
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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IOWA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION — JUNE 2026

Meeting. The Iowa State Board of Education (Board) met on Thursday, June 18, 2026, in the State Board Room at the Grimes State Office Building in Des Moines.

Nonpublic Advisory Committee Update. Board member Jeff Henderson provided the following updates regarding the Nonpublic Advisory Committee (Committee):

- The Committee reviewed 504 plan requirements, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and other special education requirements, including the differences in overall special education requirements for nonpublic and public schools.
- The Committee reviewed health service requirements to make nonpublic schools aware of the related responsibilities and the requirement to consult with a health professional if there is not one on site during school hours.
- Committee members will no longer be appointed by the Governor. Instead, members will be selected by an application process through the Department of Education (DE).

Director's Report. Director McKenzie Snow provided the following updates on the DE's news and activities since the previous meeting:

- Ten students were honored as award recipients for the DE's [Iowa America 250 Student Contest](#). Their work will be displayed at the Iowa State Fair.
- Louisiana and Indiana received waivers under the [Elementary and Secondary Education Act \(ESEA\)](#) from the United States Department of Education (ED). Louisiana and Indiana became the second and third states to be granted these waivers, with Iowa being the first.
- The DE will be partnering with the [National Math Stars](#) for a second year to provide support and resources to third-grade students who score in the top 2.0% statewide on the mathematics portion of the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP). These resources are available to the chosen students from the time of acceptance through high school and will be based on family needs.
- Applications for the dyslexia specialist endorsement stipend close on June 30. This stipend was established in 2025 Iowa Acts, [House File 890](#) (Department of Education, Programs and Duties Act). 2026 Iowa Acts, [House File 2783](#) (FY 2027 Education Appropriations Act), also appropriates \$335,000 to the DE for a grant program for an advanced specialist endorsement, which will be implemented by the DE.
- Nine Workforce Pell Grant applications were approved by the Iowa Workforce Development Board.
- The [Work-Based Learning Endorsement Leadership and Investment for the Field \(LIFT\) Grant](#) applications for school districts close on June 30. Grant funds may be used to support professional development and credentialing connected to various endorsements and the Work-Based Learning Supervisor Authorization. Interested school districts must apply at [iowagrants.gov](#).

Emergency Rules. As required by 2026 Iowa Acts, [House File 2591](#) (Extracurricular Athletics, Open Enrollment and Eligibility Act), the Board voted to adopt and file [emergency administrative rules](#) regarding the expansion of high school athletic teams to include eighth grade students and changing how periods of ineligibility due to transfers or open enrollment transfers are calculated. The Act also requires the Board to give parallel notice of intended action. The emergency administrative rules will be effective August 1, 2026, and the administrative rules with notice of intended action will receive public comment on August 11, 2026.

Requested Charter School Amendments. The following four charter schools requested an amendment to their contracts:

- [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics \(STEM\) Innovation High School](#) requested an amendment to the language regarding the location of its school.
- [Horizon Science Academy Cedar Rapids](#) requested an amendment regarding when the school year may commence and pushing back its opening date from 2026-2027 to 2027-2028.
- [Opportunity Education Network — Cedar Rapids Prep](#) requested an amendment to formally provide the specific location of a facility within the already approved Cedar Rapids metropolitan area that will be used to support enrollment growth and program expansion.
- [Hamburg Charter High School](#) requested an amendment to expand the grade levels taught at the charter school from grades 9 through 12 to grades 7 through 12 to allow earlier exposure to career pathways and career and technical education (CTE) opportunities.

All four amendments were approved by the Board.

Civica Career and Collegiate Academy Charter School Contract Withdrawal. [Civica Career and Collegiate Academy](#) requested to withdraw from its contract to allow for an additional year to find a suitable and affordable facility. The charter school plans to reapply for the 2027-2028 academic year. The Board approved the withdrawal.

Charter School Renewal and Performance Reports. The following three charter school renewal and performance reports were presented to the Board:

- [Hamburg Charter High School](#), established after the loss of the local high school, met 100.0% of charter school goals. The DE recommended additional transitional support and improvements to professional development.
- [Choice Charter School](#) is a grades 7 through 12 school with personalized, project-based learning. The DE found areas that were out of compliance and raised concerns about the school's governing board, for which members are selected by the school's chief executive officer. The DE recommended corrective actions, including changing governing board policies to avoid conflicts of interest.
- [Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College Charter High School](#) allows twelfth-grade students to earn a high school diploma and a college associate degree. The DE found that the charter school had repeated financial deficits and that students taking college courses were being charged the actual costs of the course. The DE outlined two required actions and five recommendations, including a required action to discontinue charging students fees when they enroll in a college course.

