

FALSE STATEMENTS	FACTS	FACT SOURCES
<p>1. AEAs HAVE NOT BEEN REVIEWED OR HELD ACCOUNTABLE IN THEIR 50 YEAR HISTORY.</p> <p>“These nine regional entities, which operate without meaningful state oversight...” (p. IV)</p>	<p>The AEAs are evaluated regularly by the Department of Education. AEA oversight is the responsibility of AEA Boards who manage AEAs just as a school board manages a school district.</p> <p>Iowa Code, Chapter 273</p> <p>1. The department of education shall develop, in consultation with the area education agencies, and establish an accreditation process for area education agencies by July 1, 1997. At a minimum, the accreditation process shall consist of the following: a. The timely submission by an area education agency of information required by the department on forms provided by the department. b. The use of an accreditation team appointed by the director of the department of education to conduct an evaluation, including an on-site visit of each area education agency. The team shall include, but is not limited to, department staff members, representatives from the school districts served by the area education agency being evaluated, area education agency staff members from area education agencies other than the area education agency that conducts the programs being evaluated for accreditation, and other team members with expertise as deemed appropriate by the director.</p> <p>Iowa AEA Fiscal Research Brief</p> <p>Since 1997, the DE has reviewed the accreditation standards of each AEA. To be accredited by the State Board of Education and maintain accreditation status, an AEA is required to have: • An approved five-year comprehensive plan. • An approved annual budget and plan update. • Approved programs and services following a comprehensive onsite review by an accreditation team.</p>	<p>Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 273</p> <p>Iowa AEA Fiscal Research Brief, Robinson, January 2024, p.5</p>
<p>2. AEAs WERE CREATED FOR ONE PURPOSE: SPECIAL EDUCATION.</p> <p>“...were created in the 70s to provide special education support for school districts.” (p. IV)</p> <p>“Since 2000, voluntary mergers have reduced the number of AEAs to nine, but their services and infrastructure have grown well beyond the scope of special education to include a wide array of education and media services for school districts across the state.” (p. 30)</p>	<p>Iowa’s AEA system has been charged with providing special education, media, AND educational services since their inception in 1974.</p> <p>Iowa Code, Chapter 273</p> <p>The area education agency board <i>shall furnish educational services</i> and programs as provided in section 273.1, this section, sections 273.3 through 273.8, and chapter 256B to the pupils enrolled in public or nonpublic schools.</p> <p>The area education agency <i>board shall provide for special education services and media services</i> for the local school districts in the area and <i>shall encourage and assist school districts in the area to establish programs for gifted and talented children.</i></p> <p>Legislative Guide-AEAs</p> <p>Area education agencies have the legal status of school corporations. The primary role of AEAs is to provide special education support services to individuals under the age of 21 years, media services to benefit all children from kindergarten through grade 12, and other educational and support services to pupils and education staff; to provide a method of financing the programs and services; and to avoid duplication of programs and services provided by other school corporations. AEAs are authorized by statute to provide other contracted services to school districts. Iowa Code chapter 273 assigns specific powers and duties relating to each of these functions.</p>	<p>Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 273</p> <p>Legislative Guide-Area Education Agencies, Hanlon, 2018, p. 1</p>

