

**AEA
SUPERINTENDENTS' MEETING
November, 2011**

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TEAM MEMBERS ARE NEEDED FOR SITE VISITS

The Department of Education invites you to participate as a team member for one (or more) site visits. Participation in a site visit can broaden one's perspective of school improvement efforts and help form partnerships with other educators. In addition, it assists in understanding the site visit process as team members prepare for their own visit.

For more information and to sign up to participate as a team member on a site visit:
http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1558&Itemid=2342 Please sign up by September 15.

2011-2012 Site Visits: Team Members Needed

District/School	Site Visit Dates	Minimum Number of Team Members Needed
Sacred Heart Catholic School	January 10-11	3
St. Paul the Apostle, Davenport	January 17-18	3
John F. Kennedy Catholic School, Davenport	January 19-21	3
Wilton (Equity)	January 24-26	7
Preston	February 7-9	5
Andrew	March 13-15	5
Northeast	March 20-22	5
Davenport	April 16-20	10

Districts with visits scheduled during the 2012-13 or 2013-14 school years may wish to serve on a site visit team this school year. Following is the list of districts scheduled for a site visit during the 2012-2013 school year:

2012-13		
Bennett	Columbus	Durant
North Scott	West Liberty	
2013-14		
Bellevue	Delwood	East Central
Maquoketa	Muscatine	

COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION RESEARCH TO ACTION FORUM: DECEMBER 8, 2011

Join the Iowa Department of Education and the Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest (REL Midwest) for a Research to Action Forum on planning and evaluating competency-based education practices. The forum will be held at the Ramada Tropics Resort in Des Moines on December 8 from 8:00 AM to 3:45 PM.

Competency-based education ensures a system where students advance to the next concepts and levels based upon their mastery of content rather than by age or seat time. Newly developed state guidelines for K-12 competency-based pathways and waiver forms for the 2012-13 school year are now available on the Department website at <http://tiny.cc/6ebxp>.

Participants will examine research on competency-based education, connect with other practitioners from across the nation who are implementing competency-based education reforms, consider how best to evaluate the impact of these practices, and beginning planning for local implementation.

School districts are encouraged to attend in teams of 4. Teams might include the superintendent, curriculum director, principals, teachers, students, or the district's AEA school improvement consultant.

Registration is open through November 21, 2011 at <http://tiny.cc/ykyo6> The Ramada Tropics Resort (5000 Merle Hay Road) has reserved a block of rooms at \$55 for the event. Please call 515-278-0271 for reservations. Please contact Sandra Dop for more information (sandra.dop@iowa.gov).

Registration is limited. There is no registration fee, and lunch will be provided.

A REL Midwest Connecting Research to Practice Event

SENIOR YEAR PLUS CLARIFICATION

The Iowa Department of Education has received some feedback about Senior Year Plus in the past few months. This law was passed in 2008 and initial guidance came out in the fall of 2008. The Department wants to clarify two points of confusion:

1. **Proficiency Requirement:** The law states that students must be proficient on the most recent administration of the Iowa Assessments. The requirement is more restrictive for enrollment of high school students than for adults. Adults are paying their own tuition. High school students are accessing community college courses tuition-free; i.e., courtesy of the taxpayer. Thus, the Legislature included proficiency requirements into Iowa Code chapter 261E (the Senior Year Plus Act) to make sure that the public's money is being spent wisely. School districts have the statutory authority to have their boards adopt "alternative but equivalent qualifying performance measures including but not limited to additional administrations of the state assessment, portfolios of student work, student performance rubric, or end-of-course assessments." Section 261E.3(1)(e). Page 11 of the SYP Handbook (on the Department's Website at http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1856&Itemid=2596) presents a full page of suggested criteria from performance level descriptors with evidence of proficiency for any board to use.
2. **Students who drop.** It is a given that districts cannot claim funding for any student who drops from the postsecondary credit of a concurrent enrollment course. The heart of this issue is the intent of the Legislature. The Department reads section 261E.8(4) as clear legislative intent that no student may be enrolled in a concurrent enrollment course merely for the secondary credit. 261E.8(4) reads as follows:

“4. A school district shall grant high school credit to a student enrolled in a course under this chapter if the student successfully completes the course as determined by the community college and the course was previously approved by the school board pursuant to subsection 3. The board of directors of the school district shall determine the number of high school credits that shall be granted to a student who successfully completes a course.”

