

School Leaders of Iowa February 2003

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>

"The improvement of understanding is for two ends: first, our own increase of knowledge; secondly, to enable us to deliver that knowledge to others."

-- John Locke

1. **School Transportation: E-mail Distribution List for Transportation Directors.** Max Christensen, the Department's new School Transportation Officer has sent an introductory e-mail to all transportation directors in the state of Iowa. Max does not have an e-mail address for all directors, so please forward this correspondence to your particular transportation director. (Note: If the school's transportation director has not already done so, please have the director send an address where the director can access e-mail. Max is hoping to build an e-mail distribution list of all transportation directors in Iowa to increase communication between this office and them.) Thank you for your help! Contact: Max Christensen, 515-281-4749, max.christensen@ed.state.ia.us
2. **School Transportation: Other Contact Information.** Listed below is a reminder of the contact information for the School Transportation Unit at the Iowa Department of Education:
 - **Max Christensen, School Transportation Executive Officer** (coordinates the Department's school transportation program) 515-281-4749, max.christensen@ed.state.ia.us
 - **Pat Ratcliff, School Transportation Clerk** (processes school bus permits, driver in-service, accident reports, inspection notices and seals, Annual Transportation Report, nonpublic reimbursement claims, and clerical duties for the Executive Officer) 515-281-5821, pat.ratcliff@ed.state.ia.us
 - **Owen Freese, Bus Inspector** (completes bus inspections in the western half of Iowa) 515-281-4802, owen.freese@ed.state.ia.us
 - **Verlan Vos, Bus Inspector** (completes bus inspections in the eastern half of Iowa) 515-281-3382, verlan.vos@ed.state.ia.us
3. **Iowa Technical Adequacy Project (ITAP).** To fulfill Iowa's ESEA timeline waiver with the USDE, local districts are being asked to report the alignment and technical adequacy of their district-wide assessment measures (in mathematics and reading) this fall. As a way of assisting educators to fulfill this requirement, the Iowa Department of Education is funding an initiative lead by the University of Iowa titled the **Iowa Technical Adequacy Project (ITAP)**. This project began in January with the delivery of two ICN sessions focusing on how to determine alignment of district-wide assessments with local standards and benchmarks. These sessions will now be followed by a web-based lesson, completed by LEA teams, and face-to-face training. Face-to-face meetings provide opportunities for educators to work in teams, with their AEA representative, on the alignment process designed to assist them in completing their work. Web-based lessons are used to determine the level of skills acquired by educators as they engage in the necessary work and to design further learning opportunities for educators in the state.

The Department of Education, in conjunction with the University of Iowa, is in the process of creating a template that teams will use to submit their evidence regarding alignment and technical adequacy of their district-wide assessments. When this template is complete, it will be distributed to the ITAP participants and accompanied with necessary training opportunities for its successful completion. It is important to remember that school districts will report in December of 2003 the current state of alignment and technical adequacy of district-wide assessments and what actions, if any, are required to improve alignment and technical adequacy. *Note: It is not expected that school districts will complete any necessary improvements for the alignment and technical adequacy of district-wide assessments by December 2003.*

4. **NCLB: Consolidated State Application Workbook—Iowa’s Proposal to the USDE.** On Monday, January 27, the Department submitted its Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook to the United States Department of Education (USDE). This workbook outlines Iowa’s response to federal AYP requirements. This document is a proposal only and must be approved by the USDE. School districts may access the document on the Department’s web site: <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/nclb/documents.html>.

Ted Stilwill and Judy Jeffrey will hold an informational session via the ICN to present Iowa’s plan to implement the adequate yearly progress (AYP formula) on **Friday, February 7, from 9:00-10:30 a.m.** The ICN sites are listed below:

