
FISCAL TOPICS

Fiscal Services Division

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Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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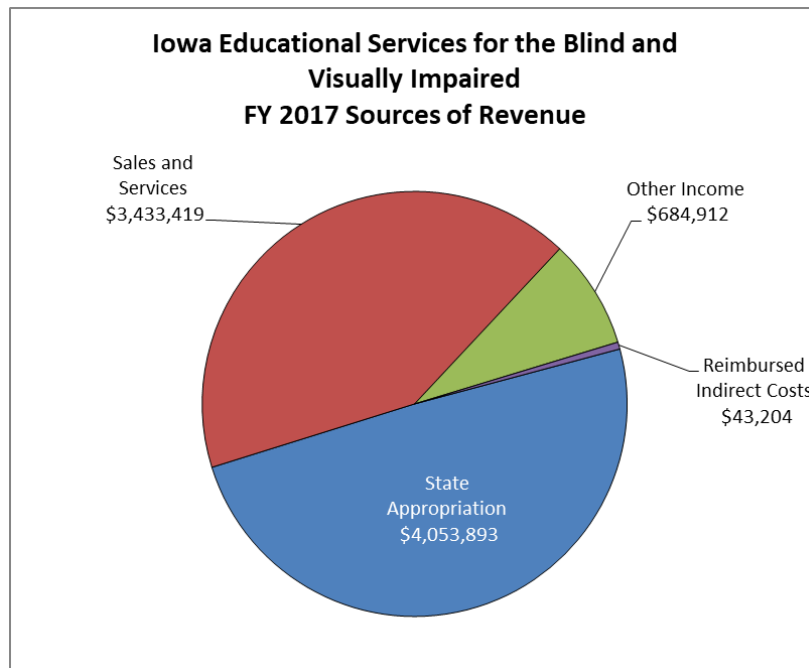
Educational Services for Deaf and Blind Students

Educational services for deaf and blind prekindergarten through grade 12 students in Iowa are provided through the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IESBVI) and the Iowa School for the Deaf (ISD) under the oversight of the Board of Regents. The two entities are colloquially known as the Regents special schools. Both the IESBVI and the ISD work with local school districts, the Area Education Agencies (AEAs), and the Iowa Department of Education to provide services throughout the state.

Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

The IESBVI provides direct services to students in their local schools under contracts with the AEAs. Des Moines Independent Community School District is the only district that contracts directly with the IESBVI. The IESBVI also provides the local school districts with services such as consultation, training, technical assistance, evaluations, low vision clinic screenings, and extended learning activities. In addition, the IESBVI offers a loan program for instructional materials and adaptive technology equipment. The cost of these services is funded primarily by an annual General Fund appropriation. In addition, the Iowa Department of Education provides some federal special education funding for targeted activities.

In FY 2017, the IESBVI had total revenue of \$8.2 million. The following charts show the revenue by source and expenditures by major categories.

