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## FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

June 2, 2026



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Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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### IOWA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING — MAY 2026

**Meeting.** The Iowa State Board of Education (Board) met on Thursday, May 14, 2026, in the State Board Room at the Grimes State Office Building in Des Moines.

**Community College Advisory Committee Update.** Cassandra Halls, chair of the Community College Advisory Committee (Committee), provided the following updates regarding the Committee:

- Three promotions were made in the Higher Education and Post-Secondary Readiness Division.
- Workforce Pell Grant applications closed Friday, May 15.

**Director's Report.** Director McKenzie Snow provided the following updates on the Department of Education (DE) news and activities since the previous meeting:

- Three new members and a new student representative joined the Board for their first meeting. Cecelia Harris will serve a one-year term as the student representative. The members serve staggered six-year terms. The new Board members, who will serve staggered six-year terms, are:
  - Jeff Henderson
  - Jeremy Lindquist
  - Erica Roth
- Nine Iowa students were recognized as semifinalists for the [United States Presidential Scholars Program](#).
- Ed-Flex waivers related to the [Unified Allocation Plan](#) are under consideration.
- The DE's literacy team engaged all districts across Iowa participating in the \$24.0 million [Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant](#) in its new [High Quality Instructional Material Leadership Academy](#).
- The DE received a competitive farm-to-school [grant](#) through the United States Department of Agriculture in partnership with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) and the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services.
  - The departments will implement a joint project called Cooking Up Connections: Iowa Farms, Food Hubs and Land Stewardship. The project will promote local food resources and improve access to local food in Iowa Schools.
  - The grant will also assist in expanding the DE's [Farm to School virtual field trip video series](#) and agricultural education for Iowa students.
- Educators can apply for the [Dyslexia Specialist Endorsement Stipend](#), established in 2025 Iowa Acts, chapter [145](#) (Department of Education, Programs and Duties Act), through June 30.
- The DE has gathered public feedback for the proposed updates on the [performance-level descriptors](#) that will set the new achievement levels on the new State summative assessment.
- The DE is partnering with national research experts to investigate different literacy tutoring models. It will include comparing different levels of artificial intelligence tutoring with human tutoring.
- [The Robert D. Blue Scholarship program](#) applications close on May 31.

**Annual Condition of Community Colleges Report.** Amy Gieseke, chief of the Bureau of Community Colleges, presented the [Annual Condition of Community Colleges Report](#) for academic year 2025-2026. Iowa's community colleges serve over 278,000 credit and noncredit students each year. The report provides information on programs, enrollment, awards, costs, financial aid, human resources, and finances. An [interactive version](#) of the report is also available. The following items were highlighted:

- 123,064 enrolled students were enrolled in credit programs, a 3.1% increase from the previous academic year. There were 1,636,793 credit hours taken, a 3.6% increase from the previous academic year.
- 57,870 high school students participated in joint enrollment, a 5.9% increase from the previous year, making up 47.0% of all credit-enrolled community college students.
- Jointly enrolled students took 528,938 credit hours, an increase of 8.2% from the previous academic year, making up 32.3% of all credit hours taken.
- 155,194 students were enrolled in noncredit programs, an increase of 3.4% from the previous academic year.
  - Noncredit students enrolled in 6,643,390 contact hours, a 22.3% increase from the previous academic year.
  - Total noncredit completions reached 64,254, a 26.5% increase from the previous academic year.
- The average in-state tuition for community college is \$211.15 per credit, an increase of 2.9% from the previous academic year.
- Revenue totaled \$1,378,917,498 and expenditures totaled \$1,375,991,944, a 5.9% and 5.7% increase from the previous academic year, respectively.

**Community Colleges' Certified Budget Approvals.** The Board reviewed and approved the following certified budgets:

- [Indian Hills Community College](#)
- [Northwest Iowa Community College](#)
- [Kirkwood Community College](#)
- [Des Moines Area Community College](#)
- [Eastern Iowa Community Colleges](#)
- [Southeastern Community College](#)
- [Iowa Valley Community College](#)
- [Iowa Lakes Community College](#)
  - Board approval of the Iowa Lakes Community College certified budget was contingent upon its willingness to comply with the Board's corrective action plan and measures.
  - Iowa Lakes Community College is continuing its outstanding FY 2023, 2024, and 2025 audits, to be completed by the deadlines specified in its corrective action plan.
- [Iowa Western Community College](#)
- [Iowa Central Community College](#)
- [Western Iowa Technology Community College](#)
- [Northeast Iowa Community College](#)
- [North Iowa Area Community College](#)
- [Hawkeye Community College](#)
- [Southwestern Community College](#)

**Revised Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.** The revised [Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards \(IQPPS\)](#) were reviewed for a second time by the Board. No changes were made to the IQPPS since the previous Board meeting. The IQPPS received full Board approval.

**Revised Iowa Early Learning Standards.** The revised [Iowa Early Learning Standards \(IELS\)](#) were presented by Celeste Mortvedt, Early Childhood administrative consultant. The IELS focus on child outcomes and developmental milestones from birth through age five. Their core components include the core subjects—math, English language arts, science, and social studies—social-emotional development, and physical development.

The revision process began in September 2025, when the DE collected data regarding current and desired uses of the IELS in the field. After subsequent review and recommendations from the IELS Revision Team, the first proposed draft standards were developed for stakeholder consideration. Public feedback was gathered and reviewed by a second review team and prepared for presentation to the Board.

If there are no further revisions before the next Board meeting, the IELS will be voted on for approval.

**Next Meeting.** The next Board meeting will be on Thursday, June 18, in the State Board Room at the Grimes State Office Building in Des Moines.

The Board of Educational Examiners will convene on Thursday and Friday, June 18 and 19, for a board retreat and meeting in room B100 of the Grimes State Office Building.

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