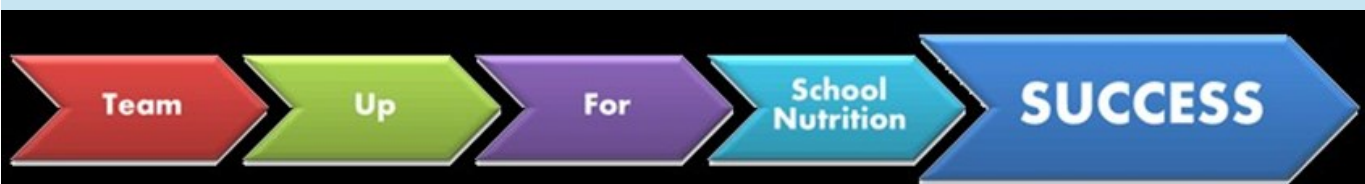
Outreach toolkit materials and templates can be found on the Iowa Department of Education Summer Food Service Program [website](#). For more information, contact Stephanie Dross at 515-281-4760 or [stephanie.dross@iowa.gov](mailto:stephanie.dross@iowa.gov).

### Team Up for School Nutrition Success workshop scheduled

Due to the overwhelmingly positive response to the first Team Up for School Nutrition Success, another workshop is planned for July 25. Many participants in the Team Up Workshop last fall stated it was the best training they had ever attended.

The Team Up workshop is designed for directors and managers. The agenda will include panel presentations of best practices on Menu Planning and Bringing Out the Best in Your Employees by experienced Iowa school nutrition directors, then small group sessions to develop specific action plans for improving your school nutrition program.

[Register](#) now to attend the Team Up for School Nutrition Success workshop. If you are interested in being trained as a mentor on the evening of July 24, contact Jan Steffen at 515-681-2301 or [jan.steffen@iowa.gov](mailto:jan.steffen@iowa.gov). Travel expense reimbursement will be available.





## Legal Lessons

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

### Graduation days: These are the days we remember

We are upon another graduation year and this year marks a hallmark year for me as I approach my 20-year high school class reunion. Graduating class of 1997! I cannot believe it has already been 20 years since I graduated from high school. As I reflect back on this time in my life, there are some things I remember just like it was yesterday. I remember all of the planning that went into commencement ceremonies and my graduation party. I remember the family, friends, and teachers who came to wish me well. I remember walking across the stage and feeling excited for all my accomplishments and all that was ahead of me. I also remember singing our graduation song as part of the choir “These are the days we remember” by 10,000 Maniacs. As I reminisce and sing the lyrics of the song, I think they adequately reflected that moment for me and many seniors:

*“You’ll know it’s true  
That you are blessed and lucky  
It’s true that you  
Are touched by something  
That will grow in you, in you”*

Our time in high school is so short, but it shapes us for the next chapter of our lives and allows us to grow even more as we move on. So, as you celebrate and congratulate the graduating class of 2017, remember that you have touched each and every one of their lives and that they will continue to grow as they look ahead. Your students will always remember you and the impact you had on their lives. I know I remember, and I am forever grateful to those who touched my life. Congratulations for a job well done!

In this May edition of Legal Lessons I bring you the Top Five Graduation Don’ts, New Rules Noticed by the State Board, Federal Registrar Notices, and information on how to Win \$1000 for your School.

#### Top Five Graduation Don’ts

##### It’s that time of year again to revisit the Top Five Graduation Don’ts.

1. ***Don’t allow sponsored prayer at commencement.*** School districts cannot sponsor prayer at graduation regardless of the form of delivery. This includes the school choir singing a hymn that includes religious references. This does not mean that the school is going to get in trouble if a student speaker spontaneously begins to pray during the middle of his or her commencement speech. As long as school officials do not have prior knowledge of the student’s intent to pray it is not considered school sponsored. The district should take affirmative steps to inform all speakers that prayer at a public school graduation is not legal. If, given the district’s prior knowledge of the speaker, it is not unreasonable to assume that the speaker may offer a prayer; the district has an affirmative obligation to pre-screen the content of the planned speech.

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# Legal Lessons continued

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## 2. **Don't charge fees.**

- *Diplomas* - Schools *cannot* charge a fee for a diploma if earned. The district must provide a diploma and there is no authorization to charge a fee. School districts *can* charge a fee for graduation cap, gown, tassel, and a diploma cover – as long as the purchase is voluntary; state law does not regulate this.
- *Senior Trip* - If a school district still schedules a senior trip as part of the instructional days or hours, the presumption is that the trip is curricular in nature, and thus, the district cannot charge a fee.  
[See Declaratory Order](#) (upheld by district court).

3. **Don't withhold diplomas for failure to pay.** School boards cannot withhold diplomas for failure to pay fines, fees, etc. A student who has met graduation requirements has an undisputed right to receive his/her diploma. To withhold a diploma for non-academic reasons is tantamount to academic fraud. Having said that, the student does not have an undisputed right to receive the diploma at a commencement ceremony. If the student has committed some egregious misbehavior, the student may be properly banned from taking part in graduation exercises and the diploma can be mailed to the student. Again, do not charge a fee for the diploma.

4. **Don't use a breathalyzer or search students without reasonable suspicion.** Iowa law prohibits searches of students without reasonable suspicion. So, in order for a school district to search a student, including use of a breathalyzer, the employee administering it must have a reasonable suspicion that the specific student has violated school rules. The suspicion has to be individualized to a student. There is no broad authority to search a group of students unless there is reasonable suspicion that they have all violated school rules.

5. **Don't sponsor a baccalaureate.** A school district cannot sponsor a baccalaureate; this is an event that must be left to the local churches or similar organizations. Students cannot be required to participate in a baccalaureate ceremony nor punished for failure to do so. Prayers and religious songs are unrestricted at a properly-sponsored baccalaureate.

## **New Rules Noticed by State Board**

Several new administrative rules will be noticed by the State Board on May 11. The new rules include changes to Chapter 33 – Homeless Students, Chapter 14/41 – School Health & Special Education, and Chapter 21 – Community Colleges – OWI Rules. The text of these rules will be available on our website under the State Board agenda for May 11 when it is posted.

For comments or questions on the rules, contact Nicole Proesch at 515-281-8661 or [nicole.proesch@iowa.gov](mailto:nicole.proesch@iowa.gov) or Phil Wise at 515-281- 4835 [phil.wise@iowa.gov](mailto:phil.wise@iowa.gov).

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# Legal Lessons continued

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## Federal Registrar Notices

Applications for New Awards:

[Deadline for Fiscal Year 2017 for Small, rural School Achievement Program](#)

[Indian Education Formula Grants to Local Educational Agencies; Part II of the Formula Grant Electronic Application System for Indian Education Applications](#)

## Win \$1000 for your school Iowa Safe Schools Alliance (ISSA) video contest

The Iowa Safe Schools Alliance (ISSA) is sponsoring a video contest for Iowa high school students. The winner of the contest will take home \$1000 for your school. Get your kids started on this project now and they will have plenty of time to work on it over the summer.

The theme this year is “See Something, Say Something.” The theme should focus on the mission of the ISSA with emphasis on mitigation. The mission is to *Assist schools in preparing for, mitigating, responding to and recovering from natural and man-made threats and incidents.*

Sample topics could be identification of external or internal threats such as a student with a weapon, intruder, hazardous material spill outside the school, etc. The topics should *not* be focused on bullying, harassment, etc. For guidance, check the bulletins at <http://www.iowaschoolsafety.org/>, or visit the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s website at [www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something](http://www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something).

Submission deadline is Sept. 19. [Click](#) to get information on how you can win.



## Students with disabilities

For questions regarding students with disabilities, contact Thomas Mayes at 515-242-5614 or [thomas.mayes@iowa.gov](mailto:thomas.mayes@iowa.gov).

# Calendar

- May 1 • Second semester parental claim forms for nonpublic transportation reimbursement due
- May 15 • AEA budget proposal — resubmit unapproved budget



*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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