

School Leaders of Iowa

February 2004

Bureau of Administration and School Improvement Services Iowa Department of Education

(This document is also available on the DE web site.)

<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/index.html>

There is no winning, no hope of constant improvement, for you or your people, unless there is involvement. You must love what you do, or else excellence remains an elusive target.

Tom Peters, *A Passion for Excellence*

1. **Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).** The Department distributed the technical assistance package for CSIP Constant Conversation #2: "What do/will we do to meet student learning needs?" to all CSIP contacts on Wednesday, January 28. The documents will also be available soon at the CSIP web site: <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/csi/documents.html>
2. **Winter Institute: Programs/Services Evaluation.** The Iowa Department of Education, School Administrators of Iowa, and the Iowa Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development are sponsoring a February Winter Institute again this year. The topic this year is focused on CSIP Constant Conversation #4: How will we evaluate our programs and services to ensure improved student learning? The day will include the following conversation tools: a) Clear Expectations for Programs/Services—what we wanted, b) Results Data for Programs/Services—what happened, and c) Additional Information Needed about Programs/Services—what else we need to know. The Department will also gather information from attendees about their needs with regard to program/service evaluation.

The same session will be held in four different locations around the state:

February 3: West Des Moines
February 5: Cedar Rapids
February 10: Ames
February 11: Sioux City

For registration information, call SAI at 515-267-1115.

3. **Annual Driver Education Reports.** The Office of Driver Services, Department of Transportation, still has not received the annual Driver Education reports that were due on December 24, 2003, from some school districts. The reports may be found at this address: <http://www.dot.state.ia.us/mvd/ods/education/public.htm>

If you cannot print the documents or have any questions, use the contact information below:

Contact: Steve Tudor, 515-237-3180, steven.tudor@dot.state.ia.us.

4. **AEA Customer Satisfaction Survey.** All educators are invited to participate in the 2003-04 statewide AEA Customer Satisfaction Survey. This survey allows you to provide valuable feedback to each AEA as system improvement conversations occur. The survey this year is web based and should take 10-30 minutes to complete, depending on the quantity of feedback you provide. Each

section of the survey also allows you to provide narrative feedback. *Access to the survey will end February 13, 2004.*

To access the survey, simply use the following web site URL and follow the directions provided:
<http://proj1.aea15.k12.ia.us/docs/aeasurvey.html>

Contact: Jeff Berger, 515-281-3399, jeff.berger@ed.state.ia.us

5. **Healthy School Environment Workshops.** To help schools and communities take on the serious problem of obesity, which adversely affects children at home and at school, the Bureau of Food and Nutrition, Iowa Department of Education, and Partners for Healthy Kids, a group of more than 25 state education and health organizations, are holding five regional workshops across Iowa in February, March, and April. The workshops will provide resources and information that can help children eat healthy and be more physically active. The workshops will identify local priorities that will lead to establishing a local action plan to take home. There is no cost to attend this training.

Who Should Attend

These workshops are for school administrators, school board members, school food service, teachers, nurses, coaches, and interested community members. Because combating these issues will take a concerted community-wide effort, we recommend having a team attend, from those listed above, who will be active in creating a healthy school environment.

For More Information

Registration materials are on the Bureau of Food and Nutrition Web site under the Training sidebar, <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/fn/>
Contact Janet Wendland, janet.wendland@ed.state.ia.us

6. **Mathematics Added to the Iowa Content Network.** The Mathematics Section is now available on the Iowa Department of Education Content Network web site. This web site has been designed to help school districts identify content for implementing their district career development plans pursuant to Iowa Code section 284.6. As districts develop their district career development plans, they will collect and analyze data, set goals, and identify content. *Note: Each school district will incorporate its district career development plan into its comprehensive school improvement plan (CSIP) that is due September 15, 2004.*

Web Site Content: The web site now contains mathematics and reading research. Science research will be added in the near future. The site offers information about how to select strategies for professional development that are supported by scientifically based research. The site is also a resource that will help local districts identify research studies which show evidence that particular instructional practices have had an effect on student achievement. When compared with district data, a district should be able to match the area of need to potential professional development content options. The site includes processes to use locally when selecting content, resources, and links to other sources of information about scientifically based research in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science. Each study is rated using a 5-point scale. The rating is based on an established criteria that describes the quality of the research design. The rating does not suggest the level of quality of the strategy or model. Every review includes a summary of the research results.

