Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

September 18, 2014

**Agenda Item:** Area Education Agency (AEA) Accreditation – AEA 267

**Iowa Goal:** All PK-12 students will achieve at a high level.

**State Board Role/Authority:** Iowa Code section 273.11(1) directs the State Board to develop standards and rules for the accreditation of area education agencies. The Department of Education is directed to develop and establish, in consultation with the AEAs, an accreditation process for AEAs. Iowa Code section 273.10(1). The State Board shall determine whether a program of an AEA shall receive initial accreditation or remain accredited...based upon the recommendation of the Director of the Department of Education after a study of the factual and evaluative evidence...in terms of the accreditation standards adopted by the State Board. Iowa Code section 273.10 (3 and 3a).

**Presenters:** Sharon Hawthorne, Consultant
Bureau of School Improvement

Eric Heitz, Consultant
Bureau of School Improvement

**Attachments:** 1

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board grant continued accreditation to AEA 267.

**Background:** According to the AEA Accreditation Process used by the Department, each AEA is visited on a five-year rotation to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of 281 Iowa Administrative Code chapter 72.
AEA 267 Accreditation Report

Purpose
The central purpose of the accreditation visit is to help Area Education Agencies (AEAs) improve the quality and focus of their services, which will in turn assist schools and school districts to improve learning for students.

Iowa’s AEAs are a critical part of the support structure for schools and ultimately for children. With so much at stake, maintaining high standards or quality in programs and services is a top priority.

On-Site Visit
Onsite visits are an essential part of the AEA accreditation process.

AEA site visits conducted during the school year reflect the requirements outlined in 281—IAC Chapter 72. As a result, the following procedures were applied:

- Assessment of the eight accreditation standards through review of their associated descriptors:
  - School-Community Planning
  - Professional Development
  - Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
  - Diverse Learner Needs
  - Multicultural, Gender Fair
  - Media
  - School Technology
  - Leadership
- Assessment of common criteria that apply to each standard:
  - Agency services are equitably available
  - The agency includes a process to monitor implementation of the services
  - The agency has a process to measure the effectiveness of services provided
  - The agency has a process to measure the efficiency of services provided
  - Assessment of the services provided for established agency-wide goals

Site Visit – Desired Results
The agency can:
- Address accreditation expectations
- Consistently deliver services that, in aggregate, meet the eight accreditation standards
- Use the site visit findings to continuously improve the quality of services to positively impact student learning
Accreditation applies to the entire agency, not to individual programs, services, or actions.

281—IAC Chapter 72 designates two accreditation options:
- The State Board of Education grants Continuation of Accreditation if the agency meets all standards and other requirements
- The State Board of Education grants Conditional Accreditation if the agency has not met all standards and other requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Accreditation</th>
<th>Standards Met or Not Met</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AEA Accreditation Standards</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• School-Community Planning - <strong>Met</strong></td>
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<td>• Professional Development - <strong>Met</strong></td>
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<td>• Leadership - <strong>Met</strong></td>
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## Overall Strengths of the Agency

### Accomplishing the Work Framework
Agency interviewees spoke of the agency’s framework for “Accomplishing the Work” of the agency. This framework allows districts to ask hard questions of agency staff, expects agency staff to listen to what districts are saying, and allows the agency to “say no” to requests that are outside the scope of the agency’s core works, are not supported by data, or have limited impact on districts.

District interviewees spoke positively of the work of their district’s Collaborative Team. The Collaborative Team agenda and minutes are a positive template for preparing for and facilitating Collaborative Team Meetings. These teams are having a positive impact on agency/district relationships.

### Organizational Effectiveness Framework
Agency administration presented information to the site visit team about their Organizational Effectiveness Framework (OEF), which is used by agency staff to make data-based decisions. The framework includes clear definitions of each framework component.

This framework is utilized by the Chief Administrator and his cabinet and the agency’s Continuous Improvement Committee to make decisions regarding the agency.

Agency interviewees also reported that the application of the agency’s OEF has allowed the agency to narrow its service focus to be more aligned to the needs of Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Three areas of focus have been identified:
- Early literacy
- Support for implementation of district initiatives
- Learning Supports for all students

### Communication
LEA interviewees report communication from the agency as a strength. This includes emails and resources on the website. Collaborative Team Meetings have also played a role with improving the two-way flow of information.

The Chief Administrator expressed that an outcome for the agency is to be a “connector of information vs. a holder of information.”

### One AEA vs. Three AEAs
During the agency overview and agency interviews, it appeared that the agency has merged into one AEA versus the three separate AEAs observed in the last site visit. This is an area of growth for the agency.
One example of this shift is that the agency has realigned and reduced the number of agency regions.

**Flexibility**

LEA interviewees expressed appreciation for the changes the agency has made to be flexible in meeting the needs of LEAs in spite of decreasing resources. This includes:

- Staffing
- Professional development being offered in various locations across the agency
- Collaboration with other AEAs
Overall Recommendations for the Agency

### Cultural Competence Training

Agency interviewees reported that there has not been any Cultural Competence training for agency staff. Agency staff feel that the agency demographics are rapidly changing and they are not prepared to assist and support districts with demographic shifts.

It is recommended that all agency staff receive comprehensive cultural competency training that meets the changing demographic needs of the LEAs they serve and positively impacts educational practice across the area. This training should include issues around equity and diversity.

The agency may also consider conducting a self-study of the agency’s diverse demographics to better understand the needs of underrepresented groups in the agency.

For further information on cultural competence contact Margaret Jensen-Connet (515-281-6947 or Margaret.JensenConnet@iowa.gov) or Isbelia Arzola (515-281-3954 or Isbelia.Arzola@iowa.gov) at the Department of Education (DE).

### Independent Nonpublic Schools

The agency overview discussed the organization of agency leadership and goals. LEA interviews indicated the current leadership created a customer service focus which has improved response to LEA needs and equity of services throughout the agency.

The collaborative team structure and chief administrator meetings with district superintendents are effective and efficient ways to deliver meaningful connections and services.

Agency interviewees indicated independent accredited nonpublic schools (not part of a nonpublic system) have not been visited annually by agency administration.

The agency needs to consider conducting agency administrators’ visits with principals and/or superintendents of independent nonpublic schools as they do with the administrators of public school districts and nonpublic school systems.

