



School Leader Update

Iowa Department of Education

Wednesday, December 1, 2004

Resources for Iowa School Leaders

NEWS FROM THE DE

Judy Jeffrey appointed Education Director

Governor Tom Vilsack has appointed Judy Jeffrey as director of the Iowa Department of Education, a position she has held on an interim basis since the retirement of former director Ted Stilwill last August. In his announcement, which he made at the Iowa Association of School Board's annual convention, Governor Vilsack cited Judy's expertise and commitment to Iowa students and quality schools as traits that make her the ideal candidate for the post. The Iowa Senate must confirm Judy's appointment during the 2005 legislative session. If confirmed, she will serve a 4-year term.

Community forums to discuss [Iowa Learns Council](#) recommendations

Governor Vilsack continues to host a series of community forums to discuss the Iowa Learns Council recommendations designed to ensure continuous improvement of our educational system for all learners of all ages, so they will enjoy success and quality of life as adults. Highlights of the recommendations include:

- Make a strong commitment to early childhood
- Renew our commitment to the K-12 system
- Establish a better connection between Education and Business/Labor

The remaining forums are listed below. All forums will begin at 7:00 p.m. and conclude at 8:30 p.m.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
December 1	Mississippi Bend AEA, Bettendorf
December 7	Grand River Center, 500 Bell Street, Dubuque
December 8	Sioux Center Community School District, TePaske Theatre, SC High School
December 9	Fremont-Mills Community School District, High School Multi-Purpose Room

Remember tax deduction for teachers

Teachers and other educators are able to deduct up to \$250 for qualified out-of-pocket book and classroom expenses as part of the Working Families Tax Relief Act. Public and private school educators who work 900 hours during a school year as a teacher, instructor, counselor, principal, or aide, are eligible. For more information, call 800/829-4477 and select Topic 458, or visit www.irs.gov and use its search engine to find Tax Topic 458.

Reminder about applications for Student Member to State Board of Education

Application materials are now on our website for use by interested public school sophomores and juniors who desire to apply for the term of the nonvoting student member on the State Board. Interested students should go to: <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/stateboard/nsm.html>.

Qualified students are those who:

- a. Have at least a 3.0 GPA (4.0 scale);
- b. Have attended their public high school at least the past two consecutive semesters; and
- c. Have parental permission and district approval to apply.

A memorandum was emailed to all school district superintendents on November 18 with applications and supporting documents. For more details, please refer to said memorandum or contact Carol Greta, 515/281-8661, carol.greta@iowa.gov.

Leading the way in addressing and resolving differences

Conflicts between families and educators are to be expected, but that doesn't necessarily make them welcome. The Iowa Department of Education recognizes this and is committed to helping educators and family members learn and use the skills they need to get differences addressed and resolved as early as possible. We believe this will strengthen working relationships between families and educators, and ultimately improve student learning.

Iowa is ranked No. 1 in the nation for having the lowest number of special education hearings, complaints, and mediations when examining the data per 10,000 special education students. There are many reasons for this. One is that educators and parents across the state are taking [mediation and conflict resolution](#) training, paid for by the Bureau of Children, Family and Community Services, and using the new skills they learn to address and resolve differences before they escalate to unhealthy levels.

Since 1995, the Department has contracted with the Conflict Resolution Center of Iowa (formerly the Iowa Peace Institute) to provide training in introductory and advanced mediation skills for educators, creating solutions for parents, and the newest offering, RESPECT (Recognizing Everyone's Strengths by Peacebuilding, Empathizing, Communication and Trustbuilding), for IEP and related team members. Costs to participants are minimal. There is no training fee, though sponsoring agencies often ask participants to pay the cost for meals and breaks. Participants or their agencies are responsible for their own travel expenses.

