

January 14, 2013

Building World-Class Schools for Iowa:

A Legislative Brief





Jason E. Glass, Ed.D.

Dear Iowans,

As the first gavel of the 2013 legislative session falls, I'm pleased to provide this legislative brief on the components of the education reform package introduced by Gov. Terry Branstad and Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds. At full implementation, this package invests \$187 million into our schools.

The Iowa Department of Education has joined the Office of the Governor to prepare a set of legislative proposals that will bring Iowa closer to its goal of providing a world-class education to all children, no matter where they live. This legislative brief serves as an overview of that legislation, which I encourage you to read and discuss in greater detail.

The goals behind these policies are straightforward: Comprehensively and systematically raise and support the teaching profession while expanding efforts to customize instruction to every student's passion and talents. Iowa's children deserve the best education we can provide so they leave our schools with the knowledge and skills necessary for successful and rewarding lives.

Iowa has many good schools with hard-working, talented educators who deserve our respect and appreciation. While we honor the past work of generations of Iowans who built a strong foundation in education, it is our responsibility – and our turn – to make a focused, dedicated effort to improve Iowa's schools. We stand at a pivotal moment in Iowa's storied education history, in which we have the opportunity and will as a community to make the transition from being "good" to being "great."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason E. Glass". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jason E. Glass, Ed.D.
State Director and Chief Learner
Iowa Department of Education



Component I: Teacher Leadership and Compensation System

What it's about: Teachers are the most important influence on learning inside schools, and they are being asked to do increasingly complex work to prepare all children for this knowledge- and innovation-based global economy. This requires better preparation of new teachers and better support for teachers already in the classroom to more effectively meet the needs of each student.

That's why the centerpiece of the Branstad-Reynolds administration's education package is establishing a new teacher

leadership and compensation system. This system will put many of Iowa's top teachers in new instructional leadership roles alongside school administrators. It's no longer realistic to expect one principal to provide all the instructional leadership needed in each school. Improving the academic outcomes of students requires

improving the instruction they receive each day. There is no better way to do this than to empower our best teachers to lead the effort.

We must give the most effective teachers the opportunity to both teach and lead, and we must foster greater collaboration

among all teachers. Many talented people become teachers to make a difference, but there are few ways to advance professionally without leaving the classroom. This new system keeps our best teachers in front of children, but they are paid more to take on leadership responsibility for the purposes of strengthening the teaching around them. This plan spreads out great teaching and makes an impact on more students. It also ensures our most effective teachers earn entry into the leadership pathways through the establishment of a rigorous and fair selection process.

In addition, this compensation structure makes teaching more attractive to top students. The proposal raises the \$28,000 minimum annual starting salary to \$35,000 and improves entry into the profession by providing new teachers additional opportunities for mentoring and collaboration. This includes a reduced teaching load during their first year so they have time to observe outstanding teachers.

Such an approach raises the status of the profession by paying teachers more at the beginning of their careers and providing additional opportunities for growth and leadership throughout their careers.

Finally, the proposal helps Iowa's highest-need schools become more competitive



Background:

This proposal is based on the recommendations of the Task Force on Teacher Leadership and Compensation, which represented diverse perspectives from across Iowa.

Key Elements:

- **Raise starting salaries:** Make teaching more attractive with a minimum starting salary of \$35,000
- **Improve entry into the profession:** Create a residency year for all new teachers that includes a reduced teaching load and increased learning opportunities
- **Enhance career opportunities:** Design a system of career pathways with differentiated pay and responsibilities
- **Address labor market issues:** Provide incentives for teachers to teach in high-need schools

Component I: Teacher Leadership and Compensation System cont.

