

2020-2021 Online Learning in Iowa Annual Report



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State of Iowa
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OVERVIEW

AUTHORITY

This report serves as the annual update under Iowa Code 256.7 (32). In addition, August 4, 2021, [chapter 15 Online and Virtual Learning](#) rules went into effect. The following subsection addresses the required data collected for the Approved Online Schools in Iowa Annual Report to the Legislature and the required report:

15.12(2) Data collection and reporting.

a. Each school district and accredited nonpublic school shall include in its comprehensive school improvement plan a list and description of the online coursework offered by the school district or accredited nonpublic school to which the student is enrolled.

b. Online schools. A school district providing educational instruction and course content delivered primarily over the Internet that is required to seek approval under subrule 15.7(4) shall annually submit to the department, in the manner prescribed by the department, data that includes but is not limited to the following:

(1) Student achievement and demographic characteristics.

(2) Retention rates.

(3) The percentage of enrolled students' active participation in extracurricular activities.

(4) Academic proficiency levels, consistent with requirements applicable to all school districts and accredited nonpublic schools in this state.

(5) Academic growth measures, which shall include either of the following:

1. Entry and exit assessments in, at a minimum, math and English for elementary and middle school students, and additional subjects, including science, for high school students.

2. State-required assessments that track year-over-year improvements in academic proficiency.

(6) Academic mobility. To facilitate the tracking of academic mobility, school districts shall request the following information from the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in educational instruction and course content that are delivered primarily over the Internet:

1. For a student newly enrolling, the reasons for choosing such enrollment.

2. For a student terminating enrollment, the reasons for terminating such enrollment.

(7) Student progress toward graduation. Measurement of such progress shall account for specific characteristics of each enrolled student, including but not limited to age and course credit accrued prior to enrollment in educational instruction and course content that are delivered primarily over the Internet, and shall be consistent with evidence-based best practices.

c. Department responsibilities. The department shall compile and review the data collected pursuant to this subrule and shall submit its findings and recommendations for the continued delivery by school districts of educational instruction and course content delivered primarily over the Internet in a report to the general assembly by January 15 annually.

The Iowa Department of Education (Department) received the following demographic data, student achievement, retention rates, participation, academic proficiency, academic growth, academic mobility, and progress toward graduation from Iowa Connections Academy at CAM Community School District (hereinafter “IACA”), Virtual Academy at Cedar Rapids Community School District (hereinafter “CRCSD Virtual”), Iowa Virtual Academy at Clayton Ridge Community School District (hereinafter “IAVA”), Council Bluffs Virtual Academy at Council Bluffs Community School District (hereinafter “CBCSD Virtual”), Des Moines Virtual at Des Moines Community School District (hereinafter “DMPS Virtual”), and Sidney Virtual SAC School at Sidney Community School District (hereinafter “SAC”) for the 2020-2021 school year. The data presented in this report was collected via Consolidated Accountability and Support Application (CASA), direct reporting and data collection by the Bureau of Information and Analysis Services.

Note: In the tables that follow an asterisk (*) indicates that there are fewer than 10 students in that particular cell. No data will be publicly reported for those cells, to protect student privacy pursuant to state and federal law.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA - SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021

Demographic Information: Number of students, for IACA, CRCSD Virtual, IAVA, CBCSD Virtual, DMPS Virtual and SAC are presented below.

Characteristic	IACA	CRCSD Virtual	IAVA	CBCSD Virtual	DMPS Virtual	SAC
Enrollment	899	598	866	1910	258	24
Male	506	305	508	946	155	12
Female	393	292	358	964	103	12
Asian	14	10	*	28	*	*
African-American	36	111	57	87	40	*
Hispanic	93	39	56	276	51	*
Multiracial	46	68	*	80	25	*
Native American	*	*	*	13	*	*
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*
White	706	370	742	1426	135	24
English Learner (EL)	*	*	*	81	10	*
504 Plan	70	*	38	59	18	*
Students with individualized education program (IEP)	45	66	70	370	13	*
Free-Reduced Lunch Eligible	358	346	291	1508	195	10

ACADEMIC DATA - SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021 (MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE)

Achievement Data: Percent proficient based on the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress, including alternate assessment scores, in reading, mathematics, and science for IACA, CRCSD Virtual, IAVA, CBCSD Virtual, DMPS Virtual, and SAC are presented below. For comparison purposes, state data from the 2021 [Iowa School Performance Profiles](#) is included.

