
BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2020

Fiscal Services Division

December 6, 2019



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

Iowa School for the Deaf

Purpose and History

The Iowa School for the Deaf (ISD) operates under the supervision of the [Board of Regents](#) to provide educational services to deaf or hearing-impaired Iowa students from preschool through age 21. The school is located in Council Bluffs. An agreement between Iowa and Nebraska allows Nebraska students to attend the ISD.

The School was created by the Iowa General Assembly in 1854 in Iowa City, and moved to Council Bluffs in 1870. Iowa high school diplomas were first awarded to ISD students in 1932. In 1953, the Board of Regents became the governing body for the school.

Students with a variety of communication methods, abilities, and devices attend the ISD. Students vary in their hearing levels, from those with mild losses to those with severe and profound losses. Cochlear implants and hearing aids are used by many students, while some students do not use any device. Speech language pathologists strategize with students who wish to maintain their residual voicing abilities. American Sign Language is used on campus, and all employees are required to attain and retain a level of signing, based on the amount of interaction they have with students. Depending on individual class needs, teachers sign, speak, or conduct class using both communication methods.

Collaboration with the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School

The School for the Deaf and the Braille and Sight Saving School (IBSSS) share a director. Programming for visually impaired transitioning youth is provided at the Iowa School for the Deaf in Council Bluffs. The former Braille and Sight Saving School building in Vinton is no longer in use and is in the process of being sold to the city of Vinton.

Funding

The School for the Deaf 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 school aid or any other formula, the General Assembly has frequently increased appropriations to the ISD 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 [270](#)

Iowa Administrative Code [681](#)

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More Information

Iowa School for the Deaf: www.iowaschoolforthe deaf.org

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