



School Leader Update

A MONTHLY JOURNAL
FOR IOWA EDUCATORS

Annual reports on Iowa's schools and community colleges are available

The Iowa Department of Education released the latest editions of two annual reports containing state-level data and information on Iowa's schools and community colleges.

The [Annual Condition of Education report](#), and the [Annual Condition of Iowa's Community Colleges report](#), contain the most recent data through the 2016-17 school year, unless otherwise noted.

Additionally, the Department is introducing for the first time an [online companion](#) to the Condition of Education report (preschool through 12th grade). The new online features allow education stakeholders to dig deeper into interactive enrollment and staffing data at the state and school district levels.

[Read more.](#)



February 2018

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Having a front-row seat to excellence

As director of the Iowa Department, I have focused on strengthening the instruction every Iowa student receives each day. We know the powerful impact that great teaching can have on students. When students have effective teachers they are more likely to attend school regularly and develop the skills they need to be successful and productive citizens. Most important, we know that great teachers inspire students to achieve goals and accomplishments they never thought possible.

In January, I had the opportunity to help honor educators who teach, inspire and lead. This included Iowa's 2018 Teacher of the Year Aileen Sullivan, along with the five other finalists for the award, as well as the Iowa Presidential Award honorees for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching and the State History Teacher of the Year. As I listened to their accomplishments at the awards ceremony, I pictured the students in their classrooms. I could easily imagine their enthralled expressions and active engagement as each of these teachers helped make connections between the classroom and their lives.

And while these 11 honorees are truly exceptional, I know they represent countless other teachers across the state who make an indelible impact on their students. I know this because I see it every week.

At Moulton-Udell Elementary last week, I watched an AmeriCorps volunteer implement one-on-one reading interventions with students to help them meet their reading benchmarks. The volunteer was trained and supported by an instructional coach who is in a hybrid role that enables her to both teach in her own classroom and support the overall literacy efforts of the school.

In Dallas Center-Grimes last month, I met with the district's



Director Ryan Wise

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teacher leadership team. In describing her work, one instructional coach said, “I did not leave my classroom. My classroom has just gotten bigger.”

In early December, I spent a morning with teacher leaders who serve as technology integrationists in the Hinton, MOC-Floyd Valley, Le Mars and Kingsley-Pierson school districts. Despite working in four different school districts spread out across north-west Iowa, they meet regularly to discuss how they can coach and support their teachers on how to effectively use technology to strengthen instruction.

And in Pella this fall, I sat in on a district-wide strategic planning session in which teacher leaders played a lead role in the process.

These school visits also give me a front-row seat to excellent teaching in classrooms.

I’ve seen teachers help students develop actual businesses for raising crops, processing turkeys, and selling plants.

I’ve also watched teachers and teacher leaders engage students in setting goals, like the eighth graders in Shenandoah on the Horsepower Ten-80 Racing Team, which won a national championship for designing and driving radio-controlled race cars. These students aspired to become better teammates, improve their time management and branch out into the community.

And I’ve seen incredibly engaging lessons, like the teacher in the AHSTW Community School District who turned his classroom into a series of caves, which students explored to learn about cave paintings and pre-historic forms of art and communication.

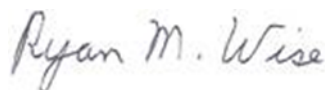
Iowa’s teachers are preparing their students with the knowledge, skills and mindset needed to succeed in a world that grows more complex by the day.

A key part of this work has been the development of the Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) system. I’m so excited about how far we’ve come with teacher leadership in Iowa, and I’m just as excited about where we’re headed.

I’ve met with educators from across the state to examine the use of instructional frameworks, or rubrics, which is about creating a common language and vision for quality teaching across an entire school district. In my observations, schools that do this are best positioned to maximize the impact of their teacher leaders, which is why the Department has proposed legislation that will help all school districts put this best practice into action.

I’m also looking forward to the work of learning from school districts that are seeing great results with TLC. We’re working with the American Institutes for Research to develop in-depth case studies in six school districts. I’m optimistic that the case studies will be a valuable tool for all school districts as they adapt their local TLC plans.

I look forward to the work ahead as we continue to honor and celebrate great teaching and teachers and continually strengthen the education our students receive each day.



