



Iowa's Area
Education
Agencies

The Playbook for Iowa's AEA's

Building a Brighter Future for Iowa's Children

Iowa's Area Education Agencies (AEAs) are dedicated to working together as a system to ensure all Iowa children have equal opportunity for an exceptional education. Iowa's AEAs meet this challenge through services that accelerate student learning and development, inspire educators and propel districts and schools to maximize learning outcomes. This playbook affirms our **mission, core values, and key partners**, provides a framework of **essential functions** delivered uniformly across the system, and establishes strategies for implementing and monitoring actions in **priority goal areas**.



Mission

To ensure **equitable, efficient, and effective** educational services that prepare all Iowa children for a life well-lived.

Key Partners

Children and Families

Accelerate children's learning and development

Educators

Inspire educators to sustain superior learning outcomes

Innovate with schools to maximize system effectiveness and resources

Theory of Action

If AEAs enrich instructional resources and system efficiencies in Iowa schools

AND if AEAs work as a system to provide equity in Iowa schools

AND if AEAs work in partnership with Iowa school staffs to implement authentic learning systems and learning environments that lift every child

AND if AEAs provide professional learning supports that contribute to all Iowa children learning with highly skilled educators and leaders

THEN all Iowa children and youth will thrive and be prepared for a life well-lived.

Core Values

AEA staff are committed to being **Caring Partners** that deliver **Accountable Services**.

Caring Partners:

- Establish collaborative relationships with clients through frequent interactions, careful listening, and friendly, trustworthy behavior.
- Are highly-skilled professionals who are cognizant of service outcomes and consistently use available information and data to make improvements.
- Are creative in providing customized services that are responsive to client needs.
- Clarify expectations and respond to concerns, comments, or complaints in a timely manner.
- Treat all individuals respectfully.

Accountable Services:

- Anticipate and respond to the needs, requirements and expectations of clients.
- Surpass the client's expectations
- Provide comprehensive, high-quality solutions (products, consultation, therapy, service, and/or support).
- Result in increased learning, professional capacity, and/or system effectiveness.

MISSION & CORE VALUES

What We Do

- 1 Accelerate children's learning and development
Iowa's AEAs provide educational equity for all Iowa children with emphasis on those with diverse learning needs.

Provide support to children and families through:

- **Screenings:** Developmental screening to identify children that may be at risk, screening for hearing loss
- **Family Support and Early ACCESS Services:** Support to families in hospital neonatal intensive care units, partnering with families in their homes to assist young children, assisting in the development and implementation of Individual Family Support Plans (IFSP) for children at-risk, providing parent learning opportunities, and fostering family and educator partnerships
- **Academic and behavioral assistance for specific children:** Child Find (identifying and serving children who require special education), problem solving and progress monitoring, academic and behavioral assessments, support from specialized staff and educators (i.e. school social workers, school psychologists) for specific needs — mental health, social-emotional learning, behavior, online learning systems, and adaptive technology
- **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)** for children requiring special education (Individual Education Plans (IEP); specific support services determined by IEPs (speech services, physical and occupational therapy, behavior consultants, itinerant vision and hearing teachers and services, school social workers and psychologists); transition planning from high school to post-secondary living, working and learning settings, and due process
- **Education programs for children in shelters, detention, jails and prisons:** AEAs hire and supervise teaching and support staff



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Inspire educators to sustain superior learning outcomes

Iowa's AEAs provide professional tools and learning experiences to support the implementation of evidence-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Develop and sustain high quality learning environments through:

- **Learning systems design and implementation:** Early Warning Systems, Multi-tiered Systems of Supports, specific supports for students who may be Gifted, At-risk, English Learners, and/or in need of special education
 - **Curriculum, assessment, and instructional supports** in reading, language arts, mathematics, and science using research-based methodologies
 - **Instructional technologies**
 - **Student data:** support in the use of academic screeners, data, and assessment
- **Adult learning** designed in response to needs assessments and specific requests
 - *Year-round learning opportunities:* coaching, mentoring, classes, workshops, and online learning sessions in requested areas such as social-emotional learning, behavior, mental health, personalized learning, leadership development, and IEP trainings
 - *Learning networks and meetings:* special education, curriculum, teacher leaders, school administrators and school business managers
 - **Learning resources:** lending library, digital resources, print and production, and online learning



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Innovate with schools to maximize system effectiveness and resources
Iowa's AEAs provide economies of scale, and program and infrastructure supports.