### Separation of Three Service Areas

During agency and LEA interviews it became clear to the site visit team that there is a separation of the three agency service divisions. The agency should continue to work toward the integration of the Special Education, Media/School Technology and Education Service Divisions.
School/Community Planning (S/CP) Standard

| Expectations IAC 281—72.4(1) | The AEA shall deliver services for school-community planning. The AEA assists schools and school districts in:
- Assessing needs of all students
- Developing collaborative relationships among community agencies
- Establishing shared direction
- Implementing actions to meet goals
- Reporting progress towards goals |

| Strength: Agency Committee Representation | The Chief Administrator reports that 75-90 percent of agency committee representation is from LEAs. As a result of this representation the agency’s Advisory Committees (e.g. Special Education Advisory Committee, Educational Services Advisory Committee, and Superintendent Advisory Committee) will provide advice to make agency decisions that support both the agency and LEAs. |

| Strength: Collaborative Teams | The ongoing continuous improvement conversations between the agency and LEA have led to the creation of LEA Collaborative Teams. The agency overview and interviews with LEA and agency staff indicated the Collaborative Teams have created a collaborative relationship between the agency and LEA that is focused on student needs. |

| Recommendation: Empowering LEAs to Use Data to Inform Changes | Agency and LEA interviewees spoke to the development and use of district profiles as a way to look at district data. The agency is encouraged to continue utilizing the district profiles to drill down into student performance data, including the analysis of disaggregated data for subgroups, to inform services and enhance instruction. Continue agency efforts to empower LEAs to analyze and use their own data to make instructional improvements. Consider how the agency can support a process, based on continuous improvement and best practice theories, for identifying and replicating successful instructional practices and effective use of data among LEAs to improve student achievement. |

| Recommendation: Moving Beyond Compliance | LEA interviewees report appreciation for support during the DE School Improvement Site Visits and Special Education Compliance Reviews. Although LEAs appreciate the help with compliance the agency is encouraged to continue to focus their supports on continuous improvement. |
Professional Development (PD) Standard

Expectations

IAC 281—72.4(2)

The AEA shall deliver professional development services for schools, school districts and AEA instructional, administrative, and support personnel.

The AEA:

- Anticipates and responds to schools’ and school districts’ needs
- Supports proven and emerging education practices
- Aligns with school and school district comprehensive long-range and annual improvement goals
- Uses adult learning theory
- Supports improved teaching
- Uses theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching
- Addresses professional development activities as required by the Iowa Code or administrative rules

Strength: PD that meets needs of LEAs

Agency and LEA interviewees report that over the last couple years, the agency has been more responsive to LEA needs through the provision of professional development aligned with those needs.

The agency has:

- Offered credit for courses based on LEA needs
- Provided support for state initiatives (e.g. Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs [SWVPP], Multi-Tiered System of Support of [MTSS], and Teacher Leadership and Compensation System [TLC])
- Developed trainings for larger districts and bring experts to smaller districts
- Allowed LEA staff to cross AEA boundaries to receive professional development/training
- Used PD Survey data to review and revise the next iteration of a course/class.

Strength: CBAM supporting MTSS

Agency interviewees report Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) training as being relevant and helpful during the Phase I implementation of MTSS. Each agency staff member trained in CBAM has been assigned to provide support to one of the AEA 267 LEAs implementing Phase I of MTSS.

LEA interviewees from schools implementing Phase I of MTSS saw benefit in having a CBAM trained AEA staff member supporting their MTSS efforts.
**Strength: PD Proposal Template**
The Document Review including searches on the agency website found professional development resources for instructors and participants. These resources are helpful and easily accessed in the professional development area of the agency website. In particular, the agency’s course proposal template reinforces the best practice of supporting implementation of professional learning.

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**Recommendation: Implementation of PD**
Some LEA interviewees report experiencing more support and follow up to PD at the district level than in the past.

The agency is encouraged to continue and expand the practice of supporting PD participants to ensure fidelity of implementation along with monitoring the effectiveness of professional development across the agency.

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**Recommendation: Building Capacity within LEAs**
Agency interviewees report that the agency is working to build professional capacity within LEAs. The agency is working to shift from LEAs viewing the agency as the holder of information to being the connector of information. This shift has resulted in the agency building the capacity of the district and building leaders.

Examples of capacity building for leaders include providing support to leaders through Superintendent’s Network and the Principal Learning Network.

Interviews with LEAs indicated there is some confusion about this shift. The agency should work to be sure districts clearly understand this change in philosophy and how it will impact services.

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**Recommendation: Options for PD Delivery**
LEA interviewees mentioned the challenge of participating in professional development offered during the school day.

AEA and LEA interviewees report the AEA has added technology components so that PD can be taken from a distance, including webinars and self-paced courses. The agency is encouraged to continue investigating further strategies and options for PD outside of the school day.
**Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (CIA) Standard**

**Expectations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IAC 281—72.4(3)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The AEA shall deliver curriculum, instruction and assessment services that address the areas of reading, language arts, mathematics, and science but may also be applied to other curriculum areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>These services support the development, implementation, and assessment of rigorous content standards in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The AEA assists schools and school districts in:</td>
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<td>• Gathering and analyzing student achievement data as well as data about the learning environment</td>
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<td>• Comparing those data to the external knowledge base</td>
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<td>• Using that information to guide school and school district goal setting and implementation of actions to improve student learning</td>
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**Strength: Data Support**

| LEA and agency interviewees commented on the amount and quality of data and support provided to LEAs. This included: |
| • Process for collecting and analyzing goals |
| • Decision Making Matrix |
| • Setting Goals |
| • Program Evaluation |

**Strength: Collaborative Teams**

| Agency and LEA interviewees indicated the AEA has made a strong effort to develop a Collaborative Team environment which has focused on math and reading. This is a great building block to develop communication lines and relationships with LEAs. |
| Collaborative efforts include: |
| • Designation of a team rep for each district |
| • Collaborative teams meeting with district administrators to discuss math and reading assessment data and solutions that may be provided |
| • The agency sends follow-up emails to the superintendents asking for feedback about the collaborative team process |

**Strength: Measuring Impact of Initiatives**

| LEA interviewees appreciated the work of the agency to measure the impact of the implementation of initiatives. |
Specifically interviewees commented on the provision of follow-up. This included a data profile of each district. The profile encourages districts to explore assessment data to adjust instruction.