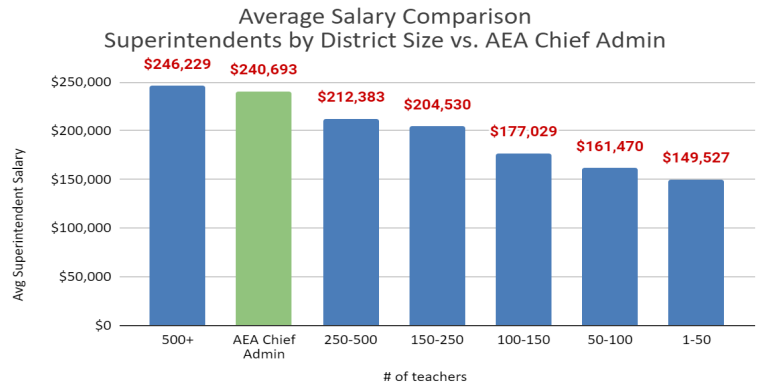
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<p>3. IOWA SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS ARE FAILING AND THE AEAs ARE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT FAILURE.</p> <p>Iowa students with disabilities are performing below the national average. In the last five years, they've ranked 30th or worse on 9 of 12 national Assessments. (p. V)</p> <p>Data chart (p.30)</p>	<p>Readers should be wary of this statement and the information on this chart.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No sources are included for any of the data (Students with disabilities NAEP scores for 2019 & 2022) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does the score represent? Math, reading, grades 4, 8, and/or 12, or an aggregate score of some or all of these items? This is unknown. The vertical axis has a scale that is truncated to exacerbate differences in scores, which in reality, are likely statistically insignificant (chart scores range from approximately 210-223) From the NAEP site, <i>“NAEP assessment results are reported as average scores on a 0-500 scale (reading, mathematics at grades 4 and 8, U.S. history, and geography) or on a 0-300 scale (mathematics at grade 12, science, writing, technology and engineering literacy, and civics).</i> Average scores of a data set will pool towards the middle of the scale. In exporting NAEP data for all states for grades 4 and 8 reading and math, no data or any aggregate of the data for the comparison states (National, Georgia, Nebraska, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas) matches the scores for these states on this chart. The reader also has no context for why those particular comparison states have been chosen. The adjusted special education per-pupil expenditure is not cited. What is the source of this data? Any high school statistics course would cover these issues as ways in which data is frequently manipulated to skew readers’ perceptions, as well as to paint an inaccurate and incomplete picture with data. Data presented in this one-sided manner are <u>always</u> motivated by deceiving the reader into seeing only the information that makes the author’s case. AEAs work hand-in-hand with school districts to provide special education services. Placing blame for any real or imagined poor performance of our students is not the sole responsibility of the AEAs; rather, it is a shared responsibility of districts and AEAs. 	<p>NAEP</p> <p>NAEP Report Cards</p>
<p>4. AEA ADMINISTRATOR SALARIES ARE BLOATED.</p> <p>“And AEAs have grown well beyond their core mission of helping students with disabilities, creating top-heavy organizations with high administrative Expenses.” (p. V)</p> <p>The average compensation package for an AEA chief is more than \$312,000. For comparison, the average public school district Superintendent’s total compensation is almost \$100,000 less.</p>	<p>Using Educational Statistic Reports from 2022-23 on the Department of Education website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average 2022-23 compensation for AEA Chief Administrators is \$294,000, not more than \$312,000 Average compensation for Superintendents is not available on the DE site, so salary comparisons (vs. total compensation) are the only publicly available metric. The total for the 9 AEA Chief salaries in 2022-23: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2,166,239 The total for the 240 full-time Superintendent salaries in 2022-23: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$44,451,752 Chief Administrator salaries are a minor expense in overall AEA and education spending. They are also comparable to Superintendent salaries in Iowa’s larger school districts. Information below provides greater context for Superintendent and AEA Chief salaries. 	<p>Iowa Department of Education PK-12 Education Statistics 2022-23</p> <p>Reports: IA Public School District Superintendent Information 22-23</p> <p>IA AEA Chief Administrator Information 22-23</p> <p>IA Public School & AEA Teacher Counts & Salaries 22-23</p>

AEA Chief Administrators vs. Superintendent Salary Analysis

		Average salary 2022-23
# Superintendents	248	\$191,861
# AEA Chief Administrators	9	\$240,693

However, Superintendent salaries are quite dependent on the size of the district and the experience of the Superintendent. Using the number of full time teachers as a grouping framework, average Superintendent salaries look like the charts below. Iowa's AEAs are not the same size, just like school districts are not the same size, but all AEAs have a professional staff of a minimum of 150 (estimated, based on review of AEA staff directories), making a fair salary comparison group Superintendents with teaching staffs of 150 or more. In that context, AEA Chief Administrator salaries are competitive with district Superintendents.

# of full-time teachers in district	Avg Superintendent Salary	Total Supt.
500+	\$246,229	12
AEA Chief Admin	\$240,693	9
250-500	\$212,383	14
150-250	\$204,530	20
100-150	\$177,029	45
50-100	\$161,470	96
1-50	\$149,527	61



		Average salary 2022-23
# Superintendents (<150 teachers)	46	\$221,047
# AEA Chief Administrators	9	\$240,693

AEA Chief Administrators have slightly higher average salaries than Superintendents in similarly staffed districts. The larger the district, the higher the average salary. Comparing the nine Chief Administrators salaries to the top nine salaries for Superintendents:

School/AEA	2022-23 Salary
Central Rivers AEA	\$280,644
Cedar Rapids Comm School District	\$277,946
Waukee Comm School District	\$271,810
Des Moines Independent Comm School District	\$268,450
Grant Wood AEA	\$258,044
Linn-Mar Comm School District	\$255,954
Sioux City Comm School District	\$250,000
Ankeny Comm School District	\$245,400
Council Bluffs Comm School District	\$244,175
Northwest AEA	\$243,130
Marshalltown Comm School District	\$242,105
AEA 13 Green Hills AEA	\$240,000
Mississippi Bend AEA	\$239,722
Davenport Comm School District	\$239,000
Heartland Area Education Agency	\$237,811
Great Prairie AEA	\$228,072
Prairie Lakes AEA	\$219,816
Keystone AEA	\$219,000