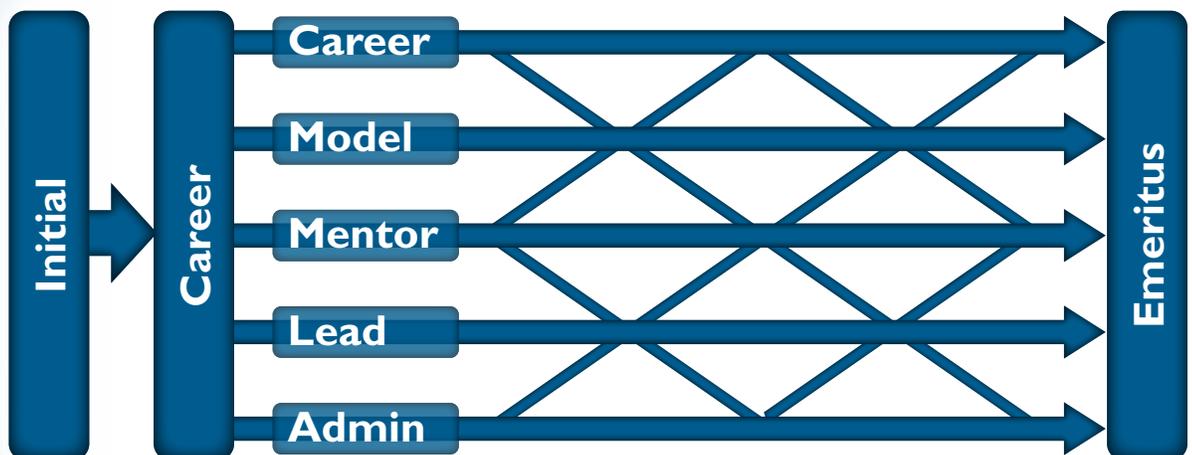
in recruiting and retaining outstanding teachers. It provides state assistance to increase the compensation for teachers in schools where high teacher turnover may affect student achievement growth.

Ultimately, this system is about strengthening the teaching profession for the benefit of both students and teachers.

Effective implementation of this system will be critical to its success. Accordingly,

school districts will have the opportunity to apply for a planning grant to determine how to adapt the system to the local context. The system will take effect for all schools in the 2016-17 school year, and districts will be able to apply for early implementation beginning in the 2014-15 school year.

Career Pathways



The teacher leadership pathways include initial, career, model, mentor and lead teachers. The plan also establishes emeritus teachers to better utilize the talent of retired teachers.

State Budget Impact:

First year (FY 2014): \$5 million

Second year (FY 2015): \$60 million

Fully implemented (Annual cost): \$160 million

Component 2: Teach Iowa Initiative

Key Elements:

- **Tuition reimbursement:** \$4,000 a year – \$20,000 total – for top students who commit to teach in Iowa schools for five years
- **Hard-to-hire subject areas:** Many of these awards will go to students majoring in hard-to-hire subject areas, such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
- **Student teaching pilot:** Strengthen clinical experience with a full year of student teaching in the senior year of college, rather than the typical one semester
- **Jobs board:** A statewide education job posting system

What it's about: A common theme among the world's highest-performing school systems is that they attract top talent into the teaching pipeline. The Teach Iowa Initiative is a committed effort to do the same in Iowa. This initiative builds on an existing program to provide both relief and incentive through tuition reimbursement to top students who commit to teach in Iowa schools for five years.

Tuition reimbursement will be available only to those students whose academic credentials are better than, or equal to, the top 25 percent of candidates in the state's approved teacher preparation programs and who demonstrate important traits for teaching, such as dedication and relationship-building. Many of these awards will go to students majoring in hard-to-hire subject areas, such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Upon college graduation and placement in a classroom, Teach Iowa scholars will be awarded \$4,000 a year for up to five years of teaching. This approach not only reduces the financial burdens of those scholars, it also gives Iowa students access to highly trained, highly competent instructors in challenging subject areas.

The Teach Iowa Initiative also includes a pilot program to strengthen clinical experience with a full year of student teaching in the senior year of college,

rather than the typical one semester. This is modeled after a successful program at Arizona State University that aims to turn out brand-new teachers who tend to be as effective as second-year teachers. Student teachers receive intensive support and training, similar to that of the medical profession. Because many new teachers leave the profession within a few years, it's clear that more support and training are necessary.

Finally, the Teach Iowa Initiative includes a simplified approach to connecting teachers with job openings in schools. It establishes a statewide web-based education job posting system that will make the processes for hiring and applying for jobs more efficient. This system will reduce paperwork for applicants, provide cost savings to school districts and taxpayers, keep hiring decisions within school districts, and will provide better data about educator supply and demand.



