

TESTIMONY BEFORE  
HOUSE EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION HEARING

by

Robert D. Benton, Ed. D.  
Iowa State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
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# STATE OF IOWA • DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

GRIMES STATE OFFICE BUILDING • DES MOINES, IOWA 50319

ROBERT D. BENTON, Ed.D., STATE SUPERINTENDENT  
David H. Bechtel, M. S., Administrative Assistant  
RICHARD N. SMITH, Ph.D., DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am Dr. Robert Benton, Superintendent of Public Instruction and executive officer of the State Board of Public Instruction for the State of Iowa. We welcome the opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee and thank you for the invitation.

Before proceeding, I personally want to compliment you for holding onsite hearings outside of Washington, D. C. As you and your committee recognize, Iowa and the other sites chosen are where the grass roots of education exist. We believe these types of hearings will be most beneficial to your committee in future deliberations. With your permission, we will enter our statements in the record. I will then make a brief oral presentation summarizing our concerns and recommendations and emphasizing a few major considerations.

I have asked Dr. William Baley, associate superintendent of the Area Schools and Career Education Branch; Mr. Charles Moench, director of area schools; and Mr. William Schuermann, director of career education to accompany me, and they will be available to you and your committee if there is need for indepth questions pertaining to the vocational education efforts in the State of Iowa at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

## I. DEFINITIONS

Before presenting our concerns, I would like to offer the following explanations of some of the pertinent terms as they are used in Iowa and which are contained in this formal testimony:

1. The State Board of Public Instruction, of which I am executive officer, also functions as the State Board for Vocational Education. It is composed of nine laymen who are appointed to six-year terms by the Governor and confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Senate.
2. Vocational education is viewed as consisting of all activities and experiences through which one prepares herself/himself with marketable skills for a work role.
3. Career education is a sequence of planned educational activities designed to develop positive student attitudes, values, knowledges, and skills toward self and the world of work that will contribute to personal fulfillment in present and future life opportunities as well as economic independence.
4. A merged area is an area where two or more county school systems or parts thereof merge resources to establish and operate a vocational school or a community college as set forth by Chapter 280A of the Code of Iowa. (See Figure 1 in the Appendix.)

5. Vocational school means a publicly supported school which offers vocational or technical education, training, or retraining.
6. Community college means a publicly supported school which offers two years of liberal arts, preprofessional, or other instruction partially fulfilling the requirements for a baccalaureate degree, but which does not confer any baccalaureate degree and which offers in whole or in part the curriculum of a vocational school.
7. Junior college was the term used prior to 1965 to designate the two-year college parallel programs operated by the local public school districts. This term is no longer used in Iowa, because these programs were absorbed by the merged area schools and formed the basis for the college parallel offerings of the community colleges.
8. The school budget review committee, consisting of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Comptroller, and three members appointed by the Governor to represent the public, holds hearings and reviews the budgets of local school districts each year.
9. Career option college parallel programs are those which initially may serve a terminal purpose of employment but later offer application toward a baccalaureate degree as the person advances in a career such as law enforcement, library science, or community service.
10. An area education agency is an intermediate level organization for educational services to local school districts, with boundaries conterminous with those of the existing fifteen merged area school corporations, to provide an effective, efficient, and economical means of identifying and serving children from under five years of age through grade twelve who require special education and to provide special education support services, media services, and other educational services and programs to local school districts.

## II. BACKGROUND

Each state has its individual education structure which affects the way in which that state relates to federal vocational education legislation.

Iowa differs from many other states in that we have only two boards administering all public education programs in the state. The Iowa State Board of Public Instruction administers all public education programs, services, and activities in elementary, secondary, and the area vocational schools and area community colleges, while the Iowa Board of Regents is responsible for all programs, services, and activities conducted in the three state-supported undergraduate and graduate universities.

Prior to 1963, vocational education offerings at both the secondary and postsecondary levels were quite limited in volume, location, and variety. At the secondary level, in most areas of the state, vocational offerings were

limited to agriculture and home economics. Iowa's junior colleges offered a very limited number of occupational programs, while Iowa State University offered a few two-year technical courses.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 served as a catalyst in planning for improving the delivery system for occupational programs in Iowa. From the beginning Iowa planners focused on meeting the needs of people, rather than becoming over-involved with facilities and equipment. This goal of bringing vocational education opportunities as directly to the students as possible found its first fruits in the far-reaching legislative actions which began in 1965. The following table indicates the type and number of postsecondary enrollments in the public junior colleges in Iowa during the 1965 school year:

TABLE I  
ENROLLMENT OF IOWA PUBLIC JUNIOR COLLEGES  
1965 FALL TERM

Vocational Programs		College Parallel			Totals	
Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	All Students
825	14	7,444	827	8,269	841	9,110

The sixteen public junior colleges operating in 1965 were located for the most part in small communities which naturally curtailed the tax base for the support of the colleges and the bonding capacity which was essential for the construction of adequate physical facilities. According to the 1960 census, not one of the sixteen was located in any of the seven most populous counties in the state.

