



School Leader Update

Iowa Department of Education

AUGUST 2005

Resources for Iowa School Leaders

NEWS FROM THE DE

Progress on state priorities

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION:

- Development of kindergarten benchmarks is in progress (per HF 761).
- Training continues for early learning staff across the state regarding the early learning standards developed by the department.

FOCUS ON HIGH SCHOOLS: The department, in collaboration with other Iowa educational partners, continues to keep a focus on middle and high schools.

- To help communicate about the many high school initiatives undertaken by the department, the State Board, and many of our education partners and stakeholders, the DE will use a "Brighter Futures" logo attached to statewide high school improvement efforts. "Brighter Futures" was selected as a tagline to help convey our promise and obligation to students; it also is intended to remind educators (and parents and students) that we all -- even those currently achieving at high levels -- must increase our expectations and continuously seek "brighter futures."
- DE Director Judy Jeffrey introduced the Brighter Futures message at the SAI annual conference August 3, when she and Governor Vilsack both presented updates on our high school initiatives. In addition to providing highlights from the High School Review visits and a summary of the statewide Iowa Testing program results, Judy's comments focused on the need for educators to be future-focused when they set expectations and goals for their students; to use data when setting priorities; and to connect and communicate with their communities to bring everyone together toward the common purpose of brighter futures for students. The Governor outlined several initiatives he'd like administrators to continue or undertake, including quality preschool, teacher quality efforts, improving high school curriculum, and increasing the number of school days. A copy of Judy's speech is available at www.state.ia.us/educate/oofd/priorities.html. Streaming video of the Governor's speech is posted online at www.sai-iowa.org/.
- The High School Review Visit summary will be posted at www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/fohs/index.html after it is discussed at the State Board meeting August 11 and 12. The summary includes highlights from the High School Review visits and 12 Community Conversations, as well as recommendations for addressing issues raised during the visits.
- The statewide High Schools Leadership Team continues to coordinate the various initiatives aimed at high school improvements. Contact Glenn Grove at ggrove@aea13.org for details.

TRANSITIONS: A SEAMLESS EDUCATION SYSTEM

- The DE, community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities will use information from the community conversations and high school visits to discuss how they can best meet the needs of students with regard to rigorous coursework, sharing resources, and ensuring all students are adequately prepared for successful employment.

Program Administration Changes in the DE:

These programs have new administrators within the DE:

- Title II, Part A - Jim Reese: 515/281-3061 or jim.reese@iowa.gov.
- REAP (Rural Education Achievement Program) - Jim Reese: 515/281-3061 or jim.reese@iowa.gov.

- ❑ Charter Schools - Del Hoover 515/281-8402 or del.hoover@iowa.gov.
- ❑ Federal Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant - Mary Beth Schroeder Fracek, 515/281-3160 or Marybeth.schroederfracek@iowa.gov.
- ❑ Iowa Mentoring and Induction program - Mary Beth Schroeder Fracek, 515/281-3160 or Marybeth.schroederfracek@iowa.gov.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Orientation for School Improvement Visits

There will be orientation sessions for school districts having school improvement visits during the 2005-2006 school year. The sessions will be held twice in each AEA. The locations and times for those orientations are listed in the schedule attached to this issue of the School Leader Update.

Please note that there will be a separate orientation for those districts having a school improvement visit with a focus on equity. That session will be at the Urbandale Public Library located at 3520 86th Street in Urbandale, Iowa from 1:00-4:00 p.m. on September 19, 2005. If your district is scheduled for a visit with a focus on equity, it is recommended that you attend the Urbandale session only. That session will include the information you need to prepare for both the school improvement and the equity component of the visit.

We strongly encourage your attendance at these orientation sessions. Past experience has shown that the orientation reduces some of the apprehension districts have about the visits and that participation in the orientation contributes to making the visits a more positive experience for both the district and the visiting team.

