



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

2015 Legislative Session – Summary of Statute Changes Affecting Schools

July 16, 2015

Overview

Dear Colleagues,

The General Assembly passed, and the Governor signed, several important pieces of legislation from the 2015 session that will impact Iowa's schools. The Iowa Department of Education is pleased to provide this summary of legislative changes to help you plan for the year ahead.

As I begin my service as director of the Iowa Department of Education, I look forward to working with you to implement these new changes, as well as the bold statewide initiatives that are under way. They include Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation System, a statewide early literacy initiative to make sure all students are successful readers by the end of third grade, and an effort to improve our state standards and assessments.

Together, we will build on our successes and address our challenges to ensure all of Iowa's students have a bright future ahead of them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ryan M. Wise".

Ryan Wise, Ed.L.D.

Director

Iowa Department of Education

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2015 Policy Changes

HF 658 Education Appropriations

Each year, the Department of Education (Department) and other state-funded educational agencies or programs are funded in budget bills. In addition to those annual appropriations, this legislation also includes several policy and programmatic changes and modifications, which are described below.

Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program: Division I, Sec. 6, 15

Includes \$57,391,351 in new funding to launch the second year of Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) system. School districts approved to implement a TLC plan in the 2015-16 school year will receive \$312.68 per pupil. This amount includes a 1.25 percent increase from the 2014-15 amount and applies to districts both in their first and second year of TLC implementation.

This legislation also includes funding for all districts for the beginning Teacher Mentoring and Induction Program, National Board Certification, and the Teacher Development Academies. School districts approved to receive TLC funds will continue to receive mentoring and induction funding during the 2015-16 school year.

Attendance Center Performance Rankings Report: Division I, Sec. 6, 17

Appropriates \$250,000 for the continued development and implementation of the Attendance Center Performance Rankings system.

Administrator Coaching and Support: Division I, Sec. 6, 18

Appropriates \$1 million to the Department for the continued development of a coaching and support system for administrators in school districts that have adopted a TLC plan.

English Language Learners (ELL): Division I, Sec. 6, 19

English Language Literacy Grant Program

- Appropriates \$500,000 to the Department to continue the ELL Grant Program. In addition, the 25 Iowa schools with the largest number of students identified as limited English proficient and that provide educational programming will be required to submit a report to the Department.

Online State Job Posting System: Division I, Section 6, 20

Online State Job Posting System

Appropriates \$250,000 to the Department of Education for the administration of the TeachIowa.gov online job posting system, which was launched in August 2013. All public school districts, charter schools, and area education agencies are required to post **all** job openings on the system. Accredited nonpublic schools may participate.

Area Education Agency (AEA) Support for Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC): Division I, Sec. 6, 22, Sec. 15 a,b,c,d,f; Sec. 16(b) Sec. 17(3)

Appropriates \$1 million to the Department to support the system by which the AEAs support school districts implementing local TLC plans.

Successful Progression of Early Readers: Division I, Sec. 23

Continues the appropriation of \$8 million to the Department for distribution to school districts to provide intensive instructional services for the successful progression of early readers. This is the same amount of funding as distributed for fiscal years 2014 and 2015.

Early Warning Assessment System: Division I, Sec. 6, 24

Appropriates \$2 million to the Department's general administration to administer and distribute to school districts and accredited nonpublic schools an early warning assessment system that allows teachers to screen and monitor student literacy skills from prekindergarten through sixth grade. The language was modified during this legislative session to allow the Department to charge a fee for the system not to exceed the actual costs. Because the state cost of the system is \$3.2 million, and the legislative appropriation was \$2 million, the Department will determine how to make up the shortfall.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

Child Development Coordinating Council Grants: Division 1, Sec. 10

Establishes new standards for Shared Visions Preschool Programs being awarded grants.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Costs: Division V, Sec. 30

Allows transportation, outreach activities, and rental of facilities to be included in administrative costs for the statewide voluntary preschool program.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

Iowa Reading Research Center (IRRC): Division I, Sec. 6, 25(a)

Directs the IRRC to collaborate with AEAs in carrying out its work as mandated in Iowa Code section 256.9, subsection 53, paragraph "c".

Competency-Based Education: Division I, Sec. 6, 26

Appropriates \$425,000 to the Department for the continued implementation of the recommendations of the Competency-Based Instruction Task Force, with the addition of one FTE. In addition, the funding is to be used to provide grants under the competency-based education grant program and support the following key areas: development of model competencies, accountability and assessments, professional development, and the use of technology to support the system.