In addition, document review and agency interviews indicated the agency has trained approximately seventy agency staff on Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) to measure the impact of initiatives. The agency was intentional about who was trained and where they are located to ensure equitable access to CBAM training across the agency.

**Recommendation: Other Content Areas**

Based on LEA interviews, the team noted that the agency has focused on math and reading content areas.

The agency is encouraged to duplicate the process used in working with LEAs in the areas of math and reading to other content areas, such as science, social studies and early childhood.

**Recommendation: Agency Supports to LEAs**

LEA interviewees report that the agency provides many valuable digital resources for them to use with students, and many of which are found on the agency website. The site visit team heard less about agency services designed to provide specific supports for instruction that can be implemented at the classroom level.

Consider how the agency communicates about the wide variety of instructional services it provides, including opportunities to recognize and celebrate instructional practices that are improving outcomes for students. The 1:1 Technology Fair is an example of how the agency has tried to share instructional practices that are working in the field.
## Diverse Learner Needs (DL) Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>IAC 281—72.4(4)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectations</strong></td>
<td>The AEA shall address the diverse learning needs of all children and youth, including but not limited to services which address gifted and talented students and meet the unique needs of students with disabilities who require special education.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strength:</strong> Iowa Core</td>
<td>Agency interviewees reported that the agency has developed and held training on the Iowa Core for special education teachers. This includes a rubric to assist special education teachers in aligning their specially designed instruction to the core.</td>
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<td><strong>Strength:</strong> Early Childhood PD</td>
<td>Agency and LEA interviews reported that there are many PD offerings for teachers and paraeducators in the area of Early Childhood. These include, but are not limited to:</td>
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<td>• Creative Curriculum</td>
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<td>• GOLD</td>
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<td>• Digging Deeper into Instruction</td>
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<td>• GOLD Interrater Reliability Training</td>
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<td>• Every Child Reads 3 to 5</td>
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<td>• Creative Curriculum and Creative Curriculum Studies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Early Childhood – Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) Overview, Implementation and Review</td>
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<td><strong>Strength:</strong> ELL Consultants</td>
<td>Agency and LEA interviewees had high praises for the English Language Learners (ELL) consultants.</td>
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<td>Examples of support included:</td>
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<td>• ELL packet for new ELL students</td>
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<td>• Information on agency website around ELL for districts, parents, teachers, and students.</td>
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<td>• Focus of the agency to help districts understand that just because a student doesn’t speak English does not indicate a need for special education services.</td>
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### Recommendation: Team Representatives

Agency interviewees reported that team representatives are trained in numerous areas (e.g. challenging behavior, secondary transition, preschool). These trainings allow team representatives to respond to various district needs. LEA interviewees reported team reps as being knowledgeable, helpful, and part of the school team. In some districts team representatives help facilitate work placements for students of secondary transition age.

The agency needs to ensure that team reps are given adequate support and training if they are expected to support districts in many different areas.

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### Recommendation: G/T Services

Agency and LEA interviewees spoke about events for students who are gifted and talented (G/T) such as Battle of the Books, National History Day, Future Problem Solvers, Invention Convention, but not about strategies for serving G/T students.

The agency should consider using its G/T consultant(s) as a resource when professional development is being developed to ensure that strategies for students who are G/T are included in each PD offering. It would also be beneficial to revitalize the dissolving G/T network. The DE G/T consultant, Rosanne Malek, may also be a resource for the agency. She can be contacted at 515-281-3199 or Rosanne.Malek@iowa.gov

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### Recommendation: Other Diverse Learners

During agency and LEA interviews little was heard about diverse learners outside of students with special education needs and gifted/talented students.

The agency should consider how services are being provided to students such as those who are at risk, of low socio-economic status, minority students, and students from different cultures.

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### Recommendation: Services for Preschoolers with IEPs

Agency interviewees indicated that there has been improvement in serving preschoolers with IEPs in general education settings. They expressed a continued need for supporting districts in serving children in Least Restrictive Environments.

Further data analysis indicated an increase in the percent of children receiving special education services outside of the general education setting.

It is recommended that the agency continue to work with IEP teams and LEA staff when determining placement of preschool children with IEPs so that it is based on individual student needs and not on availability of service.
### Recommendation: Resource Teams

Agency and LEA interviewees expressed appreciation for the agency’s Resource Teams (e.g. Brain injury, Autism, Crisis Intervention). While interviewees stated that specialty teams were knowledgeable and helpful, some interviewees reported that it is hard to get these teams out to their districts. Interviewees reported there is a long-waiting list and expressed concerns about follow-up.

Consider reviewing the structure, content and processes in place for the design, delivery and evaluation of the services provided by the agency’s specialty resource teams.

### Recommendation: Family Educator Connection

Although the Family Educator Connection (FEC) is on the agency website, parents of students with disabilities ages 3 and above interviewed had limited awareness of services provided by FEC.

It is recommended that the agency consider other means, aside from the agency website, to make parents aware of the resources that are available to them through the FEC. It may be that agency staff are not aware of the services that can be provided by the FEC. Consider conducting an informal survey of agency staff to measure their awareness of the FEC and the services it provides. Once staff are knowledgeable about the FEC they may be more likely to encourage parents to take advantage of the resources and services the FEC has to offer.
Multi-Cultural Gender Fair (MCGF) Standard

Table: Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IAC 281—72.4(5)</th>
<th>The AEA shall provide services that support multicultural, gender-fair approaches to the educational programs pursuant to Iowa Code section 256.11.</th>
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</thead>
</table>

These services assist schools and school districts to:

- Take actions that ensure all students are free from discriminatory acts and practices
- Establish policies and take actions that ensure all students are free from harassment
- Incorporate into the educational program instructional strategies and student activities related to responsibilities, rights, and the respect for diversity which are necessary for successful citizenship in a diverse community and a global economy
- Incorporate, on an ongoing basis, activities within professional development that prepare and assist all employees to work effectively with diverse learners

Table: Strength: MCGF Resources

<table>
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<th>Agency and LEA staff reported the following:</th>
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<tr>
<td>- The agency provides PD regarding Olweus, PBIS, Digital Citizenship, and Poverty</td>
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<td>- The lending library is a very helpful resource that includes a wide variety of culturally diverse materials and resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Agency staff are a great resource for LEAs when preparing for site visits in regards to reviewing documentation, policies, and procedures.</td>
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Table: Recommendation: ELL Coordinators

