

Legislative Report High Needs Schools



January 2021

State of Iowa
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

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LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT - IOWA CODE 284.11

284.11 State supplemental assistance for high-need schools.

1. Findings and intent. The general assembly finds that students whose first language is not English, who have special needs, or who come from low-income backgrounds face potential obstacles to learning. Schools across Iowa, both urban and rural, have increasing numbers of students who face these challenges. Therefore, it is the intent of the general assembly to provide supplemental assistance to the highest-need schools in Iowa to address these challenges. This section provides for state assistance to allow school districts to develop extended learning time programs, hire instructional support staff, provide additional professional development, or supplement the salary of teachers in the identified schools.
2. The Iowa Department of Education's responsibilities. The Department shall do the following:
 - a. Collect relevant data and establish a list of high-need schools eligible for state supplemental assistance. The Department shall establish a process and criteria to determine which schools are placed on the list and the Department shall revise the list annually. Criteria for the determination of which high-need schools shall be placed on the list shall be based upon factors that include but are not limited to the socioeconomic status of the students enrolled in the school, the percentage of the school's student body who are limited English proficient students, student academic growth, certified instructional staff attrition, and geographic balance. The Department may approve or disapprove requests for revision of the list, which a school district submits pursuant to subsection 3.
 - b. Develop a standardized process for distributing moneys appropriated for supplemental assistance for high-need schools under section 284.13, subsection 1, paragraph "f", to school districts. In determining the process for distribution of such moneys, the Department shall take into consideration the amount of moneys appropriated for supplemental assistance in high-need schools for the given year and the minimal amount of moneys needed to increase the academic achievement of students. A school district receiving moneys pursuant to this section shall certify annually to the Department how the moneys distributed to the school district pursuant to this section were used by the school district.
 - c. Review the use and effectiveness of the funds distributed to school districts for supplemental assistance in high-need schools under this section, and consider the findings and recommendations of the commission on educator leadership and compensation submitted pursuant to section 284.15, subsection 13, relating to the use and effectiveness of the funds distributed to school districts under this section. The Department shall submit its findings and recommendations in a report to the general assembly by January 15 annually.

REPORT

Iowa Code section 284.11 creates a state supplemental assistance for high need schools. Subsection 284.11c requires the Department of Education to submit a report to the general assembly which reviews the effectiveness of funds distributed to high need schools. This program, created by the Legislature during the 2013 legislative session, has not been funded since its inception. Therefore, the Department is unable to provide a report for the use of these funds.