State Budget Impact*:

First year (FY 2014): \$3 million

Second year (FY 2015): \$3 million

Fully implemented (Annual cost): \$13.5 million

*Includes student teaching pilot program

Component 3: Iowa Promise Diploma Seals

What it's about: This program uses diploma seals to identify and recognize graduating high school seniors who have demonstrated through certain competencies that they are college- and career-ready. These competencies include a college readiness exam or a career readiness assessment made available at no cost to students who are completing a core and specialized course of study at a high level, as well as a senior portfolio assessment requiring the demonstration of concepts such as collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. The seals are an optional addition to diplomas awarded by Iowa high schools for students who

choose to pursue and earn them. The purpose is to help students better prepare for the future and to align education with workforce development in a thoughtful way. A blue-ribbon commission of business and education leaders will set high standards for the seals to better define what it means to be college- or career-ready, with the goal of providing automatic college entrance or a hiring preference for students who earn the diploma seal. The first Iowa Promise Diploma Seals will be available to the graduating class of 2015. The program will be fully implemented by July 1, 2017, when students entering high school during the 2013-14 school year will be graduating.

State Budget Impact:

First year (FY 2014): \$4 million

Second year (FY 2015): \$4 million

Fully implemented (Annual cost): \$10 million



Component 4: Educator Development System

What it's about: Iowa needs to update teacher and administrator standards and evaluations to provide more valuable feedback and to enable the state to win a waiver from components of the federal No Child Left Behind law. In 2012, Iowa became the first state in the nation to be rejected for a waiver application because the state does not meet requirements in the areas of educator evaluations. This has resulted in a stalled effort to replace a one-size-fits-all accountability framework that unfairly blames schools serving more at-risk and disadvantaged students with a state accountability system that emphasizes growth and fits Iowa's context. However, the U.S. Department of Education has left the door open for a waiver, contingent upon legislative action to give the Iowa Department of Education

authority to develop and implement an evaluation framework that differentiates performance using three levels and also factors in student outcomes. This proposal develops such a system through inclusive input from a commission of education leaders to guide the Iowa Department of Education in this policy area.

In addition, the eight teaching standards that have been in place in Iowa for the past 11 years will be updated by July 1, 2015. These updates will be made by the Iowa Department of Education with recommendations from the commission. This new system of educator standards will create consistency in the professional pipeline for teachers, from preparation to practice.

State Budget Impact:

First year (FY 2014): \$500,000

Second year (FY 2015): \$3.5 million

Fully implemented (Annual cost): \$3.5 million

Why a NCLB waiver?

- **Not a retreat from accountability.** While the No Child Left Behind law has advanced some important reforms by shifting attention to the country's neediest students, it's also widely acknowledged that the law has created some unrealistic measures in its attempt to hold the nation's public schools accountable.
- **In Iowa:** We still expect our schools to meet high standards. But we need a fair approach that recognizes that students come to school with different starting points and emphasizes growth and progress.

Component 5: Expanding the Iowa Learning Online Program

What is ILO?

Iowa Learning Online provides online instruction with Iowa licensed instructors in various academic subjects, including those that are hard to fill or in situations where a school district has lost the services of an instructor. This popular program has filled an academic gap in this state and has helped school districts meet their educational needs.



What it's about: Statewide demand far outpaces the supply of services provided through Iowa Learning Online, a state-run system that has provided high-quality courses online and through the Iowa Communications Network since 2004. This federally funded Iowa Department of Education program reaches fewer than 1,000 students a year. Classes have waiting lists, and many students who want to take challenging courses that are not available in their schools are turned away from Iowa Learning Online because of limited resources. Federal funding is capped, which stymies expansion. An infusion of state resources would expand the Iowa Learning Online program's ability to serve students and school districts in Iowa.

Senate File 2284, adopted in the 2012 legislative session, took major steps to define online education in Iowa. One of those steps was to codify Iowa Learning Online to provide support and long-term stability for the work of the program. This proposal provides \$1.5 million in seed money for three consecutive years to help Iowa Learning Online transition to a self-financing model and to expand services to about 2,500 students a year. In the long term, Iowa Learning Online will be funded only through users on a fee-based system.

State Budget Impact*:

First year (FY 2014): \$1.5 million
 Second year (FY 2015): \$1.5 million
 Third year (FY 2016): \$1.5 million

*Transitions to a fee-based system after third year

Education Reform Package – Total Program Costs

Program	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Teacher Leadership and Compensation System	\$5,000,000	\$60,000,000	\$110,000,000	\$160,000,000	\$160,000,000
Teach Iowa Initiative	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$4,500,000	\$5,500,000	\$13,500,000
Iowa Promise Diploma Seals	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000
Educator Development System	\$500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000
Expanding the Iowa Learning Online Program	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0
TOTAL COSTS	\$14,000,000	\$72,000,000	\$129,500,000	\$179,000,000	\$187,000,000