
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION — AUGUST 2019

Meeting. The State Board of Education met on August 1, 2019, in Des Moines. The meeting opened with Director of the Department of Education Ryan Wise reporting on the recent Teacher Leadership and Compensation Conference held in July that included over 800 educators from over 200 school districts. Director Wise also announced the launching of the Iowa Clearinghouse for Work-Based Learning project board [site](#). The project board provides business-posted projects that will provide high-quality, work-based learning statewide.

Adoption of Rules for School Buses. The Board approved adoption of rules regarding construction standards for school buses. New school buses being purchased will be required to have lap-shoulder belts and additional safety features. The adopted rules included changes that were made after public comment, including clarification that the rules are for new buses only and that old buses would not be required to be retrofitted with lap-shoulder belts. The Department estimated it would take 12 to 15 years before all buses were fitted with lap-shoulder belts based on how often new school buses are purchased.

Seclusion and Restraint Rules. Proposed amendments to rules regarding seclusion and restraint were presented by the Department of Education and public comments were heard from school representatives, education association representatives, and the American Civil Liberties Union. The rules revision process began when a petition to the original rules was filed with the Department. Multiple meetings with petitioners, stakeholders, and the Department have been held. Although there have been areas of consensus, four areas of disagreement remain, including the use of the words “serious injury” versus “injury” to determine when safety precautions should be taken; the required physical attributes of a seclusion room; parent notification requirements; and implementation time frame of new rules. The Department suggested that if the Board fails to adopt the proposed rule changes, getting additional stakeholder input statewide would be a next step. The Board agreed that additional input and discussion were needed and the motion to adopt the amended rules failed.

Statewide Early Warning System. Panorama Education demonstrated the new statewide data system that will be made available to all school districts, nonpublic schools, and area education agencies (AEAs) to support implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). Currently, the focus for the early warning system is kindergarten through third grade literacy. The new system will allow reporting for preschool through high school and include literacy, math, and social-emotional and behavioral health. Reporting can be provided at a student, building, school district, AEA, and State level. The system will be used to identify needed support interventions to promote student achievement.

Iowa Statewide Assessment. Iowa Testing Programs provided an update on standards setting for the new statewide assessment that was administered in spring 2019. The standards setting process will determine cutoff scores for what is determined to be advanced, proficient, and not yet proficient. Iowa teachers worked in peer groups by content area and grade level to determine the performance level scoring system. Recommendations will be presented to the Board at the upcoming September meeting.

Davenport Community School District. Davenport Community School District was placed on conditional accreditation in May 2019. An update was provided of the district’s progress toward meeting all conditions of its accreditation and the anticipation of the successful completion of action items due August 31, 2019. Tom Lane was introduced as a Department-approved mentor for the district. Newly hired Superintendent Robert Kobylski also spoke to the Board. The Board did raise questions about a

recently agreed-to sale of Lincoln Elementary School property and discussed the need to build trust within the Davenport community.

Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency. Mississippi Bend AEA was placed on conditional accreditation in March 2019. Representatives from the AEA presented a history of operating results and the anticipation that the agency will return to a positive general fund balance in FY 2020. Staff budget reductions and alignment of contract days and salaries to other statewide AEA levels have all provided reductions in expenses.

Iowa Reading Research Center. Deborah Reed, Executive Director of the Iowa Reading Research Center, provided information on the following projects at the Center:

- Review of intensive summer reading programs.
- Evaluation of writing in first through sixth grade.
- Evaluation of teacher professional development.
- Varied practice reading versus repeated practice reading to support fluency, and the development of free online modules available to teachers.
- Development of a dyslexia overview module.

Next Meeting. The next meeting of the State Board of Education is scheduled for Thursday, September 12, 2019.

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