Session Date: Friday, February 07, 2003	09:00 To10:30 Session: 963115	Site Status	Approval Status
39	WAVERLY-HS	Committed	Approved
53	MUSCATINE-CC	Committed	Approved
54	BETTENDORF-CC1	Committed	Approved
78	SIOUX CITY-CC1	Committed	Approved
125	CEDAR RAPIDS-CC2	Committed	Approved
Originate: 142	DES MOINES-DEPT/ED	Committed	Approved
178	EMMETSBURG-HS	Committed	Approved
201	MARSHALLTOWN-HS	Committed	Approved
232	OTTUMWA-HS	Committed	Approved
240	BURLINGTON-HS	Committed	Approved
270	SIOUX CENTER-MS	Committed	Approved
273	FORT DODGE-HS	Committed	Approved
347	COUNCIL BLUFFS-ED SVCS CTR	Committed	Approved
350	CARROLL-HS	Committed	Approved
387	CEDAR FALLS-HS	Committed	Approved
393	CHARTER OAK-UTE-HS	Committed	Approved
474	SHENANDOAH-HS	Committed	Approved
499	CRESTON-HS	Committed	Approved
590	CLEAR LAKE-HS	Committed	Approved
630	WILLIAMSBURG-HS	Committed	Approved
767	DUBUQUE-DOWNTOWN-CC	Committed	Approved
793	CALMAR-CC2	Committed	Approved

Consolidated State Application Workbook: Iowa’s Response to Federal AYP Requirements February 7, 2003 ICN Sites (9:00-10:30 a.m.)	
Waverly - Shell Rock Community High School 1405 4 th Avenue, SW Waverly, IA 50677	Carroll High School 2809 N Grant Road Carroll, IA 51401
Muscatine Community College 152 Colorado Street Muscatine, IA 52761	Cedar Falls High School 1015 Division Street Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Consolidated State Application Workbook: Iowa's Response to Federal AYP Requirements February 7, 2003 ICN Sites (9:00-10:30 a.m.)	
Scott Community College - 1 500 Belmont Road Bettendorf, IA 52722	Charter Oak-Ute High School 321 Main Charter Oak, IA 51439
Western Iowa Tech Community College - 1 4647 Stone Avenue Sioux City, IA 51106	Shenandoah High School 1000 Mustang Drive Shenandoah, IA 51601
Kirkwood Community College - 2 6301 Kirkwood Blvd. Cedar Rapids, IA 52406	Creston High School 601 West Townline Road Creston, IA 50801
Department of Education Grimes Building E. 14th and Grand Avenue Des Moines, IA 50319	Clear Lake High School 125 N 20th St Clear Lake, IA 50428
Educational Services Center Administration 12 Scott Street Council Bluffs, IA 51503	Williamsburg Jr-Sr High School 810 W Walnut Williamsburg, IA 52361
Fort Dodge High School 819 N 25th Street Fort Dodge, IA 50501	Dubuque Downtown - Northeast Iowa Community College 700 Main Street Dubuque, IA 52001
Sioux Center High School 550 9th St, NE Sioux Center, IA 51250	Northeast Iowa Community College Dairy Education Center 1527 Hwy 150 South Calmar, IA 52132
Burlington High School 421 Terrace Drive Burlington, IA 52601	Emmetsburg High School 2 nd and King Street Emmetsburg, IA 50536
Ottumwa High School 501 E 2nd Ottumwa, IA 52501	Marshalltown High School 1602 S 2nd Avenue Marshalltown, IA 50158

5. **The Iowa Professional Development Model.** The Iowa Teacher Quality Program requires each participating district to submit a district career development plan as part of its comprehensive school improvement plan (CSIP) in September of 2004. This model focuses on improving student learning and engages all teachers in collective professional development. The model (available on the Department's web site at <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/tqt/tc/documents.html>) provides guidance for local districts to use when designing, implementing, and evaluating the district career development plan as well the individual teacher career development plans.

The model was established in response to state and federal legislation, current trends in education, and research. The Department and a stakeholder group representing major Iowa organizations and role groups involved in professional development in Iowa collaborated to create the model.

What might school districts do this year to get started with development of a district career development plan? Districts are encouraged to evaluate their current professional development practices to determine where their system of professional development may need strengthening. A self-assessment tool is available in Appendix B of the Model: *School Improvement/Staff Development: Evaluating Current Plans*.