Iowa Learning Online summer courses

[Iowa Learning Online \(ILO\)](#) is offering over 50 courses for the summer term, including French and Spanish levels 1 and 2 at an accelerated pace. Visit the Iowa Learning Online website for a complete [course list](#).

The summer term runs from May 23 to Aug. 3. Early enrollment ends June 1 at 4 p.m. For enrollment questions, contact the Iowa Learning Online registrar at 515-725-2075 or registrar@iowalearningonline.org.

ILO is also piloting a new service, Branch Out, to help schools take the first step to offering their own online service to meet local district needs. ILO provides the infrastructure and high school courses, and the local school provides the teacher. Click the link for more information about ILO's [Branch Out](#).

Contract language for accessible curriculum

Adopting curriculum is an ongoing activity for school districts. Assuring that curriculum is accessible to all students is essential. As more districts purchase digital content and online learning media, schools need to consider accessibility of both the content e.g. e-book, and the delivery method for the content e.g. text reader. Accessibility must apply to e-learning systems as well, such as Moodle or Google Classroom.

Contract language for print materials purchases needs to include details about a vendor providing files that can be rendered into accessible formats, e.g. digital text, audio file, Braille and large print. Sample contract language can be found at the [National Center on Accessible Educational Materials](#).

Guidance and sample contract language for purchasing accessible digital materials can also be found at the National Center on Accessible Educational Materials in their Purchasing Accessible Learning Materials ([PALM Initiative](#)) resources.



2018 Iowa Youth Survey initial notice

The Iowa Youth Survey (IYS) is the most frequently used source of data regarding Iowa's youth. IYS data are used for reporting at the school, community, and state levels for informed policy, strategy development, and surveillance, funding at the local and state levels, and research. The 2018 IYS will be taken through online survey software following much the same procedure as in 2016 for sixth, eighth and 11th grade students only. The IYS will be administered during October.

The IYS website, www.iowayouthsurvey.iowa.gov, will be utilized to disseminate information about the 2018 survey including training information, forms and directions. This site is also where publicly available reports from previous iterations are posted. Registration for the 2018 IYS will begin in March with more details distributed in a future update. For questions about the 2018 Iowa Youth Survey, email Pat McGovern at iowayouthsurvey@idph.iowa.gov.



Spring pilot for Iowa's Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation

Schools have an opportunity to participate in a spring 2018 pilot for the Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation (SAMI). The Every Student Succeeds Act requires all schools identified as either Comprehensive or Targeted to engage in a needs assessment as they develop an action plan in 2018-19. The deadline for registering for the pilot is Feb. 9.

For Iowa, the SAMI is the needs assessment for schools. The SAMI was adapted for Iowa using an established self-assessment developed and validated by national experts - the Self-Assessment of MTSS implementation (SAM).

Iowa conducted a small pilot of the SAMI in spring 2017. The pilot can expand to any school that would like to volunteer and meets the criteria for participation. Click to access [details about the SAMI](#), including the two ways to be part of the pilot:

1. To be an On Your Own site, you will need a SAMI facilitator who will access online, self-paced modules that provide the information needed to facilitate a school leadership team to engage in discussions and complete the SAMI, complete the SAMI in your school leadership team, and complete brief surveys on the SAMI and the process. Click for more information about being an [On Your Own site](#), and to sign up.
2. To be a Facilitated Pilot site, you will need to attend a two-day Iowa Department of Education/ Area Education Agency facilitated session on April 5-6 with your school leadership team, complete the SAMI, and complete brief surveys on the SAMI and the process. Click for more information about being a [Facilitated Pilot site](#), and to sign up.

This is sponsored by Collaborating for Iowa's Kids (C4K) - a collaboration across the Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Education Agencies to support Early Learning Standards/Iowa Core within an MTSS framework through Differentiated Accountability.

