



A MONTHLY JOURNAL
FOR IOWA EDUCATORS

School Leader Update

January 2014

Iowans tapped for Career and Technical Education task force

Twenty-six Iowans have been named to a state task force that will make recommendations to reduce skill shortages, enhance economic growth, and ensure that all students have access to high-quality, globally competitive career and technical education programs.

The Secondary Career and Technical Education Task Force was established as part of House File 604. For more information on task forces established by state legislators during the 2013 session, visit the Iowa Department of Education's [website](#).

Members of the Secondary Career and Technical Education Task Force are as follows:

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From concept to action: Getting it done

With the end of winter break and the start of a brand new year, schools in Iowa are once again full of renewed energy and focus. In fact, you could say that this new year of 2014 is a time of focus for our entire education system.

Our state came together in 2013 around a framework for improving our schools. The hard work and compromise that went into the historic education reform legislation adopted by Iowa lawmakers last spring exemplifies that shared commitment. So does our work to scale up evidence-based literacy practices in schools statewide through a collaboration between the Iowa Department of Education, area education agencies and local school districts.

If 2013 was about committing to plans for improvement, 2014 must be about moving ahead with those plans.

I really believe in what we're trying to accomplish around supporting teachers with the most comprehensive leadership system of its kind nationally, having high standards for what students should know and be able to do, and working to ensure that all students read proficiently by the end of third grade.

As director, I'm also committed to helping our schools implement this important work in a way that respects both the local context of our communities and the vision set at the state level.

To that end, we have two important developments in January with regard to implementation. The first has to do with the teacher leadership and compensation system.



Brad Buck, Director

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Two Iowans receive top math, science honors

Two Iowans have been named recipients of the prestigious Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Math teacher Josie Burg of Des Moines and science teacher Mason Kuhn of Shell Rock were among 102 math and science teachers nationwide recognized for their contributions to education. Burg teaches math at the Downtown School in Des Moines. Kuhn teaches science at Shell Rock Elementary in the Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District.



Mason Kuhn

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching is awarded annually to outstanding K-12 science and mathematics teachers from across the country. This year's awardees represent all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Department of Defense Education Activity. The educators will receive their awards at a Washington, D.C., event later this year. The winners are selected by a panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators following an initial selection process at the state level. Winners of this Presidential honor receive a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation to be used at their discretion.



Josie Burg

Continued from page 1, Secondary Career and Technical Education Task Force

Karrie Abbott, Vice President of Community Impact, United Way of the Quad Cities Area, Davenport	Murray Fenn, Consultant, Green Hills Area Education Agency, Council Bluffs	Vicky Rossander, Executive Board Member, Iowa State Education Association, Des Moines
Mary Bontrager, Executive Vice President, Workforce Development/Education, Greater Des Moines Partnership, Des Moines	Scott Fortune, Iowa Association of School Boards, Des Moines	Ken Sager, President, Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, Des Moines
Matt Bruinekool, Educational Consultant, Master Builders of Iowa, Des Moines	Jerry Kearns, State Representative, Keokuk*	Brian Schoenjahn, State Senator, Arlington*
Josh Byrnes, State Representative, Osage*	Gail Kotval, Iowa Innovation Council Program Manager, Iowa Economic Development Authority, Des Moines*	Elliott Smith, Executive Director, Iowa Business Council, Des Moines
Mark Chelgren, State Senator, Ottumwa*	Dana Lampe, President, Iowa Association of Career and Technical Education, Marion	Lisa Stange, FCEDS Program Coordinator, Iowa State University, Ames
Tom Cooley, Administrative Consultant, Iowa Department of Education*	D.T. Magee, Executive Director, Iowa Board of Educational Examiners, Des Moines*	Jeremy Varner, Division Administrator, Iowa Department of Education, Des Moines
Nicole Crain, Vice President, Government Relations, Association of Business and Industry, Des Moines	Randy Mead, Executive Dean of Program Development, Des Moines Area Community College, Ankeny	Ed Wallace, Deputy Director, Iowa Workforce Development, Des Moines*
Greg Dufoe, Superintendent, Adel-Desoto-Minburn Community School District, Adel	Kathy Nacos-Burds, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Northeast Community College, Calmar	Jeff Weld, Executive Director, Governor's STEM Advisory Council, Des Moines*
Chris Duree, Chancellor, Iowa Valley Community College District, Marshalltown	Julie Rosin, Assistant Director, Central Campus, Des Moines	

*Ex-officio/nonvoting member

Open enrollment transportation guidelines

The transportation reimbursement for the 2013-2014 school year for open-enrolled families that qualify according to income guidelines is \$479. Transportation assistance is only available to families that open enroll between contiguous districts. The cost of transportation reimbursement incurred by the resident district should be deducted from the tuition sent to the receiving district for a student who is open-enrolled. If the application for transportation assistance is filed after the beginning of the school year, the cost of providing the transportation should be pro-rated.