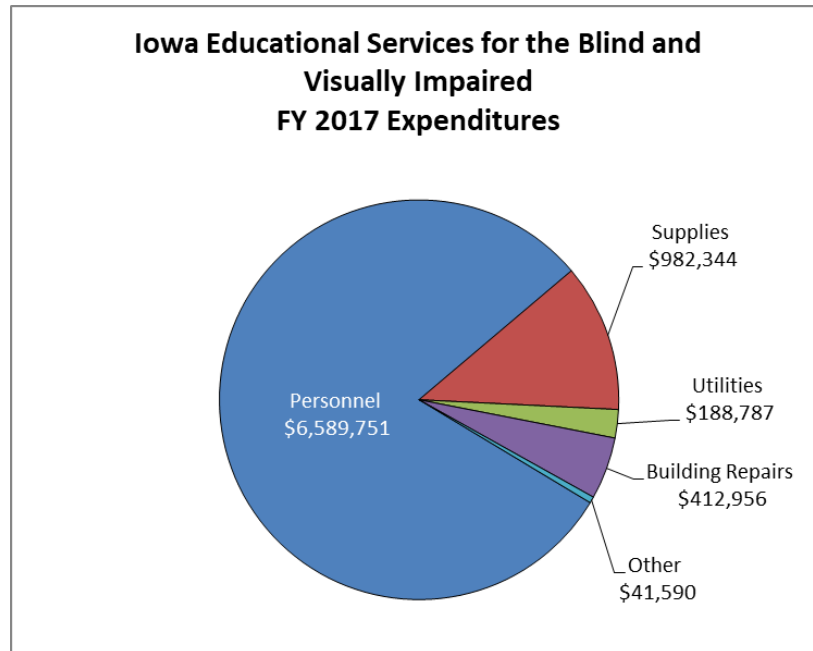


More Information

Iowa School for the Deaf: www.iowaschoolfortheblind.org/

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

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The Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School campus in Vinton, Iowa, is now vacant and has been offered to the City of Vinton for \$1. Since 2011, no residential students have been housed on the campus, and it has been used only for administrative offices and short-term and weekend activities. Some of the administrative activities and the library have been moved to the ISD campus in Council Bluffs.

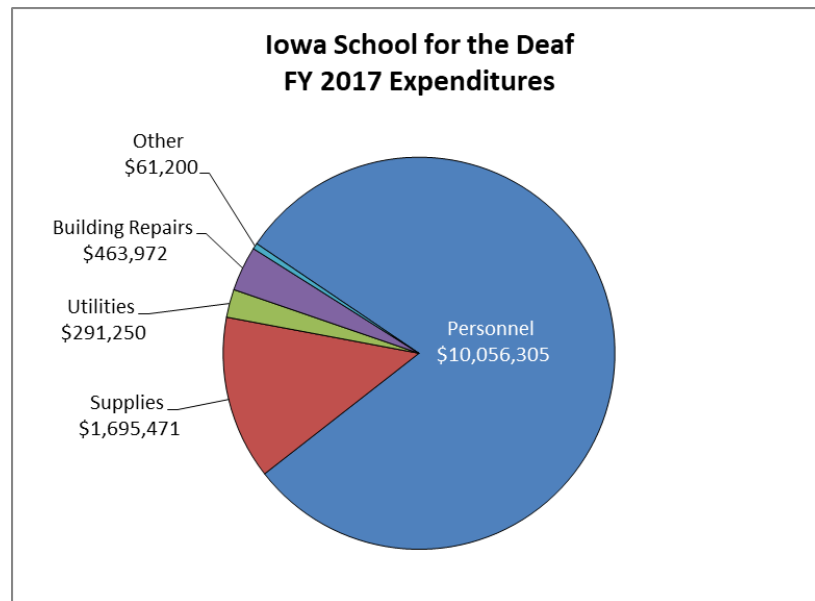
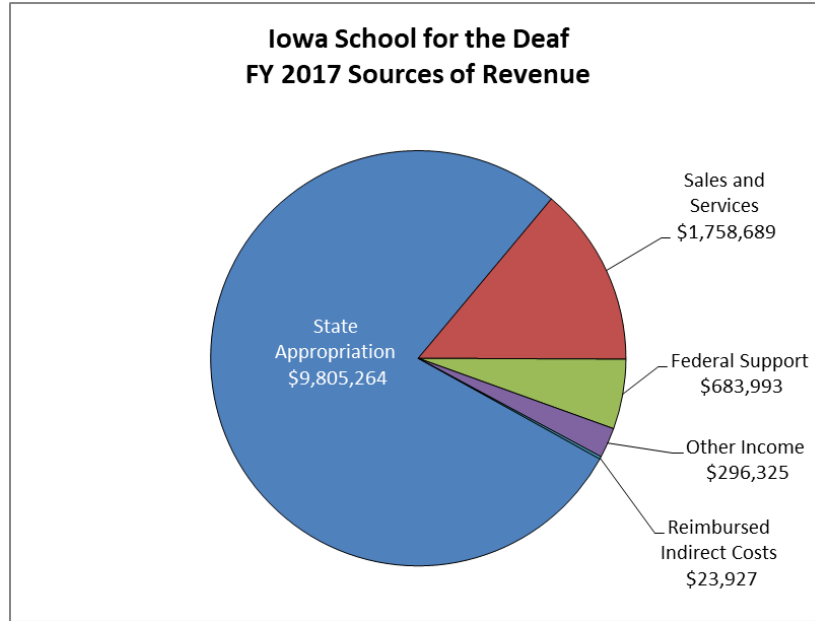
The IESBVI is currently serving 669 students in 193 school districts across Iowa. The Program has 47 teachers and mobility specialists paid under contracts with the AEAs and seven consultants paid from the General Fund appropriation and other revenue sources.