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<th>LEA and agency interviews appreciated the work of the English Language Learners (ELL) coordinators. However, they are concerned they may be stretched.</th>
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<tr>
<td>The agency should consider using its ELL consultants as a resource when professional development is being developed to ensure that strategies for ELL are included in each PD offering. The DE ELL consultant, Jobi Lawrence, may also be a resource for the agency. She can be contacted at 515-281-3805 or <a href="mailto:Jobi.Lawrence@iowa.gov">Jobi.Lawrence@iowa.gov</a></td>
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Table: Recommendation: Over-representation of non-white students in

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<tr>
<th>LEA interviewees reported that the agency is aware of the overrepresentation of ELL students identified as eligible for special education services.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While interviewees agreed that the agency is aware of this overrepresentation, they were not aware of a plan to reduce the number of ELL students</td>
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misidentified for special education services and develop proactive steps to stop any further overrepresentation.

The agency is encouraged to review the special education identification process with all staff to ensure ELL students are being identified properly and receiving appropriate services.

**Recommendation:**

**Instructional Strategies Related to Diversity**

Several LEA interviewees expressed that they do not receive any direct services around incorporating instructional strategies related to responsibilities, rights, and respect for diversity into educational programs.

It is recommended the agency work with LEAs to intentionally review disaggregated data by subgroups to determine and analyze where gaps exist and support LEAs as they formulate strategies to address those gaps.

**Recommendation: Equity Conference**

Agency and LEA interviewees expressed a need for the agency reestablish the practice of holding an annual Equity Conference.

It is recommended that the agency bring back the Equity Conference as a key professional development to increase awareness and cultural competency within agency and LEA staff.

As the agency makes preparation to reinstate an Equity Conference it is encouraged to consider conducting a needs assessment to develop the content of the conference. If an Equity Conference is scheduled it will be important to not only promote the conference but ensure valid implementation as well as assessment of the impact on teaching and learning.

**Recommendation: Equity Self-Study**

Agency staff expressed the need to conduct a self study in the area of equity. This self-study should address the following:

- the diversity of people who live in the LEAs supported by the agency
- changes to be made so hiring practices reflect the diversity of the area
- provision and analysis of disaggregated data with agency and LEA leaders and the community.

The agency should consider developing a self-study in the area of equity in order to identify areas that must be improved. Margaret Jensen-Connet at the DE can be of assistance for this. Her contact information is Margaret.JensenConnet@iowa.gov or 515-281-3769.

**Recommendation:**

Agency policies need to be updated as they have become “policies on shelf” as reported by agency staff. It was unclear how policies are monitored.
The agency is encouraged to develop a plan to review policies in a timely fashion and update the agency’s equity statement to ensure the revised statement replaces statements in agency documents.
Media/School Technology (M/ST) Standard

Expectations
IAC 281—72.4(6)

The AEA shall deliver media services.

These services:
- Align with school and school district needs
- Support effective instruction
- Provide consultation, research and information services, instructional resources, and materials preparation and dissemination to assist schools and school districts to meet the learning needs of all students and support local district media services
- Support the implementation of content standards in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science
- Support and integrate emerging technology

Expectations
IAC 281—72.4(7)

The AEA shall supplement and support effective instruction for all students through school technology services.

These services provide:
- Technology planning
- Technical assistance
- Professional development

These services support:
- The incorporation of instructional technologies to improve student achievement
- The implementation of content standards in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science
- Integrate emerging technology

Strength:
Media/ School Technology Services

LEA interviewees reported high satisfaction with agency media and school technology services.

Examples of services include:
- Supports from the school technology department, including the repair shop
- Supports for the implementation of 1:1 laptops
- Helpful and easy access to printing and production services through the agency website
- Skilled graphic designers
- Instructional and digital resources
- Training one person from each building to use EdInsight
Strength: Clarity Survey

Implementation of Clarity survey has been well received by participating LEAs.

LEA interviewees report that the review of Clarity survey data has been seen as a new opportunity to work with the agency. Data indicated that more work needs to be done in the area of Digital Citizenship. The agency responded by offering Cybersmarts and Teen Cybersmarts.

Recommendation: Assistive Technology Resource Team

LEA interviewees appreciate the Assistive Technology (AT) Resource Team, which includes the resources available on the website that provide information about how to access AT services as well as the ability to test devices before making purchases.

LEA interviewees did report a delay in receiving AT services. They expressed that their perception regarding this delay is that agency staff members are stretched too thin.

Consider reviewing the structure, content and processes in place for the design, delivery and evaluation of AT services.
Leadership (LD) Standard

Expectations

The AEA shall deliver services that develop leadership based upon the Iowa Standards for School Administrators as adopted by the board of educational examiners.

Leadership services assist with:
- Recruitment
- Induction
- Retention
- Professional development of educational leaders

AEAs develop and deliver leadership programs based on:
- Local educational needs
- State educational needs
- Best practices

Strength: Leadership Philosophy

Agency overview and interviews indicated leadership has promoted a collaborative and distributive leadership philosophy in the system.

Collaborative teams are a tool to promote customer service focused on the needs of the LEAs. Examples include:
- Sector Leadership Teams
- LEA Collaborative Teams
- Agency Leadership Team
- Integrated Service Leadership Team
- School Improvement Team
- Continuous Improvement Team

Strength: Agency Leadership

LEA interviews appreciated the LEA experience of the Chief Administrator and Assistant Chief Administrator/Director of Human Resources. Their experience has strong credibility with LEAs because they understand what it is like to be in an LEA. Specific examples included:
- Data collection and analysis
- Calendar: hours vs days
- Elmore training
- Professional Learning Communities
- Continuous Improvement
- Mini Summit with DE staff, such as the one in April

During LEA interviews several members of the agency’s leadership team have been mentioned by name for their exemplary leadership and support to the LEAs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation: Clarify Core Works</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency staff stated there is a need for the agency to continue to build agency and LEA staff’s understanding of the agency’s core works. There needs to be an awareness of what the agency identifies as core works and what the LEAs identify as core works.</td>
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<td>It would be beneficial to address how information regarding the agency’s core works pass from the agency’s collaborative teams to the LEAs. For example, how clear are core works for LEAs asking for specific services? As the agency continues to review core works, be deliberate on how these are communicated to agency staff and LEAs. One means of sharing the core works with LEAs could include deliberate conversations around the agency’s core works with superintendents both during district visits and at the monthly superintendent meetings.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation: Assignment of Agency Staff</th>
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<tr>
<td>LEA and agency interviews indicated the agency has worked to realign or reassign agency staff to meet the needs of LEAs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviewees indicated there is not a formal process to ensure agency staff experience meets the needs of the LEA. The agency is encouraged to develop a formal process that looks at the needs of an LEA and assigns agency staff who have the capacity to meet those needs.</td>
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</table>
Accreditation Status – AEA 267

Area Education Agency 267 is recommended for continued accreditation pursuant to 281—IAC Chapter 72.
Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

September 18, 2014

Agenda Item: Area Education Agency (AEA) Accreditation – Prairie Lakes AEA

Iowa Goal: All PK-12 students will achieve at a high level.