If a parent/guardian qualifies for school transportation assistance, the resident district has the authority to determine how the transportation assistance will be provided. The type of transportation assistance is not a parent/guardian choice. The resident district may meet its statutory obligation in one of three ways:

1. The resident district may provide transportation for the pupil(s) to a stop on the bus line of the receiving district.
2. The resident district may allow the receiving district to enter the resident district to pick up the pupil(s) if the receiving district requests this arrangement. If either the sending or receiving district does not approve the arrangement, the resident district is still obligated to provide transportation assistance.
3. The resident district may provide a parent/guardian with a cash reimbursement at \$479 per child per year for up to four children per family. The maximum number of children can include only one secondary child and up to three elementary children.

Income guidelines can be found in the Open Enrollment Handbook on the Iowa Department of Education website: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/options-educational-choice/open-enrollment>

Agency offers high-definition video service

The Iowa Communications Network (ICN) provides Internet, data, video, and phone services to K-12 schools and higher education users statewide. Many users are experiencing high-definition video, making the benefits of “being there” more of a reality. Education users are upgrading to flat-screen monitors, high-definition cameras, open microphones, and iPad video controllers. ICN’s Video@LightSpeed™ 1.0 is an introductory, E-rate eligible, IP video service, designed to reach almost any location in Iowa from ICN’s Polycom® platform. This subscription-based service allows for unlimited hours of video conferencing, which can be unscheduled. The first release includes common features popular with ICN users, while adding the flexibility of an Ethernet-based IP video solution. ICN continues to provide the same dedicated, round-the-clock telephone support from our Network Operations Center. Video rates are posted on ICN’s website at <http://icn.iowa.gov/services/video>. For more information, email ICN.CSS@iowa.gov.





Nominate a history teacher for state, national honors

Help us find the best history teacher in Iowa! We are now seeking nominations for a 7th through 12th grade history/social studies teacher for the 2014 Iowa History Teacher of the Year award. One teacher will be named the state winner, awarded \$1,000, and automatically entered into the National History Teacher of the Year selection process. The National History Teacher of the Year receives \$10,000 and is flown to New York City, along with two students, for an awards ceremony in the teacher's honor. Go to www.gilderlehrman.org/nhtoy to learn more and nominate a teacher. The deadline to nominate someone is Feb. 1. For more information, contact Stefanie Wager at stefanie.wager@iowa.gov.



Teachlowa.gov training announcement

There are a variety of learning opportunities to enhance and support your use of the Teachlowa.gov job posting and applicant tracking system.

Throughout 2014, a series of webinars will be hosted by Aspex Solutions for an interactive opportunity to learn more about the Teach Iowa system. Participation in these webinars will be at no charge, but registration will be necessary. The webinar topics will change over the course of the year and each webinar will be recorded and posted on Teachlowa.gov for access at your convenience. Webinar topics and registration links are listed below.

Be on the lookout for an announcement about face-to-face learning opportunities in your area. The Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners are partnering with each of Iowa's AEAs to bring an introductory and an advanced training to a location near you. Dates and locations will be announced at a later date. For more information, contact Marietta Rives at marietta.rives@iowa.gov or 515-281-6038. Webinar information is as follows:

Training: Posting jobs to Teachlowa.gov

Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2 to 2:30 p.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/771227054>

Monday, Feb. 17, 2 to 2:30 p.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/324911782>

Monday, March 17 2 to 2:30 p.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/343444518>

Monday, April 14, 10 to 10:30a.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/359874486>

Training: Reviewing applicants in Teachlowa.gov

Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2 to 2:30 p.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/791269046>

Monday, Feb. 3, 10 to 10:30 a.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/284985542>

Monday, March 3, 2014 10 to 10:30 a.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/271655030>

Monday, April 7, 10 to 10:30 a.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/288220438>

Training: Advanced Features in Teachlowa.gov

Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2 to 2:30 p.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/804488574>

Monday, Feb. 10, 2 to 2:30 p.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/295842638>

Monday, March 10, 2 to 2:30 p.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/303742110>

Monday, April 14, 2 to 2:30 p.m.

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/309201502>

School administration manager authorization

A person serving as a school administration manager prior to July 1, 2014, is eligible for the standard school administration manager authorization, subject to the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation and national criminal history background checks. The person will be assessed the background check fee. The school administration manager must have completed the school administration manager training and must be listed on the Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS) as a school administration manager by Oct. 31, 2013. The application fee for such persons will be waived if the application is received prior to June 30, 2014. The applications will be available in the late spring, and the authorizations will be issued after July 1, 2014. The application must be postmarked by June 30, 2014, or there will be an \$85 fee for the issuance of the authorization.