Consult with districts and schools:

• **District/school-wide program plan design, implementation, and assessment:**

- *Early Learning Program Plans/Voluntary 4-year-old Preschool*
- *English Learner:* assessment plans, program development and implementation support, and use of data and quality processes to monitor and adjust Implementation of program plans
- *Learning Plans:* rigorous learning designs for adults based on identified needs (job-embedded coaching models, professional learning teams, Iowa Professional Development Model)
- *Specific student/family needs:* 504 planning, student and family rights, and data analysis to inform and adjust practice

• **Technological systems:** assistance developing and maintaining EdInsight data, Iowa's IEP system, demographics, student outcomes data, learning management systems, online learning systems, and educational data (storage, disaster mitigation, and school interconnectivity)

• **Specific district planning requests and requirements:** community needs assessment,



district reorganization, whole grade sharing, district boundaries and maps (alignment after each census), board strategic planning, and advisory committees

- **Provision of instructional media services** that supplement and support local district media centers
- **Coordination of operational efficiencies:** school management systems, cooperative purchasing, shared staff, school business office and human resources supports, van delivery service, and print and production centers
- **Collaboration with the Iowa Department of Education to provide statewide infrastructure:** federal program implementation, Differentiated Accountability and Collaborative Inquiry systems, general supervision of special education programs and services (special education plans, corrective action planning, mediation, due process, and legal representation)

Priority Goal Areas

Within the *Essential Functions*, Iowa's AEAs have identified priority goal areas:



WELL-BEING



FUTURE READY



SYNERGY

Iowa's AEAs work teams have created action plans for each of the priority goal areas that detail how the AEAs are working as a system to provide supports to ensure equity of educational services to all Iowa children, families, and educators. Teams include representation from across Iowa's AEAs, and other partners.

PRIORITY GOAL AREAS

Well-being

What will be true for all AEAs and the children, families, and educators in Iowa because of this strategic planning work?

Iowa's AEAs are committed to supporting schools in promoting healthy learning environments that address the social, emotional, behavior, and mental health well-being of students.

Well-being is a sustainable state of positive mood and attitude, resilience, and satisfaction with self, relationships, and experiences.

When these supports are in place, students typically have fewer disciplinary issues, can focus more on school work, and develop skills that translate to a life well-lived.



Future Ready

What will be true for all AEAs and the children, families, and educators in Iowa because of this strategic planning work?

Iowa's AEAs will provide an integrated statewide system of supports and services by creating and connecting Authentic Learning experiences for Iowa students and educators. With personalized, competency-based learning models, work-based experiences, and data-driven strategies, AEAs will ensure all students are future ready.



Synergy

What will be true for all AEAs and the children, families, and educators in Iowa because of this strategic planning work?

For Iowa's AEAs, synergy includes delivering equitable services to all Iowa schools and ensuring that resources reduce/eliminate redundancies.



WELL-BEING, FUTURE READY & SYNERGY

1 School Foundation Aid Formula*

- AEA's replaced County Boards of Education in 1975.
- Funding was then transferred from County budgets to local school budgets.
- Basic operating funds are "controlled" by the state legislature.

| Educational Services | Media Services | Special Education Services |
|--|--|--|
| <p>AEAs have three separate controlled funding formulas that must be accounted for separately and funds cannot be combined.</p> | | |
| <p><i>Formula:</i> Per pupil cost times the number of students enrolled in the public and non-public schools the AEA serves.</p> | <p><i>Formula:</i> Per pupil cost times the number of students enrolled in the public and non-public schools the AEA serves.</p> | <p><i>Formula:</i> Per pupil cost times the enrollment number which is public school enrollment plus additional special education weighted values.</p> |
| <p>Funding is from property taxes.</p> | | <p>Funding is 79% state aid and the balance is from property taxes.</p> |

Spending Restrictions For Services

- Special Education funding can only be used for expenditures directly related to children identified through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or to support Early ACCESS or Child Find services.
- Media and Educational Services funds public and accredited non-public schools.



2 Federal Funds*

Federal funds use is restricted based on federal authorization and local grant application.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Federal Grants | Small Grants |
| • IDEA Part B | • ELL |
| • Part C | • Title I |
| • Basic 619 appropriations | |

*The school foundation aid formula and federal funds make up over 90% of the Agency's budget.

*Funds generated must also provide for administration, operations, facilities, insurance and all other costs to operate the Agency.

*The amount of money received via these funding streams is prescribed by various formulas and factors.

*AEAs have no taxing authority or ability to individually impact how much money is generated by these formulas.



3 State Categorical Funding

State categorical funding is restricted to be used as specified by law.

- Shelter Care Educational Program
- Teacher Salary Supplement
- Teacher Quality Professional Development
- Early ACCESS

How Schools & AEA's Differ

AEAs have no bonding or tax levy authority for facility acquisition, operations or upkeep; insurance or early retirement programs; cash flow or additional State Supplemental Aid.

Prepared by the Heartland AEA Business Department. For questions, contact Kurt Subra, Chief Financial Officer, (615) 270-9030, ksubra@heartlandaea.org.

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