Several training programs (listed below) have been scheduled for 2004-05. Additional trainings can be scheduled when school districts and/or AEAs request them. Note that enrollment is based on availability:

Creating Solutions for Parents and Educators (a one-day program for parents)

January 27 in the Des Moines Area

Sponsored by Heartland AEA 11 Parent-Educator Connection Program

Contact Kari Paulsen at 1-800/362-2720

Space is currently reserved for Heartland PEC Program staff

RESPECT (a four-day program for educators and parents)

Nov. 23, 2004, Dec 14, 2004 and Jan 18 and Feb 8, 2005 in Cedar Rapids

Sponsored by Grant Wood AEA 10

Registration information at www.aea10.k12.ia.us/profdev/speced.html

Two units of graduate credit available

RESPECT

Mar 1 and 22, Apr 12 and May 3, 2005 in Le Mars

Sponsored by Western Hills AEA 12 and AEA 4

Contact Linda Appleby, AEA 12 at 1/800-352-9040

For further information on how your agency can secure Department of Education funding for a conflict resolution training program at your location, or for an electronic brochure describing the various programs please contact Dee Ann Wilson, 515/281-5766, Deeann.wilson@iowa.gov.

For addition information on the training or to schedule a program, contact the Conflict Resolution Center of Iowa (CRCI). If districts want to offer the training, the district should contact its AEA, with the AEA submitting the required paperwork. Contact CRCI president Greg Buntz at 641/236-3939, buntz@iowatelecom.net or by mail at PO Box 925, Grinnell 50112.

AEA Customer Survey results available online

The 2004-05 AEA Customer Survey was conducted from mid-October to mid-November. Respondents were asked to rate the quality and quantity of AEA services and were given opportunities to provide narrative feedback to agencies as they work to continuously improve services to schools, teachers, and students. All certified LEA staff members statewide were invited to participate and 8,668 certified educators did participate. This was up from 3,916 the previous year. Thanks to everyone that chose to participate this year. Survey results can be accessed at www.state.ia.us/educate/aea/documents.html.

Contact Jeff Berger, 281-3399 or Jeff.Berger@iowa.gov with additional comments or questions.

High School Summit set for December 14 in Des Moines

The first Iowa High School Summit: Rigor, Relevancy, Relationships will be Tuesday, December 14, 2004, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Polk County Convention Complex in Des Moines. Local school district administrators and teachers, along with community college and AEA staff, are encouraged to attend as teams (recommended team size of five to seven individuals). The intended outcome of the summit is to help teams better understand the importance of high school rigor, relevance, and relationships in order to prepare students for their post-secondary choices and the world of work. Governor Vilsack has been invited to share information from the Iowa Learns Council; Kati Haycock, director of the Education Trust in Washington, D.C., will keynote the day; Iowa practitioners will highlight the three key areas of school reform: leadership, climate and curriculum; and the afternoon will include information on proven school reform initiatives in Iowa.

Registration materials have been mailed to local school district, AEA and community college administrators. Registration information is also available at http://www.sai-iowa.org/summitHS_2004.pdf. The National Association of Secondary School Principals has provided partial funding for the summit.

Conference on Bullying in Schools: Power & Empowerment

Mark your calendars for January 27, 2005; that's the date for the Conference on Bullying in Schools: Power and Empowerment, in Ames. Speakers will include Dr. Nan Stein, a senior research scientist at the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College, whose research has been supported by the U.S. Department of Education, the National Education Association, and by several private family foundations. She has published extensively on topics of school safety, zero tolerance, and children's rights, and has also appeared on many television news and talk shows to speak about violence in schools and bullying.

The conference also will include a youth panel to share issues of bullying related to diversity, and will have a strand specifically for middle school and high school youth. Additional speakers will include Dr. Susan Limber from Clemson University, who is U.S. Training Coordinator for the Olweus Bullying program (research-based); and Dr. Russell Skiba, Director of the Safe and Responsive Schools Project at Indiana University Institute for Child Study.

Other breakout sessions will include topics such as:

- Special Issues and Special Populations (language, ethnicity, religion, disabilities, etc.)
- Tactics of Bullying Behavior (gangs, cyber bullying, bullying in athletics, how girls bully, etc.)
- What to do (ideas for administrators, parents, and teachers including research-based approaches)
- Youth Strand -- specific activities directed at youth engagement and networking.