State Board Role/Authority: Iowa Code section 273.11(1) directs the State Board to develop standards and rules for the accreditation of area education agencies (AEAs). The Department of Education is directed to develop and establish, in consultation with the AEAs, an accreditation process for AEAs. Iowa Code section 273.10(1). The State Board shall determine whether a program of an AEA shall receive initial accreditation or remain accredited…based upon the recommendation of the Director of the Department of Education after a study of the factual and evaluative evidence…in terms of the accreditation standards adopted by the State Board. Iowa Code section 273.10 (3 and 3a).

Presenters: Sharon Hawthorne, Consultant Bureau of School Improvement

Cindy Butler, Lead Consultant Bureau of School Improvement

Attachments: 1

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board grant continued accreditation to Prairie Lakes AEA.

Background: According to the AEA Accreditation Process used by the Department, each AEA is visited on a five-year rotation to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of Iowa Administrative Code 281—72.
Prairie Lakes AEA 8 (PLAEA) Accreditation Report

Purpose

The central purpose of the accreditation visit is to help Area Education Agencies (AEAs) improve the quality and focus of their services, which will in turn assist schools and school districts to improve learning for students.

Iowa’s AEAs are a critical part of the support structure for schools and ultimately for children. With so much at stake, maintaining high standards or quality in programs and services is a top priority.

On-site Visit

Onsite visits are an essential part of the AEA accreditation process.

AEA site visits conducted during the school year reflect the requirements outlined in 281—IAC Chapter 72. As a result, the following procedures were applied:

- Assessment of the nine accreditation standards through review of their associated descriptors:
  - School-Community Planning
  - Professional Development
  - Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
  - Diverse Learner Needs
  - Multicultural, Gender Fair
  - Media
  - School Technology
  - Leadership
  - Management

- Assessment of common criteria that apply to each standard:
  - Agency services are equitably available.
  - The agency includes a process to monitor implementation of the services.
  - The agency has a process to measure the effectiveness of services provided.
  - The agency has a process to measure the efficiency of services provided.
  - Assessment of the services provided for established agency-wide goals.

Site Visit – Desired Results

The agency can:

- address accreditation expectations
- consistently deliver services that, in aggregate, meet the eight accreditation standards
- use the site visit findings to continuously improve the quality of services to positively impact student learning
Accreditation applies to the entire agency, not to individual programs, services, or actions.

281—IAC Chapter 72 designates two accreditation options:
- The State Board of Education grants Continuation of Accreditation if the agency meets all standards and other requirements.
- The State Board of Education grants Conditional Accreditation if the agency has not met all standards and other requirements.

AEA Accreditation Standards
- School-Community Planning – Met
- Professional Development – Met
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment – Met
- Diverse Learner Needs – Met
- Multicultural/Gender Fair – Met
- Media – Met
- School Technology – Met
- Leadership – Met
- Management – Met
Overall Strengths of the Agency

**Responsiveness**
Responsiveness of PLAEA staff to the needs and requests of districts is a strength that was reported by many district interviewees. Interviewees reported the AEA gets back to them with a response to their questions or concerns within 24 to 48 hours.

Additionally, if the AEA doesn’t immediately have what the district needs, the AEA will make contacts and connections with outside entities that can address the need. This strength was noted for all agency divisions and administration.

**School Technology**
Agency and Local Education Agency* (LEA) interviewees report that the agency has made available tools that provide access to the internet and new ways for families, communities, LEA and AEA staff to communicate with others. Examples include:
- Bluejeans
- Zoom
- Verizon Wireless Remote Access
- IPs

*Local Education Agencies include public school districts and nonpublic accredited schools.
Overall Recommendations for the Agency

Communication regarding Agency Focus and Future

LEA and AEA interviewees expressed concern about inconsistency of communication throughout the agency and LEAs regarding the focus and future of the agency.

Interviewees felt there are questions that need to be addressed regarding:

- Where the agency is going?
- What initiatives will be the focus of the agency’s work?
- How are the agency and LEAs going to work together?

Consider ways to increase communication with internal staff and LEAs, some possibilities would be keeping the agency website current by having a ticker or crawler with current updates running on the home page, website calendar with highlights for the day emphasized, quarterly newsletters, email updates and email blasts.

Determining Services to LEAs

Both agency and LEA interviewees reported that services are made available to all public school districts but not to all nonpublic schools. However, not all districts/schools choose to access services. For those requesting support, support is determined on a multi-tiered approach based on the district’s capacity to sustain a program with a plan of action.

LEA interviewees expressed that they would like the agency to return to the practice of visiting every district/school during the spring to discuss the coming school year and the needs of the district/school.

It is recommended that the agency consider reinstating this practice in order to assure that each district and nonpublic school have annual contact with the leadership of the agency to discuss the supports that could be provided to them to best serve their students.
School/Community Planning (S/CP) Standard

Expectations

The AEA shall deliver services for school-community planning.

The AEA assists schools and school districts in:

- Assessing needs of all students
- Developing collaborative relationships among community agencies
- Establishing shared direction
- Implementing actions to meet goals
- Reporting progress towards goals

Strength: Support for Safe and Supportive Schools

AEA and LEA interviewees spoke highly of the work the agency is doing in the area of safe and supportive schools, with specific references being made to Early Childhood and School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) services and supports.

Interviewees referenced the good work being done with data collection, data analysis (e.g., School Wide Information System, Iowa Youth Survey data, PLAEA Climate/Culture survey), action planning and implementation of systemic and individual interventions.