Webpages support implementation of social studies standards

In order to support implementation of Iowa's new social studies standards, the Department has launched revised social studies webpages on IowaCore.gov. These webpages offer several resources for supporting the new standards. A few highlights include:

- You can view printable cards of the standards, standard progressions and the standards as a printable poster [here](#).
- An overview of the [instructional shifts of the new standards](#).
- The [inquiry in social studies poster](#) and several resources for [developing powerful questions](#) in a social studies classroom.
- Course, unit, and lesson plans templates, standards at a glance templates and examples in third grade and high school U.S. history and alignment tools on the [Planning for Delivery and Implementation page](#).
- An updated [Best Practices Rubric](#) to gauge the use of best practices in social studies.
- Links to various teaching strategies in social studies and hundreds of links to content resources on the [Applying Skills and Content page](#).
- Two webpages that identify several assessment resources with webinars, articles, and examples [here](#) and [here](#).
- Access to social studies research and professional learning resources [here](#).
- Resources for [self-paced professional learning](#) and professional learning [events](#).

Check out the new webpages at <https://iowacore.gov/content/social-studies-resources>.

For questions, contact Stefanie Wager at 515-725-7842 or stefanie.wager@iowa.gov.

Title III: Did you know?

The English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) 21 assessment is quickly approaching. The testing window is open from Feb. 13 through April 13. All agencies that receive Title III services are accountable to the federal government; therefore, they must administer the ELPA 21. Iowa has chosen this assessment tool to adhere to federal Title III guidelines.

Consider the table below:

Do non-public school English Learners that receive Title III services have to take the ELPA 21?	Must a (state or independently accredited) non-public school who chooses NOT to participate/receive Title III services administer the ELPA21 assessment?
YES	NO
Rationale: They are receiving Title III funds; they need to be accountable; the approved accountability tool is the ELPA21	Rationale: They are not receiving Title III funds and are not required to adhere to federal Title III guidelines

Training clarification: All educators administering ELPA21 assessment are legally required to complete the online module titled, "ELPA21 Test Administration Training 2017-2018" found at [AEA Learning Online](#). This is not the same as the "ELP Standards Modules 1-6" that focus on instruction.

For Title III programming questions, contact pam.mcdonnell@iowa.gov.
For assessment questions, contact jennifer.riedemann@iowa.gov.

Implementing the Math Standards

Rigor - do we know what it really is?

Build Knowledge: Rigor - to pursue each of the attributes, with equal intensity, in the major work of each grade:

1. conceptual understanding
2. procedural skills and fluency
3. application

The three-legged stool is often used to represent Rigor because none of the legs can be longer or shorter than the others to have balance.

Understand Rigor: Standards speak to their aspects of Rigor. Some standards will address only one aspect, some will address two, and some will address all three. Not all standards that start with apply will be application and not all word problems will be application. Rigor is not about underlining or highlighting verbs.

How to use Rigor in instruction

[Why Rigor doesn't mean harder](#)

[Rigor Activity from the Deep Dive into the Math Shifts](#)

Implementing the Shifts in the Mathematic Standards <http://bit.ly/iacblog>.

For questions, contact April Pforts at 515-314-6243 or april.pforts@iowa.gov.

Register today for the 2018 Learning Supports Conference

[Registration](#) is under way for a conference focusing on social-emotional learning and development. Sponsored by the Iowa Department of Education, the March 2 conference will be held in Ames at Iowa State University's Scheman Building.

Preschool-through-12th grade educators are encouraged to attend. Strands during the conference will include Early Childhood Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS), School-wide PBIS, social-emotional learning and challenging behaviors. Featured speakers will include Nick Yoder of the American Institutes for Research and Kelly Jo Wilson, a behavior consultant and author.

There is no cost to participants and lunch will be provided, but registration is required. Event details and hotel information can be found [here](#). [Registration](#) deadline is Feb. 26.

For more information, contact Amanda Winslow at amanda.winslow@iowa.gov.



Register now for the 2018 Special Education Symposium



[Registration](#) is now open for the 2018 Special Education Symposium which will be held June 11-12 at the Community Choice Credit Union Convention Center in Des Moines. There is no fee to register.

The symposium is open to Iowa school administrators and educators, Area Education Agency staff, families, and other adults who work with learners with disabilities.

For more information, contact Nancy Hunt at nancy.ankeny-hunt@iowa.gov

Headlines from

IOWA
Department of Education

[Knocking down barriers to success: English language learners](#)

Riverdale Heights has a long history of closing the education gap. Its work with students whose native language isn't English is exemplary.

[Bullying, harassment down 79%? Oh, yeah!](#)

There aren't too many school districts that can boast they have plunged bullying and harassment by 79 percent. Dubuque Community School District can lay that claim.