Deadline nearing for Microsoft settlement addendum

The window for filing an addendum to the Microsoft settlement will be closing on March 31. The program ends on June 30, and filing for reimbursement must be done by Sept. 30. If you wish to file an addendum, the next step is for the contact person to send an email before March 31 to the Iowa Department of Education (see contact information below) saying that you would like to make a change to your application.

The product has to be linked to your focus area so it may be purchased for the grade levels that you have identified and for each of the eligible school buildings. Remember any invoice can only run up to the ending date of June 30, so watch any subscriptions time lines. Approval only means that the product is acceptable and linked to your application. Product eligibility list is located on the claims administrator website at www.iowaschoolmicrosoftsettlement.com. The process for requesting a product consideration for inclusion is also located there.

If you have had an administrative change, it is critical to update the contact information because this person is the direct contact of the claims administrator, external evaluator or the Iowa Department of Education. Check the contact information by going on the application site at www.edinfo.state.ia.us. Login and select the district name to see if the contact information needs to be changed or if there has been an administrative change at any of the eligible schools in your district. If there has been an administrative change, send the district name, name of the building, the new administrator's name and email address to the Department's John O'Connell at john.oconnell@iowa.gov or 515-249-0334. For more information about the Microsoft settlement for schools, go to: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/educational-technology/microsoft-settlement-information-iowa-schools>

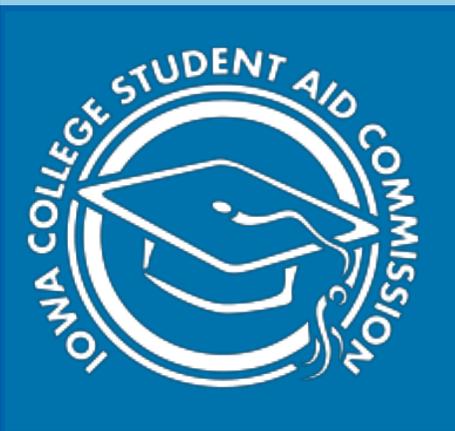


Iowa College Aid launches a blog

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission has launched its agency blog, Education Empowers. The blog is a new resource for students, parents and educators that provides practical, informative and engaging tips and insights related to financial aid and college and career planning.

The name "Education Empowers" was chosen because it encompasses the influence education has to change an individual's life. New posts will be added to the blog on a weekly basis and will supplement Iowa College Aid's efforts on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Iowa College Aid will even accept blog requests and write about topics readers find pressing. If you or anyone you know is interested in becoming a guest blogger for Education Empowers, contact Heather Doe at heather.doe@iowa.gov.

Education Empowers can be accessed at: <http://iowacollegestudentaidcommission.wordpress.com/>



Cashing in on financial literacy

Iowa high schools and college-bound seniors have an opportunity to cash in on their financial literacy. The 2013-2014 Iowa Financial Know-How Challenge offers high schools the chance to win \$1,000 and seniors the possibility of a \$1,500 scholarship. The \$1,000 high school challenge is free and simple, and participation can be completed in a single 45-minute class period.

Schools that register for the challenge and have students complete the

Ednalysis Financial Literacy Assessment by Jan. 31 will be entered in a drawing for a chance to win one of 30 \$1,000 cash prizes to benefit financial literacy programs and scholarship funds.

Iowa Student Loan®, the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Jump\$tart Coalition, Junior Achievement of Central Iowa and the Iowa College Access Network sponsor the program.

The assessment allows teachers to see how well their students understand essential financial literacy skills. Registered schools whose students complete the assessment will be entered in the drawing. Individual student scores are confidential and will be shared only with the high school.

Schools can now register at <http://challenge.ednalysis.com> for the 2013-2014 Iowa Financial Know-How Challenge, and students can then begin taking the assessment. Use the "Get Started" link on the left to enter your school information and create your username and password. You will also be able to request login information for each student in grades 9-12 who will participate in the challenge.

And for college-bound seniors, the Iowa Financial Know-How Challenge: Senior Scholarship expands the challenge by awarding 20 scholarships worth \$1,500 each to students who complete the Ednalysis assessment test and two financial literacy modules in February 2014. Interested seniors will receive emails highlighting financial literacy tips and reminding them to complete Student Loan Game PlanSM and the ROCI Reality Check, both of them resources offered by Iowa Student Loan to help students realize their financial goals. For more information about the challenge, contact Matt Brown at Iowa Student Loan at 1-800-243-7552, ext. 7656, or by email at mbrown@studentloan.org.