School personnel from schools where PBIS Tier II and Tier III is in place reported the agency does a good job of involving families in the planning process.

Strength: Leadership Support

LEA interviewees reported the leadership and supports provided by AEA administrators to boards and LEA administrative teams was very helpful.

An area of support particularly valued by interviewees was the work AEA administrators conduct with boards as they discuss whole grade sharing and merger issues. Included in that work is the discussion by AEA administrators of relevant, district data and the implications for sharing and/or possible merger.

Strength: Lake Partnership School

Agency and LEA interviewees reported an appreciation for the work the agency has facilitated in the development of the “Lake Partnership School.”

Interviewees spoke of the increasing need for mental health services. The AEA, partnering with local districts and the larger community, developed an educational program that incorporates a mental health
component. Interviewees expressed that such a program will be beneficial for students.

Recommendation: LEA Supports for Monitoring Goals

It was recommended by the LEA interviewees that the agency continue to develop supports in assisting LEAs with the monitoring of their long and short term goals.

This might include meeting with district leadership teams and School Improvement Advisory Committees (SIAC) as they collect and analyze internal and external data related to their goals.

Recommendation: Mental Health

It was recommended by the LEA and agency interviewees that the agency continue to advocate and partner with community agencies for students and families, particularly in the area of mental health.

Consider partnering with community agencies such as National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) at namiiowa.com and local hospitals or agencies that provide services for individuals struggling with mental health issues. Suggestions include: Berryhill Center for Mental Health and Unity Point Health – Trinity in Fort Dodge and Mental Health Center of North Iowa in Mason City.

Recommendation: Analysis and Use of Student Achievement Data

LEA interviewees recommended that the Agency become more consistent in supporting the analysis and utilization of student achievement data to assist LEAs in making data-driven decisions.

Examples include:

- Disaggregating data by subgroups to analyze and use student achievement data for identification of students with the greatest achievement needs. Given the increase in the number of students who receive free or reduced priced meals, it is recommended that the Agency focus on this disaggregation.
- Analyzing data to guide professional development planning and implementation.
- Analyzing data to determine assessment approaches and instructional practices.
- Analyzing data to assist in the development of curriculum, assessment, and instructional strategies to support the diverse needs of every learner.
Professional Development (PD) Standard

| Expectations IAC 281—72.4(2) | The AEA shall deliver professional development services for schools, school districts and AEA instructional, administrative, and support personnel. The AEA:  
  - Anticipates and responds to schools’ and school districts’ needs  
  - Supports proven and emerging education practices  
  - Aligns with school and school district comprehensive long-range and annual improvement goals  
  - Uses adult learning theory  
  - Supports improved teaching  
  - Uses theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching  
  - Addresses professional development activities as required by the Iowa Code or administrative rules |

| Strength: PBIS | Agency and LEA interviewees indicated a strong effort to provide professional learning opportunities, data analysis, and follow-up support to implement PBIS in order to meet the social-emotional needs of students and improve instructional climate in classrooms and buildings. |

| Strength: Iowa Core Consortium | Agency and LEA interviewees reported the Iowa Core Consortium has supported the districts in understanding the Iowa Core standards and implementation of instruction through means such as Investigations, Deeper Investigations and Concept Based Unit Writing for Iowa Core Mathematics and Literacy Standards across the elementary and secondary grade levels. |

| Strength: Technology Integrationists | LEA interviewees reported that the newly hired Agency Technology Integrationists have provided professional development that encourages educators to incorporate technology into student learning opportunities. Agency support in utilization of technology has enhanced instructional practices that meet students’ educational needs and promote innovative uses of technology. This support has been increased to meet the demands of LEAs. |
Strengths: PD Offerings

Agency and LEA interviewees reported the agency is providing professional development in a variety of areas such as:

- Instructional Coaching training for agency staff with Jim Knight
- Kansas University (KU) Strategies/Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) for agency and LEA staff
- Second Chance Reading
- Poverty Training and Simulations
- Kathy Richardson Math
- Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI)
- School secretaries PD

Recommendation: Build Capacity of Agency Staff

Agency and LEA interviewees reported that agency staff are needing professional learning to enhance their skills in content areas as well as instructional coaching. This professional learning will increase their effectiveness as instructional leaders who support the implementation of evidence-based instructional strategies in the classroom.

It is recommended that the agency provide agency staff with ongoing opportunities for professional learning to build their capacity as instructional coaches and educational leaders.

Recommendation: PD with Instructional Coaching

Agency interviewees reported that recent change to the service delivery model provides various professional development opportunities in conjunction with instructional coaching.

It is recommended that the agency continue to focus on implementation with an end result of improving student achievement, enhancing educational practice and implementing evidence-based strategies. This would allow opportunities for modeling, providing feedback and engaging in instructional coaching with teaching staff based on individual and classroom needs.

It is also recommended that agency ensure the implementation of uniform instructional coaching practices across the agency.

Recommendation: Clear Vision of Statewide Priorities

The agency and LEA interviewees indicated a need for a clear vision in the implementation of statewide priorities to ensure positive results for students.

It is recommended that the agency prioritize and align resources to support implementation of statewide priorities such as:

- Iowa Core
• Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC)
• Goals and priorities identified by the Collaboration for Iowa’s Kids (C4K) including:
  – Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)
  – Early Literacy Implementation (ELI)
## Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (CIA) Standard

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<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
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<td>IAC 281—72.4(3)</td>
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The AEA shall deliver curriculum, instruction and assessment services that address the areas of reading, language arts, mathematics, and science but may also be applied to other curriculum areas.

These services support the development, implementation, and assessment of rigorous content standards in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science.

The AEA assists schools and school districts in:
- Gathering and analyzing student achievement data as well as data about the learning environment
- Comparing those data to the external knowledge base
- Using that information to guide school and school district goal setting and implementation of actions to improve student learning

### Strength: Support for Initiatives

Agency and LEA interviewees indicated the agency’s support of Phase 1 school districts with the C4K initiatives for MTSS and ELI.

Multiple agency and LEA interviews revealed that agency facilitation of the Initial and Deeper Investigations in Iowa Core Literacy and Math has led to work with collaborative concept-based unit development that incorporates Understanding by Design and Authentic Intellectual Work.

