
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES — COVID-19 — MAY 27, 2020

School Reopening. On May 20, 2020, Governor Kim Reynolds [announced](#) that schools may reopen for school-sponsored activities effective June 1, 2020, but only to the extent that such activities and learning are consistent with guidance from the Department of Education (DE), the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union. The DE has provided [reopening guidance](#), [school facilities guidance](#), and [summer sports guidance](#).

Schools are required to submit a Return to Learn Plan to the DE by July 1, 2020. The plans will outline ways learning disruptions will be addressed and may include summer school, enrichment activities, or other opportunities to address the needs of students. The requirement for schools to start no earlier than August 23 has been waived to give schools flexibility for the 2020-2021 school year. The DE has provided [Return to Learn Plan guidance](#) and additional support through an [Iowa Return to Learn Support website](#).

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) continues to provide employment services to job candidates with disabilities and continues to work with business partners. IVRS has provided [resources](#) to clients regarding unemployment, food assistance, Iowa business recovery assistance, and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Transition services are continuing for graduating high school students as they prepare to become job candidates, and virtual meetings are being provided for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Starting in June, the [IVRS Virtual Pre-Employment Transition Services Summer Program](#) will provide virtual activities with each week focusing on a different business sector.

Iowa Reading Research Center. The Iowa Reading Research Center (IRRC) has provided numerous [resources](#) to educators and families to support student learning at home, including [information](#) for caregivers on how to use assistive technology to support the continuous learning of students with literacy difficulties. The IRRC's [eLearning](#) professional development modules have experienced an increase in teacher enrollments, and the IRRC continues to provide additional content.

Iowa Department for the Blind. The Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB) continues to provide vocational rehabilitation and independent living services by phone and Internet. The IDB is providing educational materials in alternative formats to K-12 students. Library Services has been providing books to youth and senior care facilities, offering 60 virtual library programs, and providing [online trainings](#) to paraeducators and associates. The Business Enterprise Program has been in conversation with the Feeding Iowa Task Force regarding partnering with the vending machine program that allows legally blind vocational rehabilitation clients of the IDB to manage their own businesses by operating vending machines.

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