School Improvement Consultant Assignments

<u>AEA</u>	<u>Consultant</u>	<u>AEA Superintendent's Meeting Times (1st week of month)</u>
267	Brandie Gean 515-281-5332 brandie.gean@iowa.gov	Wednesday
14, 15, and 16	Barbara Byrd 515-281-5001 barb.byrd@iowa.gov	Tuesday-15 Wednesday-16 Thursday-14
10 and 13	Debbie Boring 515-281-3198 debbie.boring@iowa.gov	Wednesday-10 Wednesday-13
4 and 12	Elizabeth Calhoun 515-281-8170 elizabeth.calhoun@iowa.gov	Wednesday-12 Thursday-4
1 and 9	Tom Cooley 515-242-5132 tom.cooley@iowa.gov	Wednesday-1 Thursday-9
8	Lois Irwin 515-281-8582 lois.irwin@iowa.gov	Wednesday
11	Julie Melcher 515-281-6293 julie.melcher@iowa.gov	Tuesday

Postsecondary Enrollment Options Update

School districts are required to notify students and parents about Postsecondary Enrollment Option opportunities. The DE has updated the PSEO Handbook, which is on the DE website at www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/pseoa/index.html.

NAEP Tests Next Spring

The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) will again be administered to a small sample of schools in Iowa during January 30 through March 10, 2006. Superintendents and principals of the selected schools will be notified in September 2005. Contact Dianne Chadwick, 515/281-3718 or dianne.chadwick@iowa.gov for more information.

Volunteer For a Site Visit Team

Iowa educators are encouraged to volunteer to participate on one of the DE's site visits scheduled for the 05-06 school year. Serving on a site visit team has many benefits: It helps participants understand site visit expectations and the preparation process, and also allows educators to obtain in-depth information and examples from other districts. You'll find the site visit schedule at www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/csi/sv.html.

For more information, contact Annette Mathieu at 515/281-3170 or annette.mathieu@iowa.gov.

APR readers needed

The Department invites all educators to participate as an APR reader. We will be training and reading Annual Progress Reports on September 28 and 29 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. each day. The training and reading will be at the DMACC Conference Center in Ankeny, Iowa.

For more information, and to sign up to participate as an APR reader, please go to the following website: <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/asis/csi/aprsys.html>.

Protect students from whooping cough

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) continues to identify and follow Pertussis (whooping cough) cases in our state and anticipates this will continue. Detailed Pertussis information is available on the IDPH website at <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/pertussis.asp>. Documents on the site include fact sheets and control guidelines. It is recommended districts contact and work with their local public health department regarding identification of and communication about whooping cough. IDPH will send additional information in the future.

QUALITY TEACHING

Update from the Board of Educational Examiners

Ethics

The Board requests that some time be devoted during a teacher inservice day to discuss the new ethics rules. Chapters 25 and 26 can be found on the BOEE website at www.state.ia.us/boee.

New License Fees

At its July 29, 2005 meeting, the Board approved an increase in licensing fees. This increase is necessary to help the Board meet its budget. Revenues have declined because of fewer license applications; however, staff costs already have been reduced and further reductions in staff would create delays in processing applications. Presently, for an in-state applicant, the usual processing time for an application is six to eight weeks. With additional cuts in staff, the processing time would likely double or triple. The Board is committed to providing the best service possible, but with the decline in the number of licenses processed this past year and the amount of money they retain from each license processed, the Board has very few options.

Proposed fee increases call for the standard license, master educator license, and the renewal of each of these licenses to increase from the present \$60 fee to \$85. The Board will continue to evaluate how they can provide the most efficient and effective system in processing a license for the educational practitioner.

Please discard all old licensure forms and only use the updated applications from our web site, as the use of old forms will delay the issuing of the license. Teachers can now renew their standard or master educator license online at <http://www.state.ia.us/boee/>.

New Rule

On June 21, 2005, the Board of Educational Examiners adopted the following rule: IAC 282 Section 14.121(7) Penalty for Failure to Have Appropriate Licensure.

- a. Effective September 21, 2005, an additional fee of \$25 per calendar month, not to exceed \$150, shall be imposed if practitioner holds a valid Iowa license, but does not hold an endorsement for the type of service for which the person is employed.
- b. Effective September 21, 2005, an additional fee of \$100 per calendar month, not to exceed \$500, shall be imposed if practitioner does not hold a valid Iowa license.

The fee will begin to be assessed the first day of the school year for which the practitioner is employed until the practitioner submits a completed application packet for the appropriate license. The penalty is to enforce the Code of Iowa 272.7. Waiver of the fee will be granted only upon a showing of extraordinary circumstances rendering imposition of the fee unreasonable.