At-Risk and Dropout Prevention Funds: Division VII, Sec. 36, 5, Sec. 37(a), Sec. 38 (d,e), Sec. 39, 1,2, Sec. 40, Sec. 41, 1,2,3, Sec. 42, 4

Broadens the permissive uses of Dropout/Dropout Prevention funds to mirror the uses currently allowed for at-risk supplementary weighted funds. The language includes three major changes:

- Broadens uses of Dropout/Dropout Prevention funds to match the uses of at-risk supplementary weighted funds.
- Allows districts to use 5 percent of both Dropout/Dropout Prevention funds and at-risk supplementary weighted funds for proactive interventions.
- In concert with HF 445, allows a school district with a private facility within its boundaries to bill back to the resident school district the actual cost of instruction for general education students rather than the current limitation of district cost per pupil per day. This new adjustment covers both Psychiatric Medical Institute for Children (PMIC) and non-PMIC residential general education students. This adjustment to language does not affect anything related to the agreement between the district and the private facility.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

Four-Year Career Planning for 9-12 Students (IHAPI) XII, Sec. 52

Provides one additional year of funding for the I Have a Plan Iowa® system, which districts use for four-year student planning under Iowa Code section 279.61. The system will remain available for FY 2016 while the Department plans for a transition to an enhanced approach to student career and academic planning.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

SF 510 Standing Appropriations

Each year, the Department and other state-funded educational agencies or programs have ongoing obligations of expenditures, some of which do not require a vote or any statutory provisions and automatically enact without an active vote. In addition to those ongoing expenditures, this legislation also includes policy and programmatic changes and additions. One such piece of legislation is outlined below.

Online Learning Academies, Division XVII, Section 99, Section 256.7, subsection 32, paragraph c.

Removes the sunset of the online academies in the CAM and Clayton Ridge Community School Districts. Removes the limitations on enrollment through June 30, 2018, if those limitations prevent siblings from enrolling in the same school district or if a sending district determines that the educational needs of a physically or emotionally fragile student would best be served by educational instruction and course content delivered primarily over the internet.

Requires the Department to collect data on student performance in educational instruction and course content delivered primarily over the internet, to provide an annual report to the General Assembly, and to post this report on the Department's website.

Amends the reporting requirements for the online academies operating in the CAM and Clayton Ridge districts.

Requires the online academies at CAM and Clayton Ridge to:

- Monitor and verify full-time student enrollment, timely completion of graduation requirements, course credit accrual, and course completion.

- Monitor and verify student progress and performance in each course through a school-based assessment plan that includes submission of coursework and security and validity of testing.
- Conduct parent-teacher conferences.
- Administer assessments required by the state to all students in a proctored setting pursuant to state law.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

Additional Education Legislation

The sections below cover additional legislation impacting PK-12 education. Legislation related to community colleges will be addressed in a separate letter in the coming weeks.

SF 227 School Start Date

Requires all districts and accredited nonpublic schools to begin school no earlier than August 23 each year. An exception to the start date requirement exists for districts or accredited nonpublic schools that choose to operate one or more elementary or prekindergarten through eighth grade attendance centers on a year-round calendar. The Department no longer has the authority to grant waivers. Guidance was provided on April 10, 2015 ([School Start Date Guidance](#)).

HF 445 Payment of Student Costs

Provides that a district in which a private psychiatric facility is located may bill the district of residence of a placed child for the actual cost of instruction instead of the current limitation of the per-day amount of district cost per pupil.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

HF 488 Iowa Reading Corps

Allows the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, in collaboration with the Department, to provide AmeriCorps members with a data-based, problem-solving model of literacy instruction to use in tutoring students from prekindergarten to third grade who are either not proficient or at risk of becoming not proficient in reading.

HF 515 Management Levy for Mediation and Arbitration

Authorizes a school district to use revenue from the district management levy under Iowa Code section 298.4 to pay the settlement costs of mediation and arbitration decisions.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

HF 421 Community College Career and Technical Education (CTE) Instructor

Allows high school CTE teachers to count time spent teaching CTE courses as relevant work experience for purposes of meeting state minimum faculty standards for teaching community college CTE courses, including concurrent enrollment sections.

SF 462 Epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPens) in schools

Allows schools to have epinephrine auto-injectors available for use by authorized personnel. It permits a licensed health care professional to write a prescription in the name of a school. Provides instructions for the maintenance and administration of epinephrine in schools and certain other facilities.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

HF 347 Child Care Oversight and Licensing

Removes the Department from oversight responsibility for child care programs located in schools and places the responsibility for the licensure and oversight of child care programs with the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) effective January 1, 2016. DHS may begin implementation prior to January 1, 2016, to the extent necessary to transition to full implementation of the bill by the effective date.

Preschool is not considered child care, and the Department will maintain oversight responsibility for state preschool programs and any preschool serving students with Individualized Education Programs.

Additional information can be found here: [Transitioning to DHS Child Care Licensing](#)

HF 397 Child Labor

Relieves district superintendents from the responsibility of signing work permits for children under the age of 16. That responsibility will now fall on the Labor Commissioner.

HF 646 Physical Plant and Equipment Levy - Repair Technology and Equipment

Authorizes a school district to use revenues from the regular and voter-approved physical plant and equipment levies (PPEL) for the repair of transportation equipment if the cost of the repair exceeds \$2,500.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.

SF 485 Physical Plant and Equipment Levy

Authorizes school districts to exceed the statutory levy rate limit following the refunding or refinancing of certain loan agreements and including effective date provisions.

The Department will provide additional guidance on this legislation.