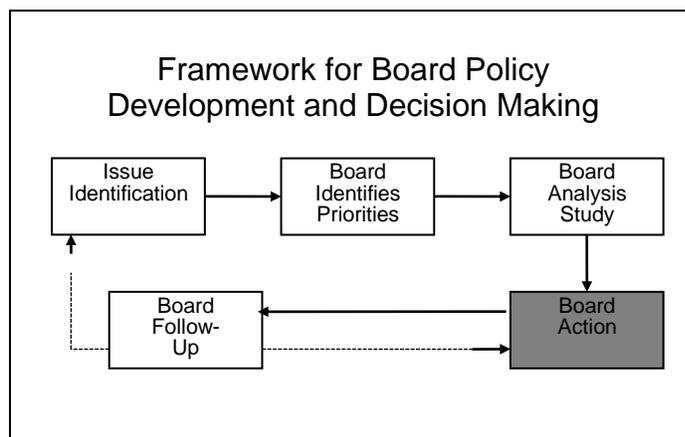


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

September 17, 2015



Agenda Item: Area Education Agency (AEA) Accreditation – Heartland AEA 11

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 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).

Presenter: Sharon Hawthorne, Consultant
Bureau of School Improvement

Attachments: 1

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board grant continued accreditation to Heartland AEA 11.

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.

Heartland AEA 11 (HAEA) 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

Levels of Accreditation

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
-

Standards Met or Not Met

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**
-

Overall Strengths of the Agency

Professional Development Options

LEA and agency interviewees reported the agency offers a wide variety of Professional Development options.

These offerings are available in a variety of ways including online, face-to-face, centrally-located, and in district. Professional development is available for large groups, small groups and individuals.

Restructuring of the Agency

As indicated by LEA and agency interviewees and the improved ratings in the Denison Survey from 2012 to 2014, the restructuring of the agency has been favorable and beneficial. The restructuring better meets the needs of LEAs and agency employees.

Infrastructure changes include reducing 15 regions to 8 with each being led by a Regional Director whose role is to be a consistent communication link with districts they serve. The mission, theory of action, goals, values, and priority service areas have been clearly communicated to agency staff.

Special Education Services

LEA and agency interviewees indicated that special education services provided by the agency are seen as well established and highly effective. Interviewees felt that the professional development offered by the agency has contributed to the effectiveness of the agency's special education services.

For example:

- collaboration opportunities among job alike
 - structured orientation for new staff
 - discipline-specific professional development.
-

Overall Recommendations for the Agency

Inconsistency in Delivery of Services

While the agency philosophy is to provide supporting services as needed to LEAs driven by the Regional Director's investigation, there appears to be inconsistency in the delivery of services. These inconsistencies impact services across all regions.

Interviewees noted inconsistency in the services provided by agency staff such as:

- Regional Director leadership,
- teams having/not having designated leadership,
- depth of content expertise,
- availability of Professional Learning and Leadership Consultants
- instructional technology integration.

The visiting team recommends leadership consider:

- investigating where inconsistencies exist and address those findings
- establishing clarity around roles and responsibilities
- bringing LEAs of similar size together to determine how to better serve their needs.
- gathering input from LEAs to determine how to best serve each LEA and help with consistency
- sharing that information across the administrative leadership to operationalize consistency
- developing Service Profiles for each LEA that include current services being accessed by the LEA, data that indicates LEA needs. These can be used during end or start of the school year meetings between Regional Directors and Superintendents/Administrators to assess current services, discontinue services no longer needed and add services that meet the needs of the LEA.

Awareness of Agency Resources

Multiple interviewees, including LEA and agency stakeholders, noted being unaware of the opportunities and resources available throughout the agency. The depth, breadth and relevance of agency services are not commonly understood or known by agency employees and LEAs.

It is recommended that the agency:

- increase employee awareness of resources
- provide communication regarding available resources
- promote services that effectively make use of existing resources.

- consider multiple venues to market agency services such as:
 - posing new resources as they become available on agency website
 - developing regular virtual tours of resources
 - modeling appropriate use of resources by agency staff
-

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:
Community
Service by
Agency Staff**

In order to promote the agency's commitment to the communities in which they work, staff members were granted up to four hours of work time per year for community service. Multiple interviewees positively commented on the impact this had on them personally as well as how this had positively impacted the collaboration with their agency volunteer partners.