The Board believes it is a very serious offense when a person is employed as a practitioner and this person does not have a valid Iowa license, and that there should be a penalty assessed to anyone who violates the Code of Iowa 272.7 Validity of License, which requires every person employed as a practitioner to hold a valid license with the appropriate endorsement for the type of service performed.

The Board is encouraging all administrators to take the necessary steps to ensure that everyone employed by your district is appropriately licensed. If you have questions or concerns about what is needed, please contact the Board's staff for assistance at 515/281-3245, or visit <http://www.state.ia.us/boee>.

National Board Certification REMINDER:

The deadline for eligible teachers to apply for National Board Certification is September 15, 2005. Please distribute the attached information to teachers as soon as possible. This information is also available on the DE's Web site at: <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/nbc/documents.html>

LEGAL LESSONS

Sex Offender Registry (SOR) Information

County sheriffs are now *required* to release (in the past they were merely *authorized* to release) "relevant information" to public and private schools when a person required to be registered on the SOR either moves into a school district or moves within the district. Private schools are included when the school is located "near the person's residence."

"Relevant information" is defined by the law [Iowa Code section 692A.13(5)] to include the following: the offender's name, address, a photograph, the results of any risk assessment, locations frequented by the offender, relevant criminal history information from the registry, and any other relevant information. The identity of the victim is NOT to be shared with schools or with the general public.

What should schools do with this information? Unless the offender is a student enrolled in the district or attempting to enroll in the district, schools are not required by the statute to do anything with this information. On a case-by-case basis, the best approach is to obtain as much background information from the sheriff as is available, and contact your school attorney to determine what, if anything, to do with the information.

If the offender is a student, the provisions of Iowa Code section 282.9 apply:

"...Upon receipt of notice that a student who is enrolled in the district is required to register as a sex offender under chapter 692A, the [local] board shall determine the educational placement of the student. The tentative agenda for the meeting of the board of directors at which the board will consider such enrollment or educational placement shall specifically state that the board is considering the enrollment or educational placement of an individual who is required to register as a sex offender under chapter 692A. If the individual is denied enrollment in a school district under this section, the school district of residence shall provide the individual with educational services in an alternative setting."

NOTE: The Iowa Sex Offender Registry web site is www.iowasexoffenders.com. A person may go to "search" in the upper left hand corner and type in the name of a city or county. The site will then show the names, addresses, and pictures of persons in that area who are registered sex offenders. There is no requirement that schools use the Registry web site; this information about the web site is provided as an information item only.

More Information on the New Prohibition against Fingerprinting

As reported last month, new legislation prohibits the fingerprinting of a child under age 17 by a governmental unit (including school districts). After learning that several district lunch programs use finger scans, this agency asked for clarification from the Attorney General's office on whether digital finger scanning and/or mathematical algorithms of a child's fingerprint are considered to be fingerprinting.

After meeting with representatives of the Attorney General's office, Public Safety Department, Division of Criminal Investigations (including fingerprint experts), School Administrators of Iowa, and the Iowa Association of School Boards, the answer is that the finger scan or finger code systems in use by some districts for students to access school lunch, media resources, etc., **are unlawful** under the new law. Such systems may be used for staff, but not for students. (See attached letter from Assistant Attorney General Christie Scase.)

IASB plans to work with districts and vendors of such systems to offer corrective legislation designed to provide districts with a means to use the systems. Such exceptions in the law likely will not be effective until the 2006-07 school year, however.

Finally, remember that consent by a parent or guardian does not provide districts with a means to use such a system. The law does not allow a parent or guardian to consent to the use of a finger scan or finger code for a student for any school-related purposes.

Implementation of Constitution Day on September 17

United States Constitution Day is September 17 of each year. While the designation of this day is not new, there is a new federal law that requires the nation's public schools to set aside one day on or near September 17 (which is a Saturday this year) to teach all students about the U.S. Constitution and about citizenship.

Iowa districts are already in compliance with the spirit and letter of this law as to secondary students taking U.S. government. [Iowa Code section 256.11(5)(b) requires that the government course cover the federal Constitution.] Many, if not most, districts probably already incorporate such instruction at the elementary level.