	Reading	Mathematics	Science
IACA	74.2	70.1	61.2
CRCSD Virtual	70.9	47.6	59.8
IAVA	66.6	65.0	59.4
CBCSD Virtual	51.9	43.5	37.5
DMPS Virtual	78.3	48.1	45.0
SAC	55.6	77.8	100.0
State Average	68.95	65.21	60.42

Academic Proficiency levels by Subgroup: Percent proficient based on the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress

IACA – Academic Proficiency Levels by Subgroup

	Male	Female	EL	Low SES	504	IEP
Reading	70.3	77.3	*	65.8	74.2	14.3
Mathematics	75.7	65.7	*	61.0	67.7	28.6
Science	62.6	60.2	*	55.2	66.7	18.2

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American /Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	Multiple Race/ Ethnicity
Reading	75.6	30.0	71.4	85.0	*	*	100.0
Mathematics	72.9	15.8	54.2	95.0	*	*	100.0
Science	63.5	*	43.5	75.0	*	*	100.0

CRCSD Virtual – Academic Proficiency Levels by Subgroup

	Male	Female	EL	Low SES	504	IEP
Reading	67.0	73.8	*	56.7	*	29.2
Mathematics	53.7	43.1	*	32.8	*	8.3
Science	54.2	63.5	*	47.4	*	20.0

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American /Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	Multiple Race/ Ethnicity
Reading	76.5	53.5	60.0	50.0	*	*	70.6
Mathematics	57.7	20.9	25.0	50.0	*	*	31.3
Science	66.7	30.0	33.3	100.0	*	*	75.0

IAVA – Academic Proficiency Levels by Subgroup

	Male	Female	EL	Low SES	504	IEP
Reading	62.4	70.0	*	62.3	74.2	15.8
Mathematics	69.6	61.3	*	53.0	67.7	34.2
Science	58.3	60.4	*	58.0	43.8	8.3

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American /Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	Multiple Race/ Ethnicity
Reading	67.5	51.6	64.1	*	*	*	*
Mathematics	66.6	53.1	53.8	*	*	*	*
Science	64.1	38.5	26.7	*	*	*	*

CBCSD Virtual – Academic Proficiency Levels by Subgroup

	Male	Female	EL	Low SES	504	IEP
Reading	48.5	55.3	2.8	47.9	35.4	14.3
Mathematics	46.2	40.8	0	38.9	47.0	10.7
Science	35.6	39.3	0	31.1	38.6	6.5

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American /Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	Multiple Race/ Ethnicity
Reading	52.0	42.6	49.6	73.9	51.6	NA	42.4
Mathematics	44.7	37.0	37.0	56.5	37.6	NA	42.4
Science	37.4	42.9	36.2	50.0	36.1	NA	29.4

DMPS Virtual – Academic Proficiency Levels by Subgroup

	Male	Female	EL	Low SES	504	IEP
Reading	66.7	83.9	100	73.3	100	100
Mathematics	55.6	44.1	50.0	41.7	100	*
Science	37.5	50.0	50.0	33.3	*	*

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American /Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	Multiple Race/ Ethnicity
Reading	80.8	33.3	90.0	*	*	*	100
Mathematics	46.4	33.3	66.7	*	*	*	20.0
Science	50.0	0.0	50.0	*	*	*	100

SAC – Academic Proficiency Levels by Subgroup

	Male	Female	EL	Low SES	504	IEP
Reading	75.0	40.0	*	66.7	*	*
Mathematics	75.0	80.0	*	66.7	*	*
Science	100	*	*	*	*	*

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American /Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	Multiple Race/ Ethnicity
Reading	55.6	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mathematics	77.8	*	*	*	*	*	*
Science	100	*	*	*	*	*	*

RETENTION RATES - SCHOOL YEARS 2019-2020 AND 2020-2021

Retention Rates: Defined as the percent of students who return to the school this year from the previous year, for IACA, CRCSD Virtual, IAVA, CBCSD Virtual, DMPS Virtual, and SAC are presented below for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years.

