

Online Learning in Iowa Legislative Report



January 15, 2024

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, political party affiliation, or actual or potential parental, family or marital status in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.). If you have questions or complaints related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, please contact the legal counsel for the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, telephone number: 515-281-5295, or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, John C. Kluczynski Federal Building, 230 S. Dearborn Street, 37th Floor, Chicago, IL 60604-7204, telephone number: 312-730-1560, FAX number: 312-730-1576, TDD number: 800-877-8339, email: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov

Overview

Authority

This report serves as the annual update under Iowa Code section 256.7, subsection 32. The following subsection addresses the required data collected for the Approved Online Schools in Iowa Annual Report to the Legislature and the required report. Information is collected and reported for online schools in which students are open enrolled into the district for purposes of attending the online school. Such districts are required to report to the Iowa Department of Education (Department) the following information:

- (1) Student achievement and demographic characteristics.
- (2) Retention rates.
- (3) The percentage of enrolled students' active participation in extracurricular activities.
- (4) Academic proficiency levels, consistent with requirements applicable to all school districts and accredited nonpublic schools in this state.
- (5) Academic growth measures, which shall include either of the following:
 1. Entry and exit assessments in, at a minimum, math and English for elementary and middle school students, and additional subjects, including science, for high school students.
 2. State-required assessments that track year-over-year improvements in academic proficiency.
- (6) Academic mobility. To facilitate the tracking of academic mobility, school districts shall request the following information from the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in educational instruction and course content that are delivered primarily over the Internet:
 1. For a student newly enrolling, the reasons for choosing such enrollment.
 2. For a student terminating enrollment, the reasons for terminating such enrollment.
- (7) Student progress toward graduation. Measurement of such progress shall account for specific characteristics of each enrolled student, including but not limited to age and course credit accrued prior to enrollment in educational instruction and course content that are delivered primarily over the Internet, and shall be consistent with evidence-based best practices.

The department shall compile and review the data collected pursuant to this subrule and report to the general assembly by January 15 annually.

APPROVED ONLINE SCHOOLS IN IOWA

District	Name of School	Grades Served	Date Approved	Accepted Open Enrollment
1. CAM	Iowa Connections Academy (IACA)	K-12	Pre-existing approval by legislature	Yes
2. Cedar Falls	Cedar Falls Virtual Academy	K-12	11/20/20	Yes
3. Cedar Rapids	Cedar Rapids Virtual Academy	K-12	06/05/20: 6-12 04/14/21: K-5	Yes
4. Clayton Ridge	Iowa Virtual Academy (IAVA)	K-12	Pre-existing approval by legislature	Yes
5. Council Bluffs	Council Bluffs Virtual Academy	PK-12	06/17/20	Yes
6. Davis County	Davis County (DC) Online	K-12	04/20/21	Yes
7. Des Moines	DMPS Virtual Campus	6-12	08/28/19: 9-12 5/4/21: 6-8	Yes
8. Dubuque	Dubuque Online School	6-12	03/29/22	Yes
9. Iowa City	ICCSA Online	PK-12	10/30/20	Yes
10. Johnston	Digital Dragons	K-12	08/11/21	No
11. Marshalltown	Marshalltown Virtual Academy	PK-12	02/04/21	Yes
12. Mason City	Mason City Virtual Academy	K-12	01/27/21	Yes
13. Mid-Prairie	Mid-Prairie Virtual Academy	K-12	07/16/20	Yes
14. Montezuma	Montezuma Virtual Learning Academy	K-12	02/04/21	No
15. Oelwein	Oelwein Online	K-12	10/15/20	Yes
16. Oskaloosa	Oskaloosa Virtual Academy	K-12	01/14/21	Yes
17. Ottumwa	Bulldog Virtual Learning	K-12	09/15/20	Yes
18. Shenandoah	IGNITE	K-12	03/16/21	Yes
19. Sidney	Sidney Virtual SAC School	PK-12	06/25/20	Yes

District	Name of School	Grades Served	Date Approved	Accepted Open Enrollment
20. Sioux City	Sioux City Online School	K-12	12/11/20	Yes
21. Tri-Center	Tri-Center Virtual Academy	7-12	03/16/21	No
22. Waterloo	Waterloo Virtual School	K-12	07/22/20	Yes
23. Williamsburg	Williamsburg Online School	K-12	08/11/21	No

CONCLUSION

School districts with approved online schools in Iowa have submitted data to the Department for school year 2022-2023. The number of Department approved online schools reporting has not changed from 2021-2022 to 2022-2023. All 23 schools listed have been approved to allow open enrolled students to participate in an approved online school which offers course content delivered primarily over the internet during the 2022-2023 school year. Of these 23 approved schools, Digital Dragons, Montezuma, Tri-Center Virtual Academy, and Williamsburg Online School did not accept any open enrollment. These schools do not have data included in this report. The most current list is located on the Department website on the [Online Learning](#) web page.