The U.S. Department of Education's web site acknowledges that curriculum and course decisions fall outside federal authority. This agency has no information about whether or how the federal government plans to enforce the law. There is a website with more information about this, including material useful in planning Constitution day activities, at www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/other/2005-2/052405b.html

IDEA and Legally Binding Agreements

The reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was signed into law on December 3, 2004, and the provisions of the act became effective on July 1, 2005. One change in the procedural safeguards section creating the biggest reaction from parent advocacy groups and educators alike is the requirement that when parties execute a written settlement agreement, it is considered to be "legally binding" and enforceable in any state court of competent jurisdiction or in a district court of the United States. The change will impact three types of processes during which an agreement may be written: (1) preappeal conference (mediation conducted by the state before any party requests a hearing), (2) mediation (conducted by the state following a request for a due process hearing, and (3) a resolution session (a new responsibility of the district and AEA that is connected to a parental hearing request to the state). IDEA 2004 does *not* impact the Resolution Facilitator process (mediation) available from each AEA.

In the event a preappeal conference or hearing is requested, the DE will provide guidance and written materials as parties attempt to meet the requirements involving a legally binding agreement, as well as the resolution session mandates. For additional information, contact Dee Ann L. Wilson, 515/281-5766 or DeeAnn.Wilson@iowa.gov.

Study of Minor School Licenses Not to Materialize

The legislative council decided not to honor a request by the Legislature that it establish a study committee to review the law about minor school licenses. Therefore, this agency will not be sending out a survey of superintendents or secondary principals to gather data for the study committee.

"S" Endorsement Information

"S" testing is going well across the state with most districts reporting a good deal of success at getting their drivers through the written test phase. However, there have been reports of varying degrees of success with the skills testing. Initially the DOT had said that anyone with two or more years of school bus driving experience would not need to do a skills test. In the past month, they have further defined that statement by saying that anyone who has been "regularly" employed as a school bus driver for the past two years won't have to do the skills test. "Regularly" is defined as having driven a school bus transporting students at least one time during each of 18 months out of the past 24 months. This redefinition will mean that a lot of coaches, administrators, and part-time drivers may indeed need to do the skills test despite the fact they may have been operating a bus for two years or more.

New regulatory guidance recently issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration is good news for mechanics. Previously, the FMCSA had stated that mechanics, regardless of whether they transported students, would have to obtain the "S" endorsement. FMCSA has now reversed that decision and is saying that mechanics and other drivers who operate empty school buses don't need an "S" endorsement.

National Congress On School Transportation

The 14th National Congress On School Transportation was held in May in Missouri. Traditionally referred to as "the national standards conference," this event is held every five years. Every state is allowed to bring up to a 7-member delegation for the 4-day event, which generally covers all aspects of school bus transportation, with the main goal being to update or modify the specifications for the bodies and chassis of school buses. The end product is the 500+ page national minimum recommendations document that all states then use for determining what the minimum construction standards for school transportation equipment shall be in their particular state. Several states actually use the completed document word for word, while most states, including Iowa, only use it as a recommendation.

The actual document that is used in Iowa for determining our minimum school transportation specifications is Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 44. Iowa's NCST delegation along with the DE's Maintenance & Inspection Advisory Council are in the process of looking over IAC 44 and plan to make needed changes in the next year. We have a goal of having the updated draft of IAC 44 accepted into law and put into effect by late summer of 2006.

We will be seeking input on needed changes and updates from various factions, including the Iowa Pupil Transportation Association and school administrators. Input on updates to IAC 44 will be accepted in writing only, preferably by email, and each request must state the reason and/or rationale for the change. To be considered, all proposed changes must be sent to Max Christensen at the DE no later than October 1, 2005, max.christensen@iowa.gov.

To read or download a current copy of IAC 44, follow this link and click on "School Buses (281-44):" www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/fn/trans/legis.html.

CALENDAR

Deadlines and [Dates to Remember](#)

August 31	Certified Enrollment Training via ICN
September 12	School Budget Review Committee
October 10-11	Iowa Talented & Gifted Association Conference, Des Moines (see attachment for registration materials and flyer)
January 23-24, 2006	Statewide High School Summit, Des Moines

SCHOOL LEADER UPDATE is produced monthly by the Iowa Department of Education for school leaders of Iowa. Comments and submissions should be sent to Kathi Slaughter, 515/281-5651, kathi.slaughter@iowa.gov.