A parallel movement to the public junior colleges designed to provide occupational education was initiated in the 1960's as a result of Title VIII of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) approved by Congress in 1958. Federal funds, as a result of this Act, were made available to states on a matching basis for the development of area vocational programs. The State Board of Public Instruction implemented this legislation by modifying the state plan for vocational education to make local school districts as well as Iowa State University eligible to operate as "area" schools. Legislation increasing the availability of occupational programs in area vocational-technical schools was enacted by the 59th General Assembly in 1961. This legislation included Senate File 534 which made a specific allocation of funds to develop area vocational programs under Title VIII of NDEA, and Senate File 470 which created designation of several public senior high schools as "area vocational-technical high schools" and allowed students from neighboring school districts to attend those schools or programs by paying tuition.

A total of fifteen high schools were eventually designated as "area vocational-technical high schools" or programs by the State Board of Public Instruction, and these schools were also designated as "area" schools for purposes of Title VIII of the National Defense Education Act. The total number of full-time day students enrolled in postsecondary vocational education programs for the 1965-66 school year was only 1,815, and the majority of these students attended the area vocational-technical high schools or programs. It was quite obvious that this approach would not meet the vocational needs of Iowas citizens.

Therefore, the 61st General Assembly in 1965 approved legislation (Senate File 550, Acts of the Iowa 61st General Assembly which became Chapter 280A, Code of Iowa) permitting the development of a statewide system of postsecondary educational institutions operated under the direction of the State Board of Public Instruction. These institutions were officially designated as merged area schools and were to be organized by merged areas which included two or more counties. The boards of education of county school systems were authorized to plan for the merger of county school systems or parts thereof to develop a merged area provided that no local school district be part of more than one merged area. Each merged area was required to have a minimum of at least 4,000 public and private pupils in grade 9 through 12.

The merged areas were authorized to develop area schools as either area community colleges or area vocational schools. The legislation establishing the area schools limited the number of merged areas to not more than twenty. This number was amended by Senate File 616 in 1967 to permit the development of no more than seventeen area schools. In actuality though, only fifteen merged area school districts have been formed, and the entire state is included in those fifteen.

The fiscal support for area schools is provided through a combination of federal, state, and local funds and student tuitions. These funds include a local three-quarter mill levy on property within the merged area for operational purposes and an additional three-quarter mill levy for the purchase of sites and construction of buildings. The levy for sites and construction must be approved by a majority of those voting in the merged area and approved for a period not to exceed five years. In the beginning, general state aid was distributed to area schools on the basis of \$2.25 per day for the average daily enrollment of full-time students and the full-time equivalent of part-time students who were residents of Iowa. This formula was changed in 1969 by the 63rd General Assembly (House File 825, Acts of the 63rd General Assembly) to provide for the payment of general state aid equal to the full-time equivalent enrollment of Iowa residents x 180 days x \$2.25. This new formula provided for the computation of full-time enrollment on the basis of actual contact hours of instruction. For the past several years, though, the state general aid has been a line item amount to each of the merged area schools based on a formula developed jointly by the Department and the schools.

The individual area school has the authority to establish tuition. However, tuition for residents of Iowa is not to exceed the lowest tuition rate per semester, or the equivalent, charged at the three state universities. Tuition for non-residents of Iowa must be not less than one hundred fifty percent and not more than two hundred percent of the tuition established for residents of Iowa.

Admission to the area schools has not been restricted in the legislation, and as a result admission is open to all Iowans of post-high school age as well as high school students who qualify for one of the special programs offered in some area schools. All area schools subsequently developed as co-educational institutions that have an "open-door" policy of admissions. Some individual programs within area schools have certain prerequisites, but these are generally only those minimal requirements necessitated by the nature and level of the program.

The legislation authorizing the development of area schools was rather enthusiastically accepted by Iowans. The first plan for the organization of a merged area was received by the State Department of Public Instruction on July 5, 1965, one day after the effective date of the legislation. Plans from other areas followed in quick succession and fourteen merged areas were approved and organized in 1966 and a fifteenth in January of 1967. Fourteen of these fifteen merged areas offered some educational programs during the 1966-67 school year, and the fifteenth began offering programs during the 1967-68 school year.

The State Board of Public Instruction has established and adhered to a policy which negates the proliferation of educational facilities supported with federal funds. Except for special priority efforts when State monies have been used, local funds have been the primary support for vocational facilities construction. Local school and area school boards and administrators have supported the adaptation of facilities such as old school buildings, industrial processing and warehousing structures, and storefront buildings for educational purposes. This practice was followed quite extensively during the development of the area schools with their multiple campuses. This practice is most likely to continue as these institutions serve individuals interested in further education, particularly in the case of adult education programs, services, and activities.

#### Current Status of the Area School System in Iowa.

There are currently fifteen area schools operating in Iowa which include all counties in the state. Thirteen of the area schools have been organized as area community colleges, and two have been organized as area vocational schools. (See Figure 1 attached to this testimony which is a map showing the boundaries of the merged area school districts and the location of the various campuses.) As may be seen from that map, the fifteen area schools operate twenty-six campuses.