**Strength:
Parent and
Educator
Connection**

Multiple interviewees mentioned various resources and trainings provided for parents and educators by the Parent and Educator Connection.

LEA interviewees mentioned the assistance they have received including:

- Videos:
 - Process for Determining Eligibility for Special Education
 - Parent Orientation to Early ACCESS
 - Parent Orientation to Special Education in Early Childhood
 - Parent Orientation to Special Education
 - Bullying Prevention: Parent Overview
 - Managing Your Child's Challenging Behavior Part 1, 2, 3, 4
 - Workshops:
 - Challenging Behavior
 - Diverse Learners Resource Fair
 - IEP Basics
-

**Recommendation:
Developing
Partnerships**

LEA and agency interviews indicated inconsistency of services provided within a region as well as between regions. As the agency considers School and Community Planning action steps, it is recommended that the agency consider how that planning within and between regions can be performed more consistently.

As the demographics of the agency evolve, the agency may want to consider expanding partnerships with community agencies and organizations to better meet the needs of the LEAs within the agency.

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:
Capacity
Building in
Focused Areas**

Data analysis from an internal needs assessment resulted in implementation of intense learning of agency staff in one of three key areas - literacy, mathematics, and challenging behavior.

As a result, both LEA and agency interviewees reported capacity building efforts to increase internal staff knowledge and skills for focused strand areas of literacy, mathematics, and challenging behavior to develop in-depth expertise.

**Strength:
PD Offerings**

Professional development offerings were noted as strengths by LEA interviewees. Such as:

- Gradual Release of Responsibility Model
 - Autism and Challenging Behavior Training
 - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
 - Chapter 62 - Early Literacy Implementation (ELI)
 - Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
 - Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC)
 - Standards-Referenced/Standard-Based Grading
-

**Recommendation:
Determining
LEA PD Needs**

LEA and agency interviewees indicated that there are inconsistencies in the way professional development is structured and determined.

Consider establishing, if not already in place, uniform processes and procedures based on LEA data and identified needs when making professional development decisions to ensure consistency across the agency. If uniform processes and procedures are already in place consider ensuring that these processes and procedures are being implemented consistently across the agency

**Recommendation:
Capacity of
Agency Staff**

Several LEA interviewees noted that their staff are often more knowledgeable in some areas of expertise than agency staff. This has resulted in districts accessing outside experts to meet district needs.

The team recommends the agency continue to address and expand internal capacity to address innovative and forward thinking instructional, educational and technological practices. The agency should investigate these perceived inconsistencies to identify any possible areas for which the internal capacity of agency staff needs to be increased.

**Recommendation:
PD for New
Staff**

LEA interviewees reported that it can be difficult to have consistent services from newly hired agency staff during their first year due to the number of professional development offerings they are required to attend as new employees.

The agency should consider reviewing their professional development schedules to ensure that LEAs are not being denied the services provided by newly hired agency staff. Also ensure that these agency staff are notifying districts of the times they will not be in the district and that the same district is not affected each time they attend these required professional development.

**Recommendation:
Ensuring Use of
IPDM**

LEA and agency interviewees reported many professional development offerings related to special education themes and specially designed instruction. While the participants in those professional development opportunities reported that these trainings were helpful, some expressed a need for more than a one-time training. They indicated that follow-up, coaching and/or mentoring was rarely provided unless it related to the needs of a specific learner.

It is recommended that the agency continue expectations that the requirements of Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM) be implemented when designing professional development. This adherence to the IPDM requirements will ensure the integrity of implementation. Implementing follow-up, coaching and/or mentoring as part of the IPDM leads to enhanced results for educators who have participated in the training and positive results for all students.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (CIA) Standard

**Expectations
IAC
281—72.4(3)**

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:
Data Days**

LEA and agency interview groups reported the agency has been instrumental in implementing and supporting “data days” in LEAs throughout Heartland. Data Days teams include additional agency staff as identified by district need such as Literacy and Professional Learning and Leadership Consultants, etc.

The assessment consultants provided technical assistance in development of reports that were technical in nature yet easily understood. Assessment consultants in each region assist districts with:

- organizing multiple sets of data
 - facilitating analysis of that data with district educators
 - noting student strengths and teacher needs for action planning
-

**Strength:
Mathematics
and Literacy
Consultants**

LEA interviewees reported multiple levels of support for LEA educators by mathematics and literacy consultants.