Students are challenged in video contest

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission and EverFi, Inc. have teamed up to sponsor the third annual [Iowa Financial Literacy Video Clip \(IFLiP Video CLiP\) Challenge!](#) The challenge is an opportunity for Iowa high school students to put their creativity to work by producing a short video designed to educate their peers about financial literacy concepts or the importance of financial literacy. Students are encouraged to showcase their creativity. The competition also allows students to celebrate and promote April as Financial Literacy Awareness month.

Each team of students will need an educator mentor from the high school to review the videos prior to submission. Video entries must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m., March 23, 2014. Students who submit the winning video will receive prize money for the team to share and a technology grant for their school.



Schools are encouraged to post the [IFLiP Video CLiP promotional flyer](#), or send it to your teachers and students. More information about the challenge is available on the Iowa College Student Aid Commission [website](#).

Girls encouraged to head to the Capitol

The deadline is fast approaching for an opportunity to get high school girls to shadow female legislators to get a close-up look of how the Legislature works.

The program, called "Capitol Girls," is aimed at girls in grades 9 through 12. The day-long Feb. 5 event is designed to give young women a sense of the political process and helps participants develop personal leadership skills.

The event is being sponsored by the Girl Scouts in conjunction with the Iowa Commission for the Status of Women. Cost is \$15 for Girl Scouts, and \$30 for others. Scholarships are available. Lunch is included.



Registrations are due Jan. 17. To sign up, go to www.girlscoutsiowa.org or www.girlscouttoday.org.



Data and Reporting

2013-2014 bullying and harassment data

Accredited public and nonpublic schools are required to submit bullying and harassment data.

Please ensure that data are being entered for the 2013-14 school year. The application is accessed through the Department's Education Portal: <https://portal.ed.iowa.gov/iowalandingpage/Landing.aspx>

All incidents that meet one or more of the following criteria based on the targeted student's perception of the incident should be reported:

- Conduct placed the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
- Conduct had a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
- Conduct had the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance.
- Conduct had the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in, or benefit from, services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Certification of these data will be required at the end of the 2013-14 school year.

Additional guidance, as well as instructions for accessing the application, can be found on the Department's website: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/learner-supports/anti-bullyinganti-harassment>

For more information, contact Meredith MacQuigg at meredith.macquigg@iowa.gov or 515-281-4705.

Training sessions on E-rate available

The deadline for filing E-rate form 471 applications for the 2014-2015 school-funding year has been announced. E-rate form 471 may be filed online starting at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 9. The deadline for completing Form 471 is 10:59 p.m. Wednesday, March 26. That means that E-rate form 470, which must be filed at least 28 days before 471, must be filed no later than Feb. 26.

The Form 471 is being revised and all applicants are encouraged to participate in training. Training sessions for Form 471 are as follows:

Completing Form 471: (select one)

Wednesday, Jan. 15, 9 to 11 a.m.

Thursday, Jan. 16, 1 to 3 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 28, 10 a.m. to noon

Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2 to 4 p.m.

To participate in any of the above sessions, go to <http://iowa.adobeconnect.com/e-rate> and select "enter as a guest." For more information, contact Pam Jacobs (pam.jacobs@iowa.gov) or call 515-975-0071.

Data and Reporting continued

Winter Student Reporting in Iowa

Winter Student Reporting in Iowa (SRI) is a required data submission for all public school districts and nonpublic schools that submit individual student records for SRI – all schools, all grade levels. By sending all schools, you have the opportunity to validate all data and utilize SRI as a resource for keeping your data as accurate as possible.

Mark your calendars with the following winter submission dates:

Jan. 2: Winter SRI Testing closes at the end of the day.

Jan. 6: Winter SRI Production site opens.

Jan. 31: Winter SRI Certification deadline.

For districts with high schools, the CTE Courses in a Program must be completed and approved by Jan. 31. Since the CTE application uses SRI Winter data, you must have moved the district's data to SRI before you can begin working on the CTE Courses in a Program. For questions regarding CTE Courses in a Program, contact the CTE Consultant assigned to your region. For more information and documents, check the [Student Reporting in Iowa website](#) or contact Carla Schimelfenig at 515-281-3111 or carla.schimelfenig@iowa.gov.

Continued from page 1, Director Buck

School administrators who want to pursue funding to implement a system locally in the 2013-14 school year must submit a plan to a statewide commission by Jan. 31. This Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation will then evaluate and make recommendations for approval to the Iowa Department of Education.

I'm thrilled that every school district in the state embraced planning grants to support the development of teacher leadership systems in their communities. Some school districts will want to move forward right away by submitting an implementation plan this month, while others will take more time. Either approach is great. The statewide system will fully develop over the course of four years, so the goal is to have all school districts voluntarily participate by the 2016-17 school year. Whichever pace is right for your district, we look forward to supporting you in the months and years ahead. To learn more about this important work, please visit our website at www.educateiowa.gov.