Contact Jane Todey, 515/281-8514, jane.todey@iowa.gov.

QUALITY TEACHING

Content Network update

The Content Network is up and running with its new look designed to include user-friendly tables with the strategy, subjects and effects immediately available. The next step in this improvement process is to combine all studies into categories and finish computing effect size for all studies currently reviewed. The new tables mean that you can choose "Math grades 9-12 Algebra" and see all the studies that have been reviewed pertaining to 9-12 Algebra. Or, you can look at information available for "4-6 Reading Comprehension - Graphic Organizers" to support your District Career Development Plan. By the end of December 2004, you will be able to view all of the reviewed studies in single categorized tables.

You'll find the Content Network online at <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/tqt/tc/prodev/main.html>. As always, we welcome your suggestions for additional improvement. Contact Cynthia Knight, 515/281-5287, Cynthia.knight@iowa.gov.

Iowa evaluator approval training

There will be a final session of the original Iowa Evaluator Approval Training Project offered for those participants who have already completed the Data Driven Leadership Training but have not yet taken Iowa Evaluator Approval Training. This is the last time this will be offered as a "stand alone" training session. Please check the schedule below for details regarding time, place and eligibility.

The department is in the process of revising and updating the current Iowa Evaluator Training Program. It still will be intended for participants who have never obtained their new teacher evaluator's license. It will be offered for the first time in the spring of 2005. This training is an updated version of the original training and will combine the components of IEATP and DDL. This training will continue to result in four credits of staff

development from SAI and allow participants who successfully complete the training to obtain their new evaluator's license. More information will be available in the January School Leader Update.

Statewide Training Schedule
Iowa Evaluator Approval Training Program
 "Original Version"

Registration Information

This is the final session that will be offered of the original version of the IEATP training. It is intended strictly for anyone who has already completed the four day DDL training and needs this original version of 6-day IEATP training to complete the requirements for the new evaluator's license. There will be one session offered in the eastern half and one in the western half of state.

Eligibility: Successful completion of the 4-day DDL training.
 Registration Fee: \$300
 Minimum Enrollment: 15 per session

Eastern Iowa			
Register at www.aea10.k12.ia.us/prof/evalapp.html .			
Regional Coordinator: Christine Day			
Contact professional development at 319-399-6700 or 800-332-8488 to register.			
E27	Cedar Rapids	January 15, 22 February 5, 12, 26 March 5	Grant Wood AEA, Room 214, 1120 33 rd Avenue SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Western Iowa			
Register at http://www.aea13.org/evaluatorapproval .			
Regional Coordinator: Joan Crowl			
Contact professional development at 712-366-0503 or 800-432-5804.			
W 27			

Western Iowa

On December 15, 2004 the date and location information for Western Iowa will be on the DE website <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/tq/tc/teacheval.html>. The information will also be Loess Hills AEA website <http://www.aea13.k12.ia.us/>, the Heartland AEA website <http://www.aea11.k12.ia.us> and the Western Hills AEA website <http://www.aea12.k12.ia.us>.

Register at <http://www.aea13.org/evaluatorapproval>. Regional Coordinator: Joan Crowl. Contact professional development at 712-366-0503 or 800-432-5804.

Eastern Iowa

Register at www.aea10.k12.ia.us/prof/evalapp.html. Regional Coordinator: Christine Day. Contact professional development at 319-399-6700 or 800-332-8488.

Teachers earn National Board Certification

Congratulations to the 37 Iowa teachers who earned their National Board Certification in 2004 from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). That brings to 461 the total number of Iowa teachers who have earned the teaching profession's highest credential since the certification began in 1993.

National Board Certification is a symbol of teaching excellence. A voluntary process established by NBPTS, it is achieved through a rigorous performance-based assessment that takes nearly a year to complete. Through the assessment process, teachers document their subject matter knowledge, provide evidence that they know how to teach their subjects to students most effectively, and demonstrate their ability to manage and measure student learning.