Notes: This site will not contain recommendations for specific strategies, programs, or products. Nor will the site provide a list of trainers to deliver content based on the findings.

For more information about professional development see the Iowa Professional Development Model at the same web site. <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/tqt/tc/prodev.html>

Contact: Deb Hansen, 515-281-6131, deb.hansen@ed.state.ia.us
Kathy Book, 515-281-6235, kathy.book@ed.state.ia.us

7. **Advanced Placement (AP) Exams.** The instruction packet for the Advanced Placement (AP) Reimbursement for Exams is an attachment with the February *School Leaders of Iowa Update*. This reimbursement applies to students who are eligible for free and/or reduced price lunches. The intent is to remove the cost barrier for low-income students to participate in the AP exam opportunity. The school district must indicate the number of low-income exams when ordering prior to the May exam dates. After eligible students have taken the AP exams, send the appropriate form to the Iowa Department of Education.
Contact: Rosanne Malek, 515-281-3199, rosanne.malek@ed.state.ia.us
8. **American Lawyers Auxiliary Honors Teachers.** For over forty years, the American Lawyers Auxiliary has been active in its support of public education, citizenship awareness, and various public service programs. Nominations for the 2004 LRE teach award may be made by any school administrator, coordinator or director, or by any person identified with the program. Nominations should be teachers that have a) furthered the understanding of the role of the courts, law enforcement agencies and the legal profession; b) helped students to recognize their duties as well as their rights, c) encouraged effective law-related education programs; d) increased communication between students, educators, and those involved professionally in the legal system. To submit a nomination for the Teacher of the Year Award, use the contact below:
Contact: Katie M. Robinson, 323-296-0627.
9. **Non-Public Transportation Reimbursement Claims.** For those of you who file a first semester non-public reimbursement claim, the applications web site is open and ready for your input. Those claims should have been filed by **January 31st**. The Department will start processing claims the first week in February. Once the claims are processed and the checks are sent to the districts, *it will require an Appeal Board Claim to receive your funds as a result of late filing.*

School Bus Driver In-service. School bus drivers should complete their yearly in-service by June 30th. The Department will not offer the 2003-04 in-service training after June 30th. If you have drivers who miss, for example, the 2003-04, they will revert back to "new" driver status and have to take the 12-hour class in order to maintain an authorization. This could not only cost a district or driver more money for training, but it could also put a district jeopardize driver availability.

2nd Semester Bus Inspection Schedules. The bus inspection schedules for the second semester have now been posted on the Department of Education web site.
10. **Teach Iowa.** Teach Iowa, the teacher recruitment website sponsored by the Iowa Department of Education, has recently been updated to include a feature which allows potential candidates to post their name, contact information, and endorsements. The new feature allows employers to review the candidate list as they seek to fill positions. Teach Iowa, provided at no cost to both employers and candidates, includes job listings in categories for general and special education teachers, administrators, area education agency staff, college and university staff, and the Iowa Department of Education. A key benefit of the site is that it has the capability to send job listings through e-mail to those who register for the service. That means pre-service students and other job seekers are updated regularly about job opportunities once they have submitted their name to the Iowa educator database. Currently, some 2,800 potential candidates are registered for the e-mail update service. Jobs posted on the Teach Iowa site reach teacher candidates throughout the United States. The site is linked to a national site and is promoted through a variety of avenues. The site can be accessed at the following address: www.iowaeducationjobs.com
Contact: Norma Lynch, 515-281-6038, norma.lynch@ed.state.ia.us
11. **Get the Facts: Iowa Quick Facts.** The State Library's State Data Center has developed the web page *Iowa Quick Facts* that provides useful statistics and information about the state. *Guide to Iowa Caucus Web Sites*, another new State Library website, has links to high quality information about the Iowa caucus process. Both are located near the top of the State Library's home page at this address: <http://www.silo.lib.ia.us>

Other services that the State Library offers state employees free of charge are the following: Answers for your information needs; specialized databases for Iowa statistics, health, law, and patents information; document delivery - they can put virtually any book or article in your hands; computer lab and meeting rooms; and quiet study areas. Food and drink are allowed.

