Iowa Department of Education

Modified Allowable Growth for Dropout Prevention Annual Report

Iowa Department of Education
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Des Moines, IA 50319

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State of Iowa
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Iowa Code section 257.40(2): Approval of programs for returning dropouts and dropout prevention – annual report

Beginning January 15, 2007, the department shall submit an annual report to the chairpersons and ranking members of the senate and house education committees that includes the way school districts in the previous school year used modified allowable growth approved under subsection 1; identifies, by grade level, age, and district size, the students in the dropout and dropout prevention programs for which the department approves a request; describes school district progress toward increasing student achievement and attendance for the students in the programs; and describes how the school districts are using the revenues from the modified allowable growth to improve student achievement among minority subgroups.

What is Modified Allowable Growth for Returning Dropouts and Dropout Prevention Programs?

Modified Allowable Growth for Dropout Prevention (MAG-DoP) is a funding mechanism to assist districts in providing targeted services and programs for students at a local level. The money that is levied and the 25 percent local match become categorical funding and shall be used specifically for the purpose of providing programming for students identified as returning and potential dropouts.

> "Categorical funding" as defined by the 281 – Iowa Administrative Code (IAC) Chapter 281.98, means financial support from state and federal governments that is targeted for particular categories of students, special programs, or special purposes. This support is in addition to school district or area education agency general purpose revenue, is beyond the basic educational program, and most often has restrictions on its use. Where categorical funding requires a local match, that local match also is considered to be categorical funding. Categorical funding includes both grants in aid and budgetary allocations. Although grants in aid and budgetary allocations are both categorical funding, they are defined separately to distinguish unique characteristics of each type of categorical funding. Chapter 281.98 describes appropriate uses of grants in aid, budgetary allocations and tax levies and funds. In addition Chapter 281.98 also addresses indirect cost recovery, restriction on supplanting, mandatory carry forward, discontinued funding, expenditures, restriction on duplication, excess expenditures, commingling, and uses of levies and funds.

All districts shall follow the guidelines for financial management of budgetary allocations/categorical funding as set out in 281 – IAC Chapter 98. These can be viewed at: http://search.legis.state.ia.us/nxt/gateway.dll/ar/iac?f=templates&fn=default.htm

Purpose for using MAG-DoP

Modified allowable growth for dropout prevention is not funding that is generated to provide school wide programming to prevent students from becoming at-risk. It is intended to be used for serving students who left high school and have returned and to prevent those who are most at-risk from:

- leaving school,
- progressing in school, and
- completing school.

When districts consider using this funding for programming, the district is asking the local property taxpayers to invest in the district (as a community) so the students will stay in school and not become a burden to state and local resources at a later point in life.

Funding for these programs must focus on two types of students - returning dropouts and potential dropouts as defined in Iowa Code Section 257.39:

"Returning dropouts" are resident pupils who have been enrolled in a public or nonpublic school in any of grades seven through twelve who withdrew from school for a reason other than transfer to another school or school district and who subsequently enrolled in a public school in the district.

"Potential dropouts" are resident pupils who are enrolled in a public or nonpublic school who demonstrate poor school adjustment as indicated by two or more of the following:
   a. High rate of absenteeism, truancy, or frequent tardiness.
   b. Limited or no extracurricular participation or lack of identification with school, including but not limited to, expressed feelings of not belonging.
   c. Poor grades, including but not limited to, failing in one or more school subjects or grade levels.
   d. Low achievement scores in reading or mathematics which reflects achievement at two years or more below grade level.
   e. Children in grades kindergarten through three who meet the definition of at-risk children adopted by the department of education.

Once districts have identified students as meeting the criteria for returning or potential dropouts, districts must provide supports for those students. Districts are required to provide "alternative options" in accordance with Iowa Code Section 280.19A. The alternative options offered by a district would be defined at a local level. Using modified allowable growth for dropout prevention is one way to provide those services. Students who are identified will need intensive, ongoing, individual supports. Only the level and intensity of the supports might change over time. Students previously identified as a potential dropout who need minimal ongoing supports should continue to be included and supported and staff should continue to dedicate time to serving the needs of the identified students.

Setting Priorities
Districts could target the services in several ways from providing individualized supports or small group activities to an alternative school/program. All services should be targeted and explicit for the identified population for a specific identified need.

First and foremost, any student who has dropped out and returned is the primary target for modified allowable growth for dropout prevention (MAG-DoP) funding. The money should focus on recovery, re-entry and re-engagement of students who left school.