[African American History Month? We have you covered](#)

From a modest one-week observation in 1926 to today's national one-month celebration, African American History Month is an integral thread woven into American history. It's also an important education tool for our students.

[When a student lacks access to communication](#)

Though the vast majority of students who are deaf or hard of hearing have no additional disabilities, an astounding percentage of them are falling behind their peers in the areas of language and literacy skills.

[Subgrants enable expanded services for homeless students](#)

Competitive subgrants are available to districts to expand services to homeless children and create awareness and sensitivity of district and school staff about ways to identify and serve these children.

[Resources available for social studies standards](#)

The Iowa Department of Education has launched revised social studies webpages on IowaCore.gov to offer resources and support implementation of Iowa's new social studies standards.

[Director Wise convenes state team to recommend computer science standards for schools](#)

Iowa Department of Education Director Ryan Wise convened members of a new team that will review and recommend Statewide standards for computer science education.

[New guide addresses needs of advanced learners](#)

Addressing the needs of advanced learners in a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) is the focus of a new guide that will be available to Iowa educators in April.

[National award underscores dedicated work of Iowa school districts](#)

There are some whose work it is to efficiently apply their expertise to help Iowa school districts with financial oversight and compliance.

[Staying at, or getting to, the top of their games](#)

Approximately 150 educators from around Iowa convened in Indianola for the third annual Emerging Educators Conference.

[Pella emphasizes quality communication through training](#)

Communication has been a systemic focus for the Teacher Leadership Compensation (TLC) program in the Pella Community School District.

[Diversity and inclusion: Mitigating unconscious biases in education](#)

Unconscious bias can sneak up on the best of us. Learn how to build inclusive workplaces and educational institutions at the upcoming 2018 Expanding Possibilities Iowa Adult Education and Literacy Virtual Conference.

[Teacher of the Year: Be a 'star' finder](#)

2018 Teacher of the Year Aileen Sullivan of Ames addressed the State Board of Education. Read her speech.

[Five Iowa schools honored for breaking education barriers](#)

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

[Outstanding Iowa teachers recognized for outstanding work](#)

Eleven Iowa teachers were recognized during the Outstanding Iowa Teachers Recognition Luncheon in Des Moines.

Nutrition and Health Services

Some kids are hungering for a solution. How you can help

Your leadership can help ensure that the children you work with during the school year do not go hungry in the summer.

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides organizations with the opportunity to serve free meals to kids age 18 years and younger, in high need areas.

What can you do to help make summer meals a priority?

- Connect with other school districts. Schools across the state have experience with this program and can share insight.
- As a trusted community organization, sponsor the program and host a meal site.
- Consider partnering with local organizations to provide meals as part of child-serving activities in the community such as library summer reading and parks and rec programming.
- Become a vendor for other SFSP sponsors. Schools are uniquely qualified to provide summer meals to other organizations.
- Spread the word about meal sites in your community or communities near you via program materials, district website, electronic message boards, social media, etc.



Summer Food Service Program, Legion Park, West Des Moines

Schools interested are invited to register to participate in an [informational webinar](#) on Feb. 22 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

For more information, visit the Iowa Department of Education [Summer Food Service Program webpage](#), or contact Stephanie Dross at 515-281-4760 or stephanie.dross@iowa.gov.



Summer Food Service Program
Swerve Outreach Altoona Kids Cafe



Legal Lessons

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

February fun

The father-daughter dance is fast approaching along with Valentine's Day and Valentine's parties. For me, February always reminds me of snow storms and the birth of my oldest who was born in the middle of an ice storm. I was stuck in the hospital with a little one in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and no one could make it out in the weather to come and visit us. At the time it was no fun, but it does make a great story to tell when we describe how she came into this world. Hopefully the ice will stay away this year and we can enjoy all of the February fun we have planned under safer driving conditions.

Now in this February Edition I bring you the Supreme Court: A year in Review and Reminders on FERPA and Facebook or Social Media Use.

The Supreme Court: A Year in Review

The judge who always likes the results he reaches is a bad judge. —Justice Antonin Scalia

Two cases during the 2016 term are particularly relevant to our work in education: *Fry vs. Napoleon Community Schools* and *Andrew F. vs. Douglas County School District RE-1*. Both addressed the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA).