12. **Whole-Grade Sharing Corrections from the January School Leaders of Iowa Update.**

The January *School Leaders of Iowa* had two mistakes:

- a) **The whole-grade-sharing chart erroneously stated that parents may petition the resident district board for a period of 45 days after the agreement is signed. In reality, parents only have a 45-day period in which to file open enrollment (if January 1 deadline is missed) if an existing whole grade sharing agreement is dissolved or if negotiations for a new agreement fail. But, for a successful new whole grade sharing agreement, parents who want their children to attend another contiguous district, must petition the resident district within the 30 day period before the whole grade sharing agreement is signed. The change has been made to the chart that appears as an attachment to the February *School Leaders of Iowa Update*.**
- b) **The financial incentives for sharing chart stated the weighting for regional academies was .48. The amount should be .10. The change has been made in the chart that appears as an attachment to the February *School Leaders of Iowa Update*.**

Contact: Eric Heitz, 515-281-5001, eric.heitz@ed.state.ia.us

13. **Visiting Teacher from Spain Program.** Local school districts are invited to participate in *The Visiting Teacher from Spain Program*. This program provides local school districts with the opportunity to fill vacant Spanish teaching positions. Iowa schools have the option of recruiting highly qualified Spanish educators for a period of up to three years and at the same time provide Iowa students, parents, and communities the opportunity to work with professionals from other countries.

The DE web site will contain a more detailed description of the program along with the application for intent form: a) letter of invitation, b) general information, c) school and Department obligations, d) application of intent.

Contacts: Carmen Sosa, 515-281-3805, carmen.sosa@ed.state.ia.us and John O'Connell, 515-242-6354, john.oconnell@ed.state.ia.us.

14. **ETT2 Funding.** The Iowa Department of Education received notification of a three-year \$1.95 million grant for the evaluation of how education is enhanced through technology. The funds will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development being conducted in conjunction with the implementation of the E2T2 (Enhancing Education Through Technology) Title II part D of the NCLB (No child Left Behind). The Department is seeking to demonstrate that scientifically based professional development activities (teacher training on best practices) must be causally linked to the implementation of these practices in the classroom in order for the impact to be observed in student achievement in math and reading.

This is essentially the implementation of a multi-agency, statewide field research effort. This will involve the scaling-up of scientifically based educational practices through the use of essentially experimental, quasi-experimental, and randomized classroom trials design elements, with appropriate units of analysis (student, classroom/teacher, building, or school district).

Contact: John O'Connell, 515-242-6354, john.oconnell@ed.state.ia.us

Legal Lessons

The contact person for each legal lesson is Carol Greta, 515-281-5295, carol.greta@ed.state.ia.us

15. **Charter Schools Subject to Ethics Laws.**

The Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board (IECDB) is the public body that is in charge of helping all public employees stay on the right side of the gift law (Iowa Code section 68B.22) and other pertinent public ethics laws. Recently, the IECDB looked at whether charter schools are considered public schools for the purposes of the ethics laws.

With input from the Department, the IECDB did indeed issue a Formal Advisory Opinion that any new charter school in Iowa will be a public school. Therefore, a) all employees of a charter school are subject to the gift law (as are all public employees) and b) the prohibition on the use of public property for political purposes applies to a charter school.

The Opinion can be accessed at either

www.state.ia.us/government/iecdb/legal/adv_opn/2003/03fao19.html or it will soon be on our web site at www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/chart/legis.html.