1. Recovery involves finding students who have dropped out of school and reconnecting with them to return to school. This can be accomplished by positive adult role models, advisors, advocates placing phone calls, conducting dropout walks, contacting friends, relatives, etc.
2. Re-entry is supporting students to have the ability to return to school at any time during the year and pick up where s/he left off or begin/finish coursework to earn credits to apply toward graduation. This can be accomplished by online coursework, component recovery, credit recovery, focusing on essential concepts and skills for graduation.
3. Re-engagement is getting students to become connected within the school context. This can be accomplished by focusing on the student's relationship with the school community: the people (adults and peers), the structures (rules, facilities, and

schedules), the curriculum and content, the pedagogy and the opportunities (curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular). The degree to which a student returns and is able to re-engage in school is dependent on the quality, depth and breadth of the student's relationship with the various aspects of the life and work of the school. (Yazzie-Mintz, 2006)

The National Dropout Prevention Center website has three documents that focus specifically on re-entry programs for out of school youth. The documents are titled:

I. The Need for a Broad Range of Options
II. Strategies for Locating and Reenrolling
III. Characteristics of Reentry Programs

Clicking on the title of the document will open that specific document. Click on this link for more detailed information about dropout prevention and re-entry programs: http://www.ndpc-sd.org/knowledge/reentry_programs.php

The second priority would be any student who would meet all four of the criteria for a potential dropout, then any student who meets three of the criteria and lastly for the students who meet two of the criteria. These are the students who are at the highest risk of dropping out. Students who would only meet one of the above defined criteria would certainly be at risk but not qualify for programming with the modified allowable growth funding.

Students previously identified in specific subgroups should not be identified for the mere fact that the student is already identified in a subgroup or that research with a broad group of students shows that group of students could be at risk or don't perform as well as other students. Examples of inappropriately identifying students and using the MAG-DoP funding could be, but not limited to, poor students, African American students, a student with a disability and/or a student who wears "Goth" or a student who has green hair. Every student served in programming with the MAG-DoP funding must be because s/he is specifically identified using the above criteria for dropout, returning dropout, and potential dropout from the Iowa Code Section 257.39.

Providing a Tiered System of Supports
A tiered system of support is an educational model that delineates three or more levels of instructional/behavioral interventions based on gaps in student skills. A tier is a level in a response to intervention system that includes interventions and supports for a clearly defined group of students. Using a tiered system of support can address the needs of struggling learners by providing interventions at increasing levels of intensity(Stuart, 2009). The students most disaffected with school would be in the tertiary tier.

Primary prevention is programming for all students or has a broad scope in nature and reaches about 80-85 percent of students. The educational and behavioral supports that should be provided to ALL kids, to assist them in being successful in school (core academic program – Iowa Core, athletics, Positive Behavior Intervention Supports-core level, DARE, Character Counts…) are considered primary prevention and should not be funded with MAG-DoP funds. Any programming set up for students that is intended for ALL students, whether it is a good dropout prevention strategy or not, is considered general education programming. No district-wide or building-wide programming can be provided with the MAG-DoP funding. Examples of this could be the funding of positions such as guidance counselors, deans or administrators to perform the duties expected of them when working with all students and would be considered an inappropriate use of funds (IAC 281-98.1).

Prevention Tier	Core Elements
Primary (ALL students)	- Access to general education "core" curriculum - Access to after school programming/clubs/organizations - Behavioral and instructional expectations defined - Behavioral and instructional expectations taught - System to acknowledge appropriate behavioral/academic successes - Continuous collection and use of data for decision-making - Universal Screening

Adapted from (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Techinical Assistance Center, 2009)

Secondary prevention is considered supplemental programming that is in addition to the basic education provided for all students. Secondary prevention would be directed toward smaller groups of students, who are experiencing the same types of challenges or barriers. Instruction, interventions, supports and services could focus on academic or social skill development, specific reading programs and/or afterschool programs focused on students who have similar needs.

Prevention Tier	Core Elements
Secondary (Some students)	- Progress monitoring for students at risk (locally defined) - System for increasing structure and predictability through supplemental supports - System for increasing contingent adult feedback through supplemental supports - System for linking academic and behavioral performance through supplemental supports - System for increasing explicit home/school communication - Continuous collection and use of data for decision-making

Adapted from (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Techinical Assistance Center, 2009)

Tertiary prevention is for the top five to eight percent of kids who need individual assistance to focus on overcoming any of the issues/challenges/barriers that s/he may have in regards to progressing at the same rate as their peers. The majority of the students who are served with MAG-DoP funds are those in the tertiary level. Tertiary programming is defined as supports focused on meeting students' individual needs based on their unique characteristics and specific circumstances (e.g., significance of academic needs in reading/math, differences in the severity of behavior, complexity of environment, barriers), and should be flexible, focused, and personalized for each student. In establishing a framework to intervene effectively with individual students whose behavior interferes with school progress and interpersonal relationships, it is necessary to consider the importance of eliminating barriers for success and providing appropriate programming at an individual level and having multiple alternative options for students to chose from.