In Iowa, teacher candidates are eligible to receive state payment for half of the \$2,300 registration fee and, upon certification, a \$2,500 per year annual award for 10 years as well as reimbursement for the other half of the registration fee. For information about the NBC program, visit <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/nbc/index.html>.

Teachers who earned certification in 2004 include:

Ancell, Jennifer	Cedar Falls Comm School District
Barsic , Nancy	Cedar Falls Comm School District
Bourne, Karen	Sioux City Comm School District
Buehler, Marilyn	Odebolt-Arthur Comm School District
Cady, Paula	Colo-Nesco Comm School District
Clark, Charles	Marion Independent School District
Cooper, Natasha	Southeast Warren Comm School District
Dunlap, Marci	Fairfield Comm School District
Elmborg, Ann Ellen	Cedar Rapids Comm School District
Frank, Mary	Spencer Comm School District
Gebers, Barbara Jean	Galva-Holstein Comm School District
Green, Janet	Central Clinton Comm School District
Grotewold, Susan	Boone Comm School District
Horst, Laura	East Central Comm School District
Houseal, Anne	Waterloo Comm School District
Jessen, Nadine	Audubon Comm School District
Johnson, Scott	Marshalltown Comm School District
Kaska, Cathy	Fairfield Comm School District
Kruse, Megan	Fort Madison Comm School District
Lawler, Teresa	Jefferson-Scranton Comm School District
Lofgren, Kelcy	Ankeny Comm School District
Martsching, Mary	No SD Provided
Mc Kone, Brenda	East Central Comm School District
Mcelvain, Jean	Boone Comm School District
Mikels, Aleta Alice	Davis County Comm School District
Quinn, Rebecca	Southeast Polk Comm School District
Rains, Wendy	Ankeny Comm School District
Redman, Dick	Pella Comm School District
Rexwinkel, Lorene	Le Mars Comm School District
Rife, Angela	Logan-Magnolia Comm School District
Sandberg, Marianne	West Delaware County Comm School District
Schmidt, Jane	Maquoketa Comm School District
Schroeder, Janette	Cedar Rapids Comm School District
Shirbroun, Holly	Fort Dodge Comm School District
Sowder, Amy	Martensdale-St Mary's Comm School District
Thronsdon, Robert	Cedar Rapids Comm School District
Tracy, Laura	Greene Comm School District

SCHOOL FUNDING AND GRANTS

Apply for Title V funds

Title V Part A is an extremely flexible funding stream that school districts can use to:

- Support local education reform efforts consistent with statewide efforts.
- Implement promising educational reform programs and school improvement programs based on scientifically based research.
- Provide a continuing source of innovation and education improvement that includes support programs to provide library services and instructional and media materials.
- Meet the educational needs of all students.
- Develop and implement education programs to improve school, student, and teacher performance, including professional development activities and class size reduction programs.

2004-2005 Title V Allocations are now posted at www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/ippcp/index.html.

Based on feedback received from school districts, we have revised forms and due dates. Please note the following due dates:

- The Year-End Final Report for 03-04 - November 15, 2004 – NEW DATE
- 04-05 Title V local budgets - November 15, 2004 – NEW DATE

Other resources available on the Title V webpage:

- Year End Report – Technical Assistance Document – NEW!
- Year West Lakes CSD – Technical Assistance Example – NEW!
- Acquisition Form – For districts with Non-public schools – Revised
- Guidance for Title V

Contact: Del Hoover, 515/281-8402, del.hoover@iowa.gov

LEGAL LESSONS

Religious holiday celebrations in public schools

Public school officials need to be especially conscious at this time of year that the birth of the Christian Savior is not recognized or celebrated by all students and families. Therefore, here is a quick (not meant to be exhaustive) checklist of what public school officials are prohibited from doing and what they are permitted to do.

