



STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KEVIN FANGMAN, ACTING DIRECTOR

DATE: October 1, 2010

TO: Public School District Superintendents
Area Education Agency Administrators

FROM: Kevin Fangman
Acting Director

SUBJECT: The 8th Grade Plan and Iowa Code 279.61

In 2009-2010, 32,149 8th graders and 25,390 9th graders developed career and educational plans as a part of their work on the required state components of the 8th Grade Plan process. The report is available on the Department of Education's website at www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1657&Itemid=2467#reports. Although this is an increase over the previous school year, there are data gaps on schools or groups of students who did not begin or finish their student portfolio.

Iowa Code 279.61 requires Iowa schools to work with students enrolled in 8th grade to create a plan which shall include career options and shall identify coursework needed in grades 9-12 to support the student's postsecondary education and career options. The state-designated system for career and educational information is IHaveAPlanIowa™ (www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov).

For the 2010-2011 school year, each Iowa student in 8th, 9th and 10th grade is expected to complete the grade level Guideways to provide the school data on the career planning process of the 8th Grade Plan. Guideways for 11th grade will be required in 2011-2012 and for 12th grade in 2012-2013. IHaveAPlanIowa™ provides school and district student data to Iowa's partner agencies – the Department of Education and the Iowa College Student Aid Commission. No additional data collection process is needed for schools that complete the process within the Guideways of IHaveAPlanIowa™.

District personnel working with students must be aware that **IHaveAPlanIowa™ only collects data on the components that are completed *within the Guideways*. Any school that does not have students go into the Guideways to complete the components or uses a system other than IHaveAPlanIowa™ will have to file a report with the state.** The grade specific spreadsheets for this report can be found on the Department of Education website www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1657&Itemid=2467#additional.

Guidance and resources to assist the schools and their staff have been created by a cross-divisional team of educational consultants at the Department of Education which can be accessed at www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1657&Itemid=2467.

If you need assistance or would like some individual help on the 8th Grade Plan, please contact Sandra Dop at Sandra.Dop@iowa.gov or 515-281-0127.

For technical assistance with the **IHaveAPlanIowa™** website, please contact Iowa College Student Aid at 877-272-4456 or info@iowacollegeaid.gov.