The Board approved all three performance reports.

Teacher of the Year. 2025 Teacher of the Year, Melanie Bloom, shared her final report, focusing on career-connected learning, work-based learning, and the elevation and celebration of educators.

Northern Iowa Area Community College Accreditation Report. [Northern Iowa Area Community College \(NIACC\)](#) presented its accreditation report. Highlights of the report include the following:

- Most benchmarks were ahead of State and national benchmarks.
- NIACC maintains Higher Learning Commission (HLC) compliance.
- NIACC was found to need improvement in four standard areas, and three standard areas presented no significant issues.
- Through NIACC's Senior Year Plus program, Career Link, 1,755 high school students enrolled in courses across 18 school districts. 18,031 credits were taken.
- The college has three new programs: dog grooming, drone pilot certification, and aviation pilot certification.
- There are two programs under development: dental hygiene and electrical technology.
- The college plans to open its third regional career center to expand high school students' access to CTE college programming within a 30-minute drive.

The Board granted continued accreditation for NIACC.

Iowa Lakes Community College Accreditation Report. [Iowa Lakes Community College \(ILCC\)](#) presented its accreditation report. The report includes the following highlights:

- ILCC leads State and national outcomes.
- Out of eight standards, two had recommendations for improvement but presented no significant compliance issues.
- Through ILCC's Senior Year Plus program, Career Connect, 1,407 high school students enrolled in courses across 13 school districts. 11,842 credits were taken.

Iowa Lakes Community College was investigated over concerns that the college was not following federal student aid compliance requirements. No intentional misconduct was found. The college is working to complete fiscal audits from previous fiscal years.

The Board granted conditional accreditation for ILCC through March 2027.

University of Iowa Educator Preparation Program Approval Report. The Board received the [educator preparation program](#) review for the University of Iowa (SUI). Any concerns will be revisited annually over the next three years following program approval.

The Board awarded full approval to the SUI educator preparation programs. The next site visit will be conducted during the 2031-2032 academic year.

Iowa Early Learning Standards. The revised [Iowa Early Learning Standards](#) underwent their second reading by the Board. No changes have been made since the previous meeting. The Board approved the standards.

Iowa's Area Education Agencies' Statewide Strategic Plan Approval. Nathan Wood, chief administrator for Great Prairie Area Education Agency (AEA); Stan Rheingans, chief administrator for Central Rivers and Keystone AEAs; and Angelissa Fynarrdt, administrator for the DE Division of Special Education, presented the three-year [Statewide AEA Strategic Plan](#). The following highlights were included:

- There will be statewide AEA director teams for each goal area outlined in the plan.
- Student data for each academic year will be reported no later than August of the following academic year.
- Centers of Excellence will have statewide consistency.
- The AEAs are on schedule for yearly reporting.

The Board approved the statewide strategic plan for the next three years, requiring the AEA system provide an annual update in 2027.

Prairie Lakes AEA Accreditation Report. The Board reviewed the Prairie Lakes AEA accreditation report and final progress [report](#). In July 2025, the AEA received conditional accreditation, which required engagement in several corrective actions, quarterly progress reports to the Board, and consideration of recommended corrective actions.

The Board approved its accreditation with corrective actions.

June School Budget Review Committee Update. Kassandra Cline, chief of the Bureau of School Business Operations, presented an [overview](#) of the School Budget Review Committee (SBRC) special hearing that occurred on June 9, 2026.

Student Board Representative. The Board discussed having a community college student as a nonvoting student Board representative. Board endorsement was requested and given to add a student

position to the Community College Advisory Committee. A motion was made and approved to pursue legislation to change Iowa Code to include additional student membership.

Iowa Code section [256.5A](#) states that the Governor shall appoint the nonvoting student member for a term of one year if the student is enrolled in grade 11 or for two years if the student is enrolled in grade 10. It does not currently include other types of students, such as community college students or Regents university students.

Next Meetings. The Board will not meet in July. The next Board meeting will be on August 13 in the State Board Room at the Grimes State Office Building in Des Moines. The Board of Educational Examiners will convene on August 7.

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