Math and literacy consultants assisted with the following:

- Iowa Core Investigations training
- Literacy and mathematics strategy training
- Iowa Core alignment work
- Technical assistance for curriculum adoption in the areas of mathematics and literacy.

**Strength:
Chapter 62 and
ELI**

Multiple interview groups noted the attention and support provided by the agency to address Chapter 62 requirements and Early Literacy Implementation (ELI). The agency provided an overview to all Heartland staff around the components of Chapter 62 so all staff were able to answer LEA questions.

In addition, agency staff provided support to benefit LEAs in the areas of:

- alignment of assessments
- administration of universal screening measures
 - Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST)
 - Individual Growth & Development Indicators (IGDIs)
- analysis of data and technical support
- development of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

**Strength:
Agency
Consultants**

Multiple interviewees reported effective leadership and support from agency consultants.

For example, the School Counseling Consultant who facilitates LEA implementation of the new American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Standards. LEA interviewees expressed appreciation for the ongoing professional development and support for school counselors.

**Recommendation:
Alternate
Assessment**

LEA and agency interview groups reported an inconsistency of support for alternate assessment.

The agency may consider reviewing the system of training and supports provided to LEA and agency staff to determine efficiency and effectiveness of that support.

**Recommendation:
Future Evidence
Based Literacy
Interventions**

During LEA interviews, there was a concern in the sense of urgency for emerging and promising evidence-based literacy interventions. The agency may want to further investigate the districts' needs to obtain the next level of MTSS content knowledge for evidence-based interventions for literacy.

It is recommended that the agency continue ongoing acquisition of evidence-based literacy interventions to expand its toolbox in preparation for the future needs of LEAs

Diverse Learner Needs (DL) Standard

**Expectations
IAC
281—72.4(4)**

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.

Services provide support to schools and school districts and include special education compliance with Iowa Administrative Rules of Special Education.

**Special
Education
Compliance
Review**

A Special Education Compliance Review of the agency's compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was conducted on April 13-14, 2015 by a team of four. The results of this review may involve IDEA citations which must be corrected within a year of the date of notification.

**Strength:
Agency
Specialists**

Several LEA and AEA interviewees reported satisfaction and support from specialists with deep content area knowledge including English Language Learners (ELL) Consultants, Gifted and Talented (GT) Consultants, Assistive Technology Consultants, Assessment Consultants, Parent and Educator Connection (PEC) and Professional Learning and Leadership Consultants. This support occurred across a continuum from agency wide to individual teacher and student needs.

Examples include:

- Iowa English Language Development Assessment (I-ELDA)
 - PEC helping with Section 504
 - Challenging behavior and autism team
-

**Strength:
MTSS**

LEA interviewees reported support and assistance from a multitude of agency personnel, at the elementary level, in the beginning stages of developing the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework, specifically with collecting and analyzing data to assist in identifying students' needs. Agency interviewees reported capacity building through internal PD around the areas of MTSS, literacy, math, and behavior.

**Strength:
Diverse
Learner
Resources**

The agency provides a wide variety of resources for diverse learners such as:

- assistive technology supports and services
 - high-interest/low-vocabulary books
 - mp3 players with listen/then do next steps activities
 - e-readers
 - translation services.
-

**Strength:
ELLs in Need
of Special
Education**

LEA interviewees reported that ELL training for Special Education staff provided by the agency has been very helpful in assisting LEA staff in understanding the identification and evaluation process for English Language learners in need of special education services.

**Recommen-
dation:
Other Diverse
Learners**

It was noted during LEA and agency interviews that the primary discussion was around learners in need of special education services or English Language Learners (ELLs).

In planning for and learning about the needs of struggling learners; responsiveness to differences in other types of diverse learners should be embedded in professional development provided to both agency and LEA staff.

The agency is strongly encouraged to conduct a study of services and support provided for additional diverse learners groups, such as Migrant, at-risk, or LGBT, by systematically reviewing disaggregated data for each district and building to identify areas of need.

The agency may also want to develop a procedure or process for identifying the needs of groups of diverse learners who are not reported in state data.

**Recommen-
dation:
Equitable
Access**

Although overall satisfaction was high with content specialists, LEA interviewees reported inconsistencies across personnel for depth of knowledge, access and availability, and quality of support provided.

Consider developing a systematic way to study equitable access for districts to the same kinds and quality of resources for diverse learners. To support a more consistent model of service the agency should consider developing

standards for content knowledge and expectations for support and results delivered to LEAs.

