



iJAG empowers Iowa's youth to succeed, thrive, and become future-ready leaders.

### **iJAG's Curriculum, Work-Based Learning Standards, and Compliance with State Law**

#### **Curriculum**

- Over the past two years, iJAG has updated its curriculum for grades 7–12 to align with Iowa's work-based learning expectations, JAG National competencies, the Durable Skills Advantage Framework, and the Iowa Business Council's Professional Success Proficiencies.
- Across grades, students engage in hands-on learning, career exploration, and community-connected projects that build the durable skills Iowa employers value most, which include leadership skills, financial literacy, employability skills, civic engagement, community service opportunities, and work-based learning experiences—supported by evidence-based tools such as Leader in Me and the Kuder career assessment platform.

#### **Work-Based Learning Standards**

- Following the passage of SF 2411 in May 2024, iJAG updated its work-based learning standards to align with the state's revised statutory definition, including the development and implementation of updated forms, processes, and data monitoring practices.

#### **Compliance with State Law**

- iJAG Specialists document daily classroom instructional topics and employer partner participation to ensure compliance with laws and organizational expectations.
- iJAG leadership regularly reviews this data to confirm alignment with the approved curriculum and relevance to students' career pathways.
- After SF 496 passed in May 2023, iJAG provided staff with an overview of updated requirements, audited curriculum content, and implemented standardized monitoring and tracking processes to ensure compliance.
- Parents and guardians give active consent for student participation and are encouraged to review curriculum materials and employer engagement activities.

### **iJAG's Hiring, Authorization, Training, and Retention**

#### **Hiring Process**

- Hiring managers partner with school administrators to interview candidates and jointly select the best candidate.
- All new hires complete comprehensive background checks after an offer is accepted, including multi-state criminal history checks, national sex offender registry, U.S. terrorist watchlist screening (OFAC), address-based courthouse searches, and education verification.



### Authorization Process

- iJAG Career Education Specialists are authorized by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners<sup>1</sup> and endorsed by the state of Iowa to award credit for students in grades 7-12.

### Training and Retention

- iJAG Specialists complete University of Northern Iowa training to earn **Work-Based Learning Supervisor authorization**<sup>2</sup> to deliver comprehensive work-based learning experiences.
- All new hires complete an intensive 40-hour practicum covering curriculum delivery, student engagement and coaching, employer partnerships, work-based learning, ethics and compliance, data systems, school collaboration, and relationship-building
- Each staff member engages in over 40 hours of training annually to stay updated on best practices and emerging trends.
- This updated approach has strengthened retention
  - Attrition declined from 32.75% in 2023 to 24.05% in 2025—an 8.7% improvement over two years.

### iJAG's Financials, Funding Structure, and Return on Investment

FY 2025-26, iJAG received \$9.9M from state appropriation with an overall budget of \$19.275M.

#### **Organizational Financial Structure:** funding comes from three main sources

- 51.6% - State Appropriation
- 19.9% - School District Contributions (approximately \$25,000 per program)
- 28.5% - Community partnerships and private philanthropic support

#### **Use of Funds: How We Invest in Our Mission**

- 89.6% Programs
- 7.4% Administration
- 3.0% Fundraising (0% paid by State)

#### **Outcomes, ROI, and Expansion**

- Students Served: **11,777** (as of February 3, 2026)
- 2025 Graduation Rate Projection: **98.45%** (state of Iowa not yet reported)
- 2025 Improvement in Chronic Absenteeism: **31.5%** (state of Iowa 10%)
- Students Participating in Work-Based Learning: **66.3%** (state of Iowa 45%)
- iJAG programs: **208** (as of February 3, 2026)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://educate.iowa.gov/educator-licensure/licenses-authorizations/ijag-authorization>

<sup>2</sup> <https://educate.iowa.gov/work-based-learning-supervisor-authorization>