In addition to the twenty-six major campuses recognized by the Department of Public Instruction, area schools operate courses and programs at many sites throughout the merged areas. Some of these sites include significant enrollments and programming such as the urban campuses of Merged Areas X and XI in the inner cities of Cedar Rapids and Des Moines, respectively.

The area schools have developed as comprehensive institutions designed to fulfill the following objectives as indicated by the Iowa Legislature in 1967:

1. The first two years of college work including pre-professional education. (This does not apply to those merged areas that organized as area vocational schools.)
2. Vocational and technical training.
3. Programs for inservice training and retraining of workers.
4. Programs for high school completion for students of post-high school age.
5. Programs for all students of high school age who may best serve themselves by enrolling for vocational and technical training while also enrolled in a local school, public or private.

6. Student personnel services.
7. Community services.
8. Vocational education for persons who have academic, socio-economic, or other handicaps which prevent their succeeding in regular vocational education programs.
9. Training, retraining, and all necessary preparation for productive employment of all citizens.
10. Vocational and technical training for persons who are not enrolled in a high school and who have not completed high school.

Currently the area schools offer a wide range of programs including the following:

1. Part-time adult education for all Iowans of post-high school age.
2. A broad range of vocational education programs which provide initial preparation for employment and include study in full-time programs of from one quarter to two years or more in length. These programs include preparation for a variety of jobs from those that require mastery of relatively complicated manipulative skills to those technical programs that require extensive preparation in mathematics and science before entry into the program.
3. College parallel programs which include full-time programs comparable to the first two years of a baccalaureate degree program which may be transferred to a four-year institution and specialized programs of study that initially may serve a terminal purpose of employment, but later offer an opportunity for application toward a baccalaureate degree as the person advances professionally in his career. Examples of the latter type of program are community services aide, law enforcement, library science, mental health worker, and community corrections associate.
4. The agricultural production program for veterans who are employed in agricultural occupations. This program is offered at sites throughout the state that are conveniently located to make them easily accessible to veterans.
5. Community services structured to meet the needs of the individual merged areas.
6. Special programs for students who also are attending local high schools in the merged areas while attending the area school. These programs include career awareness and exploration programs, preparatory career education programs and courses that supplement the curricular offerings of local high schools.
7. Remedial programs for students with special needs who require assistance in the development of basic skills before entrance into other programs.

8. Programs for handicapped students which include such opportunities as special courses, evaluation centers, and sheltered workshops.
9. Special educational programs designed to assist Iowans who are currently institutionalized. These programs include opportunities for residents of the Men's Reformatory at Anamosa, the State Penitentiary at Fort Madison, and the Women's Reformatory at Rockwell City.
10. The course for drinking drivers authorized by the provisions of Chapter 321B, Code of Iowa.
11. An opportunity for the development of NEBIT (New and Expanding Business and Industry Training) programs as required within the merged area. These programs are offered in conjunction with local business and industrial organizations to prepare individuals for new employment opportunities as they arise. This program is designed to facilitate the expansion of existing Iowa corporations and assist in the attraction of new corporations of Iowa.

Rapid Growth in Postsecondary Programs and Enrollments.

The statewide system of area schools has demonstrated significant growth since its inception during the 1966-67 school year. Fourteen of the present fifteen area schools offered one or more educational programs during that year. In some cases, the area schools assumed operating control of local public community and junior colleges during the first year and as a result had a substantially larger enrollment for the first year of operation than would otherwise have been expected.

The full-time equivalent enrollments (FTEE) indicated below in Table II illustrate the enrollment growth of the area schools in their first eight years of operation.

TABLE II  
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT ENROLLMENTS (FTEE) - ALL STUDENTS

	Adult Education	College Parallel	Career Programs	Totals
School Year 1966-67	907.81	7,737.31	2,489.11	11,134.23
School Year 1967-68	2,894.50	9,571.55	5,478.20	17,944.25
School Year 1968-69	3,803.02	9,785.37	7,855.44	21,443.83
School Year 1969-70	5,887.70	10,070.76	8,209.41	24,167.87
School Year 1970-71	7,376.25	10,819.64	9,989.80	28,185.69
School Year 1971-72	7,095.65	10,146.18	15,311.69	32,553.52
School Year 1972-73	8,249.51	9,471.13	16,524.59	34,245.23
School Year 1973-74	8,843.87	9,255.09	17,719.36	35,818.32



Vocational Education in Iowa's Secondary Schools.

As mentioned earlier in this testimony, due to the rural nature of the state and the many small school districts, the bulk of vocational programming at the secondary level had been concentrated in vocational agriculture and home economic programs. It wasn't until the late 1950's and the early 1960's that much expansion was seen in traditional vocational skills training program, such as auto mechanics, machine shop, metal shop, office practices, and various trades and industry training programs. These programs were located mainly in Iowa's larger cities.

The information contained on page 3 of this testimony outlining the designation of fifteen high schools as "area vocational-technical high schools" illustrates later developments of much of these efforts, and it will not be repeated here. Suffice it to say that vocational education in Iowa's secondary schools was either concentrated in vocational agriculture and home economics (the latter almost exclusive of the domain of the small school) or in large city skills development programs.

