

February 2019 School Leader Update



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Identifying common challenges, finding solutions

As I've frequently mentioned, the best part of my job is visiting schools and classrooms across Iowa each week. It's inspiring to see success in our schools, from the impact of teacher leadership on instruction to the continuous refinement and improvement in the approach to early literacy instruction.

Perhaps most important, these school visits provide the opportunity to hear about the challenges schools face and to work collaboratively to craft solutions. Three issues have surfaced in almost every school visit I've had this year: finding and keeping great teachers, meeting the increasing mental health needs of students, and developing efficient and effective ways to provide high-quality career and technical education.

Administrators, particularly those in rural areas, frequently share the challenges they face in recruiting and retaining teachers, especially in high-demand areas like math and science, special education, and career and technical education. Accordingly, we are supporting several efforts to address this issue.

The Department is working collaboratively with both legislators and the education community to identify barriers to entering the profession and to lower those barriers while still maintaining rigorous entry standards. A good example of this is the effort to modify the testing requirements for educator preparation program



Director Ryan Wise

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completion and teacher licensure. If passed into law, these modifications will keep testing in place, but will provide additional flexibility to the Department in setting appropriate passing scores for the exams as well as flexibility for local school districts in hiring candidates who have not yet achieved the minimum score but have met all other program requirements.

The Department is also engaging in several efforts to ensure that teaching is viewed as a respected profession with the opportunity for growth and advancement as well helping to support new teachers so that they continue to stay in the profession. Recently, the Department and the Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation released an [annual report](#), which includes context on the Teacher Leadership and Compensation system, evaluation data, and some great school district examples of the impact of TLC on the teaching profession. This report highlights the unique opportunities Iowa teachers have to grow and develop throughout their career.

In addition, the Department is also supporting the fourth annual Emerging Educators Academy at Simpson College. The intent of this conference is to focus on beginning teachers to provide support, connections and strategies to retain them in the profession. The target audience is first through third year teachers and pre-service teachers as well as those educators that work most closely with them.

[Read more](#)

[Transfer in Iowa web portal assists students with transfers \(even high school students\)](#)

Iowa's Regent universities offer the Transfer in Iowa website to assist students to navigate the college transfer process and plan for their academic future.



Each year, thousands of students, including high school students taking college-level courses, transfer from Iowa's community colleges to state public universities. This is a big step, so the website was designed to provide information to answer the question - How will my credits transfer?

Students will discover how their community college courses transfer to the Regents by following links on the website. They can also learn about individual program articulation agreements between various institutions.

In addition to using this online resource, students should discuss their plans with both community college and university advisors. The website provides contact information for transfer advisors at each institution.

School districts should encourage the use of Transfer in Iowa by all students interested in attending college, as well as academic counselors.

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Registration open for Perkins V webinar

The Iowa Department of Education is planning a webinar to provide information on the implementation of the federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act for the 21st Century (known as Perkins V), which was signed into law in July. The webinar will provide an overview of the state plan development process and changes with the new law.

Those interested in participating in the webinar can [register](#) for one of two times on Friday, Feb. 15, from 8 to 10 a.m. and 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Both webinars will be recorded and made available via the Department's [website](#).

For questions, contact Pat Thieben, at (515)281-4707 or pat.thieben@iowa.gov.

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Work begins on development and Implementation of statewide CTE standards



Work is under way to develop, review and adopt new state standards and benchmarks for career and technical education (CTE) program service areas, as required by HF2392. This legislation, which is helping shape the future of CTE in Iowa, sets new requirements for the Iowa State Board of Education to adopt CTE standards, moves from a voluntary to a mandatory CTE program approval process, and calls for school districts to incorporate the standards into their CTE programs. Similar to how the Iowa Core provides statewide academic standards in the areas of mathematics, literacy, science, social studies, and 21st century skills, the new CTE standards and benchmarks will set clear and consistent expectations for what students need to learn in high-quality CTE program across the state.

The Bureau of Career and Technical Education has contracted with Advancing Connections, Inc. to assist with the development and review of the standards and benchmarks for each of the six CTE program service areas. Once this work is complete, the standards for each of the six service areas will be presented to the State Board for final approval and adoption.

For questions or comments, contact Pat Thieben at (515) 281-4707 or pat.thieben@iowa.gov.

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Work on universal e-transcript process underway.