The agency is also supporting LEA implementation of initiatives such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

Interviewees of both agency and LEAs reported agency support for consortiums writing concept-based units in alignment with Iowa Core, that incorporate Understanding by Design (UBD) and Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW). Within this framework, AEA representatives observed instruction in the teachers’ classrooms and coached LEA teachers in order to improve instruction.

### Strength: Summer Literacy Program

Agency interviewees reported developing a pilot summer literacy program. This will be a collaboration between the agency and six districts. This program will serve as a model for future summer literacy programs which will be required in 2017.
Strength: Support for PBIS

Agency and LEA interviewees indicated support of schools/districts by:
• supporting initial implementation (universal) of PBIS
• partnering with schools/districts to develop Tier 2 (targeted) and Tier 3 (intensive) supports

PLAEA has six paramount status schools. These schools reported that students are being impacted positively as a result of having the Universal, Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports in place.

Recommendation: Content Areas of Iowa Core

Agency interviewees indicated they wanted to have a clear focus on their assignments e.g. literacy within the Iowa Core. LEA interviewees also spoke of the need for deeper understanding of content areas in the Iowa Core.

Consider surveying agency staff regarding what professional development they need in order to build their capacity to assist LEAs with implementing the content area components of the Iowa Core. Analyze the data and use the information to review and make decisions regarding the current professional development opportunities being offered to agency staff.

Recommendation: Assisting Districts

Agency and LEA interviews revealed a need for agency to assist districts with the following:
• identifying and using student data to recognize what is working so they can focus on what works
• progress monitoring of instructional results to ensure of effectiveness of practices
• transitioning from requesting “sit and get” professional development to PD that involves the implementation, coaching and monitoring the use of evidence-based classroom strategies

Recommendation: Leadership Capacity

Agency and LEA interviewees indicated that the agency administrators have facilitated professional learning opportunities with LEAs that have supported the implementation of curriculum and instruction such as conducting instructional rounds with building administrators and presentations on instructional topics.

A recommendation from agency interviewees is to continue building leadership capacity at all levels within the agency and LEAs using a balanced leadership model.
Diverse Learner Needs (DL) Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>IAC 281—72.4(4)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The AEA shall address the diverse learning needs of all children and youth, including but not limited to services which address gifted and talented students and meet the unique needs of students with disabilities who require special education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Services provide support to schools and school districts and include special education compliance with Iowa Administrative Rules of Special Education.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Special Education Compliance Review</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prairie Lakes AEA agreed to participate in a pilot during the 2013-14 school year that separated a review of its special education services from the AEA Accreditation process outlined in Chapter 72 of the Iowa Administrative Code.</td>
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<tr>
<td>As a result of this pilot, a Special Education Compliance Review of the agency’s compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was conducted on April 15-16, 2014 by a team of six Department of Education staff which included 5 Educational Program Consultants and the State Director of Special Education. The results of this review may involve IDEA citations which must be corrected within a year of the date of notification.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The PLAEA Accreditation Site Visit team chose to recommend to the State Board of Education that the agency meets the Chapter 72 Diverse Learner Needs standard with the expectation that the agency will correct any citations within timelines required by IDEA.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Strength: Behavior Strategists</th>
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<td>The agency and LEA interviewees reported a significant increase in students experiencing problems with mental health and challenging behaviors.</td>
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<td>The agency has re-organized a system of supports to include Behavior Strategists who focus specifically on supports for students with challenging behaviors and those experiencing problems with mental health.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Recommendation: ELL Services</th>
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<td>Agency and LEA interviewees indicated that there is one English Language Learner (ELL) Consultant for the agency. The services provided by this consultant are excellent, for example, the consultant ensures the LEAs understand what to do when ELL students enroll by equipping teachers with teaching strategies and collaborating with Institutes of</td>
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Higher Education to support coursework toward the English as a Second Language (ESL/ELL) endorsement.

Additionally, the agency has provided professional development on Rule of Three, a vocabulary development approach, to support all students with primary emphasis on ELL students.

It is recommended that the agency consider building capacity of agency and LEA staff in ELL to accommodate changing student demographics. One suggestion is to involve the ELL consultant in the development of professional learning opportunities to ensure strategies that address the learning needs of ELL students are included in agency PD offerings.

**Recommendation: G/T Services**

Similar to the ELL services, LEA interviewees reported that there is one consultant for the area of Gifted and Talented (G/T) services. The interviewees also referenced means of support in the participation in Gifted and Talented conferences hosted by the agency, materials in the Media and Professional Library and strands at conferences such as the Feast at the Forum.

It is recommended that the agency consider enhancing the provision of G/T services, especially in addressing K-2 G/T identification as well as implementation at the high school level. In addition, since there is only one consultant serving the needs of Gifted and Talented services in the agency, it is recommended that the agency work to contribute strategies for integration of G/T services into efforts such as professional development and Iowa Core Consortium that will provide teachers with strategies to better serve students identified as Gifted and Talented.
Multi-Cultural, Gender Fair (MCGF) Standard

**Expectations**

IAC 281—72.4(5)

The AEA shall provide services that support multicultural, gender-fair approaches to the educational programs pursuant to Iowa Code section 256.11.

These services assist schools and school districts to:

- Take actions that ensure all students are free from discriminatory acts and practices
- Establish policies and take actions that ensure all students are free from harassment
- Incorporate into the educational program instructional strategies and student activities related to responsibilities, rights, and the respect for diversity which are necessary for successful citizenship in a diverse community and a global economy
- Incorporate, on an ongoing basis, activities within professional development that prepare and assist all employees to work effectively with diverse learners

**Strength: Programs for Students**

LEA and agency interviewees reported services to help ensure all students are free from discriminatory practices include:

- School-wide Programs such as PBIS,
- Bully Prevention programs such as Olweus
- Framework for Poverty, Ruby Payne, including poverty simulations

**Recommendation: Cultural Competence**

Comments made by agency interviewees indicate a need for more in-depth training in the area of cultural competency.

Agency staff could create, implement and evaluate cultural competency training for agency and LEA staff that helps them to meet the needs of the population. For further information on cultural competence contact Margaret Jensen-Connet (515-281-6947 or Margaret.jensenconnet@iowa.gov) or Isbelia Arzola (515-281-3954 or isbelia.arzola@iowa.gov) at the Department of Education.