In response to that situation, a number of things have occurred that have affected the development of vocational education programming in Iowa's secondary schools.

In 1965, the legislation under which Iowa's merged area school program was developed mandated that these new agencies would be concerned with "Programs for all students of high school age who may best serve themselves by enrolling for vocational and technical training while also enrolled in a local school, public or private." This mandate has been discussed previously in this testimony, but it is repeated here to better establish a sequence of events concerning the secondary programs. It has only been in the last several years that this portion of the merged area school programming has begun to take shape.

In 1970, the State Board of Public Instruction adopted eleven "Imperatives" as goals for Iowa's schools. One of those eleven "Imperatives" was ". . . . to initiate and maintain strong programs of education for people desiring to develop their skills in vocational pursuits and technical training." The adoption of this goal has resulted in a number of new strategies to greatly increase vocational offerings at the secondary level and to involve many more secondary students in these programs.

One example of this new commitment by the State Board and the Department is what is known as the "80-60-40 plan" for reimbursement of new secondary vocational programs. To encourage the implementation of new programs at the secondary level, the State Board adopted a policy of reimbursement of salary and travel at 80% the first year, 60% the second year, 40% the third year, and regular pro-rata reimbursement thereafter. The following table indicates what has happened in Iowa since that policy decision was made.

TABLE III  
INCREASES IN SECONDARY VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS  
DUE TO NEW REIMBURSEMENT FORMULA

Fiscal Year	Number of Secondary Districts	Number of Program Offerings	Reimbursement Received By Secondary Districts		
			Total	State	Federal
1973-74	106	217	\$ 541,970	\$ 314,062	\$ 227,908
1974-75	173	408	\$ 882,395	\$ 568,457	\$ 313,944

In Fiscal Year 1975, then, a total of three hundred and sixty-five of Iowa's 450 secondary districts offered state board approved, reimbursed programs compared to only 305 in 1970. Through these efforts an additional 7,870 secondary students are now being served.

A more recent thrust that affects secondary vocational programming concerns the action of the Sixty-fifth General Assembly in 1973. At that time, Sections 257.25 and 280, Code 1973, were amended to incorporate a new section pertaining to career education and a revision of the practical arts emphasis relative to the minimum educational program for grades nine through twelve.

The revised Code states that "five units of occupational education subjects, which may include but shall not be limited to programs, services, and activities which prepare students for employment in office and clerical, trade and industrial, consumer and homemaking, agriculture, distributive, and health occupations" shall be the minimum educational program for grades nine through twelve. To what extent, this statutory charge will have on vocational education programming, per se, is yet uncertain, but it does indicate a legislative commitment.

Iowa's efforts in career education are closely related to the secondary vocational programming. For the last five years, the Department has been engaged in an effort to integrate career education into the total curriculum of the schools throughout the State of Iowa. The Department's concept of career education and support for its integration into the total curriculum is based on the following philosophy:

1. Education should provide every individual access to optimum personal development which will enable responsible and productive contributions to a democratic society.
2. Education encompasses the development of basic skills, knowledge, competencies, appreciations, attitudes, and values. Education begins with preschool experiences and is a lifelong process.
3. To be effective and relevant, education must involve the cooperative efforts of school, home and community. Education must prepare individuals to adjust to the needs of a changing society and to find self satisfaction in personal and societal accomplishments.

In the State concept, career education embraces the spectrum of awareness, accommodation, exploration, preparation, and upgrading/retraining activities and experiences. State staff has been involved in a coordinated effort to implement programs, services, and activities in the local and area schools of Iowa.

The impetus of this statewide effort, which has gained wide acceptance, provides support to vocational education in Iowa. The career education effort has stimulated action relevant to improved articulation throughout the total school curriculum. It has increased the involvement of parents and the business community in the educational process. Because of the experiences and knowledge attained, individuals are better equipped to make personal decisions relevant to preparing themselves for work and for personal fulfillment in the pursuit of a career.

Another concern of secondary vocational programming has been the problem of reaching students in small high schools. Since Iowa is an agricultural state and is less densely populated than many other states, special provision has had to be made to insure that students from small, rural districts have the opportunity to participate in vocational education programs, services, and activities. This objective is being accomplished through the "joint-effort" programs which create an alliance between each merged area school and a consortium of secondary districts in order to establish centrally located attendance centers, arrange for transportation and scheduling, and provide instruction in such specific exploratory and preparatory programs as have been decided upon by the districts involved. In this manner, limited resources are shared and the opportunities for students from small schools are greatly enhanced through this group effort.

As an illustration, in Merged Area V three attendance centers have been established in the outlying areas of Humboldt, Pocahontas, and Storm Lake. Humboldt provides services for ten small feeder districts; Pocahontas, five; and Storm Lake, twelve. Programs provided include both exploratory and preparatory offerings. Without the joint-effort activity, most of these students would not have had the opportunity to receive this valuable instruction.