16. **NCAA News – Change in Eligibility Requirements for Freshmen Entering D-I and D-II Schools.**

The NCAA has changed its initial eligibility rules for freshmen entering a Division I or Division II school, effective in 2005. The change is an increase in the number of high school core courses, detailed as follows:

- Students entering a D-I or D-II school in 2005, 2006, or 2007 must have *14 core courses*, an increase from 13, to be eligible to practice, play, and receive financial aid.
- Students entering a D-I school in 2008 or after will be required to have *16 core courses*. (This additional change from 14 to 16 core courses does not apply to D-II schools.) One of the additional courses must be in math. The new breakdown of the 16 cores courses is as follows:
 - 4 English courses
 - 3 math (algebra I or higher) courses
 - 2 natural/physical science courses (one must include a lab)
 - 2 social science courses
 - 1 additional approved course in English, math, or science
 - 4 additional core courses from any listed above or from foreign language, non-doctrinal religion, or philosophy

For more information, visit www.ncaa.org or www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.

[Carol Greta is the DE's appointed, nonvoting liaison to the governing Boards of both the IHSA and the IGSAU. This information is also available at www.iahsaa.org under "Current News."]

17. **State Board Leaves Academic Eligibility Rule "as is" – But...**

The State Board of Education wants to be clear that every school and school district is to hold the highest reasonable achievement expectations for all students. A majority of members believe that local boards are in a better position than is the State Board to determine the exact level of those expectations. Therefore, although the Board voted on January 15 to not change the statewide rule (281—IAC 36.15) that sets the minimum standard for eligibility of secondary students to participate in interscholastic sports at "pass four courses," the Board did pass a resolution that will require all school districts and accredited nonpublic schools to take the following steps:

- Include a copy of local eligibility rule in CSIP so that the Department of Education will have a copy and any patron of the school or school district will have easy access to the rule;
- Explain in CSIP what school is doing to help students who are having difficulty meeting or maintaining eligibility;

School improvement consultants will be well versed by next fall how to assist schools and school districts in meeting this new requirement. In addition, the State Board strongly encourages local

boards to review their local eligibility rules and determine whether more stringent requirements are appropriate for their students. This year's survey of Iowa high schools showed that more than 60% of local boards already require more than "pass four" in order for their students to compete in interscholastic sports.

18. **Speaking of Eligibility Rules...Examples Only**

A local eligibility rule does not have to be the same for middle school students and high school students. That is, a local board could require middle school students to pass all but two courses to be eligible to compete in interscholastic sports and make the requirement pass all but one (example only) for its high school students. Also, it is perfectly acceptable for a local board to raise the bar for students, grade level by grade level. For example, a district could have a local rule that sets a minimum GPA for freshman at 1.25, moving it progressively higher so that a sophomore must have a cumulative GPA of 1.5, juniors 1.7, and seniors 2.0. This is not a mandate; it is for example only!

Hot Links—News You Can Use

Calendars: Critical Dates and Schedules

- School Bus Inspection Schedules: 2003-04 School Year
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/trans/calendars.html>
- LEA Comprehensive Site Visit Schedule: 2003-04 School Year
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/csi/calendars.html>

Comprehensive School Improvement for Student Benefit

- 281—IAC Chapter 12: General Accreditation Standards for Iowa Schools
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/legis/iac28112.pdf>
- Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) due September 15, 2004
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/csi/documents.html>

Parental and Student Choice

- Competent Private Instruction (Home Schooling) Handbook
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/cpi/index.html>
- Open Enrollment (Handbook and Application)
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/oe/index.html>
- Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/pseoa/index.html>

Student Progress: Annual Reporting

- Annual Progress Report (APR)
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/csi/reports.html>
- Annual Yearly Progress (AYP)—Talking Points
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/nclb/doc/ayptp.pdf>

Waiver Request Processes and Forms

- Early School Start, New Innovative Calendar, Continued Innovative Calendar, Chapter 12 Accreditation Standards, Foreign Language
- <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/waivers/index.html>