Iowa State University, the Board of Regents State of Iowa, the Iowa Department of Education, and the Iowa College Aid Commission are partnering to create a standardized electronic transcript system for all Iowa public secondary schools. Projected benefits of this exciting new initiative include:

- Simplifying the transfer of records from one Iowa school district to another.
- Eliminating the burden of manually sending transcripts for Iowa high schools.

- Eliminating or significantly reducing admissions office manual processing of transcripts for Iowa's public colleges and universities.
- Providing significant cost savings for Iowa's public school districts, colleges, and universities.

While a detailed implementation timeline is not yet finalized, there are plans for several high schools to pilot the system as early as 2020, with statewide implementation subsequently phased in. E-transcript steering committee representatives will reach out to Iowa public secondary schools to elicit feedback and advice.



For more information, contact Phil Caffrey, Director of Admissions Operations and Policy, Iowa State University, at pbcaffr@iastate.edu.

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Determining proficiency for Senior Year Plus under new statewide assessment



The Iowa Department of Education is in the midst of implementing a new statewide assessment, the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress. Testing under the new assessment will begin in spring 2019. Assessment scores will be available in fall 2019.

Certain programs under Senior Year Plus (i.e., concurrent enrollment and Postsecondary Enrollment Options) use students' most recent assessment scores as the primary method for determining student eligibility. However, due to the timing of the test administration and dissemination of results, school districts may not have access to students' most recent proficiency scores for use in determining eligibility for Senior

Year Plus programs for courses beginning in the fall 2019.

For this current year, school districts should continue to rely on the most recent assessment scores available to determine student eligibility for Senior Year Plus, and/or adopt policies that detail alternative but equivalent measures of proficiency for this purpose (see pages 9 - 13 of the [Senior Year Plus guide](#)). Additional questions can be directed to Eric St Clair at 515-326-0274 or eric.stclair@iowa.gov.

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Statewide social studies professional development for elementary teachers now available online

The year one statewide elementary social studies professional development is now available as a course through AEA PD Online. There is no cost for this course. To register for the course:

1. Go to <https://training.aealearningonline.org>.
2. Login
3. Select "Catalog"

4. Search "Social Studies"
5. Next to "Elementary Introduction to the Social Studies Standards Year 1" select "Register".

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

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Professional learning modules on English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics Standards available online

Free professional learning modules on the English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics Standards are now available through the [AEA Learning Online System](#):

- Standards and Enacted Curriculum - Module 1
- Instructional Practices - Module 2
- Instructional Materials - Module 3

The modules may also be taken as part of a self-paced course for license renewal credit (fee required). Search for the modules using these directions: [English Language Arts/Literacy](#) or [Mathematics](#).

For questions, contact April Pforts at (515) 314-6243 or april.pforts@iowa.gov, or Deborah Cleveland (AEA Learning Online) at dcleveland@aealearningonline.org.

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Our Kids Summer Institute for educators supporting English Learners

The 15th annual Our Kids Summer Institute is scheduled for June 18 and 19, at the Des Moines Area Community College Enrichment Center in Ankeny. PK-12 educators will have the opportunity to network with other educational professionals, discover new strategies for working with English Language Learners (EL) in Iowa, and meet national and local experts to enrich practices for increasing EL achievement.

Conference Topics Include:

- Preventing long term English Learners
- Key strategies for supporting core content learning
- EL parent engagement
- Building academic language
- Benefits of co-teaching for EL Learners
- EL laws and implications of the laws for instruction

Plan to bring a team to participate. Registration information will be communicated in March.

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Need a Spanish teacher?

The Iowa Visiting Teachers from Spain Program enables foreign teachers to have the opportunity to teach in an accredited primary or secondary school in the United States under a J1 Visa for up to three years, with a possible two year extension. This provides school districts and nonpublic schools with the opportunity to fill vacant Spanish and dual language teaching positions.

The visiting teachers from Spain are certified Spanish language educators with at least three years of experience. Local school districts hire the visiting teachers in accordance with all other local policies in terms of salary scale, licensure, and local system requirements.



The Iowa Department of Education is taking applications for 2019-20. If you are interested in hiring a teacher from Spain, click on [Visiting Teachers from Spain](#) to find the application and other information about the program. For more information, contact Isabelia Arzola at (515) 326-5962 or isbelia.arzola@iowa.gov, or Mary Smith-Johnson at (515) 242-6014 or mary.smith@iowa.gov.

Photo caption: Visiting teachers from Spain pictured with Iowa Department of Education staff during training for the 2018-19 school year.

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Does your district have the next Teacher of the Year?

