
BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2020

Fiscal Services Division

July 1, 2020



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School

Purpose and History

The Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School (IBSSS) operates under the direction of the Board of Regents. As a partner in Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the school collaborates with the Department for the Blind, the Iowa Department of Education, and the area education agencies (AEAs) to provide a wide variety of services to visually impaired or blind Iowans and their educators.

Services Provided

The collaborative provides services directly to students, as well as providing technical assistance, consultation, and collaboration for educators serving visually impaired or blind students. The primary services offered through the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired include:

- Itinerant teachers to provide instruction in Braille, literacy, and mathematics, and to provide accommodations and modifications needed for the visually impaired student.
- Itinerant orientation and mobility specialist services to address orientation and mobility skills and provide an expanded core curriculum appropriate for visually impaired students.
- A deafblind technical assistance team to provide consultation regarding accommodations and modifications needed for students who are both deaf and blind.
- Consultants in mathematics, literacy, early childhood, family services, assistive technology, deafblind needs, and transition services.
- An assistive device center to provide consultation and equipment demonstrations and loans.
- Low vision clinics to provide screening, assessment, and advice on accommodations and equipment.
- Expanded learning opportunities through regional programs and summer school camps.
- Professional development opportunities for educators through summer institutes and semiannual conferences.

Collaboration with the Iowa School for the Deaf

Currently, the School for the Deaf (ISD) and the Braille and Sight Saving School share a director, and leadership teams from both schools often meet jointly. Efforts in recent years have been aimed at better statewide coordination of services for students at both schools and for hearing impaired and visually

More Information

Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired: www.iowa-braille.k12.ia.us

Board of Regents: www.iowaregents.edu

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impaired students who are mainstreamed in their local schools.

Vinton Campus

Until 2012, the Braille and Sight Saving School provided classroom and residential programs on the campus in Vinton, Iowa. In recent years, as services have moved to local schools and AEAs, the campus has served to house a media center, equipment and file storage, and office for staff. Those are being moved to new locations as the Board of Regents pursues the sale of the property.

Funding

The Braille and Sight Saving School is not funded through the K-12 school aid formula but instead receives an operating appropriation from the General Fund through the Education Appropriations Subcommittee. Though there is no provision in statute that requires funding to be based on the school aid or any other formula, the General Assembly has frequently increased appropriations to the IBSSS by the same percentage as K-12 funding. Teachers at the school participate in some features of the Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program through a separate appropriation for that purpose.

Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code chapter [269](#)

Iowa Administrative Code [681](#)

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