The development of effective, relevant joint-effort programs is dependent upon cooperative planning. To facilitate such planning, vocational education research funds were used to provide small grants to those merged areas who desired to undertake cooperative assessment-planning studies. Each such area submitted a proposal which described their planning structure (a steering committee composed of representatives from local districts, the area school, other government agencies, business and industry, and the lay public), their objectives, anticipated procedures, a timetable, and a budget (including the local in-kind contribution). Several of the studies are now complete while others are in various stages of progress. The fifteen merged areas of the state have been involved in this group planning effort with fourteen using research funds as a stimulus. These studies sought to identify the educational needs of individuals and of employers, to identify and describe available resources, to identify constraints, and then to blend needs and resources in developing suggested alternatives for a service delivery system best suited to the geographical/educational situation of that particular area.

In summary, then, the efforts described above have resulted in the following enrollment patterns at the secondary level:

TABLE IV  
DISTRIBUTION OF SECONDARY ENROLLMENTS BY PROGRAM AREA

<u>Program</u>	<u>1969-70</u>	<u>1973-74</u>
Agriculture	11,348	16,899
Distributive Education	1,368	1,804
Home Economics	26,308	42,299
Office Occupations	755	1,330
Trade and Industrial	<u>3,333</u>	<u>3,176</u>
TOTAL	43,112	65,508

For a more detailed and diversified analysis of the various enrollment statistics, please see Figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 in the appendix.

Services for Iowa's Adult.

During the past ten years, since the passage of the original area school legislation, adult education has exhibited dramatic growth and expansion in Iowa, as indicated by the following comparison:

TABLE V  
ENROLLMENT IN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

<u>Program</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1974</u>
Agriculture	15,215	21,047
Distributive Education	1,917	3,306
Health	702	25,274
Home Economics	6,302	28,697
Office		16,312
Trade and Industrial	<u>16,730</u>	<u>26,719</u>
TOTAL	40,866	121,355

To expedite this growth, the boards of directors at the area schools have adopted a policy to permit the area schools to contract with the local high school districts in the cooperative offering of adult education programs. This type of agreement permits a wide variety of adult education courses to be offered in each community school district throughout the state. It also provides an opportunity to utilize expensive school facilities during the late afternoon and evening hours. Normally, the area schools are responsible for the financing, promotion and administration of the adult program.

Opportunities are available for adults to enroll in vocational supplementary education programs designed to upgrade or retrain persons currently employed. Programs generally are conducted as courses, seminars, workshops or conferences and are normally less than 120 contact hours in length. The length of the courses and curriculum is based on the needs of the participants and employers.

Many of the programs are offered in cooperation with agencies and organizations, e.g., Banking Courses, in cooperation with the American Institute of Banking and the Iowa Bankers Association; Firemen Courses, in cooperation with Iowa State University; Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), in cooperation with the Iowa Bureau of Labor and the U.S. Department of Labor; Iowa Local Government Inservice, in cooperation with the Institute of Public Affairs, University of Iowa; Emergency Medical Technician Ambulance, in cooperation with the Department of Health; Construction Supervisory Training, in cooperation with Master Builders of Iowa; and Basic Life Support, in cooperation with the Iowa Heart Association.

Tuition charged for the vocational supplementary courses vary between the fifteen area community colleges and ranges from a low \$.30 per contact hour up to \$1.00 per contact hour. Courses also may vary in cost within a school depending upon the specific course. For instance, a thirty hour welding course may cost the student \$48.00 and an accounting course only \$9.00. The tuition difference is due to the cost of welding electrodes and scrap material used for practice, while the accounting course may have only a workbook and a few miscellaneous supplies to purchase.

Area school staff members assigned to work with the Adult and Continuing Education Unit of the school include an adult director, who is directly responsible for conducting the adult and continuing education program of the school; one or more coordinators, who have direct responsibility for conducting courses in a specific area and for supervision of instructors in the specific course areas; and clerical and secretarial staff, who are responsible for all office correspondence, reports and general office duties.

Coordinators work with employers to determine the type and extent of the education requirements for their firm. The coordinators then develop, with the employer, a curriculum to meet these needs, select an instructor, provide classroom and/or laboratory facilities and provide the required audio-visual equipment, material, and supplies.

Many times area schools are asked by industry or other agencies to assist them in training new employees to fill a specific job vacancy which may be created by advancement of other employees or to an expansion of the firm. Currently, a program of this type is being conducted to provide 150 unemployed Iowans with jobs. The Iowa Employment Security Commission (IESC) refers the unemployed individuals, and the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) provides funds to assist in the training two hours per day, five days per week for a period of seventeen weeks.

The delivery system provided by the fifteen area schools enhances the opportunity for the continuing education of the adult. When the schools were developed, it was the expectation that no individual would have to travel more than fifty miles to a campus center. However, with the adult education delivery system, most adults attending classes on a part-time basis have an opportunity to attend classes much closer to home, usually within their own community.

Vocational Programming for Special Needs Populations in Iowa.

The Iowa Department of Public Instruction has established a Special Needs Section to promote vocational programs and support services for disadvantaged and handicapped youth.