	Percent of Students 2019-2020	Percent of Students 2020-2021
IACA	49.7	63.1
CRCSD Virtual	NA	NA
IAVA	55.9	57.7
CBCSD Virtual	NA	NA
DMPS Virtual	NA	31.3
SAC	NA	NA

NA – No data was available for 2019-2020 to calculate retention.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES - SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021

Extracurricular Activity Data: Percent of students participating in extracurricular activities, IACA, CRCSD Virtual, IAVA, CBCSD Virtual, DMPS Virtual, and SAC are presented below.

	Percent of Students
IACA	9
CRCSD Virtual	5
IAVA	16
CBCSD Virtual	4
DMPS Virtual	1
SAC	5

ACADEMIC GROWTH – THREE YEAR TREND

Academic Growth Data: Percent proficient based on the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress, including alternate assessment scores, in reading, mathematics, and science for IACA, CRCSD Virtual, IAVA, CBCSD Virtual, DMPS Virtual, and SAC are presented below.

Reading – Percent Proficient

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
IACA	75.2	NA - COVID	74.2
CRCSD Virtual	NA	NA - COVID	70.9
IAVA	60.6	NA - COVID	66.6
CBCSD Virtual	NA	NA - COVID	51.9
DMPS Virtual	NA	NA - COVID	78.3
SAC	NA	NA - COVID	55.6

Mathematics – Percent Proficient

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
IACA	60.5	NA - COVID	70.1
CRCSD Virtual	NA	NA - COVID	47.6
IAVA	53.4	NA - COVID	65.0
CBCSD Virtual	NA	NA - COVID	43.5
DMPS Virtual	NA	NA - COVID	48.1
SAC	NA	NA - COVID	77.8

Science – Percent Proficient

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
IACA	56.0	NA - COVID	61.2
CRCSD Virtual	NA	NA - COVID	59.8
IAVA	42.0	NA - COVID	59.4
CBCSD Virtual	NA	NA - COVID	37.5
DMPD Virtual	NA	NA - COVID	45.0
SAC	NA	NA - COVID	100.0

NA – Data not available due to approval immediately prior to the 2020-2021 school year.

NA – COVID - Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress was not administered per Governor Proclamation.

ACADEMIC MOBILITY - SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021

Enrollment Data: Percent of newly enrolled students choosing such enrollment for specified reason, for IACA, CRCSD Virtual, IAVA, CBCSD Virtual, DMPD Virtual, and SAC are presented below.

Characteristic	IACA	CRCSD Virtual	IAVA	CBCSD Virtual	DMPD Virtual	SAC
Anyplace/Anytime Learning	39	90	20	100	42	100
Illness/Injury	29	10	14	*	24	*
Bullying/Harassment	15	*	16	*	*	*
More/Less Course Selection	*	*	*	*	*	*
Under Credit/Overage	*	*	*	*	*	*
More/Less Personalized Learning	15	*	14	*	*	*
Miscellaneous	*	*	30	*	13	*

Enrollment Termination Data: Percent of students choosing to terminate their enrollment for specified reason, for IACA, CRCSD Virtual, IAVA, CBCSD Virtual, DMPD Virtual, and SAC are presented below.

Characteristic	IACA	CRCSD Virtual	IAVA	CBCSD Virtual	DMPD Virtual	SAC
Anyplace/Anytime Learning	*	*	*	*	*	*
Illness/Injury	*	10	*	*	*	*
Bullying/Harassment	*	*	*	*	*	*
More/Less Course Selection	*	*	*	*	14	*
Under Credit/Overage	*	*	*	*	*	*
More/Less Personalized Learning	41	*	21	*	*	*
Miscellaneous	44	*	66	46	84	*

PROGRESS TOWARD GRADUATION – SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021

Progress Toward Graduation Data: Percent of students on track for graduation, for IACA, CRCSD Virtual, IAVA, CBCSD Virtual, DMPS Virtual, and SAC are presented below.