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:
MCGF
Training
Opportunities
and Resources**

LEA and agency interviewees reported that several training opportunities and resources for staff and students are offered during the year. These include:

- Poverty simulation activity
- Digital citizenship
- Paraprofessional trainings
- Agency staff helped with district planning of a multicultural conference with presentations to help district employees understand multicultural differences and improve instructional practices to address needs of all learners.
- Unique student tools are shared with LEA staff. One of these tools is used for students to reflect on a weekly basis whether learning expectations/goals were met another to determine whether bullying and harassment incidents occur during the week so teams can follow-up with the student.
- Agency Assessment consultants assisted in the development of a district requested bullying and harassment survey that is administered to students, staff, parents and community members twice per school year. The data is then analyzed and used for identifying bullying and harassment issues in the district.
- Creative Services department has worked to provide a visual campaign of printed materials (banners, fliers, logo clings, etc.) for anti-bullying campaigns, PBIS, diversity and other areas.

**Recommendation:
Increase
Understanding
of Diversity**

Agency interviewees reported a high rate of turnover for “newly hired staff with diverse backgrounds.”

It is recommended the agency Leadership team support efforts to increase the understanding of differences and how to address and meet the needs of all students and communities it serves by analyzing desegregated data to identify areas of need. Cultural competency training for agency staff is highly recommended to meet the needs caused by the rapid changes in area demographics, and diversity.

In an effort to retain agency staff, the agency is encouraged to develop a culture and climate survey to determine multicultural needs of the agency.

**Recommendation:
Diversity
Engagement
Committee**

According to agency interviewees the agency established a Diversity Engagement Committee and recently revised their purpose so cultural competence is embedded in cross-agency work. In addition, the agency staff described the committee’s purpose is to go beyond compliance within the agency to incorporate embedded cultural competency training throughout the organization.

Although the formation and purpose of this committee is a strength, the agency should consider recruiting membership of Diversity Engagement Committee based on volunteer rather than appointed members representing each region of the agency.

Media/School Technology Services (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:
Databases**

LEA interviewees reported usefulness of Media/School Technology Resource Databases (i.e. usage report, Clarity, HEART) to plan for professional development to target and increase technology usage and integration. Agency consultants described how they encouraged and instructed participants on usage of available databases during professional development.

**Strength:
Media/Library
Services**

Media/Library Services leadership was mentioned as a strength across interview groups

LEA and agency interviewees reported an abundance of resources:

- multiple copies of professional books for book studies
- professional journals
- children's book boxes
- electronic books
- internet resources
- MackinVIA
- journal alerts
- SuperSearch
- information on copyright

**Recommendation:
LEA
Awareness of
and Access to
Media
Resources and
Databases**

LEA and agency interviewees mentioned an abundance and diversity of media resources available making it difficult to keep up-to-date on all that is offered.

LEA interviewees also reported agency resources, such as the media catalog and some data bases, could be more user friendly.

The agency should consider the following:

- increasing communication of resources to additional groups including principals, students and teachers, and looking at additional ways to share that information.
- adjusting/revising the appearance and usage instructions to allow for ease of access to agency media catalog and databases.

Recommendation:

LEA interviewees reported interest in emerging technologies that were not supported (virtual technologies, Makerspace, student access to 3D printer) and expressed a desire for continued assistance with internet aggregation, networking infrastructure and recommendations for technology improvements.

The agency should continue efforts to update and consider ways technology and media will change in the future, and solicit district opinions in developing future directions. Analysis of data from the Clarity Survey as well as usage data could be used to inform future direction.

**Recommendation:
Collaboration
between
Academic
Content and
Technology
Integrationists**

LEA interviewees reported that Consultants in Literacy, Math, Science and Technology Integration were helpful and supportive of district needs.

Consider increasing collaboration between academic content and Technology to embed this integration into more professional development opportunities, and to connect the instructional strategies with the appropriate technology resources to support effective instruction.

**Recommendation:
Additional
Technology
Staffing**

Most interviewees acknowledged the impact of additional staffing of Technology Integrationists. Some of their offerings include:

- Technology Integration Collaborative (TIC)
- 1 to 1 Initiatives
- Technology in Iowa Core for Learning (TICL)
- 21st Century Learning Skills
- Digital citizenship training

Continue to address consistent leadership, increased dedicated services and job-alike meetings as a venue for continual exploration of innovative and emerging strategies for technology integration to increase the effectiveness and continued expansion of technology integration.