The Special Needs Section uses vocational education funds as authorized by the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, 1970, 1972, and 1974 for the development of career education programs and supportive services for disadvantaged and handicapped youth at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

Special needs programs, services, and activities include:

1. Exploratory programs in junior high schools where students receive instruction and participate in experiences which familiarizes them with a broad range of occupations.
2. Work experience programs in high schools and community colleges.
3. Supplemental manpower provisions for vocational programs in high schools and community colleges.
4. Drop-in centers and outreach services for school dropouts and alienated populations.
5. Learning center activities that provide support instruction in vocational areas for lower ability students.
6. Jointly sponsored programs between local school districts, the merged area schools, and industry in establishing career awareness, exploration, and preparation experiences for students enrolled in secondary programs.

Work experiences, support services and preparatory programs largely characterize the type of activities provided for students on the secondary level. During fiscal years 1972-1974, 169 separate projects were funded. One hundred fifteen (68%) of these activities were work experience and career exploration. Twenty-five (15%) were classified as supportive service activities, and twenty-nine (17%) were designated as preparatory.

Since the majority of secondary schools lack diversity in their vocational preparatory programs, work experience opportunities utilizing community resources widen the school's ability to provide programs adapted to individual interests and abilities. In some schools, the only vocational training available to students is the work experience program. In the majority of schools, the work experience program supplements other cooperative programs that do not serve handicapped and/or disadvantaged youth. These programs serve as an exploration for students not ready for vocational training and they also serve as a preparation for those students ready for direct employment.

Supportive services and vocational preparatory and exploratory programs for the disadvantaged and/or handicapped are also provided on the postsecondary level. Throughout fiscal years 1972-1974, one hundred eighty-three (183) separate special

needs activities were funded. Ninety-nine (54%) of these activities were classified as supportive services, sixty-five (36%) were classified as preparatory programs, and nineteen (10%) were classified as exploratory programs.

Supportive services in area schools have received greater emphasis than exploratory and preparatory programs. Several reasons account for this trend. First, more personnel at the postsecondary level are being made aware that special needs students can succeed in ongoing programs if they are provided additional assistance. Second, area schools already have preparatory programs established with respect to facilities, equipment and personnel. Consequently, disadvantaged and handicapped persons can largely be served by increasing personnel to provide extra assistance and/or modifying programs through the use of special materials and techniques and third, exploratory experiences are largely expected to be provided through secondary programs. Consequently, vocational preparation can be emphasized on the postsecondary level with support services being used to adapt to the needs of individuals.

The independent learning center is a major vehicle for the delivery of supportive services on the postsecondary level. Presently, fourteen of Iowa's area schools operate learning centers. Basic reading, mathematics, language and communication deficiencies of students pursuing vocational training led to the development of the learning center. Personal adjustment problems, financial needs and vocational assessment needs of students have expanded the breadth of services of some independent learning centers.

During fiscal years 1972-1974, all of Iowa's area schools developed a position referred to as "Special Needs Coordinator". The major purpose for initiating this position originated in the belief that if a staff person was available 100% of the time for overseeing curriculum offerings, more development and activity would occur on behalf of the disadvantaged and handicapped populations. Throughout fiscal years 1972-1974, supportive service offerings increased from twenty-seven to thirty-eight, and preparatory offerings increased from fifteen to twenty-six. Special needs coordinators contributed substantially to this development. In addition, they have spurred the development of comprehensive service programs which are now being planned and initiated in several of Iowa's area schools. Special needs coordinators are combining the support of many agencies in planning, financing and initiating comprehensive service programs. Consequently, area school personnel are working collectively with other agencies and institutions to promote the full development of each student. Further encouragement in this direction should result in a very broad linkage of funds, manpower, materials and knowledge that will lead to a better quality of service.

Depending upon the circumstances, federal guidelines make provisions for 100% funding of vocational programs and services for the disadvantaged and handicapped. However, it is recognized that 100% funding of programs and services does not allow local communities to become committed to projects nor does it allow wide-spread development since funds are limited. Consequently, throughout fiscal years 1972-1974 dollars were allotted to local educational agencies on a matching basis only. Therefore, \$5,790,960 federal dollars generated over \$11,581,920 dollars in actual program development and maintenance. Moreover, fifty-three different school districts and fifteen community colleges were able to participate in developing programs and support services.

Of 167 programs started by using dollars administered by the Special Needs Section, 128 have continued either under the same funding structure and/or funds supplied from other sources. Thirty-one were successfully completed as short-term projects. Therefore, only eight programs failed to continue. Thirty-three projects have continued under different sources of funds other than Special Needs vocational monies.

We support the need for 25% monies being designated for special needs, but we believe that a more flexible way would be to allow the individual state to determine the prorated break of these 25% funds.

#### Leadership and Coordination of Efforts.

A number of related activities are germane to Iowa's vocational educational programming. Among these are use of advisory committees; data gathering, analysis and utilization, specialized services (bilingual instruction, veterans' farm programs and vocational rehabilitation services); and guidance and counseling services. At all planning levels, the content and relevancy of vocational education programs are improved through the valuable input from advisory committee members. A requirement for approval of proposals for new programs is the organization and utilization of an advisory committee in the development of the program and provision for use of the advisory committee later in evaluation of the program. Committee members are chosen because of their practical/technical knowledge of the occupational field which they represent.