1. Prohibited Activities

- Displays of religious symbols such as a crèche, an angel, a menorah, or a banner with a religious message (“Gloria in Excelsis Deo,” e.g.).
- Display of a Christmas tree with religious symbols such as stars, angels, the Baby Jesus.
- School-wide prayer or Scripture readings.
- A musical concert with exclusively religious music.
- Banning students from offering candy canes or other items with a religious message during noninstructional time (before or after school or during a recess) and NOT done in the classroom. Schools may still prohibit distribution within classrooms.
- Holding a “Christmas party” in the classroom. A “holiday” or “end of semester” or “end of 2004” party is okay.

2. Permissible Activities

- Including religious music selections during public holiday concerts if non-religious music is included.
- Holding holiday concerts at religious sites if the concerts are also held at non-religious sites.
- Displaying a “giving tree,” i.e. a tree on which students hang donated items such as mittens, gloves, etc.
- Displays of religious symbols *when combined with* other symbols of cultural and ethnic heritage such as Kwanzaa symbols, Frosty the Snowman, other festive figures, a “Happy Holidays” banner, etc.
- Displays of symbols representing many religious beliefs, even without non-religious symbols. But, just displaying symbols from Christianity and Judaism is an impermissible endorsement of dual beliefs. The display must present a message of pluralism and freedom to choose one’s own beliefs.

Diploma requirements – alternative school programs

Following are guidelines for districts to use for their students who complete a plan of study at an alternative school program, including a community college alternative school program.

- A. Always bear in mind that a student cannot graduate from a program. A student graduates from a high school. The vast majority of our districts do not have an alternative high school. They offer an alternative school program either directly or through a community college or through a consortium of other districts. Students who conclude their studies through an alternative school program get their diplomas (if earned) from their district of enrollment.
- B. A district may not set different core requirements for graduation for students in an alternative setting or program. For example, if the general graduation requirement includes 7 credits for language arts, 4 for science, 4 for mathematics, and 6 for social studies, these core requirements must also be met by a student in an alternative setting or program. The flexibility offered in alternative programs may be reflected in scheduling issues and in elective courses, not the core curriculum.
- C. A district must offer just one basic diploma. Think of the basic diploma as the lowest common denominator of achievement; i.e., it reflects the successful completion of all core requirements. It is permissible to indicate high achievement on the diploma, such as “with honors.”
- D. It is permissible to indicate on the face of the diploma that the student completed his/her studies via the alternative program. It is not mandatory to do this, as the transcript (which is more important than the diploma) will reflect all curricular data. If a district elects to indicate completion of credits via an alternative program, the word “program” *must* appear on the diploma.

- E. Districts are strongly discouraged from lowering the electives requirements drastically.
- F. Notwithstanding the above paragraphs, if a district has an attendance center that is an alternative school (not just the program), the diploma must come from the alternative school and must state on the face of the diploma that the student is awarded the diploma for having met the graduation requirements of "(Name) School." The alternative school's graduation requirements may be different from the requirements for graduation from the district's traditional high school(s).
- G. Community colleges may serve students from numerous districts. The district officials need to work with the college officials to ensure that the college understands the number and type of the district's core requirements. A community college should not be offering a "one size fits all" alternative school program.
- H. As with students who complete their educational programs via an alternative program, the diploma awarded to a special education student must be similar in all significant respects to the basic diploma awarded by the district. The transcript is the communication means between the district and other entities. Explanations of modifications may be included on the transcript. For more information, see item below.

More on grades, certificates of achievement, and transcripts of students with disabilities

Diplomas/Certificates of Achievement

- Special education students may receive a diploma without meeting the graduation requirements for the general education program if they meet their IEP goals and graduation requirements.
- Granting a special education student a Certificate of Achievement (or Completion or Attendance) is appropriate for a student who is not able to meet the academic requirements for a diploma. Bear in mind the following:
 - Such an award does not end the student's right to receive a FAPE (free appropriate public education). The right to a FAPE is ended only by either the student reaching age 21 or successfully finishing a regular secondary education program. The same is true if a special education student obtains a GED; if the student is not yet age 21, s/he may still demand a FAPE from the district of residence.
 - A district is not required to end a student's educational program when s/he has met the district's graduation requirements if not all of the student's IEP goals have been met unless the student has reached age 21.
 - A denial of a diploma to a student is NOT a denial of a FAPE.