A second important development has to do with our state's efforts to improve literacy. This month, legislators and the State Board of Education will review a set of proposed administrative rules related to improving early literacy programs in Iowa schools. Specifically, the proposed rules would enact a section of Iowa Code that legislators adopted in 2012 and funded in 2013.

The proposed rules direct school districts to use a scientific, research-based curriculum to guide reading instruction. School districts can choose a curriculum to fit their needs locally – the rules simply require that they choose from a menu of options. The Iowa Reading Research Center, in collaboration with the Department, will be adopting standards for reading curriculum and materials.

Members of the State Board of Education gave notice of their intent to adopt these proposed rules during their November meeting. I encourage you to [read the proposed rules and provide feedback](#). I'm so optimistic about the direction we're moving in as a state. I wish you all a very happy new year.



Early Childhood Preschool Programs

Answers to voluntary preschool questions

Go to the Iowa Department of Education's recently updated website for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program to access a resource to address your questions regarding receipt and use of funds. Categories addressed in the Funding/Spending FAQ include: Receipt of Funds, Funding Sources, Administrative Cost, Transportation, Registration Fee, Tuition, Partners, Annual Calculations, Improvements, Growing, Enrollment, and Other Fees/Uses of Funding. Look for finance department-approved responses to your funding/spending questions in this resource.

For more information on the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, go to:

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/statewide-voluntary-preschool-program-and-four-year-old-children> or contact Penny Milburn at penny.milburn@iowa.gov or 515-281-7844, Jennifer Adkins at jennifer.adkins@iowa.gov or 515-725-2219, or Amy Stegeman at amy.stegeman@iowa.gov or 515-725-2273. Finance questions may also be directed to Jeff Berger at jeff.berger@iowa.gov



Identifying English language learners

Districts serving students who are English language learners (ELL) need to identify and report these students in their student information systems. ELL status is required for all preschool students reported in the Student Reporting in Iowa data submission. In order to identify students, the Iowa Department of Education recommends using Form A located on the Tranact website or the GOLD online Home Language Survey.

For additional information, contact Jobi Lawrence at 515-281-3805 or jobi.lawrence@iowa.gov.



Nutrition and Health Services

School wellness policy webinar

Creating a culture of wellness is realistic and doable. But it requires support systems, active communication, and comprehensive wellness policies that are implemented, all of which are requirements under the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act federal legislation. To learn more about the wellness policy requirements that are required by school districts in the state of Iowa and what to expect during a state review to ensure you are in compliance, join us for a webinar on Jan. 28 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. [Click here](#) for more information or to register.

Want to stay connected?

Healthy Schools – Healthy Students is an e-newsletter published in partnership with Iowa Team Nutrition and Iowa Partners: Action for Healthy Kids. The monthly newsletters share information about nutrition and physical activity school programs, awareness of upcoming school wellness training opportunities, and success stories from Iowa schools. To receive this monthly newsletter, e-mail schoolmeals@iowa.gov and put “SUBSCRIBE” in the subject line.

For more information, contact Carrie Scheidel at carrie.scheidel@iowa.gov or 515-281-4758.

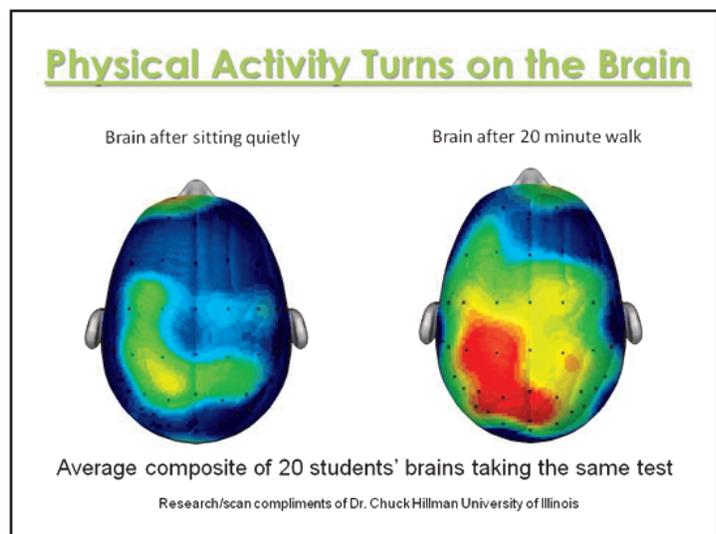
Iowa school wellness forum

In November, Iowa Partners: Action for Healthy Kids and the Iowa Department of Education’s Team Nutrition Program held an Iowa School Wellness Forum. Attended by over 60 school employees, public health professionals, Iowa Department of Education staff, members of the medical community, and non-profit organizations, the forum showcased the academic benefits of a healthy school environment.