Iowa School for the Deaf

The ISD campus in Council Bluffs serves 98 students from 38 school districts around the State. Of the 98 students served, the majority are residential students who are provided van transport to their homes on the weekends. The remainder of the student body consists of students traveling daily between the school and home within a 60-mile radius of the campus. Services provided to students on campus are funded primarily through the annual General Fund appropriation. Local school districts are billed for certain services that can be paid with weighted school aid funding. These services primarily include tuition for students taking college courses through dual enrollment and the cost of sign language interpreters and one-on-one paraeducators.

As with the IESBVI, the ISD also serves mainstreamed students in their local schools through the Extended Learning Program and remote instruction in American Sign Language. These services are funded through the Iowa Department of Education's federal special education funding for targeted activities.

In FY 2017, the ISD had total revenue of \$12.6 million. The following charts show the revenue by source and expenditures by major categories.



The ISD campus serves deaf students from preschool through high school, as well as providing post-high school services to high school graduates under age 21 to assist them with preparation for college or the workforce. The post-high school services are part of the 4Plus Program that, beginning in FY 2018, also serves a small number of blind students on the campus.

Northeast Regional Academy

The Northeast Regional Academy (NERA) located in Charles City, Iowa, began as a pilot for establishing a series of regional centers around the state to provide more intensive services for deaf and blind K-12 students. The NERA currently serves deaf and hard of hearing students living within 60 miles of Charles City and covered by the Keystone and Central Rivers AEAs. Enrollment in NERA is determined by the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) team at the student’s home school. While the original model for the regional centers anticipated serving blind students, currently there is not a need for the intensive level of services offered by the NERA for students with vision loss living within the region.

The pilot project model was based on an enrollment of 15 students. In FY 2017, there were 57 deaf and hard of hearing students receiving special education services in 51 school districts within the 60-mile radius of Charles City; the NERA served nine of those students. In the first half of FY 2018, four students are enrolled.

The Charles City Community School District serves as the fiscal agent and host district for the NERA and contracts services from the ISD and the IESBVI. The intent of the model is for other local school districts to pay tuition to the host district for students participating in the NERA. The home school district retains the legal responsibility for providing a free and appropriate public education to the student.

From FY 2016 through FY 2018, the NERA has been funded by the Iowa Department of Education at an amount not to exceed \$300,000 per year. The source of the funding is a Special Education Part B grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The funding was intended to subsidize the NERA during implementation and start-up. As a result of the grant, no school districts have been billed for services provided to their students, although the Charles City district has paid for some interpreter costs for one student.

The NERA had total funding of \$239,635 in FY 2017 from the following sources:

- \$97,010 from the ISD's general operating funds for administration.
- \$38,190 from the Charles City school district for interpreter services.
- \$104,435 from the Department of Education's Part B grant.

For FY 2019, the ISD and the IESBVI have requested a new General Fund appropriation of \$245,000 to keep the NERA operating despite the expiration of the three-year Part B grant funding.