Prevention Tier	Core Elements
Tertiary (few/individual students)	• Team-based comprehensive assessment • Individualized intervention based on assessment information focusing on (a) prevention of problem contexts, (b) instruction on functionally equivalent skills, and instruction on desired performance skills, (c) strategies for placing problem behavior on extinction, (d) strategies for enhancing contingence reward of desired behavior, and (e) use of negative or safety consequences if needed. • Linking of academic and behavior supports on an individual level • Functional Behavioral Assessment • Individualized instructional interventions • Continuous collection and use of data for decision-making/continuous progress monitoring

Adapted from (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Techinical Assistance Center, 2009)

Students who are identified as a returning/potential dropout will have barriers in school that are related to attendance, behaviors/engagement, and course completion. Each program should focus on the following:

> Staying in school – focus on increasing attendance, decreasing negative behaviors, and increasing engagement to keep students in school.
> Progressing in school – focus on course completion, increasing engagement, and relevance of school in regard to the student's current situation.
> Completing school - focus on increasing the opportunities and options so students may graduate with peers.

Below is a sample table showing state criteria aligned to student needs that could be addressed at each level.

Grade	Staying in school	Progressing in school	Completing school
Elem K-3	Excessive absences/Attendance No Connection Minimal Parent Connection K-3 At-risk	Not proficient/Achievement Grade Retention K-3 At-risk	
Elem 4-6	Excessive absences/Attendance No Connection Negative Behavior/Suspensions Bullying/Harassment	< 25 percentile Achievement Failing Grades Grade Retention	
MS 6-8	Excessive absences/Attendance No Connection/No Participation Negative Behavior/Suspensions Bullying/Harassment	< 25 percentile Achievement Failing Grades Grade Retention	Grade retention
HS 9-12	Excessive absences/Attendance No Connection/No participation Negative Behavior/Suspensions/ Bullying/Harassment	< 30 percentile Achievement Failing Grades Grade Retention Overaged/Undercredited	Not graduating on time Unemployed/not college ready

In 2010, the Department of Education, Bureau of Information and Analysis Services, conducted a study to predict the accuracy of identifying potential dropouts (including returning dropouts) using the data submitted by individual districts. Using the state criteria for returning/potential dropout, the results showed prediction accuracy for identifying students who are most likely to drop out at 11 percent (with a margin of error of +/- 3.85). Therefore, districts that identify between 7.15 percent and 14.85 percent of the student population as potential dropouts will have the greatest accuracy of identifying the students who are most likely to drop out.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Techinical Assistance Center. (2009, March). Retrieved November 1, 2010, from Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports: http://www.pbis.org/research/default.aspx

Stuart, S. R. (2009). A Collaborative Planning Framework for Teachers Implementing Tiered Instruction. *Teaching Exceptional Children, Vol 42, No 2* , pp. 52-57.

Yazzie-Mintz, E. (2006). *Voices of Students on Engagement: A Report on the 2006 High School Survey of Student Engagement*. Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation and Education Policy.

Modified Allowable Growth for Dropout Prevention
FY 13 Statistics and Data (2012-2013 school year)
Budget Analysis

351 school districts existed as of July 1, 2011
46 school districts requested the maximum amount allowable
19 school districts did not submit an application to use funds
33 school districts had enough carry-forward to not apply for any funds
299 school districts submitted an application and were approved by the School Budget Review Committee (SBRC)
331 school districts submitted an application to use funding from modified allowable growth for dropout prevention

$149,870,758	Budget Totals *(100% of MAG funds = carry forward, levy, and any match)*
$ 19,500,374	Carry Forward recorded on application *(expected to be used in FY 13)*
$130,370,384	Budgeted amount less carry forward
$ 33,678,014	25% match from districts
$ 96,692,370	approved by the School Budget Review Committee on March 19, 2012

Districts approved for modified allowable growth funding *(by size)*:

0 – 299	44 districts
300 – 599	98 districts
600 – 999	85 districts
1,000 – 2,499	73 districts
2,500 – 7,499	21 districts
7,500 and above	10 districts
	331 districts

District Expenditures for FY 13 submitted to the Certified Annual Report *(September 15, 2013)*

348 school districts existed as of July 1, 2012 *(3 of the 351 districts merged as of July 1, 2012)*
325 school districts reported expenditures for modified allowable growth for dropout prevention

$132,325,399.88	Expenditures recorded on the Certified Annual Report (CAR)
$ 22,717,161.66	Carry Forward/Reserved Fund Balance recorded on the CAR

Student Population *(2012-2013 certified enrollment for districts which submitted a request)*

461,857.6 students counted on certified enrollment *(submitted October 1, 2012)*
53,218.0 students identified as returning/potential dropouts *(at-risk #1)*
11.5 percent of student population identified as a returning/potential dropout
(Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Information Services and Analysis, District PK-12 Certified Enrollment October 2012, At Risk #1 Count, Fall 2012)