The keynote speaker of the forum was Dr. Ruth Litchfield from Iowa State University. Her presentation included information about the [Wellness Impact Report](#). The report illuminates the vital importance of nutrition and increased physical activity in creating a school environment that enriches students’ readiness to learn. The report was a launch

pad for discussions held throughout the day about how all sectors of society can work together to create an atmosphere where children have the knowledge, options, and opportunities to help them live healthier lives.

For more information about the school wellness forum, including presentations and resources, visit: <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/in-your-state/iowa/welcome>



Cognitive effects of exercise in preadolescent children presented in the Wellness Impact Report.

Nutrition and Health Services continued

USDA report due Feb. 1

The U.S. Department of Agriculture developed a new form to collect information from School Food Authorities (SFAs) related to the meal eligibility verification process. The USDA is now requiring reporting in greater detail, and the deadline for this submission is Feb. 1. All SFAs that operate the School Breakfast Program or National School Lunch Program must complete the Verification Collection Report on the CNP2000 system, where you'll find the new form. Contact Deb Linderblood at deb.linderblood@iowa.gov or 515-281-5663 or Patti Harding at patti.harding@iowa.gov or 515-281-4754 for assistance.

Reporting requirements for *hawk-i*

Public school districts are required by state rules (Iowa Administrative Code 283A.2) to release to the Iowa Department of Human Services household information for students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meal benefits and who have expressed interest in learning about the Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa (*hawk-i*/Medicaid program). Nonpublic schools are encouraged, but not required, to release this information. To report the names of parents/guardians who have requested an application, visit <http://www.hawk-i.org/>. Instructions are located in the Form Download section of the CNP 2000 system. Public schools with no names to report must file a report with no names. Contact Deb Linderblood at deb.linderblood@iowa.gov or 515-281-5663 for assistance.





Legislative Update

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

Cormack at the Capitol Playing by the rules

When I was coaching middle school sports in the Cumberland-Anita-Massena school system, I was blessed to have quality kids and parents to work with during those years. Beyond great memories of the players I was honored to coach, what ends up standing out are specific finishes to games or magical plays. I remember one fantastic play in which a basketball player picked up the ball, heaved it two-thirds of the way down the court, and it dropped in as the halftime buzzer went off. Unfortunately, that terrific feat was accomplished by a player on the other team. But, there were Cougar memories that stand out, too.

The other day I was at a Drake basketball game, and there was plenty of foul trouble for the Bulldogs. Someone asked me, "What happens if the team fouls out so many players that they only have four players left?" Well, you continue to play with four players. That's what happened to my boys basketball team, when I had a short but talented roster of seven players for the season. They were undefeated heading into their last game on the road with their nearby rivals, Adair-Casey. With one player injured, we entered the game with six players. By the end of the third quarter, we had five left because one player fouled out. With a five-point lead and 90 seconds on the clock, another player fouled out. We had four players remaining! If it had been hockey, we would have been defending against the power play the rest of the way.



When the other team tied the score with 10 seconds left, and two of our players had four fouls, it looked rather hopeless. Still, with confidence and good cheer, I designed a play for four players and shared it with the players as if I had done this before (I hadn't). The other team triple-teamed a top player of ours on the inbound pass and remarkably, with what I drew up, one player was left wide open. One baseball pass to midcourt and subsequent drive to the hoop later, we scored the winning bucket. When the other team missed its last shot, a perfect season ended and four players had won the game! It was so exciting, so memorable -- and I'm glad that situation never, ever happened again.

As rules coordinator at the Department of Education, I have been involved in several high-profile issues before the State Board of Education. Some, such as attempts to find compromise on when schools can start fall classes, ended like the player heaving the ball down the court. Others, such as bus inspection fees that allowed the hiring of a third bus inspector, were able to survive, much like the 5-on-4 basketball experience. Mostly, the rules process can be dry -- technical, yet always important to the implementation of Iowa law. The Iowa Reading Research Center, for example, was aided by the level of detail that the rules process provided, and there has been a smooth transition into action as a result.

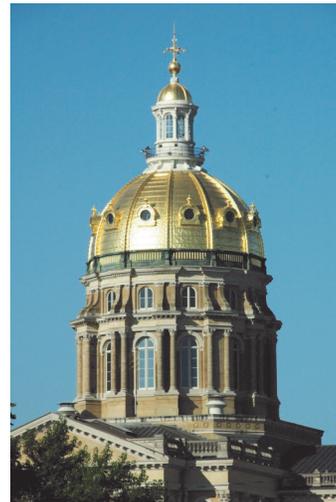
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Legislative Update continued

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At this point, we haven't utilized emergency rules since I have been the rules coordinator for the past year and a half. It doesn't mean we won't, but we try to avoid it. With emergency rules, the requirement of a public hearing and two other public appearances before the State Board of Education, as well as the Legislature's Administrative Rules Review Committee, are eliminated. As a former legislator, I always felt emergency rules should be limited in use and scope. The need to meet a federal grant program on a tight deadline is one example of appropriate use. With the normal rules process, it takes approximately 110 days to pass a rule, with five opportunities for public input. That is appropriate, and public input has improved many of our rules.