Contact: Deb Hansen, 515-281-6131, deb.hansen@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

6. **School Closings (e.g., weather and illness)**. Districts are reminded that calling off school due to widespread illness is similar to a weather-related closing in that the missed day(s) must be made up. An exception applies if just a few classrooms or an attendance center is closed for emergency health or safety reasons, but the remainder of the school district is in operation. Also, if law enforcement or public health officials order classes cancelled, that does not relieve the district of the obligation to make up the lost instructional time. For more “day of school” information, read the FAQ’s on the Department’s web site, www.edinfo.state.ia.us/web/faqs.asp?f=scy0000.
7. **Whole Grade Sharing and Athletic Eligibility**. As many districts find themselves in various stages of negotiations for whole grade sharing agreements, they also find that some families opt to open enroll out or tuition out rather than take part in the whole grade sharing arrangements. Questions of eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics arise. Those students in grades 10–12 who either open enroll or tuition out before the whole grade sharing agreement goes into effect are ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics for 90 consecutive school days at their new school of attendance. On the other hand, students who opt to open enroll or tuition out effective the school year in which the whole grade sharing agreement begins have immediate eligibility at whatever school they attend.
8. **Citizen Participation in Open Meetings**. The Open Meetings Law (Chapter 21 of the Iowa Code) gives citizens the right to attend, observe, listen, and use cameras and/or recording devices at open sessions of meetings of governmental bodies such as school boards. Citizens may also request a copy of the agenda and agenda materials before an open meeting if the materials are provided to board members before the meeting. If materials are handed out to board members in open session, the materials must be made available to citizens who are at the meeting.

However, although Chapter 21 does not entitle citizens to speak at a meeting, citizens may request the opportunity to address the body at a meeting. Some boards, including the State Board of Education, have local governance rules to facilitate citizen participation, such as a regular agenda item for “public comment.” If public comment is permitted, it is reasonable to set time limits for oral comments and to require that those who wish to speak sign up prior to the start of the meeting or by some other reasonable deadline.

9. **Good Conduct Rules: Investigations and Enforcement**. A good conduct policy can be a legitimate tool to use to discipline students involved in extracurricular activities for out-of-school conduct (as well as in-school conduct). Often the out-of-school conduct reached by a good conduct rule is also a violation of a local or state criminal code (possession of alcohol, possession of tobacco, etc.) When a district learns that a student has run afoul of the law, that knowledge may initiate the district’s own investigation. However, the actions and decisions of law enforcement should not dictate a district’s investigation and decision-making process. That is, if a student is charged with illegal possession of alcohol, the district should not base its decisions solely on what happens in court. If the criminal charge is dismissed, the district is not compelled to cease its actions. Remember, the standard of proof in criminal court is “beyond a reasonable doubt”; in a good conduct setting the standard for the district to meet is the easier “preponderance of the evidence” standard.
10. **Signs, Signs, Everywhere the Signs**. A few days ago the Iowa Supreme Court upheld an order issued by the Iowa D.O.T. to remove signs from a school’s athletic field fence. Iowa Code § 306C.11 prohibits advertising devices erected or maintained within 660 feet of a primary highway and visible from the traveled portion of the road. A primary highway is any highway, road, or street under the D.O.T.’s control.

There is an exception in the law that allows signs for “activities conducted on the property” on which the sign is located. (This exception permits gas stations, fast food establishments, etc. to have signs on their own roadside property.)

The school in question had sold several 4 x 8 foot plywood signs to local businesses; these signs were affixed to the outfield fences of the school's ball diamonds, facing home plate, but within 660 feet of a state highway and apparently visible from the highway. The signs have the name of the business, its address or phone number, and a business logo or motto. The school argued that the signs were not intended as advertising, but as "boosterism." The Supreme Court rejected that argument by noting that signs meant to celebrate boosterism and foster goodwill would not need to display business addresses and phone numbers. Because none of the signs advertised a product available at the ball fields, they do not qualify for the exception noted above.

The school's other argument, that § 306C.11 unconstitutionally regulates free speech, failed also. Commercial speech may be regulated more stringently than other speech. Also, the State's interest in highway safety and aesthetics is substantial enough to justify the law.

This does not spell the end of all booster signs on school property. The signs must be erected not closer than 660 feet to a primary highway or must be erected so as not to be visible from the traveled portion of the highway.