Enrollment into an approved online school as defined by Iowa Code 256.7(32) has decreased from 2021-2022 school year. The data table shows a comparison of enrollment from 2021-2022 to 2022-2023.

Please note for the following tables: An asterisk (*) indicates that there are fewer than 10 students in that particular cell. No data will be publicly reported for those cells, to protect student privacy pursuant to state and federal law.

District	School	2021-2022	2022-2023
CAM	Iowa Connections Academy	798	987
Cedar Falls	Cedar Falls Virtual Academy	78	44
Cedar Rapids	Virtual Academy	398	64
Clayton Ridge	Iowa Virtual Academy	694	862
Council Bluffs	Council Bluffs Virtual Academy	163	199
Davis County	DC Online	35	19

District	School	2021-2022	2022-2023
Des Moines	Virtual Campus	935	669
Dubuque	Dubuque Online School	Data not available	208
Iowa City	ICCSA Online	747	199
Marshalltown	Marshalltown Virtual Academy	150	81
Mason City	Mason City Virtual Academy	86	99
Mid-Prairie	Mid-Prairie Virtual Academy	16	15
Oelwein	Oelwein Online	81	142
Oskaloosa	Oskaloosa Virtual Academy	51	42
Ottumwa	Bulldog Virtual Learning	75	27
Shenandoah	IGNITE	18	80
Sidney	Sidney Virtual SAC School	11	*
Sioux City	Sioux City Online School	490	332
Waterloo	Waterloo Virtual School	163	Data not available
All districts	Total online enrollment	4,994	4,087

Academic data shows a wide range of proficiency, with all virtual schools except Cedar Falls, Mid-Prairie, and Williamsburg below the state average. The following chart shows the average percent proficient for the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress for the 2022-2023 school year from all the virtual schools data required for this report. The results are for students in grades 3-11 for reading and math and students in grades 5, 8, and 10 for science.

District	Reading	Math	Science
CAM	67.02	50.29	54.07
Cedar Falls	79.49	71.79	57.89
Cedar Rapids	43.68	22.99	35.29
Council Bluffs	51.75	42.71	31.65
Davis County	64.29	38.46	55.56

Des Moines	48.34	36.88	36.05
Dubuque	53.04	37.02	24.64
Clayton Ridge	57.52	43.80	35.04
Iowa City	70.54	47.66	47.37
Marshalltown	56.06	29.69	35.48
Mason City	61.63	36.05	32.35
Mid-Prairie	78.57	57.14	80.00
Oelwein	51.67	35.83	42.86
Oskaloosa	70.18	45.61	37.93
Ottumwa	28.26	12.77	12.50
Shenandoah	45.26	37.89	47.06
Sidney	25.00	0.00	NA
Sioux City	57.52	37.17	37.78
Waterloo	Did not report	Did not report	Did not report
State Average	71.4	69.5	62.44

Additional data was collected from districts via the Consolidated Accountability and Support Application (CASA) including retention rates (percent of students returning from the previous school year), extracurricular participation rates (percent of online students participating in extracurricular activities), three-year trend data (percent of students proficient in math, reading and science over a three year period), reasons for academic mobility (reasons students cited for enrolling or disenrolling from online programming), and graduation rates (percent of students on track for graduation).

Retention rate comparison cannot be accurately compared due to the lack of data. Only six schools reported retention rates for 2022. The average of the retention percentages of the sixteen schools reporting retention rates in 2023 was 36% retention.

Extracurricular participation rates increased from 2022, however, overall rates remain low across all reporting online schools. This data would not reflect the ability of an open enrolled student to participate in their resident district as allowed by [Iowa Code 282.18 \(12\)](#).

Three-year trend data for academic achievement has decreased significantly since the 2020-2021 school year, with minimal decreases between the 2022 testing and 2023 testing.

Students continue to cite anyplace/anytime learning as the leading reason for enrollment into the online academies. Miscellaneous is the leading response for enrollment termination.

Graduation rates increased minimally for each high school cohort except fifth year graduates which decreased.

All of the required components by Iowa Administrative chapter 15.12(2) are included in the Appendix of this report.

All of these pieces of information, taken together with results from the prior year's review may suggest that it may be beneficial to determine: (a) to what extent each district is working through its approved online school to provide an evidence-based, multi-tiered system of supports that will support and improve student achievement and what alternative/additional data source each school might collect to support these additional supports, and (b) what work each district is doing within its approved online school to support on-time graduation.

Note: Data provided by the Department include: student achievement, demographic characteristics, academic proficiency levels, and state-required assessments that track year-over-year improvements in academic proficiency. Data provided by the Districts include: retention rates, percent of student participation in extracurricular activities, academic mobility, and progress toward graduation. For the Waterloo Virtual School, the district provided all the data due to the absence of a building number for that school.

Individual profiles for approved online learning programs referenced in this report are available on the Department's online education webpage.