Thousands of talented Iowa educators lead and inspire their students, but only one is chosen annually as the state's ambassador to education. The deadline to nominate the 2020 Iowa Teacher of the Year is April 1.



The award is an opportunity to recognize an exceptional Iowa teacher who is helping redefine education. Nominations will be accepted from anyone, including students, parents, school administrators, colleagues, college faculty members, and associations.

Nomination forms can be found on the following web-page: [Iowa Teacher of the Year 2020](#).

The Teacher of the Year serves as an ambassador to education and as a liaison to primary and secondary schools, higher education, and organizations across the state.

Chris Burke of Dubuque was named the 2019 Teacher of the Year.

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[Accessible Educational Materials \(AEM\) best practices webinars](#)

A series of five webinars on [indicators of quality](#) AEM acquisition, provision and implementation will be available from the National AEM Center beginning in February. These one-hour discussions will include national perspective from the AEM Center and examples presented by state AEM representatives.

AEM topics include:

- Meeting Timely Manner for AEM through a Coordinated System
- Developing and Implementing Written Guidelines for AEM
- Delivering Professional Learning Opportunities and Technical Assistance
- Collecting and Using Data to Monitor and Evaluate System Effectiveness
- Allocating Resources



Iowa highlights will be included in Session 1 on Meeting Timely Manner scheduled for 2 p.m. Central Standard Time on Feb. 5, and Session 5 on Allocating Resources scheduled for 2 p.m. Central Standard Time on April 2. Registration will be available soon on the [AEM Center](#) website. Webinars are recorded for later viewing.

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[Iowa Learning Online offers Branch Out service](#)

Iowa Learning Online is offering a service to help schools take the first step to offering their own online service to meet local district needs. With [Branch Out](#), ILO provides the infrastructure and high school courses, and the local school provides the teacher.

- Leverage your local teaching talent with your own students
- Low-risk more affordable pricing without compromising local needs
- Access to ILO's top-notch and customizable online curriculum

- Courses all delivered on ILO's modern intuitive learning management platform
- Planning and implementation assistance from ILO's family of experienced online learning consultants
- Opportunity for school branding and course customization

For more information on how Iowa Learning Online can help your school or district, contact Jonnie Becker at (515) 725-2075 or jonnie.becker@iowa.gov.

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[Emergency operations planning webinars](#)



The Iowa Department of Education is offering monthly webinars to establish high-quality emergency operations plans (EOP) in school districts and individual schools. Participation in the webinars is encouraged to complete your high-quality emergency operations plans by June 30.

Our next webinar is scheduled for February 19 at 10 a.m. Join by clicking on the following [link](#). Each webinar is designed to provide step-by-step assistance in developing high-quality EOPs. These webinars will be recorded and posted to the Department's [website](#). In addition to our regular content, we will have a guest to discuss an active shooter incident.

The legislation requires high-quality emergency operations plans for all public and accredited nonpublic schools, both district-wide and individual school buildings. The plans must include, but are not limited to, responses to active shooter scenarios and natural disasters. The [legislation](#) also requires an emergency operations drill based on these plans in each individual building annually.

For questions about these webinars and requirements contact Rob Olsen at (515) 281-4743 or rob.olsen@iowa.gov

Future webinar dates:

- Tuesday, March 19
- Tuesday, April 16
- Tuesday, May 21

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[Teacher Leadership and Compensation resources](#)

Allowable use of funds

There are six categories of allowable uses for Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) funds as specified in legislation. This linked document is intended to introduce or reinforce understanding of TLC allowable uses of funds. District leaders may use this tool as they identify TLC resources to leverage student achievement.

[Allowable use of funds document](#)

End of year reporting

Each school district is asked to file an end of year report. This report serves as an opportunity for districts to reflect on their progress toward the vision and goals of their TLC plan. For the state of Iowa and the Iowa Department of Education, it serves as one method of accountability for a significant investment of state funds. For the Iowa Department of Education it also serves as an opportunity to track progress toward locally-determined TLC goals aligned to the state goals, to monitor trends, and identify supports for districts. End of year reports for 2018-19 will have the same content as last year. Districts will report progress on their local goal aligned to the state goals of: Attract and Retain, Collaboration, Professional Growth and Student Achievement. A webcast to support reporting can be found on the [TLC webpage](#) starting Feb. 22.



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Title program claims reimbursement in Iowa Grants

The second quarter submission period is now open and will remain open until 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 31. As soon as possible in Iowa Grants, submit all Title program applications your agency has not already submitted, and any Title program claims. If an application for a particular Title program was previously submitted, there is no need to create another application. Just file a claim for the funds expended that have not already been reimbursed.