Grades

- If a student has received some reasonable accommodation, but the curriculum has not been modified for the student, the grade should not reflect that an accommodation was made. After all, the purpose of a reasonable accommodation is to level the playing field so that the grade will truly represent the student's intellectual abilities. Another way of thinking about it is that the accommodation merely removes the disadvantage to the student of his/her disability (for example, giving a student extra time to take a test).
- If the curriculum has been modified, the report card and transcript may be coded or include an asterisk to indicate a modified curriculum, but only if such coding is also used for general education students (because the report card cannot indicate that the student is a person with a disability unless the parent consents).
- Grading on a pass/fail system is acceptable for a student with disabilities if participation in the P/F system is voluntary and the same P/F system is available to all students.
- Using a grading scale that assigns lower grade weights to special education courses is not a violation of state or federal law as long as the lower weighting is the result of an assessment of actual differences in the difficulty of the course vis-à-vis a comparable regular education course, and is not related to the classification of students enrolled in the course. For example, a lower weighting scale for "Basic Science Applications" is permissible if Basic Science Applications is less rigorous than other science courses, but is not permissible if done because only special education students are enrolled in the course.
- A student with an IEP who is enrolled in a general education course for reasons other than mastery of the content (e.g., to learn social skills or organizational skills) may be excluded from class grading and may be evaluated on the objectives and goals of the IEP for the course.

Transcripts

- Modifications to curriculum content may be reflected in the transcript via some coding or an asterisk, but only if such coding is also used for general education students. Remember that the transcript cannot identify the student as a student with disabilities unless the parent (or student if student is at least 18 years old) consents.

- Courses listed on a transcript may not be identified as special education courses.

Acceptable Level I English Practical Math Applications Basic Social Studies General Science	Not Acceptable Resource English Special Education Math Resource Social Studies Special Education Science
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- Modifications or exceptions to the grading scale may be identified via asterisks or special coding if done so as not to identify the student as having a disability (unless consent is given). For instance, it is permissible to indicate via an asterisk that the student received a modified grade or completed work at a lower grade level but using asterisks cannot be limited to students with disabilities.

An athletic eligibility decision to note

Appeals from transfer students regarding eligibility (these are not appeals to the State Board, but to the Department) are generally not cases that involve weighty issues. An exception was a case on appeal from a decision of the Iowa High School Athletic Association, *In re Turial Buol*, decided by this agency in late October of this year. The case is instructional regarding recruitment or undue influence.

The facts of this case are not instructive and will not be recited here. School administrators are asked to take note of the following rulings:

1. If a student transfers to a high school because of recruitment or undue influence, that fact alone will not render the student ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics. The student may or may not be ineligible under the general transfer rules, but cannot be ineligible solely because of recruitment or undue influence.
 - a. *Example 1:* Student and her family live in District A. A sports booster of neighboring District B thinks it would be just swell if the Student played volleyball for District B, and offers a job to the Student's father if the family will move to District B. Family and Student do move. Student is immediately eligible because she and her family made a bona fide move from A to B. (Same result if the undue influence had come from an employee of District B.)
 - b. *Example 2:* Student and her family live in District A. Again, a sports booster of neighboring District B talks to Student to convince her to move to District B to play on B's sports teams. The Student moves in with the sports booster's family but her own family stays in District A. Student is ineligible to compete for District B for 90 consecutive school days.
 - c. *Example 3:* Student and family move into a new district. Within the boundaries of the district is a nonpublic high school. Until the move, no one had any contact with the student; in fact, no one knew that the student was a gifted athlete and no one knew he was moving to town. Once in town, each high school (public and nonpublic) do their best to convince the student to attend their school. The nonpublic school offers to waive tuition. Under the general transfer rules, the student has immediate eligibility at either school.
2. The school that allows or tolerates recruitment can be sanctioned under the governing documents of the IHSAA and/or IGHSAA. Such sanctioning can include ineligibility of the school's teams for an entire year. In all three examples above, sanctions could be applied to the schools.

