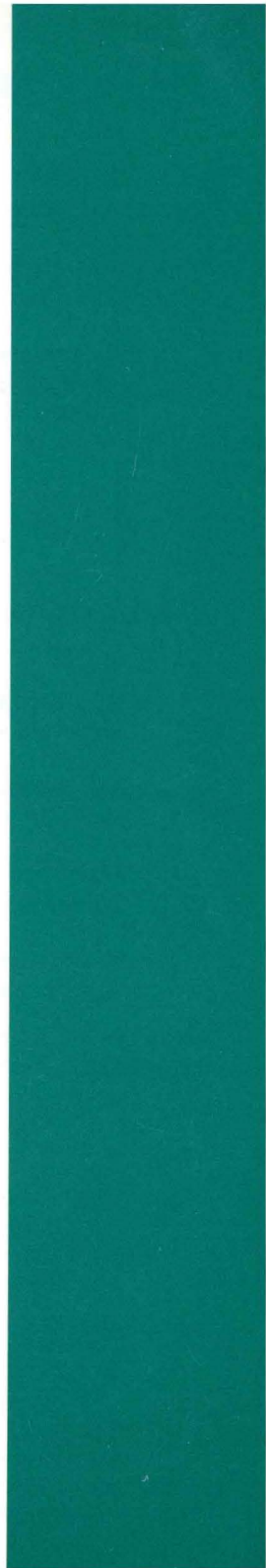


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State Board of Education
Priorities
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Iowa State Board of Education

2000 Priorities

The Iowa State Board of Education is committed to educational excellence in the 21st Century. The Board's vision for our future is guided by its goal for education in Iowa:

To improve the level of learning, achievement and performance of all students so they will become successful members of their communities and Iowa's workforce.

Changing Iowa

As we enter the year 2000, the pace of change in Iowa is accelerating. The needs of our students are changing as well, and we must respond. This is Iowa, today:

- 83.2 percent of Iowa school-age children have both parents or the only parent working outside the home, the highest percentage in the nation.
- Iowa's median household income fell by 5.1 percent in 1996-97 to \$33,877, while the national household income was rising by 1.5 percent to \$36,656.
- More than one in four Iowa students, 27.5 percent, were eligible for free or reduced price lunch in 1999, a percentage that is rising.
- Reading and math scores among Iowa 4th and 8th grade students declined again in 1999 and have dropped each year since 1995.

Iowa's Response

We must respond to these changes and create a 21st Century education system that:

- Guarantees that all students have a strong foundation in reading, math, and other basic skills.
- Ensures that all high school graduates have the opportunity to succeed in the workforce or in postsecondary education.
- Graduates students who are responsible citizens and productive members of their families and communities.

Our Legislative Priorities

The Iowa State Board of Education offers three priority issues for 2000, each aligned with the goals of the Board's strategic plan and focused on meeting the changing needs of our students. These selected strategies include:

PRIORITY ONE

Adequate Funding: Schools and Community Colleges

PRIORITY TWO

Early Childhood Investment

PRIORITY THREE

Teacher and Administrator Quality

1 Priority One — Adequate Funding: Schools and Community Colleges

A commitment to increased student achievement and success after high school and college must begin with adequate basic funding for K-12, community colleges, and services for students in need of additional assistance.

- K-12
- Community Colleges
- Supplementary Weighting
- School Based Youth Services
- Innovations Fund

K-12 — The State Board supports adequate K-12 Allowable Growth in State Foundation Aid for the 2001-2002 school year.

- Facts:** ★ Allowable Growth for 2000-2001 is already set at 4 percent.
★ State Aid to districts is 38.4 percent of the 1999-2000 state budget, a percentage which has declined each of the past three years.
★ Iowa ranked 34th in per pupil expenditures in 1997-98, \$671 per student below the national average and below each of our Midwest neighbors.

1 Priority One Continued

Community Colleges — The State Board supports full funding for the community colleges formula in 2000-2001, at an additional cost of \$9 million.

- Facts:** ★ More than 50 percent of Iowa students begin their postsecondary education at an Iowa community college.
- ★ State funding for Iowa community colleges represents 3 percent of the state budget, compared to 38.4 percent for state aid to K-12 school districts, 22.1 percent for higher education.

Supplementary Weighting: Alternative High School Programs — The State Board supports **all** school districts receiving additional support for students in alternative high school programs.

- Facts:** ★ Iowa's 83 alternative schools serve approximately 7,800 students.
- ★ Iowa's 1998 grade 7-12 dropout rate of 1.98 percent is the lowest in this decade.

School Based Youth Services — The State Board supports reauthorization of the School Based Youth Services program, which develops "one-stop," collaborative centers in or near schools that bring together community-based service agencies and education to assist at-risk children and teens. The Board also supports new funds for Extended Learning Opportunities and state partnerships in volunteer projects.

- Facts:** ★ In 1998, 22,403 youths were served at 18 School Based Youth Service sites.
- ★ 80.6 percent of births to teens in Iowa were out-of-wedlock in 1997, remaining well above pre-1992 levels.
 - ★ Iowa's juvenile arrest rate in 1997 was 124 per 100,000, a slight increase compared to the previous year.

Innovations Fund — The State Board supports seed funding for innovative educational opportunities such as regional collaboration to provide more complete programs for the last two years of high school, at a cost of \$300,000.