The third quarter Iowa Grants submission period for all Title programs will be open from April 1 to April 30. To assist the field in the claiming process, [information needed to complete the application and claims is available under the heading Iowa Grants](#).



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Reminder to school districts regarding ISASP testing protocols and administering to home school students



As districts are preparing for the upcoming Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) testing window, be sure that you have discussed the testing protocols and security guidance provided by the publisher. This should include not only building level administrators and staff who will be included in the assessment process, but staff who may be working with home school families to complete the assessment.

Remember, the ISASP is not to be sent home for completion by students outside of the school building, the Area Education Agency (AEA), or other location designated for testing and is to be supervised by district or AEA personnel.

For individuals or districts with questions, contact Buffy Campbell at (515) 954-8651 or buffy.campbell@iowa.gov.

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Win \$1,000 for your school

The Iowa Safe Schools Alliance (ISSA) is sponsoring a video contest for Iowa high school students. The theme for the 2018-19 video contest is "What's Your Plan". Contestants submit a 90 second video that focuses on that theme and correlates with ISSA's mission in assisting schools in preparing for, mitigating, responding to and recovering from natural and man-made threats and incidents.

The finalists will be invited to the Capitol to meet Governor Reynolds and also take part in the Iowa Safe Schools Week proclamation signing in March. The winner of the contest will take home \$1,000 for their school. The second place winner will receive \$600, and the third place winner will receive \$400.



Sample topics could be identification of external or internal threats such as a student with a weapon, intruder, hazardous material spill outside the school, etc.

[View the 2017-18 1st place video](#) from Council Bluffs Community School District Abraham Lincoln High School.

[Submission](#) deadline is February 28. More information about the video contest is available on the [ISSA website](#).

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Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program teacher licensure requirements



As preparations are made for the 2019-20 school year, keep in mind the qualifications required of Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) teachers. Per Iowa Administrative Code 16.9(5), districts must have an appropriately licensed and endorsed teacher in each classroom by Oct. 1 to receive SWVPP funds.

Teachers in SWVPP classrooms must hold a valid and current license issued by the Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE) under Iowa Code chapter 272 and hold an endorsement that includes prekindergarten. A teacher who has only the PK-K Early Childhood Special Education endorsement is not appropriately licensed to teach in a SWVPP classroom because the endorsement does not include preschool general education.

Contact the [BOEE](#) for information on appropriate teaching endorsements or to apply for a Class B conditional license in one of the acceptable teaching endorsement areas. Submit applications for teacher licenses and/or endorsements to the BOEE early to ensure timely processing.

For more information on the SWVPP, go to the [Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program web page](#) or contact Jennifer Adkins at (515) 954-5652 or jennifer.adkins@iowa.gov, or Mary Breyfogle at (515) 326-1030 or mary.breyfogle@iowa.gov.

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Become a summer meals champion

Childhood food insecurity remains at unacceptable levels, and children are most acutely at risk during the summer when they do not have access to school meals. Your leadership can help ensure that the children you work with during the school year do not go hungry in the summer.

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

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

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



Schools interested in becoming a summer meal champion are invited to [register](#) to participate in an informational webinar on Feb. 28, from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

For more information, visit the Iowa Department of Education [Summer Food Service Program webpage](#)

Photo caption: Students participate in the Summer Food Service Program at Central Elementary in the Nevada Community School District.

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Legal Lessons

Snow days

I was just beginning to think that we were going to have a winter with little to no snow and then in January we were hit by three snow storms resulting in school closures across the state. I was so excited! I know, call me crazy but I am an Iowan through and through. Winter would just not be the same without snow. I love to take the kids outside to play in this white fluff – sledding, tubing, skiing, skating, snowball fights, and snow angels – followed by hot cocoa, marshmallows, and a seat by the fire. Since I have four wheel drive I don't even mind driving in it either. I probably have more fun then I should – all while following the law of course. So while you are outside playing with your kids or driving around in the snow, just take a minute to enjoy the snow. It will be gone soon enough and spring will be here to warm you up.



Attorney Nicole Proesch

Now in this cold and snowy February edition I bring you [Too Close or Not to Close](#), [Snow Days & Hours Guidance Revisited](#), [Open Enrollment Refresher](#), [New Rules Adopted and Noticed by the State Board](#), and [School Discipline Guidance Rescinded](#).

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

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

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