TEST ADMINISTRATION ASSURANCE FOR 2011-2012

Test Administration Assurance for 2011-2012 Assurance for Proper and Ethical Test Administration ADMINISTRATION OF TESTS

In the administration of standardized tests, it is a violation of test security to do any of the following:

1. Provide inappropriate test preparation such as any of the following:
 - a. Copy, reproduce, or use in any manner any portion of any secure test booklet, for any reason.
 - b. **Share an actual test instrument in any form. This includes using old copies of the ITBS/ITED.**
 - c. Use test preparation materials or strategies developed specifically for Annual Progress Reporting or the Annual Yearly Progress report.
2. Deviate from the test administration procedures specified in the test examiner’s manual.
3. Provide inappropriate assistance to students during the test administration.
4. Make test answers available to students.
5. Change or fill in answers on student answer documents.
6. Provide inaccurate data on student answer documents.
7. Engage in any practice to artificially raise student scores without actually improving underlying student achievement.
8. Participate in, direct, aid, counsel, assist, encourage, or fail to report any of the acts prohibited in this policy.

After testing is completed, test booklets are to be returned according to procedures outlined by Iowa Testing Programs in the materials.

CONSEQUENCES OF TEST ADMINISTRATION VIOLATIONS

If a violation of test administration protocol occurs, as determined by the superintendent following an investigation of allegations of irregularities, the superintendent shall determine whether the integrity of the testing program has been jeopardized, whether some or all of the test results are invalidated, and whether a teacher or administrator has violated the Code of Ethics of the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners as found at 282—Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 25.

Reports of students cheating on assessments shall be submitted to the building principal for investigation and disciplinary procedures.

A staff member found to have committed testing irregularities shall be subject to discipline in accordance with law and Board policy. If the staff member is a licensee of the Board of Educational Examiners, the superintendent shall make a timely report to that Board.

STREAMLINING DATA COLLECTION

Efforts are underway to streamline the collection process of mandatory reports, data and progress for districts and schools. This streamlining process will be titled the Consolidated Plan or C-plan for short. The five plans that have been identified for inclusion are the CSIP, APR, DDSDP, DINA/SINA, and Iowa Core Implementation. The hope is that the C-Plan will be an ongoing or living document for districts/schools to use locally and not just for reporting and compliance to the DE. An internal team has been working an aggressive timeline for project completion. Initial work has included defining the cycle of plans, reviewing existing systems, and determining key stakeholders. A mock up will be shared with various stakeholders (DE, AEAs, LEAs, etc.) for feedback at the end of the year. The C-plan will be ready for use the Summer of 2012

ADMINISTRATOR-COUNSELOR WORKSHOP

Administrator-Counselor Workshop: *Not Either/Or: Building a Culture of Ethics and Excellence to Ensure All Students Graduate College, Career and Citizenship Ready*

Wed., Dec. 7, 2011 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. **Ramada Tropics Resort & Convention Center**

5000 Merle Hay Rd., Urbandale

The Education Blueprint sets bold goals for helping our students be better prepared for a competitive international marketplace. To help realize these goals, we will explore the connection between ethics and excellence and how the principal/counselor team can work together to ensure every learner's success. This training is designed to provide knowledge, tools and the opportunity for dialogue on strategies for establishing an intentional culture of safety and engagement and developing competencies for positive behavior.

Participants will:

- (1) develop an integrated audit/action plan that details the “new day/new way” roles for the principal-counselor team so students can be college, career and citizenship ready;
- (2) get clearer on the alignment of strategies, tools, and assessments necessary to accomplish high levels of success for each learner;
- (3) receive tools and strategies in eight focus areas that can be used immediately, as well as information about the new [Iowa Safe and Supportive Schools \(IS³\)](#) grant.