In *Fry*, the parents of a child with severe cerebral palsy sought permission for her service dog Wonder to attend kindergarten with her. The school denied the request, finding it unnecessary because the student has a human aide provided for under her individual education plan (IEP). Her family began homeschooling her and filed a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), claiming a violation of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and § 504. OCR agreed. Although the school invited her to return, the student and Wonder enrolled in another school. Her parents filed a complaint in federal court alleging violation of Title II and § 504 and seeking declaratory and monetary relief. The district court dismissed the complaint, holding that 20 U.S.C. § 1415(l) required the family to first exhaust the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) administrative remedies. The appeals court affirmed the finding that § 1415(l) applies whenever a plaintiff's alleged harms are "educational" in nature.

The Supreme Court held that exhaustion of the administrative procedures established by IDEA is unnecessary when the gravamen (essence) of the plaintiff's suit is something other than the denial of the IDEA's core guarantee of a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE). Thus, the case was remanded back to the appeals court to determine if the complaint represented denial of a FAPE.

In the second case, a child with autism received annual IEPs from preschool through the fourth grade, at which time his parents believed his academic progress had stalled. When the district presented an IEP for his fifth grade year similar to past ones, his parents enrolled him in a private school, where he made significant progress. Andrew F.'s parents filed a complaint under IDEA seeking reimbursement for private school tuition with the Colorado Department of Education. The lower court interpreted *Rowley* to establish a rule that a child's IEP is adequate as long as it is calculated to confer a more than *de minimis* educational benefit.

In rejecting the *de minimis* standard, the Supreme Court held that a school must offer an IEP reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances.

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Legal Lessons continued

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The court vacated the lower court decision and remanded it. While the full impact of this decision has yet to be determined, one takeaway is that the adequacy of an IEP turns on the unique circumstances of the child for whom it was created.

Another case that attracted a fair bit of press was *Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia, Inc. v. Comer*. The court held that the Missouri Department of Education's denial of a grant for a church-operated preschool's playground resurfacing violated Trinity's rights under the free exercise clause of the 1st Amendment by denying the Church an otherwise available public benefit on account of its religious status. Thus, government entities can give money to religious entities but it must be for a secular purpose.

Reminders on FERPA for Facebook and other Social Media

As administrators you are all aware of the overwhelming amount of social media that is out there these days. Many of you have Facebook, Twitter, and other social media accounts that you use for a variety of reasons. Social media is a great tool for a number of reasons like: communication with staff, students, and parents, engaging students in class in a new way, bringing groups together for one common goal, or keeping up with classmates, alumni, family and friends. . . just to name a few. But, social media can also be used in inappropriate ways by administrators, teachers, students, and parents alike. Some of it is intentional and some of it is unintentional. Thus, we all need to be thinking on our feet when we are using these tools.

APPROPRIATE SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY POINTERS FOR STAFF:

For staff regarding the social networking they do on their own time:

- Limit student access to your site. Better yet, prohibit student access to any personal site not maintained solely for instructional purposes.
- Never discuss students or colleagues.
- Never post images of students.
- If using a site for instructional purposes, keep school administrators and parents informed of your use. Make sure at least one other school official has access to edit the site maintained for instructional purposes. Keep up a strictly professional relationship with students on such a site.
- Do not ask to be a student's friend on the student's site and do not accept a student's invitation to be his/her friend. IF you accept, tell the student's parent. (If you do not want to tell the parent, this says something about the appropriateness of accepting the invitation.)
- Monitor your site regularly and remove postings that are inappropriate.
- Google yourself to find out what others see. If you don't like what comes up, fix it!
- Do not access your site or other non-school sites using school equipment, time, or other resources.

Make sure you discuss these policies with your teachers and other staff. You may think that people do not notice what you put on social media, but just remember many of your friends are parents, teachers, and administrators and they don't always agree with what you post.

Students with Disabilities

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

Calendar

- February 1 • Last date to request authority to charge administrative costs to special education for the subsequent fiscal year
- February 10 • AEA Certified Budget deadline
- February 15 • Last day to bill for first semester tuition
- February 15 • Last day to bill for first semester special education tuition



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



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