Local and statewide vocational education planning is dependent upon timely accurate data. Continuous efforts are made to refine and improve the process for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating such planning-related data in Iowa.

An important data-collection effort in Iowa is the Career Education Needs Information System (CENIS). This system involves surveys which yield data on a merged area and statewide basis on labor demand, labor supply, student interests, and student outcomes (three-year follow-up). Over three hundred different occupations are surveyed, arranged according to vocational program classification, and interfaced to provide a "Career Education Planning Profile" for each merged area. CENIS data then enriched with other pertinent information and pre-tested formulae and criteria are applied to prioritize the various programs.

The lists of "Priority Training Areas" and "Priority Program Areas" are distributed to vocational education decision-makers to assist them in their planning efforts. Information from the Iowa Employment Security Commission, the Department of Social Services, and other agencies is reviewed and correlated with the information resulting from our own data collection efforts.

The work of advisory committees and accurate and up-to-date data are key factors in providing programming to meet changing needs. In Iowa, this is best exemplified by the changing occupational trends in the field of health occupations. In Fiscal Year 1970, only eight different programs were offered, while in Fiscal Year 1975, eighteen different health fields were covered with full-time programs and numerous short-term health-related courses were offered through adult education supplementary programs. In Fiscal Year 1970, enrollments in health occupations at the postsecondary level totaled 2,535 (23% of all postsecondary enrollments), while in Fiscal Year 1975, 4,565 (28% of total enrollments) students were enrolled in this rapidly growing occupational area.



In addition, new programs planned and offered in the emerging areas of environmental technology, agri-business, and natural resources. Continuous evaluation and subsequent curriculum changes assist in keeping the programs current and relevant to the changing needs of Iowa's dynamic society.

Specialized services to target groups such as the disadvantaged, handicapped, unemployed, low-income, and minority groups, have been an integral part of Iowa's vocational programming. To illustrate, in the Muscatine area, many agencies are involved in a mutual effort to assist in the "settling out" of former migrant workers. Vocational skill training is provided and a bilingual interpreter has been employed to assist in developing communication skills. Also, linkages between various programs have enhanced the vocational and rehabilitative training of the inmates of Iowa's correctional institutions.

Another example is a self-help program at Muscatine Community College which is designed to help mothers who are receiving aid to dependent children support to improve themselves. Much of the success of this program is due to interagency linkages by combining resources. Funding is from state and federal career education funds (1/3 Part F consumer education); Social Services; federal adult basic education funds; Iowa East Central T.R.A.I.N. (Community Action agency -- Teach, Rehabilitate, Aid Iowa Neglected); Muscatine Community College; State Services for Crippled Children; and university extension services.

The Veterans' farm program is another example of "special services." An agriculture production program for veterans has been developed by the Veterans Education Unit of the Department of Public Instruction, the Veterans Administration, and program planners from the area schools. This program meets for a three-year total of 132 weeks of instruction. Special inservice training for instructors is being provided by Iowa State University. Instruction is tailored to meet the specific needs of veterans in each geographic area. Currently, Iowa has 102 centers in operation in the fifteen merged areas with a total veteran enrollment of between 2,500 and 3,000.

Finally, vocational rehabilitation counselors are stationed in each of the 15 area schools to provide the specialized services needed by students with special problems. Career orientation centers are also available in the area schools to provide students with assessment services so that they can become aware of their capabilities and choose realistic, pertinent training areas.

Guidance and counseling services have always played an important role in Iowa's vocational education programming. To assist students in exploring occupational areas which are relevant to their aptitudes and interests, the Career Information System of Iowa (CISI) has been developed. CISI is an outcome of two exemplary projects, Computerized Vocational Information System (CVIS) and IOWA script. It provides the options of a computerized or a needle sort delivery system, or both for current, localized information about occupations and avenues for preparation for employment. Materials have been developed to assist the student in coordinating personal aptitudes and interests with the selection of occupations.

Related to career choices by students is their proper placement following training. Vocational education's ultimate accountability is for the success or failure of its product, the former student, as a competitor in the market place.

Today, vocational education institutions are realizing and accepting their responsibility to provide an efficient placement service and to follow-up former students in order to evaluate and improve the training programs. Organized, systematic placement services are provided in each area school in Iowa and in many of the secondary schools. Also, the schools cooperate closely with the placement efforts of the Iowa Employment Security Commission.

Finally, three different statewide follow-up surveys are conducted, supplemented by many locally conducted follow-up studies. The Annual Vocational Student Follow-Up, coordinated by the Guidance Services Section, Department of Public Instruction, collects data from secondary and postsecondary students who were enrolled in vocational programs during the previous fiscal year. Approved Veteran Education programs are now mandated to verify that at least fifty percent of the students completing programs (other than those leading to an associate degree) during a designated two-year period have been employed in the occupation for which they were trained. The time period and other requirements for the Veteran's Follow-up do not coincide with the U.S.O.E. requirements for the Annual Follow-up. As part of the CENIS data-collection effort, we have developed and operated a Three-Year Follow-Up, which combines statistical and attitudinal information and provides a longer time period for the former student to have located a permanent job and begin to become established in his/her career.