Each proposed administrative rule has the opportunity for public comment through the normal process. Comments can be submitted in person at the rules hearing, by email or by traditional mail. We welcome any and all types of comment. No manner of comment has any more or less standing. We do appreciate it when folks join us for public hearings in Des Moines, but we enter written comment into the record with the same amount of importance. Sometimes nobody appears at public hearings, and I do my best Maytag repairman impression at those, working on other items while I sit in an empty room. For the operational sharing issue, 55 citizens attended the public hearing. Whether we have many or none, I believe the opportunity for comment is something that is very important, and I am glad that we have a solid record of providing that opportunity.



In addition, citizens may speak during the public comment portion of any State Board of Education meeting. During public comment time, members of the public can address any topic on the agenda. This includes the board's notice of intent to adopt or amend administrative rules (which starts the rules process) and adoption of the rules. With the Administrative Rules Review Committee (ARRC), a joint Senate-House committee that oversees state agency rule-making, any citizen at a meeting may stand up and provide comment on the proposed rule, as well.

On our department's [website](#), we have a page dedicated to administrative rules. In addition, the State Board of Education agendas listed on the [website](#) will always list rules that are moving forward. We plan to add upcoming rules hearings on the overall department calendar this year, too. The legislative webpage also has areas dedicated to administrative rules, both in published [bulletins](#) and on a [section](#) devoted to the ARRC, which ultimately reviews every rule we propose. You may sign up for automatic updates whenever new bulletins or new ARRC information comes forward on the ARRC site. Finally, feel free at any time to give an old-fashioned phone call or an email to me directly (mike.cormack@iowa.gov or 515-281-3399) if you have any questions about where items stand in the rules process.



On January 3, there will be two public hearings in the second-floor State Board Room of the Grimes Building. A 1 p.m. hearing concerns a proposed rule to allow the student member of the State Board of Education to serve an extra year. A 2 p.m. hearing relates to proposed new reading rules. Comments can be sent to me via email until 4:30 p.m. on January 3.

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Legislative Update continued

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The ARRC will meet on January 10 in Room 116 at the State Capitol at approximately 12:30 p.m. (Check the legislative website for an exact time and agenda as the date nears.) That panel of 10 House and Senate members, five from each chamber and party, will allow passage or seek to delay those particular rules in those meetings. Again, committee members will see these rules two times in this process, at both the noticing and adoption stages. They also will have their last look at the adoption stage of the rules concerning home school provisions at that meeting.

Finally, the State Board of Education will meet on January 23 in the State Board Room at the Grimes Building at roughly 10 a.m. (again, check the department [website](#) mid-month for an official agenda posting for time). Board members will have their last review of these two rules and will give their blessing or denial. Limited changes can be made to the rules at any of these stages, while whole-scale changes would require starting the process over again.

In the past year and a half, I have learned much about administrative rules. Today, I feel like I have a level of knowledge in this area that is much greater than when I began, but I still am learning the nuances of a technical rules process. I consider myself a creative person -- at times in working with administrative rules, I feel like I am staring at an old VCR installation manual. However, the bottom line is that rules are intended to provide clarity to all Iowans on how our Department is implementing laws that have passed. If this were a rock-paper-scissors contest, law always trumps rules. We try our level best to make the rules conform to the spirit and letter of the law we are working from. And we try to do that while allowing a process for citizen input that will hopefully lead to a better, final product.



In basketball, there are plenty of rules to follow. Without rules, there would be chaos. A basketball game without rules would look like a glorified rugby contest. Within the rules, much remains possible, including the ability of a desperate coach to draw up a winning play with one less player on the court. At the end of the day, it was the player making the play that won the game. So, too, our rules are only as effective in helping children in our state as the implementation of them in our 346 school districts. We thank you for your work to do just that. Meanwhile, if any districts are looking for expertise in the area of proper coaching of 5-on-4 basketball strategy, I would be glad to put together a clinic for you.