**Recommendation: Update of Policies and EO/AA Plans**

Based on information provided during an agency interview it is necessary for the agency to conduct a review and revision of its board policies and Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Plan to ensure they meet federal requirements.
Since policy is not procedure, the agency needs to develop procedures to support policy so practice meets federal requirements. Training in procedures should be provided for all staff.

**Recommendation: Equity Coordinator**

During the interview with the agency Equity Coordinator, who is new to the position, it became evident that she is in need of training so the responsibilities of the position will be met.

For further assistance with this contact Margaret Jensen-Connet (515-281-6947 or Margaret.jensenconnet@iowa.gov) at the Iowa Department of Education.

**Recommendation: Equity Advisory Committee**

Agency interviewees reported that the agency’s Equity Advisory Committee is currently inactive and may not include all the required representation or gender balance.

The team recommends the agency work for gender balance and appropriate representation of minorities and persons with disabilities on the committee. If the committee meets regularly, they could assist with ensuring policies are in place and updated, procedures are followed, and appropriate training is provided to ensure students are prepared for diverse living and working environments.

**Recommendation: Understanding of MCGF concepts**

Agency interviewees indicated that there continues to be a need for the agency to create common understanding of MCGF concepts and development of procedures for monitoring implementation to assure these are imbedded within all initiatives.

This was a recommendation in the 2009 PLAEA Accreditation Report and continues to be a current concern. This needs to be a continuous conversation at the agency due to turnover of staff at both the agency and LEAs.

The agency staff could continue to benefit from ongoing discussions around a common understanding of MCGF concepts that include purposeful reflection on how the agency is assisting LEAs to meet Chapter 12 MCGF requirements and identification of internal staff training that might be needed to improve the agency capacity to provide this assistance.
Media/School Technology (M/ST) Standards

Expectations
IAC 281—72.4(6)

The AEA shall deliver media services.

These services:

- Align with school and school district needs
- Support effective instruction
- Provide consultation, research and information services, instructional resources, and materials preparation and dissemination to assist schools and school districts to meet the learning needs of all students and support local district media services
- Support the implementation of content standards in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science
- Support and integrate emerging technology

Expectations
IAC 281—72.4(7)

The AEA shall supplement and support effective instruction for all students through school technology services.

These services provide:

- Technology planning
- Technical assistance
- Professional development

These services support:

- The incorporation of instructional technologies to improve student achievement
- The implementation of content standards in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science
- Integrate emerging technology.

Strength:
Technology Integrationists

Agency interviewees reported being intentional about integrating technology with what is happening instructionally in districts. This is evidenced by the hiring of four technology integrationists.

LEA interviewees reported that these integrationists are building their capacity for embedding technology into instruction.

Strength:
Media Staff

LEA interviewees commented on the responsiveness of the agency’s media staff.

Examples include:

- Weekly van deliveries to each building
• Media staff assist teachers with media requests
• Media staff attend consortia meetings to talk about what is available from the media center that aligns with Iowa Core.

**Strength: Media/School Technology Services**

According to agency and LEA interviewees the agency provides media/school technology services including but not limited to:

- Assistive Technology
- Lending Library aligned with Iowa Core
- Professional Library
- Technology Team
- Video Production Studio
- Baby Think It Over Program
- Technology Integration and Instruction for 21st Century Learners (TICL) Conference
- Cooperative with Northwest Area Education Agency
- Supporting LEA bandwidth
- Internal and External technicians
- Hiring of 4 Instructional Technology Consultants and a Director of Innovation
- 3D Printer

**Recommendation: Clarity Survey**

Agency and LEA interviewees reported that the Clarity Survey is made available to all districts free of charge. Once completed, agency technology staff help each district interpret survey results and make informed decisions around district technology.

The agency is encouraged to continue using the Clarity Survey with those districts which have not yet participated.
# Leadership (LD) Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>The AEA shall deliver services that develop leadership based upon the Iowa Standards for School Administrators as adopted by the board of educational examiners.</th>
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</table>
| IAC 281—72.4(8) | Leadership services assist with:  
  - Recruitment  
  - Induction  
  - Retention  
  - Professional development of educational leaders  

AEAs develop and deliver leadership programs based on:  
  - Local educational needs  
  - State educational needs  
  - Best practices

| Strength: Developing Educational Leaders | Agency and LEA interviewees reported the agency provides many opportunities for the development of educational leaders. Examples include:  
  - Superintendent/principal meetings with a strong leadership/change component. Focus is on continuous improvement and collaboration  
  - The Agency helps districts/communities manage whole grade sharing transitions  
  - Iowa Principal Leadership Academy (IPLA), English as a Second Language (ESL) Endorsement, and Community of Practice are examples of helping districts find and train qualified educators  
  - The Agency provides Innovative Professional Development such as Women in Leadership Summer Camp, Special Education 101, Tech 101, and PBIS to provide concentrated PD for administrators and intensive PD for districts with long term goal of gradual release of responsibility, district leadership, and implementation with fidelity  
  - The Agency Chief models the leadership role with superintendents, principals, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), agency staff, and LEA staff by trying new things, integrating technology, actively reading and sharing research-based, change process, and leadership literature

| Recommendation: TLC Grants | Agency and LEA interviewees recommended the agency assist districts:  
  - applying for Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) grants  
  - implementing TLC grants with fidelity  
  - providing modeling and coaching to grant recipients  
  - making connections to the state TLC system |
# Management (M) Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>The AEA shall deliver management services if requested.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IAC 281—72.4(9)</td>
<td>If the AEA provides management services to school districts, the services shall conform to the provisions of Iowa Code section 273.7A.</td>
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</table>

**Strength: Services Provided**
LEA and agency interviewees reported the agency delivers management services to some districts in the area. Services provided included:
- Library services
- Business services such as accounts receivable, payroll, budgeting and public hearings
- Superintendent Services

District interviewees reported they evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the services, spoke positively of the services they receive and their interest in continuing to access these services.

**Recommendation: Evaluation of Services**
As the agency engages in ongoing evaluation of the management services they provide, part of the evaluation should focus on the services provided and whether those services are provided in the most effective manner for the schools.

Effectiveness entails operational efficiency and potential outcomes for students. All management services should be aligned with accepted professional standards.
Accreditation Status – Prairie Lakes AEA

| Team Recommendation | Prairie Lakes Area Education Agency is recommended for continued accreditation pursuant to 281—IAC Chapter 72. |