- Facts:** ★ Iowa ranks 40th in the percentage of schools participating in Advanced Placement, with 36.8 percent compared to the national average of 53.8 percent.
- ★ In 1999, average ACT scores in Iowa districts with fewer than 1,000 students K-12 were below the overall state average of 22.0.

2 Priority Two — Early Childhood Investment

A stronger commitment to investing in high quality early childhood education is essential. Otherwise, Iowa's youngest citizens will continue to lose ground in basic skills and families will increasingly receive less support than is available in other states.

- **Increased Empowerment Funding**
- **Linked Funding**
- **Quality and Accountability**
- **State Assistance**

Increased Empowerment Funding — *In order to assist children eligible for early childhood services who are not being served, the State Board supports increasing state funding for Community Empowerment by \$5.2 million, for a total of \$15.6 million in state funds.*

- Facts:** ★ 24 of the 57 designated community empowerment areas currently receive no state funding.
- ★ The State Board since 1995 has advocated full funding of early childhood education for at-risk four-year-olds, at a cost of up to \$25 million. Current empowerment areas seek to serve children from birth to 5 years and their parents, with considerably less funding.

Linked Funding — *The State Board supports better coordination in linking state empowerment funds with other existing funds available through such programs as Head Start, Shared Visions, federal Child Care, and Early Childhood Special Education.*

- Facts:** ★ Total available funding through state and federal early childhood programs far exceeds the \$10.5 million for Empowerment, and yet parents face waiting lists and children remain unserved.
- ★ 83.2 percent of Iowa school-age children had parent(s) working, compared to 66 percent nationwide.

Quality and Accountability — *Research shows the positive impact of programs that have quality standards that ensure trained staff and appropriate learning experiences for children. The State Board supports ensuring the current high quality of preschool programs through accountability for both program standards and reporting on results.*

- Facts:** ★ Iowa's state-funded preschool programs currently are required to meet national accreditation standards to receive funding.
- ★ Community Empowerment 1999 legislation is unclear about the future quality requirements for child development programs.
 - ★ Community empowerment boards and the state empowerment board have already shown an increasing commitment to a results-oriented approach.

2 Priority Two Continued

State Assistance — The State Board recognizes the need to strengthen state efforts to help community empowerment areas build their capacity to collaborate and network, collect and analyze data, and identify and blend state and federal funds..

- Facts:** ★ Communities currently receive little help building and supporting collaborative leadership.
- ★ Communities also receive little help in finding and analyzing state data to better understand and track local needs.
 - ★ There is little state help in identifying and working with state and federal dollars already coming in to their own communities.
 - ★ Communities receive little help in identifying best practices in early childhood education or in networking among other communities with similar needs.

3 Priority Three - Teacher and Administrator Quality

Attracting, retaining, and rewarding quality individuals in the teaching and school administration professions are key to improving instruction and raising student achievement.

- **Induction**
- **Recruitment**
- **Retention**
- **Compensation**
- **National Board Certification**

Induction — Mentors improve the quality of teaching and help to retain new teachers. Therefore, the State Board supports increasing funds for induction from \$300,000 to \$600,000, in order to move toward a goal of statewide mentoring programs.

- Facts:** ★ In a national survey of teachers, 70 percent said mentoring at least once a week helped their teaching significantly.
- ★ Research indicates as many as 30 percent of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years.
 - ★ Induction increases retention of teachers.

3 Priority Three continued

Recruitment — *The State Board favors increased funding from \$250,000 to \$1 million for forgivable loans to teachers in targeted shortage areas.*

- Facts:** ★ Teacher shortages exist in industrial technology, special education, foreign language and ESL, and secondary math and science.
- ★ The statewide average of teaching assignments per teacher, based on the number of unique courses taught, is 3.16, compared to 2.71, 14 years ago.

Retention — *The State Board supports changes in the IPERS program to avoid a predicted mass retirement in the year 2003 and to encourage good educators to continue to serve Iowa children following retirement.*

- Facts:** ★ Currently, there is a six-month waiting period before newly retired educators may return for substitute teaching, mentoring or temporary administrative responsibilities.
- ★ A survey found that 674 of Iowa's 1,880 school administrators, 35.9 percent, are eligible to retire by the year 2003 and 93 percent of those plan to do so.

Compensation — *The State Board supports starting pilot programs in school districts to develop alternative teacher compensation systems, through a \$375,000 allocation to the Council for Continuous Improvement.*

- Facts:** ★ Iowa's average teacher salary of \$35,007 in 1999 is 34th in the nation and \$5,400 below the national average.
- ★ Teachers in Iowa's smallest school districts, on average, earn \$12,300 less than teachers in Iowa's largest districts.

National Board Certification — *The State Board supports continued funding to support financial incentives, including full reimbursement of registration fees and annual awards, for Iowa teachers achieving National Board Certification.*

- Facts:** ★ 145 Iowa teachers achieved National Board Certification in 1998-99, the first year of the financial incentive package, the 5th highest number in the nation.
- ★ 62 percent of Iowa teachers who pursued certification were successful, a success rate well above the national average.

State Board of Education



The Board's members represent every region of Iowa. They have offered many years of direct service to Iowa's students and communities as members and presidents of local school boards, teachers and community college presidents, and business executives.

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