Legal Lessons

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

Happy New Year

It's time to look back on 2013 and make New Year's resolutions for 2014. As I look back on 2013, I realized how fast it went and what a great year it was. At the Iowa Department of Education, we worked hard with legislators and other stakeholders to pass and fund education reform that will have a far-reaching, positive impact on schools, teachers, and students for years to come. What an amazing accomplishment for our state! Our work is just beginning, and I am excited to see how it will benefit our children in the future. My one work resolution is to not be as busy with legislation for 2014 and to focus on implementation. (We will see if I can keep this one.)

On a personal note, my oldest child has completed her first semester of kindergarten and she can read, count money, tell time, and speak Spanish. This is a stark contrast from when I was in school. My kindergarten days were filled with half-days, play stations, learning to tie my shoes, and taking naps. It is amazing to me how much school has changed since I was a kid. I am constantly reminding my daughter that she is already smarter than I was at her age. I am excited to see how she will continue to grow in 2014. This coming year my son will finally begin preschool, and I cannot wait to see him grow and learn like his big sister. They are growing so fast! If I could freeze them in time at the precious ages of five and three, I would – even when they are being naughty. My own personal resolution is to remember to not be in such a rush with my kiddos. When I stop to enjoy the moments, even the little ones, like my son asking me to snuggle with him in the morning (when we are running late) or my daughter asking me to help her with her rainbow loom (for the 10th time), I am reminded that those are the best moments in my life, and I need to stop and cherish them. So as you head into this new year, don't be in a rush because you could miss some of the best moments of your day. Happy New Year!

Bullying, harassment, and the equity link

Bullying has been, and will continue to be, a hot topic. We will continue to see proposals in the legislative session to make changes to the law. We also will continue to hear stories in the news and on social media about incidents of bullying occurring here in Iowa and around the United States. Since this continues to be a hot topic, it deserves some attention here.

For school districts that are dealing with bullying reports and investigations, there is a fine line between bullying and discriminatory harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age under the civil rights laws. Administrators need to recognize when student misconduct that appears to fall under an anti-bullying policy also triggers responsibilities under one or more of the anti-discrimination laws enforced by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

The failure to recognize discriminatory harassment when dealing with a bullying incident can lead to an inappropriate response or a failure to remediate violations of individual student rights. In 2010, OCR provided guidance on the relationship between bullying and discriminatory harassment in a Dear Colleague letter (turn to page 17 for a link to this letter). In August 2013, OCR also provided specific guidance on bullying and harassment in an IDEA context. School administrators should be familiar with these documents to ensure the proper handling of bullying and harassment complaints. Just remember the worst thing an administrator can do with a bullying and harassment complaint is nothing at all. Keep up your hard work and dedication to making your school environment a happy and safe environment for all kids.

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Legal Lessons continued

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OCR Dear Colleague Letter on Bullying and Harassment

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.pdf>

Fact Sheet

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-factsheet-201010.pdf>

August 20, 2013, OCR Dear Colleague Letter on Bullying and Harassment and IDEA

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/bullyingdcl-8-20-13.pdf>

The role of your equity coordinator

In many districts, the role of the equity coordinator has been relegated to handling complaints and grievances related to perceived discrimination and harassment. The role of the equity coordinator is critical. Serious attention to the responsibilities of the equity coordinator would assist in eliminating many of those violations.

Title IX of the education amendments of 1972 states, "Each district shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under this legislation, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to such recipient alleging its noncompliance with this part or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by this part. The recipient shall notify all its students and employees of the name, office address and telephone number of the employee or employees appointed pursuant to this paragraph." There is similar language in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 dealing with discrimination on the basis of disability.

It is clear the intent of the legislation is for the equity coordinator to be more than a receiver of complaints and a grievance processor. It's the equity coordinator's role to keep staff, students, and parents informed about their responsibilities and rights under the law and to monitor programs and activities within the district to ensure that they comply with federal and state equity requirements related to gender, disability, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, and socioeconomic status.

If you are unsure, or your equity coordinator is unsure of what their responsibilities are, contact your AEA for assistance. The AEA can provide training and updates for equity coordinators. You may also refer to the Department of Education's "[Equity Education](#)" webpage, where you will find guidance on the role of the equity coordinator.

For more information about equity issues, contact Margaret Jensen Connet at 515-281-3769 or margaret.jensenconnet@iowa.gov.

Students with disabilities

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

GED exits, and HiSET enters

Iowa has adopted a new test to replace the GED starting this month. This means the Iowa Department of Education's materials will no longer reference GED as the assessment required for a state-issued high school equivalency diploma. Instead, the Department will use "high school equivalency diploma test" as well as the new test's name, which is HiSET.

You can read more about the transition to HiSET here: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/article/2013/08/19/new-high-school-equivalency-diploma-test-replace-ged-iowa-next-year>

Calendar

- January 15 • Department approvals for MSA-DoP due 12:00 p.m.
- January 31 • Application deadline for State Board of Education student member

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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