

256D.1 Iowa early intervention block grant program established goals.

1. An Iowa early intervention block grant program is established within the department of education. The program's goals for kindergarten through grade three are to provide the resources needed to reduce class sizes in basic skills instruction to the state goal of seventeen students for every one teacher; provide direction and resources for early intervention efforts by school districts to achieve a higher level of student success in the basic skills, especially reading skills; and increase communication and accountability regarding student performance. The Iowa early intervention block grant program shall consist of the following:

a. Class size management. School districts shall develop a class size management strategy to work toward, or to maintain, class sizes in basic skills instruction for kindergarten through grade three that are at the state goal of seventeen students for every one teacher.

b. Improving instruction in the basics. The department of education shall identify diagnostic assessment tools that can be used to assist teachers in measuring reading accuracy and fluency skills, including but not limited to phonemic awareness, oral reading ability, and comprehension skills, to improve student achievement in kindergarten through grade three. The department, in collaboration with the area education agencies, school districts, and institutions with approved practitioner preparation programs, shall identify and serve as a clearinghouse on intensive, research-based strategies and programs for training teachers in both diagnosis and appropriate instruction interventions.

(1) A school district shall at a minimum biannually inform parents of their individual child's performance on the diagnostic assessments in kindergarten through grade three. If intervention is appropriate, the school district shall inform the parents of the actions the school district intends to take to improve the child's reading skills and provide the parents with strategies to enable the parents to improve their child's skills. The board of directors of each school district shall adopt a policy indicating the methods the school district will use to inform parents of their individual child's performance.

(2) The department shall also identify for school districts programs and materials by which parents may support classroom reading instruction.

2. A school district shall integrate its specific early intervention block grant program goals and activities into the comprehensive school improvement plan required under section 256.7, subsection 21, paragraph "a".

3. For purposes of this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, "*parent*" means a biological or adoptive parent, a stepparent, or a legal guardian or custodian of a student.