Programming Provided:

Total programs	1,036 programs
New programs added in 2013-2014	41 programs

Grade Levels Where Programming Provided **	count/percent
Elementary	390 / 22%
Middle/Junior High	542 / 31%
High School	814 / 47%

*** Some programs are offered at multiple levels (elementary, middle/junior and high school) and some programs are offered at one level, creating a total of 1,744 levels of programming offered.*

Programs at three levels (K-12)	203 / 20%
Programs at two levels (K-8 or 6-12)	299 / 29%
Programs at one level (K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	534 / 51%

Focus of Programming Provided	count/percent
Staying in School	236 / 23%
Progressing in School	550 / 53%
Completing School	251 / 24%

District Focus of Targeted Audience:

Returning Dropouts (only)	31%
Returning and Potential Dropouts	69%

<u>Program Types:</u>*

Alternative Programs   **337 programs**
    Alternative School/Program   220 programs
    Credit Recovery   108 programs
    School within a School   9 programs

Academic Supports   **318 programs**
    Guided Study Hall/Tutoring   20 programs
    Reading and Math   142 programs
    Reading (only)   89 programs
    Summer School   67 programs

Behavior Supports   **168 programs**
    Behavior Interventionists   26 programs
    Intensive Behavior Supports   81 programs
    Intensive Guidance/Counseling   49 programs
    Residential Supplemental/Day Programs   10 programs
    Suspension/Expulsion Alternative   2 programs

Community Supports   **107 programs**
    Case Management   15 programs
    I-JAG (Iowa Jobs for America's Grads)   10 programs
    Juvenile Court Liaison   39 programs
    Learning Supports   4 programs
    Mentoring   15 programs
    School Based Youth Services   24 programs

General Supports   **106 programs**
    At Risk Supports   40 programs
    Before/After School   19 programs
    Learning Center (academic & behavior)   38 programs
    Graduation Coaches   9 programs

*definitions in Appendix A

Program Type Definitions:

Academic Supports are represented by any activity implemented to improve the capacity for learning and the application of learning for core areas in education such as reading, math, language, science, social studies, etc. Examples of reading programs provided: *Reading Recovery, Second Chance Reading, and Fusion Reading.*

Alternative Programs/Schools should be designed to provide an alternative to students who have the highest risk of dropping out of school, with special attention to the student's individual social needs and the academic requirements for a high school diploma. Students who attend alternative programs/schools need an accelerated way of earning credits, a flexible schedule and a variety of options available depending on individual needs. School-within-a-School programs focus on smaller class sizes that can increase student engagement.

Before/After School can help to eliminate information loss and inspire interest in a variety of areas. Such experiences are especially important for students identified as potential dropouts because they help to fill the afternoon gap with constructive and engaging activities.

Behavior Supports are for students who need significant support in interpersonal skills to resolve conflicts with peers/teachers and will receive individualized or small group social skills or coping strategies to prevent conflicts and/or reduce office referrals. Intensive Programs are often located off site and tend to be short term.

Case Management is a coordinated effort of staff assigned a specific caseload to oversee all parts of a student's success at home, in school and in the community. Examples are Juvenile Court Liaisons, community liaisons.

Community Support/Collaboration When all groups in a community provide collective support to the school, an infrastructure is created that provides a caring supportive environment where youth can thrive and achieve. Collaborating with community agencies helps students stay in school and make right choices by connecting schools with needed community resources.

Credit Recovery is for students who need an accelerated way of earning credits so they can graduate on time with their peers (cohort). Credits may have been lost for multiple reasons: multiple moves, incarceration, previously dropping out, or repeating courses that were failed.

Intensive Guidance provides regularly scheduled individual/group sessions for specific skill development. The intensive guidance provided is exclusive to the population referred and is in addition to the guidance program already delivered/provided to these students through the state mandated core guidance program.

Residential/Day Programming involves off site, intensive behavior programs to increase connection and engagement in their home/resident school and increase the rate of graduation of very vulnerable youth. Transition supports are critical to maintain continuity of student's education while experiencing significant barriers in their home, school and community. *Funding support through MAG is only for contractual services that exceed DCPP.*

School Based Youth Services (SBYS) are services focused on students who have significant absences or have multiple office/health referrals and/or suspensions and are provided supports by local providers or school based staff. Students are experiencing serious emotional distress and struggle making and maintaining connections with the school. Academic achievement and social skills are negatively impacted.

Tutoring: Tutoring is a one-to-one activity, focused on academics and is an effective practice when addressing specific needs such as reading, writing, or math competencies and should focus on specific strategy instruction to assist students with the ability to be a better student overall.