The case is located at: <https://www.edinfo.state.ia.us/web/appeals.asp?book=23&decision=063>; click on the link to full text to view more than the summary.

And three open enrollment appeals...

In November the State Board of Education upheld the decisions of local boards of three school districts to deny open enrollment requests based on alleged harassment. In all three cases, the Board concluded that none of the claims of harassment was severe enough for it to compel any of the local boards to allow the student to open enroll out. Summaries and the full text of all three decisions are available on the DE's web site at: <https://www.edinfo.state.ia.us/web/appeals.asp?aptype=sb>. They were the only cases decided in November by the State Board, so they are the first three cases that appear on the list at that link.

Reminder that email is a public record

Administrators, please remind all employees that school email constitutes a public record. Points to consider:

- Email is analogous to regular mail, not to phone calls. Therefore, any email sent *or received* on a publicly owned computer, such as a school district computer, is a public record.
- Any email sent or received on a school district email account -- even if accessed via one's personal computer -- is a public record. Retrieving and responding to "LakeWobegon.k12.ia.us" email at home does NOT change the fact that the email is a public record.

- Start with the reality that ALL email is a public record. Some items within an email may legally be able to be expunged as “confidential.” An individual district employee shall not make this determination on his/her own. (For example, the name of a specific student usually, but not always, may be kept confidential. If necessary to use a student’s name in email, consider using first name and initial of last name [“Carol G.”].)
- The public can access public records. There are search engines by which email can be searched by topic or keyword. Keep this in mind when composing an email message. Avoid any comments you would not want attributed to you, whether they are derogatory, off-color, or subject to misinterpretation.
- Deleting an email from one’s computer does not destroy the record. Deleted email is still a public record, and may be retrieved.
- The district’s email accounts are property of the school district. Such accounts are not to be used for personal business or nonincidental personal correspondence.
- An employee’s password to access the account should never be given to anyone who has no legitimate need for it. If the superintendent or building principal gives approval for a password to be given to a co-worker it should be for a specific purpose and length of time.

CALENDAR

Deadlines and [Dates to Remember](#)

Dec. 1-9	Iowa Learns Council community forums ; various dates and locations.
December 10	Deadline for Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant applications.
December 14	Iowa High School Summit; Des Moines.
January 27, 2005	Conference on Bullying in Schools: Power & Empowerment
February 16-17, 2005	Iowa Culture and Language Conference , Des Moines (brochure attached)

CONGRATULATIONS

Governor Vilsack honored six districts with [“Breaking Barriers to Learning and Teaching”](#) awards at the November State Board Meeting for their success in reducing achievement gaps: Cedar Falls, Creston, Davenport, LeMars, Saydel and South Tama.

Two (2) Iowa high schools won national honors during the recent national FFA convention in Kentucky. The Montezuma FFA Chapter was named the National Winner in the Ag Communications Career Development Event. The Hudson FFA Chapter was named the National Winner in the Marketing Plan Career Development Event. In addition, three Iowa high school students were named national winners in the FFA Agriscience Fair. Michael Fosdick of the Mediapolis FFA Chapter placed first in the 7-9 Grade Individual Division in the Environmental Science section of the National FFA Agriscience Fair. Mallory Schon and Rachel Caraher of the Glidden-Ralston FFA Chapter placed first in the 10-12 Grade Team Division in the Environmental Science section of the National FFA Agriscience Fair.

SCHOOL LEADER UPDATE is produced monthly by the Iowa Department of Education for school leaders of Iowa. Comments and submissions should be sent to Kathi Slaughter, 515/281-5651, kathi.slaughter@iowa.gov.