It has been difficult to include all activities and programming thrusts in this brief "Background" of Iowa's program of vocational education. An attempt has been made, however, to briefly present regular vocational program efforts at both the postsecondary and secondary levels, adult education efforts, special needs programming, and specialized services.

### III. CONCERNS

In the remainder of this testimony, I want to pinpoint several important issues and concerns as it is related to pending congressional consideration of future vocational education legislation. Specifically, I am concerned about the following:

1. Single governing boards for vocational education.
2. State advisory council.
3. De-categorization of special needs funds.
4. The "seed" money concept.

#### Single board concept.

Our state supports the single board concept. The State Board of Public Instruction, as indicated in the preceding paragraphs, is responsible for all vocational education at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Our local community school districts as well as the postsecondary (two year or less) area vocational schools and community colleges are provided the direction and leadership of our department, and all vocational education programs, services, and activities are approved by our State Board. We believe that this method as practiced in our state lends itself to better articulation, coordination, and thereby assists in the elimination of duplication, fragmentation, and empire-building by the deliverers of vocational education efforts in our State. When there is need for higher education involvement, we in Iowa contract for these services with the public and private four-year colleges and universities.

State advisory councils.

We feel there is a continuing need for the State Advisory Council. One of our present State Board members is a past member of the State Advisory Council, and I had the privilege of serving on the Council in the past as a local secondary school representative. This type of representation has greatly assisted our State Board in further developing policy pertaining to vocational education. We believe that over the past years efforts and understandings have been established between our State Board and the State Advisory Council to a point where communication, articulation, and general team effort is evident in a very positive manner. The annual report, the public hearings, and the recommendations developed by the State Advisory Council have become more positive, and a closer relationship between our Department and the State Advisory Council is definitely evident.

De-categorization of special needs funds.

We in Iowa support congressional leadership as indicated by the Vocational Education Act amendments of 1972 in which the first effort to de-categorize vocational education took place, and would recommend that the categorization of special needs funds be reviewed. We find in Iowa that the arbitrary percentage of 10% Handicapped and 15% Disadvantaged does not fit our state needs, and I am sure other states have this same problem. We support the need for 25% monies being designated for special needs, but we believe that a more flexible way would be to allow the individual state to determine the prorated distribution of these funds. Our past experience indicates there are times when there is greater need established by one portion of special needs, yet the categorized percentage does not allow our state to supply funds to meet those needs.

The "seed" money concept.

The financing of public elementary and secondary education in Iowa is based almost exclusively on a formula approach. A school district's operating budget is determined by a formula contained in state law, and no discretion is given to local boards of education to vary from that formula. Only the School Budget Review Committee or a vote of the people to impose an income surtax can authorize a school district to exceed the "formula" budget. This has created a situation whereby local districts have found it very difficult to respond in a reasonable manner to inflation, changing enrollment patterns (particularly declining enrollments), employee bargaining, and program improvement and/or growth.

Application of this formula reversed almost total autonomy for local school districts in financial matters to complete budgetary limit control by the state via the foundation aid formula.

A school district's enrollment takes on added significance under Iowa's school foundation plan, since it determines a district's budget. Declining enrollments, so prevalent currently, have created financial problems for many school districts.

It is difficult to completely pinpoint the implications of Iowa's system of financing education to federal funding of vocational education. This difficulty is brought about by the multitude of categorical aids being currently provided by the federal government and the various methods of administering the same.

In general, the propensity of the federal government to identify a new thrust in education, provide "seed" money to launch that thrust, and expect local school districts to continue funding those programs when federal monies are withdrawn presents a problem. Granted, this is a generalization, but a number of examples can be cited to document the point.

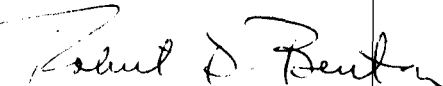
The most current example is the discussion now going on in Congress concerning new directions in vocational education funding at the federal level. There seems to be some concern that a large percentage of federal vocational funds is being used to "maintain" ongoing programs. A number of congressmen and senators seem to be stressing the "seed" money concept. Such a policy decision at the federal level would create difficulty for Iowa school districts which must operate under controlled budgeting procedures. Many Iowa school districts are seriously considering not accepting dollars (federal or state) that may be withdrawn in the future, because of the difficulty of finding replacement dollars within their controlled budgets.

The critical issue of school finance in Iowa is that school districts must operate within formula-determined budgets. If the federal government wishes to become a partner in providing educational services to students in the various states, it must be willing to become a full partner, not one that is "in and out." There are a number of programs where the "seed" money concept is not practical, and vocational education programs and programs for the disadvantaged and handicapped are two such examples.

#### IV. CONCLUDING COMMENT

Mr. Chairman, we have endeavored to give the Committee a perspective of vocational education as it exists in Iowa today. We thank you for the opportunity of sharing these thoughts with you.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert D. Benton, Ed.D.  
Iowa State Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

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