Characteristic	IACA	CRCSD Virtual	IAVA	CBCSD Virtual	DMPS Virtual	SAC
First Year High School Students	100	49	86	40	62	75
Second Year High School Students	72	46	74	83	50	100
Third Year High School Students	68	58	77	80	52	83
Fourth Year High School Students	58	88	88	75	43	100
Fifth Year Plus High School Students	44	15	67	100	30	*

CONCLUSION

As required by legislation, IACA, CRCSD Virtual, IAVA, CBCSD Virtual, DMPS Virtual, and SAC have submitted data to the Department for school year 2020-2021. The number of Department approved online schools reporting has increased from three in 2019-2020 to six in 2020-2021. To date, 23 online schools have been approved and schools will be added to the report based on their approval date. CRCSD Virtual, CBCSD Virtual, and SAC have been approved to allow open-enrolled students to participate in an approved online school which offers course content delivered primarily over the internet during the 2020-2021 school year. An additional 17 school districts have been approved to operate an online school for the purpose of open enrollment to be educated primarily online. The most current list is located on the Department website on the [Online Learning](#) web page.

Enrollment into an approved online school, as defined by Iowa Code 256.7(32), has increased from 2019-2020 school year with 1,220 students enrolled in three schools, to 2020-2021 school year with 4,555 students enrolled in six schools. For the three schools reporting for both 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, enrollment has increased from 1,220 students in 2019-2020 to 2,023 students in 2020-2021 (see last year's [Online Learning in Iowa Annual Legislative Report](#)).

Academic Data shows a wide range of proficiency. For example, when compared to the state averages for English, mathematics, and science, IACA is above the state average for reading, mathematics, and science. CRCSD Virtual and DMPS Virtual are above the state average for reading, but below the state average for mathematics and science. IAVA and CBCSD are below the state average for reading, mathematics and science. SAC is below the state average for reading but above the average for both mathematics and science.

Subgroup academic data shows wide achievement gaps across the approved online schools. For example, students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) show the largest achievement gap as compared to students without IEPs.

Retention rates cannot be calculated for the three additional approved online schools due to lack of data for the 2019-2020 school year. IACA shows an increase in retention, but IAVA retention data has remained stable.

Extracurricular rates remain low across all reporting online schools. This data would not reflect the ability of an open-enrolled student to participate in their resident district as allowed by [Iowa Code 282.18 \(12\)](#).

Three-year trend data for the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress shows improvements for English, mathematics, and science for both IACA and IAVA. This data compares 2018-2019 with 2020-2021 school years; the assessment was not administered for the 2019-2020 school year due to COVID 19. This data could not be calculated for the other four schools due to their approval date.

Academic mobility continues to show anyplace/anytime learning to be the leading reason for enrollment into the online academies. Miscellaneous is the leading category for enrollment termination.

For high school students, the percent on track for graduation ranges for the six schools from a high of 100% to a low of 15%. The state four-year graduation rate for the class of 2020 is 91.8%. For the fourth-year high school student, IACA, CBCSD, and DMPS Virtual are well below the state rate and IACA shows a marked decline in percent on track over the five years. All approved online schools in the state should put measures in place to mitigate poor graduation rates.

All of these pieces of information, taken together with results from the prior year's review suggest that it may be beneficial to determine: (a) to what extent each district is working through its approved online school to provide an evidence-based multi-tiered system of supports that will support and improve student achievement and what alternative/additional data source each school might collect to support these additional supports; (b) what work each district is doing within its approved online school to support on-time graduation; and (c) if a revised survey/method of collection on reasons for termination of enrollment would glean better information. In addition, the approved online schools may want to consider a method of monitoring student engagement and student/teacher interactions.