Leadership (LD) Standard

**Expectations
IAC
281—72.4(8)**

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
Opportunities**

LEA and agency interviewees described several opportunities for leaders to collaborate. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- Networks: Curriculum, Technology, Superintendent, Instructional Rounds, Instructional Coaching, Middle School Principals
 - G/T Academy
 - Counselor Academy
 - School Board and Superintendent Development
-

**Strength:
Support for
TLC**

LEA and agency interviewees reported that agency provided LEAs various and multiple opportunities to learn about Teacher Leadership Models as they prepared to apply for the State of Iowa Teacher Leadership and Compensation grant. The agency leadership reviewed individual district plans to provide feedback. Research, resources, models and opportunities for dialogue and collaboration have been made readily available to interested districts.

The agency provided support in grant writing, planning for implementation and is now providing direct support for the training and development of teacher leaders in year 1 of implementation as well as for districts who are preparing to begin during the 2015-16 school year. In addition, the agency provided multiple opportunities for teachers and administrators to participate in instructional coaching and networking opportunities.

**Strength:
Recruitment of
Diverse Staff**

Agency interviewees reported that the Agency has changed practices in order to recruit diverse staff members. Efforts to advertise more widely in publications and at post-secondary institutions with more diverse populations were noted. While the results are not at the level the agency desires, they are committed to continue these efforts to attract a more diverse workforce.

**Recommendation:
Leadership
Development
and
Expectations**

Multiple interviewees noted inconsistent engagement and involvement of agency personnel within and across regions and districts, often dependent upon the assignment and skill set of agency personnel serving the region.

The agency may consider a strengthened focus on leadership development and expectations within the system to address inconsistencies.

**Recommendation:
Supporting
Specialists**

Agency interviewees reported that some areas such as OT/PT/SLP have designated job-alike Facilitators (part-time) to help plan professional development. Other areas such as technology and assessment do not have this lead content support.

It is recommended that the agency provide consistent designated leadership for all specialist areas of expertise to continually expand/update content knowledge, implementation of professional development and consistency of services.

In designing professional development, consider addressing the unique needs of specialists and build upon the content knowledge at a deeper level so staff expand their knowledge, skills and understanding of research-based strategies and instructional practices.

**Recommendation:
Agency Staff
and Services**

Some LEA interviewees were not aware of agency staff assigned, role and services provided, and schedule in buildings for any given day/time.

Consider a systematic way to consistently inform the district of regional services available, planning with districts for assistance needed based on data
Consider a systematic way of informing array of LEA staff of regional services available planning with districts for needs, services and professional

development annually as well as a tool for evaluating progress and attainment of goals.

For example, schedule fall regional director and team meetings with district review services available, past use of services, district/building concerns, assistance needed from the AEA; provide follow-up with spring regional director team meetings to discuss existing data in support of professional development requests.

**Recommendation:
Networks for
Elementary and
High School
Principals**

LEA interviewees stated that although the agency provides support networks for some district/school leadership positions, there is no network for Elementary and High School principals.

Consider expanding the agency's supports to include Elementary and High School principals.

Management (M) Standard

**Expectation
IAC
281—72.4(9)**

The AEA shall deliver management services if requested.
If the AEA provides management services to school districts, the services shall conform to the provisions of Iowa Code section 273.7A.

**Strengths:
Services
Provided by
Agency**

LEA interviewees noted appreciation for management resources currently provided, for example, the Clarity Survey by BrightBytes, and expressed a need for continuation of these cost effective services. Technology support, personnel training, and the van delivery were noted as benefits districts/schools utilized frequently.

**Recommendation:
Inconsistent
Management
Services**

From statements of LEA interviewees it appears management services are inconsistent within and across regions and districts in the agency. Some interviewees were unaware of services available.

The agency should review how communication regarding services is disseminated agency-wide to ensure that all LEAs are aware of possible management services.

LEA interviewees also expressed that it would be beneficial to use a consistent training model when training LEA staff in management functions, such as student management systems, crisis planning, and other possible business functions of the school district.

Accreditation Status - Heartland AEA

**Team
Recommendation**

Heartland Area Education Agency is recommended for Continued Accreditation pursuant to 281—IAC Chapter 72.
