
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

IOWA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING — AUGUST 2026

Meeting. The Iowa State Board of Education (Board) met on Thursday, August 13, 2026, in the State Board Room at the Grimes State Office Building in Des Moines.

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

- Iowa is the first state to implement a federal [Workforce Pell Grant program \(Pell\)](#). The United States Department of Education approved the program in August 2026.
- [Iowa Central Community College](#) became the first institution in the nation to offer Pell funding for a short-term, 14-week emergency medical technician (EMT) training program.
- [Ellsworth Community College](#) and [Iowa Western Community College](#) were granted [College Academy Incentive Fund \(CAIF\)](#) grants to build two new regional career centers and expand career academies. Each center will focus on high-demand fields and career paths.
- Through the Volunteer Iowa Commission, the DE was awarded approximately \$500,000 in competitive federal AmeriCorps funding. The grant will continue to fund Iowa's [Course to College Coaching](#) AmeriCorps program.
- The DE recognized 74 schools for their outstanding commitment to student completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Don Bosco High School received a FAFSA-School of Excellence award, with a 96% FAFSA completion rate for its students.
- The DE awarded over \$2.35 million in [Therapeutic Classroom Grants](#) to 10 school districts.
- Two Iowa Best Practices were recognized at the recent federal Office of Special Education Programming (OSEP) Conference.
- The 2026-2027 Community-Based Provider application for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) was open until August 21 at 4:30 p.m. Applications must be submitted through the [IowaGrants portal](#). This opportunity was established in 2026 Iowa Acts, [House File 2754](#) (Private Schools and Charter Schools Act).
- The [Teach Iowa Scholar Program](#) application opens on September 1.

Rules. Thomas Mayes, general counsel for the DE, presented the following four Notices of Intended Action (NOIAs) for Board approval:

- Chapter [12](#), implementation of 2023 Iowa Acts, chapter [91](#) (Education, Parental Rights and School Transparency Act). This rulemaking was proposed to provide additional detail regarding enforcement.
- Chapter [12, technical corrections](#). The DE proposed corrections to conform the requirements to offer fine arts courses at the secondary level to the enabling statutory text and modernizes language regarding reporting for students based on student groups.
- Chapter [21](#), implementation of 2026 Iowa Acts, [House File 2610](#) (Course Numbering and Transfer and Curricula Act). The DE proposed this rulemaking to establish a statewide common course numbering system and a statewide lower division general education framework for Iowa community colleges.
- Chapter [41, technical corrections](#). The DE proposed this rulemaking to make technical corrections to provide additional support for students with disabilities who are placed outside their building or district of residence.

The Board approved all NOIAs.

Morningside University Educator Preparation Progress Monitoring Update. Amy Mayer, education program consultant from the Office of Educator Quality, and Kelly Chaney, dean of the Sharon Walker School of Education at Morningside University, presented [a progress monitoring update](#).

Morningside University offers traditional educator preparation programs and teacher intern preparation programs. These programs were granted conditional accreditation approval in December 2025. At that time, the university demonstrated compliance with seven standards. The three remaining standards required a formal resolution and additional time for monitoring. For this monitoring update, the university resolved the concerns and met the necessary standards.

The Board awarded full approval to Morningside University educator preparation programs through the 2030-2031 academic year.

Emmaus University Educator Preparation Program. Consultants from the Office of Educator Quality, Maryam Rod Szabo and Lindsay Harrison, and Elementary Education Program Director Lori Kratzer presented the [Emmaus University Educator Preparation Approval Report](#) to the Board. Emmaus University demonstrated compliance with three out of six standards. The University may require more time to comply with remaining standards.

The DE recommended conditional approval for the university's educator preparation program. The Board granted conditional approval with review in one year.

Iowa Lakes Community College Accreditation Update. On June 18, 2026, the Iowa Lakes Community College (ILCC) presented its accreditation evaluation and an update on its audits. The Board awarded conditional accreditation and approved ILCC's proposed financial audit submission schedule. For the August meeting, Amy Gieseke, administrator for the Division of Higher Education and Postsecondary Readiness, provided a status update related to the conditional accreditation.

The FY 2023 audit deadline was June 30, as outlined in the timeline approved by the Board. The audit is now expected to be completed by the beginning of October. The FY 2024 audit deadline is currently January 6, 2027, and may be delayed until February. The remaining deadlines are expected to be met.

Risk Assessment Process Overview. Tina Wahlert, administrator for the Division of PK-12 Learning, and Joanne Tubbs, chief for the Bureau of School Improvement, presented the [Risk Assessment Process Overview](#). Risk assessments are part of phase one monitoring for K-12 accreditation and are in addition to desk audits. Districts identified based on risk indicators demonstrated during the desk audit will receive additional monitoring and support as part of the accreditation process.

National Association of State Boards of Education Membership. The Board discussed the benefits and return on investment of its membership with the [National Association of State Boards of Education \(NASBE\)](#) and \$29,130 in membership dues paid for by the General Fund to the DE. Paolo DeMaria, president and chief executive officer of NASBE, presented an [overview](#) of membership benefits, including trainings, publications, and resources available to the Board.

Next Meetings. The next Board meeting, which will also include a site visit, is planned for September 17. The site visit and meeting location is to be determined.

The Board of Educational Examiners will meet on September 11 in the State Board Room at the Grimes State Office Building.

LSA Staff Contact: Serenity Lo (515.281.5661) serenity.lo@legis.iowa.gov