



Legislative Services Agency

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Fiscal Services Division

Fiscal Update Article

Iowa State Board of Education — September 2026

October 6, 2026

Meeting

The Iowa State Board of Education (Board) met on Thursday, September 17, 2026, at the Iowa State University Memorial Union in Ames.

Community College Advisory Committee Update

Board member Cassandra Hall provided an update regarding the Community College Advisory Committee (Committee) meeting on August 12, 2026. The Committee focused on the results of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) report. The Board heard and discussed the report.

A student representative has been identified and will begin a one-year term this fall.

Rules

Thomas Mayes, general counsel for the Department of Education (DE), presented Notices of Intended Action on the following Administrative Rule chapters:

- Chapter 95 – implements changes to Iowa Code section [19B.11](#) made by 2026 Iowa Acts, chapter [1186](#) (Affirmative Action Act).
- Chapter 79 – removes surplus language and provides greater detail on educator preparation for the consistent delivery of instruction regarding the science of reading and evidence-based mathematics.
- Chapter 31 – implements sections 98 and 99 of 2026 Iowa Acts, chapter [1086](#) (Private Schools and Charter Schools Act).
- Chapter 17 – implements a reporting requirement as outlined in 2026 Iowa Acts, chapter 1086 (Private Schools and Charter Schools Act).
- Chapter 14 – makes technical corrections as required by 2026 Iowa Acts, chapter [1183](#) (Duties of State Board and Director of Education and Educational Standards Act) and 2026 Iowa Acts, chapter [1129](#) (Medical Licensing and Prescribing Act).
- Chapter 11 – implements requirements outlined in [Executive Order 10](#).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The Board heard and discussed the following items relating to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Parts B and C Programmatic and Fiscal Monitoring

The Board heard and discussed the DE's [programmatic and fiscal monitoring pertaining to IDEA Parts B and C](#). The federal Office of Special Education Programs reported two findings of concern to the DE regarding IDEA Parts B and C monitoring.

- The State's Grant Award Notifications do not include all information required by the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) [Uniform Guidance](#) as required by federal law.
- Iowa does not have a fiscal monitoring process that meets the fiscal monitoring requirements under IDEA and the OMB Uniform Guidance.

To resolve the findings, the DE partnered with the Department of Management Division of Information Technology to create an online portal for fiscal monitoring.

The DE also implemented an IDEA Program Risk Assessment and an IDEA Fiscal Risk Assessment to identify IDEA subrecipients that would require further monitoring.

Differentiated Accountability

The Board heard and discussed the historical approach to measuring outcomes for students with disabilities and [future accountability and improvement efforts](#) launching later this year. The DE aims to operate only two accountability systems—one system under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and one under IDEA.

Director's Report

Director McKenzie Snow provided the following updates on the DE:

- The [Iowa Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics \(STEM\) Teacher Award Program](#), sponsored by Google, is open until September 30, 2026, at 4:59 p.m.
- The DE is offering [grant funding](#) to assist public school districts and child care centers with testing and reducing lead in their drinking water. Funding for the grant will come from the Environmental Protection Agency, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and Iowa Department of Health and Human Services.
- The [Teach Iowa Scholar program](#) applications are open until October 31.
- The DE is working on aligning ESSA and IDEA accountability systems.
- The DE is hosting [full-day training sessions](#) across the State to support Iowa school districts with meeting requirements outlined in 2026 Iowa Acts, chapter [1001](#) (Supplemental State Aid Act).

Updated Area Education Agencies Outcome-Based Performance Measures

Jay Pennington, administrator for the Division of Teacher Quality and Innovation, presented the updated [Area Education Agencies \(AEAs\) Outcome-Based performance measures](#), stating that these align with the academic year 2026-2027 to 2028-2029 Strategic Plan goals first presented in April 2026 and approved in June 2026.

Iowa Foundations of Reading Test Results and Program Support Plan

The Board heard and discussed the [Iowa Foundations of Reading Test \(FoRT\) Results and Program Support Plan](#). Per Iowa Code section [256.16](#), teacher candidates earning certain endorsements are required to take the FoRT. The Board then reviews the results and support plan for teacher preparation programs.

Iowa State University Literacy Educator Preparation Program

Iowa State University professors presented the improvement in their School of Education's students' FoRT passage rate from 40.0% in the 2024-2025 academic year to 66.0% in the 2025-2026 academic year.

The Board was also given an overview and tour of the School of Education campus and programs.

Next Meeting

The next Board meeting will be on Thursday, October 15, in the State Board Room at the Grimes State Office Building in Des Moines.

The Board of Educational Examiners will meet Friday, October 16, in the State Board Room at the Grimes State Office Building.

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