Dr. Matt Davidson, executive director of the Institute for Ethics and Excellence will be our trainer. Dr Davidson was the research director at the Center for the 4th and 5th Rs. His publications include Smart and Good Schools. Read more about Dr. Davidson’s work at <http://excellenceandethics.com/>

Because of the unique collaboration between the Iowa Department of Education, the School Administrators of Iowa, the Institute for Character Development, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission, the Iowa School Counselors Association for this event, we are able to offer a discounted registration fee of \$125 for the school counselor and principal team. The registration fee for individuals is \$95 for administrators (SAI's standard rate) and \$70 for school counselors (subsidized by sponsors).

To register click on <http://www.sai-iowa.org/admincounselor/>

Instructional Decision Making (IDM) is transforming

Instructional Decision Making (IDM) is transforming. IDM has been promoted and supported by the DE since 2002, but in the coming days, IDM will be evolving into Response to Intervention (or RtI). This transition will build on the essential framework of IDM while ensuring that the forthcoming RtI implementation efforts align with evidence-based instructional practices and assessment measures. The Iowa Department of Education is currently working on specific plans for RtI to ensure that all districts across the state understand the guidance and implement those components uniformly. So what can you be doing at this time? Review your curriculum to make sure it is aligned with the Iowa Core, look at the assessment measures and results you are using to formatively guide instruction, and identify key leaders within your district who can work with both your staff and AEA to promote this effort. We will keep you posted as we draw closer to completing the plans for this rollout. Stay tuned.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The Title III program through the Iowa Department of Education would like to create some opportunities for district personnel from school districts with high numbers or percentages of English Language Learner (ELLs) populations to network, share experiences, and develop strategies, practices and help shape policies that will more effectively serve these students' needs. **The first of these network meetings will be continental breakfast meeting on Wednesday Nov 9th 7:30 am.**

We define the 'districts of high numbers or percentages...' as the Urban 8 districts, districts with either 250 ELLs or districts in which ELLs comprise 20% or more of the student body.

Nearly 80% of all of the ELLs are in about 21 districts that fit the above criteria. These are the large districts and their suburbs, and the agro-industrial towns and communities found throughout our state. Although in the past policies and practices tend to paint ELLs with the same brush, we understand that the ELL population is far from homogeneous. More than 100 different languages are present in the ELL population. ELLs come from a wide panorama of backgrounds – they may be survivors of refugee camps or the sons and daughters of scientists or engineers. They may have an internationally competent education in one or more languages or may be students with highly disrupted education and not be able to read or write any language. The population has an ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity, about which our teachers and administrators and the larger school communities may not have experience and or training to meet their needs.

Whatever the students' realities may be, your districts and AEAs have been making significant progress in meeting the needs of these students, but the work still needs a lot more of support. It is time that we come together, share our best experiences, identify and outline the challenges and needs for the future, and a common set of practices and policies among us. I invite you to attend.

For more information contact John A. Scott at john.scott@iowa.gov or 515.281.3805

DATES TO REMEMBER

November 1	Innovative Calendar Waiver Application (New and Continued) Deadline
November 1	School Board Officers Report
November 1	Special Education Student Weighting Calculated
November 1	Whole Grade Sharing – last day for public notice of board intent
December 1	Juvenile Home Requests for Educational Program Services
December 1	SBRC Application – Increased Enrollment, Open Enrollment Out & LEP
December 6	2009-2010 Dropout Verification Open
December 15	Dropout Prevention programs for MAG – last day to submit application
December 16	2009-2010 Dropout Verification Deadline
January 1, 2011	Chapter 12 Exemptions for the 2011-2012 School Year Due

A complete Iowa Department of Education calendar of events can be viewed at <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/calendar/calendar.html>

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, gender, disability, religion, age, political party affiliation, or actual or potential parental, family or marital status in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d and 2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.). If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, please contact the legal counsel for the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, telephone number 515/281-5295; or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661, telephone number 312-730-1560, fax 312/730-1576, e-mail: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov