Iowa's State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

Iowa Department of Education
June 1, 2015

The Iowa Department of Education is pleased to submit to the U.S. Department of Education the following plan that has been developed to address the long-term needs for improving equitable access to great teachers and leaders in Iowa. This plan responds to Education Secretary Arne Duncan's July 7, 2014, letter to SEAs, as augmented with additional guidance published on November 10, 2014. Iowa's plan complies with (1) the requirement in Section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that each state's Title I, Part A plan include information on the specific steps that the SEA will take to ensure that poor and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers, and the measures that the agency will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the agency with respect to such steps; and (2) the requirement in ESEA Section 1111(e)(2) that a state's plan be revised by the SEA if necessary. Given the importance of strong leadership, our plan also includes the specific steps that we will take to ensure that all students are attending schools led by highly qualified and effective principals.

This plan details our approach to achieving our objective of improving access to excellent educators for our state's most disadvantaged youth. However, Iowa is committed to

improving student outcomes across the state by expanding access to excellent teaching and leading for *all* students. As such, the plan is not just about increasing the effectiveness of educators in high-need districts, schools, and classrooms, but rather a comprehensive approach to strengthening and maintaining teacher and principal effectiveness across the state, with an emphasis on our schools and classrooms with the greatest need.

Section 1. Introduction and Overview

At the core of education in Iowa is the interaction between the student and teacher around content. To ensure that all Iowa children experience high levels of success and develop the capacity to continually grow and learn as successful citizens requires an effective teacher in every classroom surrounded by strong leadership with a clear and narrow focus on increasing learning for all students. Concentrating on the instructional core and ensuring all educators have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they need to create excellence and equity in Iowa's educational system is the foundation of our state's plan for ensuring equitable access to excellent educators.

Iowa is proud of the progress we have made to ensure that students in our high poverty/high minority schools are taught by highly qualified teachers with the same preparation and licensing credentials that we see in our low poverty/low minority schools. However, even though our data show that highly qualified teachers are equitably distributed among all of our schools, there continues to be significant achievement gaps between our minority students, our students of poverty, our English language learners, and our students with disabilities as compared to the rest of our students. Since educator qualifications do not

seem to explain these differences among subgroups in achievement, we are challenged to consider other factors that may explain observed differences in student learning outcomes. The research on the factors that most directly impact student learning pushed us to consider the impact of educator "effectiveness" as opposed to educator "qualifications" on our student learning outcomes. Ensuring that all educators have the opportunity to learn and grow professionally and continuously improve their instructional effectiveness appears to be a key next step to achieve our goal of excellence and equity in our educational system.

Slavin's quote below summarizes this perspective quite well:

> Every child can learn. Every school can ensure the success of every child.
>
> Statements to this effect appear in goals statements, commission reports, and school district offices. They are posted in school buildings and appear as mottoes on school stationery. But does our education system behave as if they are true?
>
> If we truly believed that every child could learn under the proper circumstances, we would be relentless in the search of those circumstances. We would use well-validated instructional methods and materials known to be capable of ensuring the success of nearly all children if used with intelligence, flexibility, and fidelity. We would involve teachers in constant, collaborative professional development activities to continually improve their abilities to reach every child. We would frequently assess children's performance to be sure that all students are on a path that leads to success, and to be able to respond immediately if children are not making adequate progress. If children were falling behind despite excellent instruction, we would try different instructional approaches, and . . . other intensive assistance. We would involve parents in support of their children's school success; . . .

If we truly believed that all schools could ensure the success of all children, then the failure of even a single child would be cause for great alarm and immediate, forceful intervention.

Source: "Every Child, Every School, Success for All." Robert Slavin, Nancy Madden, Lawrence Dolan, & Barbara Wasik. (1996). Thousand Oaks, CA; Corwin Press.

From the beginning of the work on our Equity Plan, we realized that Iowa's commitment to ensuring educational excellence and equity for all Iowa students requires that we disaggregate data by various sub-groups of students in order to understand the needs of all of our students. However, a guiding principle that provided focus and direction for developing our plan and determining actions was an understanding of the importance of being student centered and providing immediate intervention for any individual child as soon as they need it as the research based approach for closing gaps. In other words, even though we will continuously disaggregate data by subgroups to determine gaps and monitor progress, we will intervene at the individual child level, not the sub-group level.

To create this statewide equity plan, the Bureau of Educator Quality within the Iowa Department of Education (DE), a cross bureau internal work team within the DE, and an external stakeholder advisory group were led by the Deputy Director of the Department (also the Director of the Division of Learning and Results) and followed an action plan developed by the Bureau of Educator Quality. This action was intended to guide the work as we collaborated to review our current status, identify needs, define strategies, and develop plans for implementation of actions to ensure equitable access to highly effective teachers and leaders for all Iowa students.

Initial Action Plan for Developing the State Plan:

Action Plan for Developing a State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

Table 1: Work Team & Advisory Group – Recommendations from Educator Quality Bureau

Internal Work Team	External Vetting/Advisory Group
Charge: Regular/ongoing meetings as needed until plan is developed. Monthly or quarterly meetings during implementation and monitoring.	**Charge:** Meet in November, January, March, & May during plan development. Annual or bi-annual meetings during implementation and monitoring.

• Study data • Determine goals • Develop plan • Monitor implementation of plan	• Review data • Review goals and provide feedback • Review plan and provide feedback • Review plan implementation and provide suggestions and feedback
1. Equity Consultant from School Improvement Bureau 2. Title I Consultant from School Improvement Bureau 3. Title II Consultant from Educator Quality Bureau 4. Title III Consultant from Educator Quality Bureau 5. Educator Prep Consultant from Educator Quality Bureau 6. Representative from the Early Childhood Team 7. Representative from the Special Education Team 8. Representative from the BOEE 9. Representative from the Civil Rights office	1. Representative(s) from diverse populations within Iowa (e.g. Latino Leadership Team) 2. Local district teacher(s), administrator(s), school board member(s), parents 3. Representative(s) from the Iowa Civil Rights Commission 4. Representative(s) from Institutes of Higher Education with educator preparation programs 5. Representative from ISEA 6. Representative from SAI 7. Representative from IASB 8. Local district teacher(s), administrator(s), school board member(s) 9. Parents representing diversity in Iowa (including low SES families) 10. State legislator 11. Council on Educator Development – use them as a key vetting group during one of their meetings. (Covers most areas previously listed)
Supported by the Educator Quality Bureau: • Create back-up tools for use during plan development, implementation and monitoring • Identify and summarize resources to support plan development Other supporters: • DE attorneys as reviewers • BIAS for data support	

Table 2: Initial Action Plan:

Major Activities	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	
		Start	Frequency
1. Convene work team and advisory group 1.1. Convene internal work team 1.1.1. Schedule meetings Jan – May 1.1.2. Assign tasks related to major activities 1.2. Identify and recruit members for advisory group - invite to first meeting	1.1 Management Team 1.2 Work Team	1.1 Feb 1.2 Feb	Work Team - As needed Advisory Team - Feb., March, May
2. Scan of state data and initiatives 2.1. Review current equity plan and results of implementation 2.1.1. What was accomplished 2.1.2. What wasn't accomplished 2.1.3. What needs to continue 2.2. Gather and review state profile and other data as appropriate	Work Team & Advisory Team Support from EQ team and Bureau of IAS team 2.4 Work Team	Dec - Feb 2.4 Feb	Multiple meetings as needed

2.2.1. Identify data needs - Identify additional data to collect and organize for review (e.g. data related to PK certification) 2.2.2. Prepare data for review 2.2.3. Review data and identify gaps 2.3. Review other statewide equity initiatives 2.4. Share data/information and gather input for core principles and goals from stakeholders through regional meetings or webinars			
3. Set priorities 3.1. Define core principles – to focus and guide the work related to equitable access to excellent educators (vision for equitable access) 3.2. Define key terms (update previous terms and add new ones) 3.3. Conduct root cause analysis 3.4. Determine goals based on data 3.5. Identify roles and responsibilities related to goals 3.6. Identify measurable targets and timeline	Work Team Reviewed by Advisory Team Reviewed by Management Council	February	Multiple meetings as needed
4. Strategies to address Gaps 4.1. Review literature related to best practices in the area(s) of need 4.2. Identify strategic areas of work – including (as appropriate or needed) strategies related to. . . 4.2.1. Educator preparation and certification 4.2.2. Recruitment, selection, and hiring 4.2.3. Induction and mentoring 4.2.4. Evaluation and professional learning 4.2.5. Transfer and assignment 4.2.6. Compensation and incentives 4.2.7. Educator environment 4.3. Develop theory of action 4.4. Identify relevant metrics for monitoring implementation and impact of each strategic area of work 4.5. Identify sub-strategies for each strategic area of work 4.6. Identify performance objectives for each strategic area of work 4.7. Identify policy changes needed to implement strategies effectively 4.7.1. Changes in state or federal statutes 4.7.2. Revision of regulations or guidance 4.8. Identify critical partnerships	Work Team Reviewed by Advisory Team Reviewed by Council on Educator Development Reviewed by Management Council	Feb/March	Multiple meetings as needed

5. Implementation and Monitoring of State Equity Plan 5.1. Develop action plan and timeline for implementation and monitoring of strategies defined in the state equity plan 5.1.1. Essential activities to be accomplished 5.1.2. Timeline 5.1.3. SEA staff and others who are responsible 5.1.4. Resources necessary to complete key activities 5.2. Develop communication plan related to new state plan 5.3. Develop plan for publicly reporting progress	Work Team Reviewed by Advisory Team	Feb/March	Multiple meetings as needed
6. Develop and submit state equity plan (Including implementation and monitoring plan) 6.1. Draft state equity plan 6.2. Review by Advisory Team 6.3. Vet with other groups as needed 6.4. Expert Review (April) 6.5. Modify based on feedback and finalize plan 6.6. Submit state equity plan by June 1, 2015	Work Team	March-May	Multiple meetings as needed
7. Implementation and Monitoring of the State Plan 7.1. Implement plan 7.2. Conduct ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement of the plan	All	Fall, 2015	Ongoing

As a result of this work, Iowa has identified one goal, three outcomes, and six key strategies to increase teacher and leader effectiveness and improve excellence and equity within our system:

Equitable Access to "Highly Effective" Teachers – Equity Plan Goals:

Goal: To ensure all students have equitable access to highly effective teachers and leaders.

Equitable Access to "Highly Effective" Teachers – Equity Plan Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Achievement gaps between sub-groups of Iowa students and all Iowa students decrease

Outcome 2: Teachers have increased/improved instructional capacity for ensuring high levels of learning for all students

Outcome 3: Leaders create cultures of learning for everyone

Equitable Access to "Highly Effective" Teachers – Equity Plan Key Strategies:

In order to help all Iowa teachers and leaders increase their effectiveness in relation to generating high and equitable student learning we will. . .

Strategy 1: Implement multi-tiered systems of support in all Iowa schools that are sustained by evidence based practices, early warning systems and ongoing progress monitoring

Strategy 2: Create and support coaching networks that focus on building the capacity of teachers and leaders to create effective cultures of learning for students and adults

Strategy 3: Create structures and supports for increasing teacher leadership roles within Iowa schools

Strategy 4: Create a statewide structure for scaling instructional improvement initiatives with consistent levels of support and accountability at the local, state, and regional level

Strategy 5: Create and implement a statewide differentiated accountability system aligned to our continuous improvement model

Strategy 6: Create a statewide definition of effective teaching which can guide strategic actions focused on improving teaching and learning.

Iowa's Context and Demographic Information

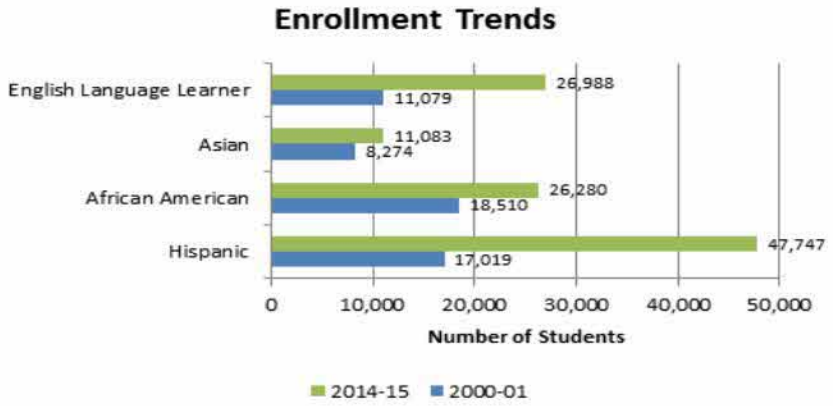
The Iowa Education school system serves a wide range of students demographically and economically. Over the past decade, Iowa's student population is shifting and becoming more diverse.

The percent increase in the number of students since 2000:

- 188% - Hispanic
- 42% - African American
- 34% - Asian
- 144% - English Language Learner

Iowa continues to see increases in the number of students who come from diverse backgrounds and don't speak English as their native language. In October 2014, 21.1 percent of Iowa students were racial or ethnic minorities. This compares with approximately 10 percent of Iowa students who were minorities in 2000. Overall, this is a 108 percent increase in minority students over this 14 year period. This change in the student population suggests that many of Iowa school districts have seen a significant increase the types of students they educate as well as the families they engage.

Figure 1: Enrollment Trends



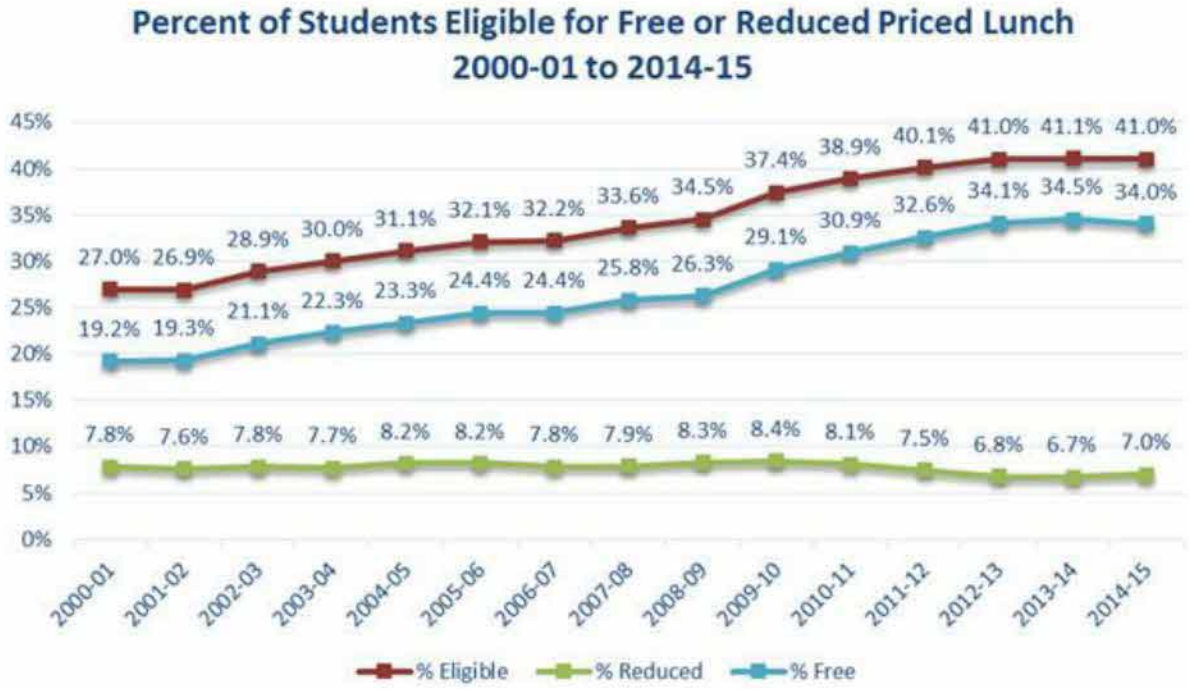
Along with the changes in student population, there is also large diversity in the school districts responsible for serving Iowa's students. In the 2014-15 school year there were 338 school districts which ranged for rural to urban and small to large. Ten percent of Iowa school districts are responsible for serving 51 percent of the student population. The other 90 percent of districts educate the other 49 percent of students.

Table 3: Iowa Demographics

Student Enrollment	Number of Districts	% of Districts	Number of Students	% of Students
< 300	40	11.8%	8493	1.8%
300 to 599	103	30.5%	46746	9.7%
600 to 999	87	25.7%	65111	13.5%
1,000 to 2,499	75	22.2%	113777	23.7%
2,500 to 7,500	22	6.5%	94788	19.7%
> 7,500	11	3.3%	151857	31.6%
Total	338	100.0%	480772	100.0%

Free-or-reduced priced lunch eligibility is the proximate measure for economic diversity in Iowa's schools. For the first time since Iowa has begun collecting student eligibility data, there was a slight decline in the percentage of students eligible for free-or-reduced priced lunch. In the 2014-15 school year, 41 percent of students in Iowa schools were eligible. This was a slight decrease of .1 percentage point from the 2013-14 school year. When looking closer at the changes in the 2014-15 school year, there was a slight increase in the percent of students eligible for free lunch and a slight decline in the percent of students eligible for reduced price lunch. Long term trends show a significant change in the percentage of students that are living in poverty. In the 2000-01 school year, 27 percent of students were eligible for free-or-reduced priced lunch. Over the 15 year period from 2000-01 to 2014-15, there was a 14 percentage point increase which is close to one percentage point gain per year in this population.

Figure 2: Percent of Student Eligible for Free or Reduced Priced Lunch



A Scan of Educational Equity Efforts in Iowa

In addition to the current equity plan in Iowa (2006) guiding our work on equity and excellence, there are three major efforts to monitor and promote educational equity. The first is the Educational Equity Review Process, the second is Technical Assistance, and the third is our early childhood focus on equity and cultural competence.

The Educational Equity Review Process is impacted by major federal nondiscrimination legislation such as:

- Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act
  "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds or race, color or national origin be excluded from, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."
- Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act
  Title VII prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or gender in educational agencies with fifteen or more employees. Areas such as recruitment, hiring, promotion, salaries, benefits and retirement are covered.

- Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972
  "No person shall, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
  "No otherwise qualified persons with disabilities shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."
- Guidelines for Eliminating Discrimination and Denial of Services on the Basis of Race, Color, National Origin, Gender and Disability in Vocational Education Programs, 1979
  As a result of the court ruling in Adams vs. Califano, state education agencies are required to develop methods of administration for assuring sub-recipient's compliance with Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
  This Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all services, programs, and activities of the public and private sector regardless of funding source.

Educational Equity Review Process

The methods of administration process is monitored by the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education and it requires all states to have an approved targeting plan to determine which districts and community colleges will be selected for a focused equity review each year. There are several criteria identified in the targeting plan. The universe from which sub-recipients are selected for equity reviews includes all the school districts with secondary career and technical education (CTE) programs, community colleges with post-secondary CTE programs, and districts/community colleges which have not had an equity review in the past six years. The criteria used to select districts from that universe include: (1) A review of course and program enrollment data in CTE programs disaggregated on the basis of gender, disability and racial/ethnic background; (2) Changing demographics within the boundaries of an educational agency; (3) Complaints received from parents, students, staff, applicants for employment or community representatives and referrals from Department of Education staff or other state or regional

agencies; and (4) The time elapsed since the district's last equity review. The number of visits conducted each year is determined through a calculation based on the number of school districts and community colleges in the state. In Iowa, for the 2015-2016 school year, there will be seven equity visits conducted in local education agencies and one in a community college.

The notification of the Equity Visit is done during the month of May, and each sub-recipient selected to receive an on-site review during the following school year is notified by letter with information about the review and the identity of the review team leader. In September and October of each year there are orientation sessions presented for educational agencies having school improvement visits with a focus on equity. Participants receive:

- Materials to be reviewed
- Persons to be interviewed
- Sample Equity Site Visit Schedule
- Document Review Checklist
- Equity Review On-Site Review Manual
- Equity Data Table

The on-site reviews may be 3-5 days in length. This will vary with the size of the agency being reviewed. The equity on-site review team consists of 6-15 members. The number of team members varies with the size of the educational agency being reviewed. Team members use the document review checklist to ensure all documents required for equity site visits are reviewed. Timeline for submission is no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of the visit. The team also reviews the district's EdInsight Equity Reports. This gives the team a window into the equity data available to the district.

Once on the visit equity-related questions are asked through focused interviews. The following individuals/groups may be interviewed:

- Equity Coordinator(s)

- Middle and High School Counselors
- Secondary English As a Second Language Teacher(s)
- Employment, Personnel and Human Resource Coordinator
- Physical Facilities/Buildings & Grounds Staff
- Parents of students with disabilities
- Parents of English Language Learners
- Middle and High School students
- Career and Technical Education Teachers
- Building Principals
- Superintendent
- Equity Committee (if applicable)

Building accessibility is also monitored through specific protocols. Places such as parking lots, building entrances, lobbies, gyms, auditoriums, etc. are looked at to ensure proper accessibility.

After the visit districts receive a letter of findings from the on-site review. Agencies will be notified of the results of the review within approximately sixty calendar days. The equity *letter of findings* (LOF) will include areas of strength and observations, recommendations for improvement and any areas of noncompliance. The district will be asked to respond to the areas of noncompliance by submitting a *voluntary compliance plan* (VCP). LOFs are submitted to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights with the Iowa Department of Education's Biennial Report.

The LOF will summarize the Iowa Department of Education's findings in the following eight major areas of review:

I. Administrative Requirements;
II. Recruitment, Admissions and Counseling;
III. Accessibility;
IV. Comparable Facilities;
V. Services for Students with Disabilities;
VI. Financial Assistance;
VII. Work-study, Cooperative Programs, and Job Placements;

VIII. Employment

After receiving the equity LOF the school district/community college has sixty calendar days to submit a VCP to the Department of Education (DE). The VCP will include the statement of noncompliance, district action plan to remedy each of the areas of noncompliance, the evidence of correction that will be submitted, the staff person(s) responsible for each action, and a reasonable projected timeline for completing the action (month and year). Implementation of a remedy should be prompt, but reasonable in light of its difficulty. If a remedy cannot be implemented for more than a year, the VCP should describe an interim plan for accommodating students while the remedy is pending. A sample plan format is provided in Appendix A in the equity LOF. All plans must be signed by the superintendent or chief administrative officer. Department staff will review the VCP and contact the district if revisions are needed. The district will receive written approval when the final plan is accepted. Approved VCPs are submitted to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights with the Iowa Department of Education's Biennial Report. Occasionally, the Office for Civil Rights requires further revisions of VCPs even after the plan had been approved by Department staff and/or requires submission of supplemental information even after the equity file has been closed. In this case, DE staff will contact the district to make required revisions or provided supplemental information.

The equity team leader is responsible for monitoring equity visit non-compliances. If the VCP is not received at the DE within sixty calendar days of the equity LOF being sent to the school district, the equity consultant notifies the district. During the second semester of the year following the on-site visit, the equity team leader will return to the district to monitor progress

toward the implementation of the VCP. During the on-site follow up visit the equity consultant will determine if all non-compliances have been corrected.

The procedure for continued monitoring after the initial follow-up visit by the team leader includes an email to the district outlining the components of the VCP that have been completed. If all the components of the plan have been completed, the district will receive an email notifying them that the equity review file is being closed by the DE. If more time is needed to implement one or more compliance items, a new short-term timeline may be arranged. DE staff will continue to monitor all the unfinished components until they are satisfactorily implemented. The date the equity review file is closed is noted in the Iowa Department of Education's Biennial Report to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. The Office for Civil Rights may request supplementary information from the district any time during the process and occasionally after the file has been closed at the DE.

In the event a district does not submit a voluntary compliance plan, or does not show good faith effort to complete its voluntary compliance plan, the State Director, on behalf of the State Board, will take one of following actions:

- Notify the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (federal law)
- Notify the Iowa Civil Rights Commission or the Attorney General's Office (state law except Chapter 256)
- Inform the school accreditation process

Educational Equity Technical Assistance

The Iowa Department of Education (DE) also offers ongoing technical assistance to districts across the state on equitable access issue. For example, the Iowa Department of Education conducted a Statewide Civil Rights Training in March, 2015 for school district and community college representatives to learn more about their obligations under federal civil rights laws. The

training included presentations by many experts on civil rights and education. In addition to compliance obligations, the training was focused on creating climates for access, integration and inclusion for all students, families and communities. In addition, the day focused on a recognition of the value of diversity in persons and perspectives and the imperative that we create environments in which all members of our community have opportunities to thrive. Guiding questions included: How do we sustain diversity in education in real, concrete ways? How has your own personal/professional experiences shaped your appreciation for diversity? How do civil rights laws provide a foundation for access, integration and inclusion of everyone in our communities? How is Iowa changing and what is the process for developing cultural proficiency in classrooms and schools? Where do we find tools and resources for educators?

Providing ongoing technical assistance is an important component of our ongoing work to ensure that all students are given access to a high quality educational system. In addition, significant work towards equity has been engaged by our network of early childhood education providers under the guidance of Early Childhood Iowa.

Iowa's Early Childhood Iowa's Focus on Equity and Cultural Competence

Iowa has been working on teacher equity issue as part of its early childhood system development work. In 2007, the Early Childhood Diversity Advisory Committee sponsored one of the nation's first Early Childhood Diversity Conferences. The Advisory Committee was part of the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholder Alliance, a group that eventually became the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council (as described in PL 110-134; c.f. 42 USC 9801 §642B et seq.). The proceedings from the conference were turned into a strategic plan that was organized around

five "diversity gaps," based on the work of BUILD ("Building Early Childhood Systems in a Multi-Ethnic Society"). Two of the gaps directly addressed the workforce, a cultural awareness and recognition gap, and a workforce diversity gap. These two areas of the plan challenged the state with two questions: Is our professional workforce as diverse as the children and families it serves? Are all service providers culturally competent? The plan called on the state to increase workforce diversity by:

- Assessing the current level of diversity within each early childhood workforce (early learning, family support, health, mental health and nutrition, and special needs/early intervention)
- Identifying and promoting intentional and proactive recruitment of diverse populations into each workforce
- Providing scholarships and forgivable loans to encourage more diversity within career preparation degrees and coursework
- Creating programs for mentoring and supporting a diverse work force.

The plan also called on increasing the cultural competence of the workforce by:

- Making the case for why a culturally competent workforce is needed
- Developing cultural competences that can be embedded in training and career preparation coursework
- Ensuring cultural competence is a valued and expected skill for all members of the early childhood workforce

These efforts embraced all professions that touched the lives of young children, but accomplishments that directly impact teachers, including child care providers, are:

- The development of cultural competences and a training to introduce them to teachers. Trainings have included Head Start teachers, Child Care Resource and Referral trainers, AEA staff Trainers and others.
- Including cultural competence as part of Iowa's early childhood teacher competencies established in 2009
- Embedding cultural competence and inclusion content into early childhood community college course work
- Expanding a teacher scholarship program (T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Iowa) as a way to remove access barriers for teachers of color.

- Ongoing monitoring racial and ethnic disparities of children's outcome data using a statewide license for Teaching Strategies GOLD.
- Including preschool children into Iowa's MTSS system
- Participating in BUILD Initiative work on early childhood system equity

Section 2. Stakeholder Engagement

It was the belief of administrators within the Iowa Department of Education that a successful state plan for teacher and leader effectiveness in Iowa could not be developed solely by the department staff. Rather, the plan's success would depend in large part on the involvement and ownership of other stakeholders that have a vested interest in the success of Iowa's schools and in the success of all Iowa students. Two main stakeholder groups were formed to guide and provide feedback regarding the development of this plan. First, the Department convened an internal work team made up of staff with specific expertise related to issues of equitable access. This group included seventeen representatives from diverse and varied backgrounds. These stakeholders included representatives from Title I, II, and III programs, the Board of Educational Examiners, the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, early childhood, special education, our state equity coordinator, higher education, and the standards and curriculum bureau. This group met monthly to identify gaps, conduct a root cause analysis, and identify strategies to address the root causes.

Second, the Department worked with an external stakeholder group to provide a feedback loop and sounding board for the creation of the equitable access plan. The group includes twenty-seven members with representation from higher education, K-12 teachers and administrators, parents, legislators, the Iowa State Education Association, the Iowa Association of School Boards, School Administrators of Iowa and area education agencies, etc.

Representatives from the internal team met with this group every month over the course of four months to gather feedback about the work of the internal team. Feedback was then taken back to the internal team for consideration and discussion.

These two groups are described in the table below. These stakeholders have been involved from the beginning and will continue to do so as they oversee the implementation and improvement of this plan.

Table 4: Work Team & Advisory Group – Recommendations from Educator Quality Bureau

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Supported by the Educator Quality Bureau: • Create back-up tools for use during plan development, implementation and monitoring • Identify and summarize resources to support plan development Other supporters: • DE attorneys as reviewers • BIAS for data support	

Work Team & Advisory Group

Key Stakeholders for Developing and Implementing the Iowa Equity Plan

The Bureau of Educator Quality began working on background information for the Equity Plan in November of 2014. The internal work team, with numerous representatives from the Educator Quality Bureau, began meeting in March of 2015 and planned a minimum of four face to face meetings prior to the submission deadline. Additional work days were added as needed. The group began by reviewing the overall charge of the Federal Equitable Access to Excellent Educators plan. This helped set the stage for analyzing state data provided by the U.S. Department of Education. The team first looked at the Educator Equity Profile holistically and had a conversation about what the data means for Iowa. When looking at the educator quality data such as the percent of classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified the team noted there were few gaps in relation to the student achievement data. An assumption was made that Iowa's achievement gaps may not be correlated with issues of students being taught by teachers who are not highly qualified, based on the data provided.

Next, the team divided into smaller groups and analyzed specific aspects of the data in relation to student achievement gaps. The team noted that gaps were present, and increasing over time when looking at subgroups of students in the content areas of reading and mathematics.

The team also reviewed the state's 2006 Equity Plan. This was beneficial for team members to review the progress of previous efforts related to equitable access. Based on the 2006 plan, team members discussed how implementation could be improved to ensure continued focus on equitable access to highly effective teaching as well as increase accountability on the part of the Iowa Department of Education for ensuring success.

The team discussed how we must embed supports to ensure equitable access to highly effective teaching into current state initiatives in order to see the greatest success. Four state initiatives were identified as key focus areas for this work. These initiatives include: Iowa Core Standards, Differentiated Accountability, Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) and MTSS and Early Literacy. The team felt connecting to these initiatives provided the greatest opportunity for successful implementation and accountability.

A key piece of Iowa's State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators is defining terminology related to issues of equity. Once given the list of key terms, the team identified terms for which a definition had already been established as the official definition. Other terms were researched and definitions were established based upon a collection of feedback. Finally, the team agreed upon definitions for each key term.

As a next step in our work, the Deputy Director of the Iowa Department of Education led the internal team through a root cause analysis using the "five whys" strategy. We started out looking at this problem statement: "The significant achievement gaps in Iowa for our minority students (specifically our African-American and Hispanic students), children in poverty, ELL students, and students with disabilities cannot be explained by the factors observed in other states such as teacher qualifications, distribution of first/second year teachers, teacher salary differences, or teaching outside the field of preparation. Why do we have these gaps in achievement?" The team broke into two groups and after completing the activity identified two main "whys" to hypothesize why we have achievement gaps. Details of this process and the outcomes are further described in Section 3 of this plan.

After completing the root cause analysis, the team used the Data Metrics Template developed by the Center on Great Teacher and Leaders to identify what data metrics we currently collect. Additionally we discussed what data would be pertinent to collect in the future to systematically review and accurately report our progress in the area of equity. These metrics are based on our identified goals of the plan.

Members of the team began working to compile aspects of the equity plan to ensure the opportunity for feedback by the external advisory team. Because of this the entire team spent the third meeting revising and refining a draft of the plan that would be submitted for feedback.

External Advisory Team

The external team included members of various stakeholder groups such as the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA), Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB), School Administrators of Iowa (SAI), Area Education Agencies (AEAs), consultants with the Board of Education Examiners (BOEE), teachers, higher education personnel, administrators, parents, etc. We used a team already in place, called the Council on Educator Development, in order to streamline our feedback process.

At the first meeting with the external advisory team we provided background information on the process for submitting our state equity plan and a snapshot of Iowa's current achievement status. At subsequent meetings the team processed data, considered possible strategies, and reviewed background information. In addition, the external team processed the root cause analysis completed by the internal team. The external team looked specifically at our developed outcomes and strategies, root cause analysis, and definitions. We

asked the external team to provide feedback on what was unclear and what was entirely missing from these aspects of the plan.. We also asked the team to provide feedback on what information would be the most valuable for them to receive regarding the monitoring and reporting of the plan. This feedback was critical for us to understand how to best meet the needs of all stakeholders in the delivery of the plan.

Equity Team Members:

Table 5: Internal Equity Team

Name	Organization	Title
Isbelia Arzola	Iowa Department of Education	Title II Coordinator
Larry Bice	Iowa Department of Education	Educator Preparation
Mike Cavin	Board of Educational Examiners	Consultant
Mary Delagardelle	Iowa Department of Education	Associatte Division Administrator
Matthew Femrite	Iowa Civil Rights Commission	Consultant
Margaret Jensen Connet	Iowa Department of Education	Equity Coordinator
Jobi Lawrence	Iowa Department of Education	English Language Learner Consultant
Matt Ludwig	Iowa Department of Education	Teacher/Leader Preparation
Ellen McGinnis-Smith	Iowa Department of Education	Special Education Consultant
Geri McMahon	Iowa Department of Education	Title I Coordinator
Jay Pennington	Iowa Department of Education	Bureau Chief, Bureau of Information and Analysis Services
Tom Rendon	Iowa Department of Education	Early Childhood Consultant
Carole Richardson	Iowa Department of Education	Educator Preparation
Marietta Rives	Iowa Department of Education	Educator Quality Consultant
David Tilly	Iowa Department of Education	Division Administrator and Deputy Director
Angela VanPolen	Iowa Department of Education	Early Childhood Consultant
Stefanie Wager	Iowa Department of Education	Social Studies Consultant

Table 6: External Equity Advisory Team

Name	Organization	Title
Elaine Baughman	Harlan Community School District	Special Education Teacher
Brad Buck	Iowa Department of Education	Director
Tom Buckmiller	Drake University	Professor

J.D. Cryer	University of Northern Iowa	Field Experience Coordinator
Carol Farver	Newton Community School District	Principal
David Fox	Waverly-Shellrock Community School District	Principal
Roberta Haas	MFL Mar Mac Community School District	Teacher
Joel Illian	Pekin Community School District	Special Education Teacher
Ron Jorgensen	Iowa Legislator	State Representative
Joe Judge	Albia Community School District	Teacher
Michelle Lettington	Waukee Community School District	Executive Director of Curriculum and Professional Learning
Josie Lewis	Iowa Association of School Boards	Attorney
Matt Ludwig	Iowa Department of Education	Consultant
Patty Link	Parent Representative	Parent
Herman Quirmbach	Iowa Legislator	State Senator
Darren Reade	Monticello Community School District	Teacher
Patti Roush	Denison Community School District	Teacher
Derek Schulte	Southeast Polk Community School District	Teacher
Jon Sheldahl	Great Prairie Area Education Agency	Chief Administrator
Amy Sinclair	Iowa Legislator	State Senator
Bev Smith	Waterloo Community Schools	Associate Superintendent for Human Resources and Equity
Dan Smith	School Administrators of Iowa	Executive Director
Billy Strickler	Fairfield Community School District	Teacher
Joanne Tubbs	Iowa Board of Educational Examiners	Licensure Consultant
Dave Versteeg	Montezuma Community School District	Superintendent
Tammy Wawro	Iowa State Education Association	President
Cindy Winckler	Iowa Legislator	State Representative

Section 3. Equity Gap Exploration and Analysis

Definition of Terms

As a beginning step in the development of our statewide plan for ensuring equal distribution of highly effective teachers, we did a scan of current definitions of key terms and began creating definitions of additional terms that would be needed.

Beginning Teacher: (paraphrased, IAC 282-13.2)
A beginning teacher is a teacher who meets the following requirements:

- Has successfully completed an approved practitioner preparation program.
- Holds an initial or intern teacher license issued by the Board of Educational Examiners.
- Participates in a two year state-approved mentoring and induction program, if employed in an Iowa public school.

Career Teacher: (IAC 282-13.7(272)
A career teacher is a teacher who holds a Standard or Master Educator License after meeting the following requirement:

- Shows evidence of successful completion of a state-approved mentoring and induction program by meeting the Iowa teaching standards as determined by a comprehensive evaluation and two years successful teaching experience in an Iowa public school. Or,
- Provides evidence of three years of successful teaching in a nonpublic Iowa school, or out-of-state school.

Unqualified Teacher:
Any teacher who lacks the appropriate grade-level teaching license and/or academic content endorsement for the grade level and subject area in which they teach.

Qualified or Highly Qualified Teacher:
NCLB and IDEA legislation requires all teachers to hold a bachelor's degree, a teaching license, and the state required endorsement for all subject areas taught. In Iowa, all teachers meet the highly qualified teacher requirements if they carry the appropriate grade-level teaching license and academic content endorsement for the grade level and subject areas they teach.

Out-of-field Teacher:
An out-of-field teacher is any person who teaches one or more classes in subjects for which he or she does not have an endorsement, and has not applied for the proper endorsement.

Class B License: (IAC 282-13.11)

A Class B license, which is valid for two years and which is nonrenewable, may be issued to an individual under the following conditions:

- The individual has a valid initial, standard, master educator, permanent professional, Class A (one-year extension of an initial, standard, or master educator), exchange, or professional service license with one or more endorsements but is seeking to obtain some other endorsement.
- Is requested by an employing school district.
- If the individual seeking to obtain some other endorsement has completed at least two-thirds of the requirements, or one-half of the content requirements in a state-designated shortage area, leading to completion of all requirements for the endorsement.

Low Income Student:

A low income student is any student who is enrolled in an accredited elementary, middle or secondary school in this state and qualifies for free or reduced lunch. Children from families at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free meals and children from families between 130 and 185 percent of the poverty levels are eligible for reduced-priced meals.

Minority Student:

A minority student is any person who is enrolled in an accredited elementary, middle or secondary school in the state and self identifies as either African-American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic or two or more races.

Effective or Highly Effective Teaching (an unfinished DRAFT)**:**

Effective teaching contributes to and results in student learning – students becoming increasingly knowledgeable and skilled across the breadth and depth of the curriculum. Instructional practices can be reviewed in six research-based domains shown to be important for contributing to improved student learning:

- Teachers know how to use their repertoire of instructional skills, strategies, and models to facilitate learning.
- Teachers are committed to students and their learning – to a student centered classroom.
- Teachers have deep content knowledge in their subject area.
- Teachers are able to manage the learning environment to enhance student learning.

- Teachers think systematically about their practice and continually work to improve it. Teachers are learners and members of learning communities that study their content, instruction, and student learning effects.
- Teachers regularly use data to make decisions regarding their practice to enhance learning outcomes. Teachers have the capacity to accurately manage, monitor and report student learning.

Student Achievement/Student Learning:

Students demonstrate growth and proficiency in relation to the Iowa Core Standards appropriate to their grade. These two terms are often used interchangeably; however, for our purposes they will be defined as two related but separate concepts:

- Student achievement is the status of subject-matter knowledge, understanding and skills at one point in time.
- Student learning is the growth in subject-matter knowledge, understanding and skills over time.

Data Study

Approaching the problem of equity in education requires a multi-faceted analysis informed by data, experience and the evidence-base. Iowa has undertaken a systematic, systemic and deep analysis process to examine our available data both cross-sectionally and longitudinally. We have engaged various groups of stakeholders to review data, help with root cause analysis and make recommendations for actions that the system may take to address the issues that are identified. Throughout these analyses, Iowa has maintained a consistent focus on student learning needs and an awareness that we can do anything, but not everything. We want this plan to be a living document, aligned with and complementary to other important state activities. And we want to be sure that the actions we plan are committed to and carried out for the benefit of all Iowa students. This philosophy permeated every conversation and meeting we have had related to equity.

The internal and external work teams worked independently and replicated the data study process resulting in something of a cross validation. In some cases the two different groups identified different observations about the data and their implications, which were then taken to the other group for consideration. Often the groups' observations were similar. Through using an iterative process for data review, reflection and interaction between the various stakeholder groups, Iowa conducted a thorough review of its relevant data that provided a solid basis to conduct a root-cause analysis.

As a starting point for examining issues of equity in education, the Iowa Department of Education and our internal work team discussed our perspective on equity in education. We discussed equity from two broad perspectives: equity in access to high quality teaching and equity in learning results. It was decided that our analysis would include both, since simple access to high quality teachers/teaching means little if that education does not produce equity in results for all of our learners. We further decided to include four groups of learners in our equity analysis: Students from minority groups, students with disabilities, students who live in poverty and students who are second language learners. Finally, for our initial data examination, we used the general problem-identification standard that a "problem is defined by the difference between what is expected and what occurs" (Shinn, 1989). In our data sets, then, problems would be objectively defined through the identification of significant and meaningful gaps in access or result for the specific subgroups when compared with all students.

Iowa's data study began by examining issues of equitable access to quality teachers. These variables were examined by closely analyzing the Iowa Equity Educator Profile data provided by US Department of Education (see Appendix 1). These profiles were examined by

both our internal and external work teams. In particular, our teams were looking for situations where minority students or students living in poverty were systematically being educated by less qualified teachers. We examined the data template and specifically were looking for gaps in access to high quality teachers. We used the template to identify the metrics currently available to and collected by the Department. Of the 58 data points included in the template, the Department currently collects approximately 22. The internal work team considered almost all of the metrics useful to assess future performance.

Our analysis of the Educator Equity Profile data revealed no significant discrepancies for low income and high minority schools and classrooms in terms of percent of first year teachers, teachers without proper licenses, teachers not highly qualified, or teacher salaries. Though our analyses of these data, it became clear that the only area where there appeared to be sizeable gap in access related to minority students and the percent of their teachers who were absent from school more than 10 days. There was a 16% gap in the percent of teachers in the highest minority quartile schools. All other variables related to high quality teachers appeared to our review teams to be quite small in size and likely attributable to error. Moreover, size of the gaps observed between minority students' and students' living in poverty and other students were so small as to be practically meaningless as targets for intervention. Current state laws, monitoring and hiring practices have virtually eliminated issues in the area of educator services.

As a second step in the problem identification step of our equity analysis, our teams examined the issue of "equity of results." The basic philosophy behind this analysis was that an equitable education system should provide equity in results for students. That is, an equitable system should provide roughly equivalent learning results for all students in the system. To

examine this hypothesis, our teams examined our state's student achievement data in the core education areas of Reading and Mathematics. We used statewide data of student learning results from our state accountability assessments, the Iowa Tests. As a basis for our analysis, we extracted a series of pages from the Iowa Condition of Education report (Appendix 2: Iowa Department of Education, 2014). We asked both of our work teams to perform the same gap analysis using a data summary and analysis protocol that was internally created (Appendix 3). In essence, we broke our groups into small work teams to examine the size of the achievement gaps observed in Iowa between all students and our four priority subgroups (second language learners, students with disabilities, minority students and students who live in poverty). The groups identified both the size of the achievement gaps as well as the trends in the size of the gaps. That is, are the size of the gaps increasing or decreasing over time? The groups were consistent in their observations and results of this analysis are presented in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7: Reading Achievement Gaps in Iowa

	Fourth			Eighth			Eleventh		
	Percent Proficient	Gap Percent	Gap Trend*	Percent Proficient	Gap Percent	Gap Trend	Percent Proficient	Gap Percent	Gap Trend
All Students	75.4	-	-	70.4	-	-	82.7		
Students Living in Poverty	62.5	12.9	same	54.8	15.6	same	66.5	19.5	same
Students with Disabilities	32.7	42.7	widening	22.0	48.4	same	32.5	50.2	same
English Language Learners	46.1	29.3	Same	24.6	46	widening	31.3	51.4	same
Minority Students									
African American	48.6	26.8	widening	42.0	28.4	widening	54.1	28.6	same
Hispanic									
Asian	57.7	17.7	widening	53.4	17.0	same	67.5	15.2	narrowing
American Indian	74.0	1.4	narrowing	70.9	-0.5	same	74.3	8.4	same
	60.5	14.9	widening	50.1	20.3	widening	71.5	11.2	ess

*Note – Gap trend refers to whether the proficiency gap is widening, staying the same or lessening over time. All coefficients taken from Iowa Condition of Education Report 2013, Iowa Department of Education.

Table 8: Math Achievement Gaps in Iowa

	Fourth			Eighth			Eleventh		
	Percent Proficient	Gap Percent	Gap Trend*	Percent Proficient	Gap Percent	Gap Trend	Percent Proficient	Gap Percent	Gap Trend
All Students	78.8	-	-	74.7	-	-	82.6	-	-
Students Living in Poverty	67.3	11.5	same	58.7	16.0	widening	66.5	16.1	same
Students with Disabilities	44.1	34.7	widening	26.9	47.8	widening	32.5	50.1	same
English Language Learners	58.6	20.2	narrowing	33.7	41	widening	31.3	51.3	same
Minority Students									
African American	62.5	16.3	widening	42.1	32.6	widening	53.3	29.3	same
Hispanic									
Asian	49.7	29.1	widening	56.4	18.3	same	68.5	14.1	less
American Indian	82.7	-3.9	same	80.9	-3.2	same	82.7	-0.1	less
	66.2	12.6	narrowing	52.7	22.0	widening	68.0	14.6	ess

*Note – Gap trend refers to whether the proficiency gap is widening, staying the same or lessening over time. All coefficients taken from Iowa Condition of Education Report 2013, Iowa Department of Education.

The overall conclusions from both groups' analysis of student learning data were consistent and sobering:

1. With the exception of Asian students, all of our important subgroups (minority students, students living in poverty, students with disabilities and students who are second language learners) had large and persistent achievement gaps as compared with all students;
2. These gaps have been in place across many years of data collection

3. In some cases these gaps are widening over time. That is, fewer percentages of students in those subgroups are achieving proficient status on our large-scale accountability assessment;
4. Even in cases where the gaps appear over time to be lessening, the rate of improvement on closing the gap is extremely slow.

Taken together, results from the teams' problem identification were clear and compelling. In summary, it appeared to both work groups that there was "equity of inputs" at a general level as measured by the data set provided by USDE. The one area where there appeared to be a difference was ultimately considered unreliable by the work teams for the following reasons. The internal and external work teams both were interested in examining the issue of teacher absences more deeply and to collect additional data on "which schools" this phenomenon was true for, what were these schools characteristics etc. On following up with those who collected these data, reviewing the data collection methodologies and examining what additional data were available in Iowa on teacher absences, the work teams hit a dead end with this variable. The teams were informed that this variable was likely the most unreliable indicator in the entire data set shared with Iowa by the USDE and the state did not have access to any additional data to confirm nor disconfirm this factor as a reliable indicator within our state. Moreover, it is unclear that a gap of the observed size could account for the magnitude of the achievement gaps observed. Indeed, in isolation, this variable (percent of teachers absent 10 or more days) was determine to be quite distal to student learning, likely not readily intervenable in Iowa given our employment laws and likely not accounting for much of the extremely large gaps in student learning we observed. As such, this variable was exited

from consideration for intervention as the teams entered the root cause analysis phase of the equity plan creation.

Root Cause Analysis

Since it did not appear that the teacher characteristics studied in the initial data study could explain the differences observed in the achievement data, the groups then needed to ask critical questions regarding the root causes for the significant gaps within the achievement data. Significant empirical literature documents that the factors most directly related to learning are those closest to instruction (e.g., Hattie, 2009, 2012). Some of these variables relate to teacher characteristics and quality, but as we've seen to this point in our analysis, those variables do not appear to be inequitably distributed across Iowa. Indeed, nearly all Iowa students have high quality teachers available to them. What then, can account for the large gaps in achievement observed by the work teams? The hypotheses needed to answer this question and write an action plan are the subject of this next section.

This phase of planning is often called the problem analysis phase or the "Root Cause Analysis." Its purpose is to synthesize information from all available sources and to posit informed and high probability answers to the question "what might be true that accounts for the large observed gaps in student performance?" The answers to these questions can then be translated into actions to intervene on those factors. Doing the problem analysis process well, and ensuring that interventions are matched well to the causes of observed problem (gaps) is one key to ensuring that action plans have a high likelihood of success.

Before engaging the team in a causal analysis, a number of parameters needed to be put in place to ensure an effective plan is created. Ken Howell (2001, personal communication) has called these parameters "rules for determine presumed causes."' Their importance cannot be understated. The most important of these rules are:

1. Identify variables as close to the problem as possible: Variables closest to the problem typically are the most powerful in solving the problem. So in this case, variables directly related to teaching and learning are more preferable than things like family constellation, where students live or family income;
2. Identify variables with the most direct relationship to the problem: Variables known to be directly related to the result are those that should be considered (e.g., in this case things like instruction, curriculum etc.)
3. Prioritize variables for analysis based on their effect size: while there are likely many factors contributing to the observed gaps in proficiency, not all of them can be intervened on given limited resources. Therefore, causal variables need to be rank ordered, or prioritized for action with the highest prioritized variables being those with the highest proven impact on the phenomenon in question (in this case, student learning).
4. Do not identify variables related to the gaps that are unchangeable: Sometimes groups in education will identify distal factors with correlational relationships to learning problems (e.g., the child is a second language learner, therefore they are struggling to learn or the student has a disability which is why they are struggling to learn). While these factors may be true, and even related, when identified as proximal causes of

student learning deficits, they incapacitate educator action. The best guard against breaking this rule is to turn each possible cause into an "If, then…" statement and evaluate for feasibility. For example, if the hypothesis is that students with disabilities haven't learned because they have disabilities. Then stating "when we change the fact that they have disabilities, they will learn." Clearly, such a statement stretches the imagination, and clarifies for those doing the problem analysis that this hypothesis will likely be less than helpful.

There are a number of recognized frameworks and tools available to assist in educational Root Cause Analysis. Possible frameworks include the IDEAL problem solving model (Bransford & Stein, 1984); Functional Analysis of Behavior/Functional Behavioral Assessment - (Repp & Horner, 1999; Tilly III et al., 1998); The Scientist Practitioner Model (Barlow, Hayes & Nelson, 1984); Applied Behavior Analysis (Baer, Wolf & Risley, 1968), Action Research (Calhoun, 1994); Heartland AEA's Problem Solving Model (Reschly & Ysseldyke, 1995). Each model contains unique features, protocols and language. In some cases, specific philosophies of science or theoretical orientations predominate and differential emphasis is placed on alternate parts of the process.

In our analysis, we decided to use some of the logic model for problem analysis contained in a number of action research models. There are a number of tools available to assist in conducting the root cause analysis, including:

- 5 Whys – the group asks "Why?" until you get to the root of the problem.
- Drill Down or task analysis – Breaking down a problem into small, detailed parts to better understand the big picture.

- Cause and Effect Diagrams – Creation of a chart of all of the possible causal factors, to see where the trouble may have begun.

All of these tools share the characteristic that they require the group to identify causal factors related to the observed gaps. From there, the group can prioritize potential factors, integrate their professional knowledge of the research base related to achievement with their knowledge of the data from the problem identification step and use these results to action plan.

Because we were working with two relatively large and diverse groups, it was determined that the most accessible root cause analysis tool for the group would be the 5-whys approach. This tool was developed Sakichi Toyoda, one of the fathers of the Japanese industrial revolution, who developed the technique in the 1930s. His technique became popular in the 1970s during the rise of the quality improvement movement and many companies and entities continue to use the method today.

The 5 Whys technique is a simple and straight forward tool and it is most effective when the answers come from people who have hands-on experience of the process being examined (such as our work teams). It is a remarkably simple and powerful technique. In essence, when a problem occurs, you uncover its nature and source by asking "why" no fewer than five times.

The team conducted a “Five Whys” activity to get to the root cause of these gaps. The internal team started by looking at this basic question: “The significant achievement gaps in Iowa for our African-American students, Hispanic students, children in poverty, ELL students, and students with disabilities cannot be explained by the factors observed in other states such as teacher qualifications, distribution of first/second year teachers, teacher salary differences,

or teaching outside the field of preparation. Why do we have these gaps in achievement?" The team attempted to focus on system challenges and not symptoms or conditions that were outside the control of the education system. The internal team identified factors such as lowered expectations, lack of pre-service experience in addressing the needs of all students, Iowa's demographics changing too rapidly for changes in the system to take place, etc. As we continued to drill down into the causes, following the Five Whys activity protocol, the team landed on the following primary root causes:

- Educators lack critical skills to address the needs of all students.
- The state does not have a shared definition of effective teaching to guide improvement efforts and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- The Department has not yet identified the knowledge and skills teachers need to meet the needs of all students.
- Inconsistency in support across the state has led to considerable variation in teacher effectiveness.
- One-size fits all approaches to improvement have not served Iowa teachers, leaders, and learners very well.

These are all system issue root causes. Once the groups identified these root causes they worked to identify possible strategies and began discussing how to measure progress.

Figure 3: Root Cause Analysis

Problem

The significant achievement gaps in Iowa for our African-American students, Hispanic students, children in poverty, ELL students, and students with disabilities cannot be explained by the factors observed in other states such as teacher qualifications, distribution of first/second year teachers, teacher salary differences, or teaching outside the field of preparation. Why do we have these gaps in achievement?

Why?

Kids' unique needs are not being adequately addressed by the educational system.

Why?

There is not consistent support across the state and this had led to considerable variation in teacher effectiveness.

Why?

There is no shared definition across the state of what highly effective teaching looks like.

Why?

The state has promoted a one-size fits all approach to continuous improvement

Why?

The state does not have a shared definition of effective teaching.

Why?

The Department has not identified the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that all teachers need in order to meet the needs of all students.

Root Causes

- Educators lack critical skills to address the needs of all students.
- The state does not have a shared definition of effective teaching to guide improvement efforts and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- The Department has not yet identified the knowledge and skills teachers need to meet the needs of all students.
- Inconsistency in support across the state has led to considerable variation in teacher effectiveness.
- One-size fits all approaches to improvement have not served Iowa teachers, leaders, and learners very well.

Section 4. Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps

Strategies

In order to help all Iowa teachers and leaders increase their effectiveness in relation to generating high and equitable student learning we will. . .

Strategy 1: Implement multi-tiered systems of support in all Iowa schools that are sustained by evidence based practices, early warning systems and ongoing progress monitoring

Strategy 2: Create and support coaching networks that focus on building the capacity of teachers and leaders to create effective cultures of learning for students and adults

Strategy 3: Create structures and supports for increasing teacher leadership roles within Iowa schools

Strategy 4: Create a statewide structure for scaling instructional improvement initiatives with consistent levels of support and accountability at the local, state, and regional level

Strategy 5: Create and implement a statewide differentiated accountability system aligned to our continuous improvement model

Strategy 6: Create a statewide definition of effective teaching which can guide strategic actions focused on improving teaching and learning.

Background and Description of Key Strategies:

A Statewide Structure For Scaling Instructional Improvement Initiatives

The Governance Structure for scaling equity and excellence of student learning:

We reviewed National Implementation Research Network (NIRN)/Dean Fixsen's work, and from that, we established our Governance Structure to work more efficiently and effectively as a state. The partners (DE, AEAs, & LEAs) determined that our new way of working together required a new structure for planning, implementing and sustaining work that can collectively accomplish the goal that every child is proficient by the end of third grade. To this

end, we developed a working Governance Structure, based on Dean Fixsen's work in implementation science, with the intent to support more efficient use of work groups and resources. Briefly, in any work, it is critical to establish groups of people to attend to specific functions necessary to move work forward within a system:

A. People who are able to lead across the system who are able to make decisions about resources and policies: Collaborative Oversight. Essentially, this is a decision-making group with membership that includes the DE Division Administrator and Associate Division Administrator, AEA Chiefs and Directors, LEA Superintendents and the Co-Chairs of Work Coordination.
B. People who are able to coordinate work across the system to ensure coherency and alignment of work, programs, products and training/coaching: Work Coordination. Members include system facilitators, one each from the DE, AEA and LEA, and facilitators from each of the Work Teams.
C. People who are experts in identified areas within the state's priority focus to identify/develop evidence-based frameworks, practices, strategies, programs and supports: Work Teams. There are six teams: Standards & Curriculum, MTSS, Educator Quality, Professional Learning, School Improvement and Evaluation. Members include experts regardless of agency or location (e.g., personnel at universities, national organizations, schools, AEA, DE, etc.).
D. People who are able to provide critical input and advice on major proposals and decisions for the state: Advisory. Members include stakeholders within and outside of the educational system.

E. People who are able to scale/implement across Iowa with fidelity: Implementation. This group is called The Collaborative. Members include DE, AEA and LEA personnel.

F. People who are able to develop essential communications across audiences: Communication. Members include AEA and DE communication specialists.

G. People who are the first to apply the what (developed by the Work Teams) using the how (scaling/implementation developed and monitored by the Implementation group) to meet the goal that every child is proficient by the end of third grade: Phase schools.

This new structure provides leverage in four ways: (1) Alignment of resources, including fiscal and personnel, focused on one priority (literacy) across priority areas that have the greatest success across children/youth (work teams); (2) Collaboration of the DE, AEA and LEAs as part of C4K; (3) Identification/development of evidence-based frameworks, strategies and programs by experts in the field regardless of affiliation or location; and (4) Intentional statewide scaling based on implementation science.

NOTE: Fixsen is a senior scientist at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina; Fixsen is also co-director of the National Implementation Research Network and State Implementation and Scaling up of Evidence-based Practices (SISEP) Center for the US Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). His research has focused on national implementation of evidence-based programs resulting in a major review implementation literature: http://www.nationaltechcenter.org/documents/conf07/presentations/implementation_fixsen.pdf

The Priority Areas:

We reviewed The McKinsey Study (2011), as well as Hattie's Book, Visible Learning, and from that, we established a focus on a few priority areas. The McKinsey Study includes an analysis of 20 systems from around the world, all with improving but differing levels of performance, examining how each has achieved significant, sustained, and widespread gains in student outcomes, as measured by international and national assessments. The authors sought to understand which elements were specific to the individual system and which were of broader or universal relevance. Based on their database of nearly 575 interventions mapped over time across our 20 sample systems, they indicate there are six interventions that occur with equal frequency across all systems, but are manifested differently in each improvement journey stage:

- Revising curriculum and standards: This relates to the focus on Standards & Curriculum [Early Learning Standards/Iowa Core]
- Reviewing reward and remunerations structure: This relates to the focus of the DE regarding increasing Teacher Leadership
- Building technical skills of teachers and principals, often through group or cascaded training: This relates to the focus on Educator Effectiveness and Professional Learning
- Assessing student learning: This relates to our focus on the Early Warning System across MTSS [assessments] and School Improvement [data system].
- Utilizing student data to guide delivery: This relates to the focus on MTSS (data-based decision making] and School Improvement [continuous improvement - healthy indicators].

- Establishing policy documents and education laws: This relates to the focus on School Improvement.

The review of Hattie's Book led to the specific focus on implementation of a Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework. John Hattie conducted extensive meta-analyses across interventions - third on the list of interventions with the greatest impact on achievement is MTSS with an effect size above .7.

Therefore, the partners put together the data on literacy + research on key interventions + what we collectively understood as the impact of illiteracy to identify the collaborative intent [to work more effectively and efficiently as a full educational system to accomplish a few agreed upon priorities, goal [all students will be proficient in reading by the end of 3rd grade across subgroups], and priority areas [Iowa Core Standards, MTSS, Educator Quality, School Improvement and Professional Learning].

The Goal:

The partnership, known as "Collaborating for Iowa's Kids (C4K)" reviewed several pieces of data/information to understand our highest area of need as a state to select our priority areas, and our goal. We reviewed high-performing systems around the world, we reviewed our own performance – our strengths and challenges, we distilled what has been shown to work and we identified themes to carry forward to Iowa's system. Information we reviewed included the NAEP and Iowa Testing data.

Iowa has one of the highest graduation rates and lowest dropout rates in the country. However, even with significant investments in curriculum and instruction in the past, the trend lines for reading are essentially flat and achievement gaps for poor, minority, students with

disabilities, and English Language Learners are not closing. Over the course of nearly 10 years, Iowa has not only failed to increase 4th grade student reading performance, we have actually showed a slight decrease in the skills of our children [Scale score at 225 in 1992; Scale score of 220 in 2011, National Assessment of Educational Performance]. Nationally we have slipped from 5th in the nation in student performance in reading, to 25th in just a little under 12 years. Data based on Iowa tests indicate a gap between students with IEPs: 29.9% proficient, and Non-IEP students at 78.05% proficient. English Language Learners fair little better at 35.55% proficiency as compared to 73.29% proficiency [Iowa testing 2012]. These data clarified our initial goal in C4K: *Every child is proficient in reading by the end of third grade.*

The Theory of Action:

1. If Iowa's educational system comes to consensus on a select number of high impact priorities and related drivers (Standards and Curriculum, MTSS, Educator Quality, Professional Learning, School Improvement and Evaluation);
2. and if we agree to establish the infrastructure necessary to effectively focus statewide efforts and implementation (Oversight, Work Coordination, Work Teams, State Implementation Team, Communication, Advisory);
3. and if there is consistent statewide implementation and support for scaling coordinated across priorities in critical areas (Leadership, Resources/Budgets, Communication, Fidelity/Evaluation, Professional Development, Evidenced-based Programs/Strategies);
4. and if we build the capacity of the educational system to provide sustained instructional coaching and support to educational personnel to implement priorities;
5. and if educational personnel implement priorities with fidelity;

6. and if there is an established evaluation plan focused on outcome impact and monitoring implementation to determine progress, development and next steps;
7. then educators will have the knowledge and skills they need to ensure the success of all learners and all learners will be proficient readers by the end of 3rd grade (across all subgroups).

Differentiated Accountability

Iowa has a history of implementing a wide range of different school improvement processes, many of which share similar features (e.g., Iowa Professional Development Model, NCLB Schools and Districts in Need of Assistance, Special Education Corrective Action Plans, Comprehensive School Improvement Plans). While each of these processes can lead to successful school improvement efforts, this approach has led to fragmentation of school/district efforts and state-level technical support. To reduce this fragmentation and increase focus on school improvement, Iowa is developing a differentiated approach to accountability and school improvement (heretoafter referred to as Differentiated Accountability). Next, we define and describe Differentiated Accountability in Iowa, the current timeline, and relevance for Iowa's equity plan.

Differentiated Accountability: Defined and Described

The intent of Differentiated Accountability is to leverage compliance to improve implementation of evidence-based content (i.e., the Iowa Early Learning Standards and Iowa Core Standards) and practices (i.e., multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)). This approach relies upon the Iowa Department of Education monitoring compliance while our statewide delivery system known as Collaborating for Iowa's Kids (C4K) engages in on-site coaching and

support to diagnose implementation barriers and to identify evidence-based solutions to those identified barriers. Iowa's approach to Differentiated Accountability includes the following: (a) data-based, tiered support for schools and districts; (b) use of healthy indicators to help prioritize focus areas; (c) earned school and district autonomy based on performance; (d) a collaborative approach to improvement grounded in a common set of collaborative inquiry questions; (e) a single, unified continuous improvement process grounded in the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM); (f) streamlined reporting; and (g) an emphasis on results for Iowa's learners preK-Grade 12.

Tiered support

In Iowa's system of Differentiated Accountability, schools and districts will receive the support they need to engage in continuous improvement based on their needs. Differentiated supports will be provided along a continuum of intensity (universal, targeted, intensive) based on the extent to which they are meeting compliance and performance requirements. These supports will include diagnostic and professional learning supports provided by the Iowa Department of Education and Iowa's area education agencies (AEAs).

Healthy indicators

In addition to compliance requirements, Iowa will monitor a set of objective, measureable indicators of the health of the education system at the preschool, building, district, AEA and state levels. Healthy indicator data will be collected in the following areas: (a) assessment and data-based decision making, (b) universal instruction, (c) targeted and intensive services, (d) leadership, and (e) infrastructure. Performance on healthy indicators will be used

within the Differentiated Accountability system to determine focus areas for deeper exploration and additional supports.

Earned autonomy

Schools and districts with a wide range of needs will receive intensive supports and a lower degree of autonomy in local decision making. As schools and districts improve performance on compliance and performance requirements, they will earn increased autonomy for local decision making.

Collaborative inquiry questions

Iowa's Differentiated Accountability system relies on a whole-system, collaborative approach to improvement, from the classroom teacher all the way to the Iowa Department of Education. Collaborative inquiry questions will be used by schools and districts to explore the extent to which they have consensus, infrastructure, implementation, and sustainability features in place to facilitate implementation of the Iowa Early Learning Standards and Iowa Core Standards within a multi-tiered system of supports.

Unified school improvement process

Iowa's Differentiated Accountability system uses a single school improvement process build on a foundation of the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM), healthy indicators, and collaborative inquiry questions. The purpose of this process is to unify all of the different continuous improvement processes that have historically been used in Iowa to reduce system fragmentation on implementation and support of school improvement efforts. Schools and districts will use the unified school improvement process to dig deeper into areas identified using healthy indicators to develop and implement a plan to remove barriers and improve

implementation of (a) assessment and data-based decision making, (b) universal instruction, (c) targeted and intensive services, (d) leadership, and/or (e) infrastructure.

Streamlined reporting

Iowa is moving toward having all compliance and performance data being collected within a single, web-based data system. A data dashboard will be developed and used to integrate collected compliance and performance data. The data dashboard will provide information related to performance on compliance items, as well as performance related to the five areas of healthy indicators (i.e., assessment and data-based decision making, universal instruction, targeted and intensive services, leadership, and infrastructure). The databoard will also provide the degree of differentiated support (i.e., universal, targeted, or intensive) needed.

Emphasis on results

Iowa's Differentiated Accountability system will combine what we know from research, best practice, policy requirements, and field experience to prioritize resource allocation on practices that are most likely to facilitate positive outcomes for Iowa's learners. Both required and not required practices that have a demonstrated positive impact on learners will receive the highest degree of resource allocation and effort. Required practices that have a negligible or negative impact on learners will receive a minimal degree of resource allocation and effort. Finally, those practices that are not required and also have a negligible or negative impact on learners will receive will be phased out.

Timeline

Iowa has been working to develop the first stages of Differentiated Accountability since 2013. A pilot study will be conducted during the 2015-16 school year. Forty-eight districts, non-

public schools, and AEAs volunteered to participate in the pilot study. Three areas will be examined in the pilot in the area of early literacy: (a) compliance (note, all districts in Iowa will participate in this areas for all compliance requirements regardless of grade level or content area), (b) assessment and data-based decision making, and (c) universal instruction. The current plan is that after the process is refined based on lessons learned during the pilot study, these three areas will be implemented with all districts, non-public schools, and AEAs during the 2016-17 school year. Additional areas, grade levels, and content areas will be piloted and added to the statewide Differentiated Accountability system in subsequent years.

Relevance for Equity Plan

Iowa's Differentiated Accountability system is intended to support the needs of all learners. There are several specific connections to be made with Iowa's equity plan. First, selected AEAs, districts, pre-school programs, and non-public schools will receive equity visits. This is being conducted per agreements with the Office for Civil Rights. This agreement will be reviewed and resubmitted for changes to match the Differentiated Accountability system for the 2016-17 school year. Second, schools and districts will be expected to engage in sub-group analysis when examining student outcome data. This sub-group analysis will be taken into consideration when identifying solutions to remove implementation barriers. This, in turn, will impact the differentiation decisions made regarding resource allocation and supports from the Iowa Department of Education. Third, by using a data-based, differentiated approach to resource allocation and support provision that focuses on high-leverage, research-based practices, Iowa can better target resources and supports to the schools and districts with the highest needs. Given that these schools and districts serve those students from disadvantaged

populations, Iowa's Differentiated Accountability system is well-positioned to promote equity in access to the highest-quality instruction and support for all of our learners.

Specific Action Plan for All Strategies

The Complete Action Plan for Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

Table 9: Iowa's Action Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

Iowa's Action Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

In order to help all Iowa teachers and leaders increase their effectiveness in relation to generating high and equitable student learning we will. . .

Strategy 1: ***Implement multi-tiered systems of support in all Iowa schools that are sustained by evidence based practices, early warning systems and ongoing progress monitoring.***

We believe that improving excellence and equity of student learning is dependent upon increasing instructional effectiveness. Improving instructional effectiveness requires a clear understanding of the current status of student learning, increasing teachers' capacity to use evidence based practices for meeting diverse student needs, supporting the implementation of those practices with good data and information to inform decision making, and providing tools and supports to guide the ongoing inquiry and decision making process. A multi-tiered system of supports, focused on addressing the needs of all students and supported consistently across the state, can provide a framework for supporting teacher growth and development in these ways.

Root Cause Factor(s) Addressed by this Strategy:

- Educators lack critical skills to address the needs of all students.
- Inconsistency in support across the state has led to considerable variation in teacher effectiveness.

Key Activities/Objectives	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	
		Start	Frequency
A. To develop sequential steps, processes and tools for the collaborative inquiry questions in practice a. Develop materials and processes to support school teams in DBDM b. Create report examples to build into Iowa TIER to facilitate DBDM at student, classroom and systems-level	Iowa Department of Education Collaborative Co-Leads Collaborative Work Team for MTSS Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed	Fall, 2014-2015	Ongoing
B. To support identification of universal screening and progress	Iowa Department of	Implementation	Ongoing review of

monitoring measures, and support implementation of universal screening and progress monitoring assessment in early literacy a. Identify universal screening and progress monitoring assessments for statewide support in early literacy [and other content areas indicated by C4K] b. Support implementation of assessments [and other content areas]	Education Co-Leads of Work Teams Collaborative Work Team for MTSS Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed	continuing Fall, 2014	assessments in the area of early literacy Ongoing
C. To identify evidence-based strategies and intervention programs a. Develop criteria/rubric to identify evidence-based intervention programs b. Develop RFI/RFP process to obtain intervention programs for review c. Train reviewers – review intervention programs d. Identify and publish evidence-based intervention programs	Iowa Department of Education Co-Leads of Work Teams Collaborative Work Team for MTSS Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed	Spring, 2015	Ongoing
D. To develop the processes and tools needed to work through Collaborative Inquiry Questions D6-10 for both targeted and intensive tiers a. Develop processes and materials to support diagnostic assessment b. Develop processes and materials to support targeted tier decisions c. Develop processes and materials to support intensification of interventions	Iowa Department of Education Co-Leads of Work Teams Collaborative Work Team for MTSS	Spring, 2015	Ongoing

	Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed		
E. To develop guidance for the system regarding how subgroups are served within MTSS a. Develop guidance and materials to support subgroups within MTSS	Iowa Department of Education Co-Leads of Work Teams Collaborative Work Team for MTSS Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed	Fall, 2015	Ongoing
A. To complete key steps in 2015-2016 a. Continued work across task groups b. Establish materials for evaluating progress of interventions c. Vetting groups established for intensification and subgroups d. Vetting of materials e. Application and registration for Celebrating Iowa's Success f. Intensification [D6-9] ready g. Regional training for intensification of instruction h. Early Warning System Training i. Subgroup Guidance ready for dissemination/ webinars j. CIS app due k. CIS in November	Iowa Department of Education Co-Leads of Work Teams Collaborative Work Team for MTSS Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed	Fall, 2014	Ongoing

Strategy 2: ***Create and support coaching networks that focus on building the capacity of teachers and leaders to create effective cultures of learning for students and adults.***

We believe that improving excellence and equity of student learning is dependent upon continuous support and technical assistance for improving teaching and leading. Coaching and mentoring are similar processes that enable learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. This has been shown to be a critical support for both beginning and experienced teachers and leaders to increase their capacity and effectiveness.

Root Cause Factor(s) Addressed by this Strategy:

- Educators lack critical skills to address the needs of all students.
- Inconsistency in support across the state has led to considerable variation in teacher effectiveness.

Key Activities/Objectives	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	
		Start	Frequency
A. To Develop the professional learning structure and organization for training, and the support needed for sustaining a statewide coach's network for coaching early literacy teachers. a. Develop training schedule based on content that is ready to be released across work teams b. Package training for Phase One Schools c. Support training for Phase One Schools d. Organize webinar content for coaches webinars e. Facilitate regular webinars	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts Co-Leads of Work Teams Collaborative Work Team for Professional Learning Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed	Continuing Spring, 2015	Ongong
B. To Develop a statewide network for instructional leaders, coaches and administrators to sustain continuous improvement and learning for educational leaders. a. Develop training schedule based on content that is	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts	Spring, 2015	Ongoing

ready to be released across work teams b. Package training for Phase One Schools c. Support training for Phase One Schools d. Organize webinar content for coaches webinars e. Facilitate regular webinars	Co-Leads of Work Teams Collaborative Work Team for Professional Learning Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed		
C. To Develop the professional learning structure and organization for training, and the support needed for sustaining a statewide coach's network for coaching teacher leaders and principals. a. Develop training schedule based on content based on the NYCLA b. Develop training modules c. Implement training modules d. Monitor and adjust training based on needs e. See also D & E in Strategy 3	Iowa Department of Education School districts With support from Area Education Agencies & Educational organizations	Spring, 2015	Ongoing

Strategy 3: ***Create structures and supports for increasing teacher leadership roles within Iowa schools.***

We believe that improving excellence and equity of student learning is dependent upon highly effective teachers surrounded and supported by highly effective leaders. Strong leadership has been shown to provide focused direction and consistency of support in studies of high achieving districts. Teachers, because they have daily contacts with learners, are in the best position to work closely with building and district administrators as co-leaders for improving curriculum, instruction, and student learning. Moreover, they are uniquely positioned to be able to support implementation of changes in a comprehensive and continuous manner.

The movement to expand teacher roles is also motivated by an ongoing need to attract and retain qualified teachers. Teachers typically define career satisfaction in terms of their ability to be of service to others and make a difference in the lives of their students. Similarly, the leadership considerations of teachers are grounded in their desire to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all students.

Root Cause Factor(s) Addressed by this Strategy:

- Inconsistency in support across the state has led to considerable variation in teacher effectiveness.

Key Activities/Objectives	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	
		Start	Frequency
A. Develop and implement a district plan for increasing teacher leadership capacity • Identify/revisit the needs of the system (students, teachers, teacher leaders, administrators, community stakeholders) • Establish and communicate a vision for teacher leadership in the greater context of school improvement (ground the work in a strategic plan, the Iowa Professional Development Model, Multiple Tiered Systems of Support, or some other improvement model) • Determine/revisit the goals (state and district) for a system of teacher leadership and identify indicators of success along journey toward goal attainment (attend to impact and effect) • Understand and engage in learning about a change process • Create structures and schedules conducive to collaboration and professional learning • Monitor and evaluate impact and effect	Iowa Department of Education School districts With support from Area Education Agencies & Educational organizations	Planning Grant FY 14. Phased in implementation from FY 15-FY17 with full ongoing implementation FY 18. Districts with 1/3 of Iowa students = Fall, 2013 Districts with 1/3 of Iowa students = Fall, 2014 Districts with 1/3 of Iowa students = Fall, 2015	Annually until all schools are involved.
B. Districts Identify teacher leaders within Iowa schools a. Develop criteria b. Develop job descriptions based on criteria c. Create and implement an application and selection process	School districts Teacher Leadership statewide support system With support from Area Education Agencies & Educational	Districts with 1/3 of Iowa students = Spring, 2014 Districts with 1/3 of Iowa students = Spring, 2015 Districts with 1/3	Annually until all schools are involved. Districts will determine how and when new teacher leaders are brought into the system.

	organizations	of Iowa students = Spring, 2016	
C. Teacher Leaders Engage in training to support • Coaching (teacher leaders of teachers, principals of teacher leaders, superintendents of principals) • Content Knowledge and Pedagogy • Adult learning • Systems thinking • The Cultivation of collaboration • Progress Monitoring via analysis of indicators	School districts Teacher Leadership statewide support system With support from Area Education Agencies & Educational organizations	Districts with 1/3 of Iowa students = Fall, 2014 Districts with 1/3 of Iowa students = Fall/spring, 2015 Districts with 1/3 of Iowa students = Fall/spring, 2016	Determined by district plan.
D. Administrators engage in professional development to facilitate and enact a vision for school improvement with teacher leadership as a point of leverage • Cultivate coaching skills specific to administrators to support teacher leaders and other administrators who work with teacher leaders • Cultivate a mindset that supports empowerment of teacher leaders. • Allocate resources and implement organizational structures and schedules that facilitate the implementation of a system of teacher leadership. • Create a climate and culture conducive to teacher leadership (e.g. how to engage, how to create a shared vision, how to empower, how to delegate, how to navigate accountability issues, how to identify and establish processes and protocols for decision making/problem solving/situation analysis). • Identify a change process and support teachers and teacher leaders as they experience change.	School districts Teacher Leadership statewide support system New York City Leadership Academy Staff With support from Area Education Agencies & Educational organizations	Application process = Spring, 2015 Training = Summer, 2015 and ongoing	6 sessions annually

E. Develop a teacher/administrator on-line community to provide support and tools focused on building the capacity of teacher leaders and develop cultures of ongoing collaboration and inquiry around student learning. • On-Demand Learning • Community Forums • Event Calendar • Toolbox • School Community Connections	Iowa Department of Education	Fall, 2015	Ongoing

Strategy 4: ***Create a statewide structure for scaling instructional improvement initiatives with consistent levels of support and accountability at the local, state, and regional level.***

We believe that improving excellence and equity of student learning is dependent upon both identifying "evidence-based practices and programs" and implementing these programs with fidelity. State and local policies aimed at improving the equity of student learning outcomes require more effective and efficient methods to translate policy mandates for effective programs into the actions that will realize them. Effective implementation of proven initiatives requires coordinated change at the system, organization, program, and practice levels. Fixen's research on the science of implementation shows that implementation appears most successful when:

- carefully selected practitioners receive coordinated training, coaching, and frequent performance assessments;
- organizations provide the infrastructure necessary for timely training, skillful supervision and coaching, and regular process and outcome evaluations;
- communities and consumers are fully involved in the selection and evaluation of programs and practices; and
- state funding, policies, and regulations create an environment for implementation and continuous improvement of program operations.

Root Cause Factor(s) Addressed by this Strategy:

- Inconsistency in support across the state has led to considerable variation in teacher instructional practices and effectiveness.

Key Activities/Objectives	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	
		Start	Frequency
A. To identify and adopt an evidence-based scaling and implementation model for the state a. Review of Research b. Establish Model	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts	Continuing Fall, 2015	Ongoing Monthly and Bi-monthly meetings

c. Establish priorities d. Identify initial focus and shared improvement goal e. Gain buy-in and support f. Implement model including all elements of the governance structure g. Monitor and adjust implementation structures and supports as needed based on implementation data and impact on goal	Co-Leads of Work Teams Work Teams Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed		
B. To create a statewide data system to support MTSS, data-based decision-making and continuous improvement. a. Establish RFP and identify successful vendor b. Create statewide data system within which to obtain student level data in the area of reading c. Continue to develop the data system across content areas, and at the systems level to provide systems with a way to engage in MTSS and data-based decision-making	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts Co-Leads of Work Teams Work Teams Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed	Continuing Fall, 2015	Ongoing Monthly and Bi-monthly meetings Weekly internal meetings
C. To identify key indicators of a healthy educational system and embed this into continuous improvement. a. Establish Healthy Indicators of a system [work with attendance center] b. Embed HI into continuous improvement and Iowa TIER for systems work	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts Co-Leads of Work Teams	Continuing Fall, 2015	Ongoing Monthly and Bi-monthly meetings Weekly internal meetings

	Work Teams Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed Education Agencies and Local Districts		
D. To develop a new continuous improvement model for the state. a. Establish continuous improvement process b. Establish the structure for continuous improvement based on the CIQ	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts Co-Leads of Work Teams Work Teams Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed	Continuing Fall, 2015	Ongoing Monthly and Bi-monthly meetings Weekly internal meetings
E. To join healthy indicators, continuous improvement processes and tiered accreditation into one system that differentiates support based on evidence of need. (also see Strategy 5) a. Develop the FINAL unified continuous improvement process by putting together all the work across the groups b. Pilot the final unified continuous improvement process c. Revise and finalize the unified continuous	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts Co-Leads of Work Teams Work Teams	Continuing Fall, 2015	Ongoing Monthly and Bi-monthly meetings Weekly internal meetings

improvement process	Collaborative Oversight Committee and other appropriate governing structures as needed		

Strategy 5: ***Create and implement a statewide differentiated accountability system aligned to our continuous improvement model.***

We believe, in order to improve excellence and equity of student learning in all Iowa schools, we must differentiate our system of accountability to distinguish between those schools that are just missing the student learning benchmarks and those that need significant reform. Differentiated accountability will allow the Iowa Department of Education to vary the intensity and type of support to match the student learning needs that lead to a school and/or district's identification as needing assistance. Differentiated accountability will assist all Iowa students by targeting resources and interventions to those schools/districts most in need of intensive interventions and significant reform.

- Differentiated accountability means creating a more nuanced system of distinguishing between schools in need of dramatic intervention, and those that are closer to meeting student learning goals.
- Differentiated accountability means creating a systems of supports to Iowa schools and districts that is driven by data and differentiated by student learning needs.
- This approach will provide districts with the support and oversight they need to do what is necessary to enable all students to succeed in a more effective and efficient manner.
- Differentiated accountability is about increasing the focus on all students achieving at high levels and increasing the imperative to improve struggling schools.

Root Cause Factor(s) Addressed by this Strategy:

- One-size fits all approaches to improvement have not served Iowa teachers, leaders, and learners very well.

Key Activities/Objectives	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	
		Start	Frequency
A. Establish Differentiated Accountability subgroup to develop process and implementation plan	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts	February	Ongoing
B. Finalize major components of process C. Develop/implement webinar schedule to inform the field D. Establish process for selecting pilot districts and AEAs	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and	March	Ongoing

E. Identify pilots for Fall 2015	Local Districts		
F. Develop materials to support process G. Build professional learning standards into process	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts	April	Ongoing
H. Communicate final pilot and process to the field I. Identify site visit teams	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts	May	Ongoing
J. Desk Audit process finalized K. Train site visit teams	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts	June – July, 2015	Ongoing
L. Desk audit begins for pilot districts	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts	August, 2015	Ongoing
M. Initial pilot of process in selected sites N. Desk audit late fall for winter/spring – and continued piloting of process	Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies and Local Districts	Sept., 2015	Ongoing
Strategy 6*: Create a statewide definition of effective teaching which can guide strategic actions focused on improving teaching and learning.* We believe that improving excellence and equity of student learning is dependent upon effective instruction. However, definitions of what constitutes effective instruction and the specific, observable characteristics of effective teaching abound. Without shared understanding of the basic constructs and characteristics of effective teaching and learning, variability in classroom instruction will continue to prevail, evaluation systems will not have the intended outcome of improving classroom instructional practice, and leaders charged with facilitating the			

improvement of teaching and learning will continue to struggle to provide focus and direction to this important work. Without a shared definition of effective teaching, all other strategies for increasing excellence and equity for all Iowa students will not have the grounding they need to succeed.

Root Cause Factor(s) Addressed by this Strategy:

- The state does not have a shared definition of effective teaching to guide improvement efforts and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- The Department has not yet identified the knowledge and skills teachers need to meet the needs of all students.

Key Activities/Objectives	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	
		Start	Frequency
A. To review state and national teaching standards, including those identified by content areas (i.e., literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies) to identify evidence based effective teaching practices. a. Review standards b. Compile and organize results c. Generate a definition d. Operationalize the definition e. Vet the definition to gain broad based feedback and support f. Modify the definition based on feedback and finalize the definition g. Publish the definition h. Integrate the use of the definition into evaluation systems and the practice of teachers and leaders	Educator Quality Bureau of the Iowa Department of Education Council on Educator Development Broad-based vetting and advisory group	Spring, 2015	Monthly
B. To engage the Council on Educator Development in a study of effective teaching for excellence and equity in Iowa schools and make recommendations to improve as a part of the recommendations they will advance to the Governor on educator development. (The Council has been established to study and make recommendations for a new statewide teacher evaluation system and a new statewide	Council on Educator Development Iowa Department of Education	Fall, 2014 & Winter, 2015	Monthly until plan is complete

administrator evaluation system. The goal of the study is to determine the efficacy of the current system in providing practitioners with clear and actionable feedback to enhance their practice and advance student learning. The council is also reviewing the current teacher and administrator evaluation systems, the Iowa Teaching Standards, and the Iowa Standards for School Administrators, as well as other related components, in an effort to support effective instruction and leadership in Iowa schools.			
C. To develop a Teacher Leadership Support Team and engage them in operationalizing the definition of effective teaching and using the definition in their coaching and support of teacher and administrative leaders as they build leadership for effective teaching and learning capacity in the following areas: • Adult Learning: Design and delivery of professional learning • Collaborative Culture: Facilitation of group processes and development of necessary structures for professional learning environments to be effective. • Communication: Cultivation of skills associated with effective dialogue with colleagues. • Content/Pedagogy/Assessment: Implementation of research and best practice in content (Iowa Core), instruction, and assessment. • Systems Thinking: Integration and alignment of district and statewide educational improvement efforts. • Data: Facilitation of data analysis and data informed decision making.	Iowa Department of Education Statewide Teacher Leadership Support Team	Fall, 2015	Monthy

Section 5. Ongoing Monitoring and Support

The measures used to evaluate Iowa's progress on strategies and outcomes designed to reduce equity based student achievement gaps are identified for each strategy in the tables below. This data, when collected, will be disaggregated to inform equity gaps. Additional plans to regularly monitor implementation and evaluate overall success are being developed around these newly developed strategies.

As the implementation plans are further defined, the systematic procedures for monitoring will also be refined. Currently, newly developed and implemented assessments related to some of the intended student learning outcomes resulting from the implementation of these strategies are being utilized. Data from these monitoring assessments, as well as other formative and summative assessments of student learning progress as they become available, will be used to inform the implementation of the equity strategies.

The goals and strategies the state has set to close our achievement gaps are ambitious but reasonable. The strategies address system issues, but the work of teaching and learning happens at the classroom level. The challenge has been to establish monitoring and reporting tools and processes that can inform actions at all levels so that data collection can address the needs of both implementation and impact and inform decision making for corrective action along the way. Ultimately, we must be able to address a variety of needs and continuously monitor our progress toward closing the equity gaps that currently exist.

Each of the strategies identified below demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement. None of the strategies are a one size fits all approach, nor are they approaches that could be implemented with fidelity without a focus on continuous improvement. The State

has established a clear commitment to continuous improvement in a variety of ways. The statewide focus on developing teacher leaders is designed to grow capacity of quality teaching and learning through the development of beginning teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators as well as comprehensive systems of evaluation based on research based practices. The multi-tiered systems of support and the differentiated accountability system will provide targeted levels of support for P-12 systems that need increased support in specific areas, while continuing to ensure compliance with state and national guidance. Coaching networks and a renewed focus on professional learning will build the capacity of all educators (both teachers and leaders) to meet the needs of an increasing diverse Iowa population. And a statewide infrastructure for scaling initiatives and decreasing variability among classrooms, schools and districts as they implement evidence based practices will provide the structure and supports to reach all classrooms and not just create pockets of excellence.

The State will use state-wide assessments and evaluation tools to monitor and inform decision making for the statewide strategies. All of these measures are aligned with strategies and outcomes designed to effect the state's work around equity gaps. Statewide evaluation plans for these strategies are being developed and will be added to this plan as soon as final decisions about indicators and metrics have been determined. To ensure initiatives are being monitored and actions are adjusted as needed, the State plans to continue to bring together the internal equity work team and the external advisory team on a regular basis to analyze data that informs the equity plan and recommend changes to the administrators of the Division of Learning and Results.

Table 10: Goals and Outcome Measures

Goal: To ensure all students have equitable access to highly effective teachers and leaders.

Outcome 1: Achievement gaps between sub-groups of Iowa students and all Iowa students decrease.

Strategy	Responsible Entity	Implementation/Timeline	Outcome Measures	Methods of Evaluation
Strategy 5: Create and implement a statewide differentiated accountability system aligned to our continuous improvement model	DE Statewide collaborative partners – Collaborating for Iowa Kids (C4K) School Improvement Bureau (Title I monitoring)	Started, system structure/definitions developed Pilot in 2015-16	Healthy Indicators	Annual evaluation of healthy indicators data. Adjustment of strategy.
Strategy 6: Create a statewide definition of effective teaching which can guide strategic actions focused on improving teaching and learning.	DE Educator Quality Bureau Council for Educator Development	Design made in 2015/16 Roll out	Implementation in appropriate state-wide standards (Teaching Standards, Preparation Standards. Etc.)	Use of standard in practice (compliance)

Outcome 2: Teachers have increased/improved instructional capacity for ensuring high levels of learning for all students.

Strategy	Responsible Entity	Implementation/Timeline	Outcome Measures	Methods of Evaluation
Strategy 1: Implement multi-tiered systems of support in all Iowa schools that are sustained by evidence based practices, early warning systems and ongoing progress monitoring	Iowa Department of Education Area Education Agencies Local Districts	In Progress	Evaluation pan being developed Implementation data Student Assessment data	TBD – In the process of selecting an external evaluator. When that is finalized the evaluation plan will be developed between the vendor and the internal evaluation design team. (This applies for all strategies)

Strategy 2: Create and support coaching networks that focus on building the capacity of teachers and leaders to create effective cultures of learning for students and adults	Iowa Department of Education Area Education Agencies Local Districts Council for Educator Development	In progress Coaching for Administrators 2015-2016	Evaluation plan being developed Implementation data Student Assessment data	On-going when plans are finalized
Strategy 3: Create structures and supports for increasing teacher leadership roles within Iowa schools	Iowa Department of Education Area Education Agencies Local Districts Council on Educator Development Educator Quality Bureau Educator Preparation –	In progress Ed Prep guidance to be updated	Evaluation plan being developed Implementation data Student Assessment data Ed Prep annual reporting	On-going when plans are finalized
Strategy 4: Create a statewide structure for scaling instructional improvement initiatives with consistent levels of support and accountability at the local, state, and regional level	Iowa Department of Education Area Education Agencies Local Districts	Ongoing implementation and plans for scaling	Evaluation plan in process	On-going when plans are finalized
Strategy 6: Create a statewide definition of effective teaching which can guide strategic actions focused on improving teaching and learning.	Iowa Department of Education Educator Quality Bureau Council on Educator Development	Design made in 2015/16 Roll out	Implementation in appropriate state-wide standards (Teaching Standards, Preparation Standards. Etc.)	Use of standard in practice (compliance)

Outcome 3: Leaders create cultures of learning for everyone.

Strategy	Responsible Entity	Implementation/Timeline	Outcome Measures	Methods of Evaluation
Strategy 2: Create and support coaching networks that focus on building the capacity of teachers and leaders to create effective cultures of learning for students and adults	Iowa Department of Education Area Education Agencies Local Districts Council for Educator Development	In progress Coaching for Administrators 2015-2016	Evaluation plan being developed Implementation data Student Assessment data	On-going when plans are finalized
Strategy 3: Create structures and supports for increasing teacher leadership roles within Iowa schools	Iowa Department of Education Area Education Agencies Local Districts Council on Educator Development Educator Quality Bureau Educator Preparation –	In progress Ed Prep guidance to be updated	Evaluation plan being developed Implementation data Student Assessment data Ed Prep annual reporting	On-going when plans are finalized
Strategy 6: Create a statewide definition of effective teaching which can guide strategic actions focused on improving teaching and learning.	Council for Educator Development Educator Quality Bureau Educator Preparation	In progress Ed Prep guidance to be updated	Evaluation plan being developed Ed Prep annual reporting	On-going when plans are finalized On-going

Specific indicators of progress and metrics are being negotiated with an external evaluator with whom we will be contracting. Since these measures are still being defined we are attaching the Service Requirements from the Request for Proposal (RFP) to interested vendors for details about potential indicators and metrics. Six proposals were accepted in

response to this RFP, finalists have been interviewed, and an award will be forthcoming. Please see Appendix 4 for the details of the minimum evaluation requirements.

Reporting Progress

The State will report on equity plan progress in multiple ways. The State's website will be used to disseminate timely information on data gathering, information gleamed from data gathering and progress toward planned goals. Reports will be published on the website at times that coincide with need for public input on proposed actions or changes to the plan. As evaluation plans for each of the initiatives identified in the equity plan are finalized, the timelines of dissemination of information will be included. In addition, the State will use its monthly School Leader Update newsletter to inform P-12 school systems. The State also has a network for informing stakeholder groups such as parent and community organizations. The State will reach out to these stakeholder groups to gather information on plan implementation through the use of surveys, focus groups, and posting contact information on the website in case stakeholders have questions or comments.

Section 6. Conclusion

Iowa has worked tirelessly to create equity in education for all of our learners. As reflected in Iowa's equitable access data, our educational system has created conditions where this goal is substantially achieved. Equitable access to high quality teachers, however, means little if the result of that access is not equitable learning. The gaps in learning results in Iowa for students living in poverty, students with disabilities, students who are racially and ethnically diverse, and students who are English language learners are unacceptably large and in many

cases are not improving. It is time for a broader and deeper analysis into proximate causes and for renewing our efforts and strategies to reduce these achievement gaps.

Completion of this plan related to Equitable Access to Excellent Teachers has provided Iowa with the opportunity to conduct that analysis and plan long term to diminish these gaps. The approach to analysis was deep, grounded in the evidence base, our data and the years of experience of our stakeholder groups. This, and similar analyses has resulted in a long-range plan that takes Iowa in a different, more targeted and more rigorous direction, especially in literacy and mathematics, than we heretofore have gone. We look forward to implementing our plan.

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Educator Equity Profile

Iowa

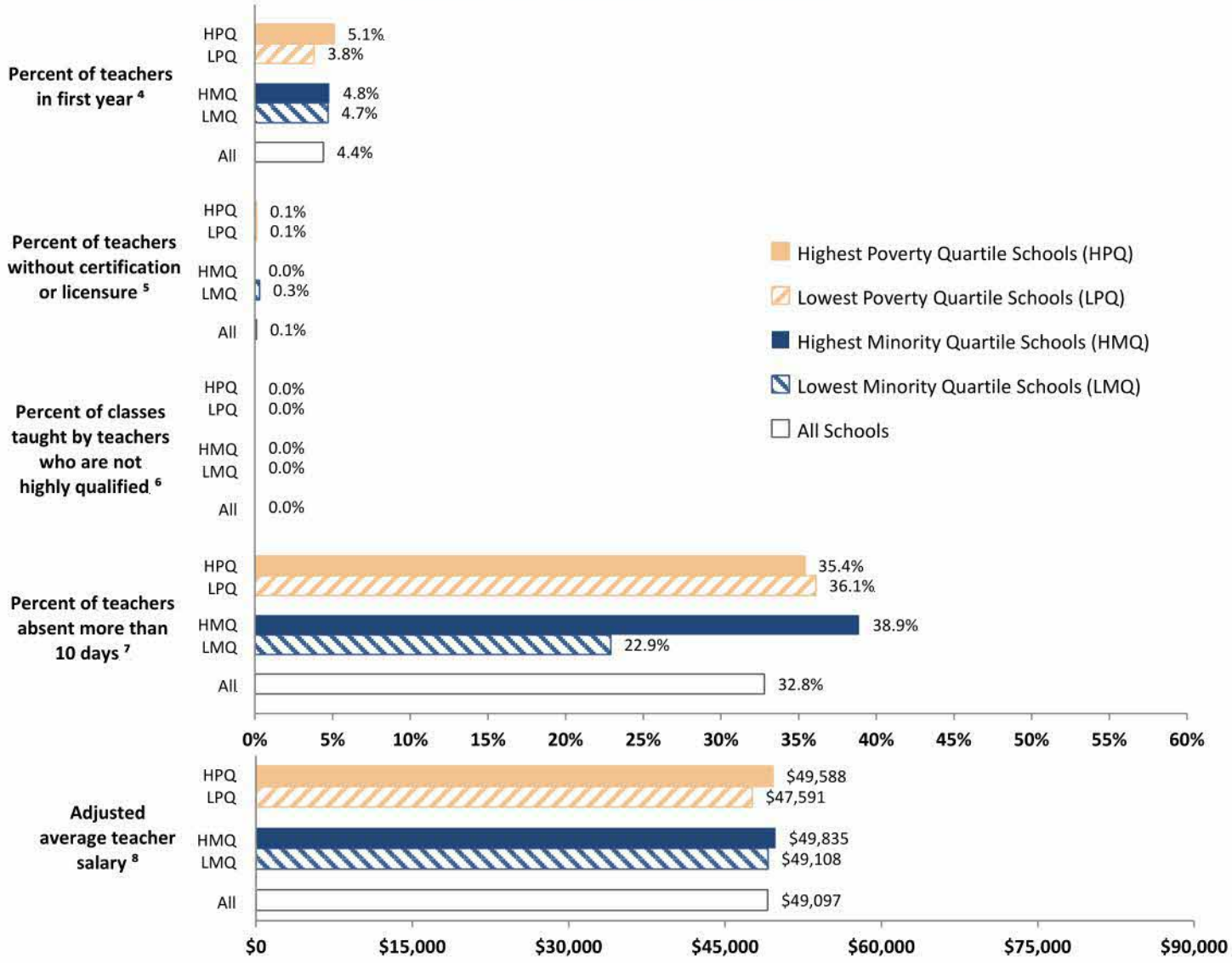
2011–12 Data

This profile compares certain characteristics of educators in schools with high and low concentrations of students from low-income families and minority students. These data are the best available to the Department. In working to ensure that all students have access to excellent teachers and leaders, states and districts are encouraged to supplement these data with additional measures of educator quality.

About this State

Number of Schools	1,403	**Average Percent Students in Poverty [2]**		**Average Percent Minority [3] Students**	
In each quartile	*about 351*	All Schools	40%	All Schools	19%
Number of Districts	351	Highest Poverty Quartile Schools (HPQ)	68%	Highest Minority Quartile Schools (HMQ)	40%
Total Student Enrollment	485,358	Lowest Poverty Quartile Schools (LPQ)	18%	Lowest Minority Quartile Schools (LMQ)	3%
Total Number of Teachers [1]	33,672				

Educator and Classroom Characteristics



Other metrics

States are encouraged to add other measures of educator quality using their own data (e.g., teacher and principal effectiveness ratings and turnover rates).

Chart reads: In the quartile of schools with the highest percentage of students in poverty (HPQ), 5.1 percent of teachers were in their first year of teaching, compared to 3.8 percent of teachers in the quartile of schools with the lowest percentage of students in poverty (LPQ). In the quartile of schools with the highest percentage of minority students (HMQ), 4.8 percent of teachers were in their first year of teaching, compared to 4.7 percent of teachers in the quartile of schools with the lowest percentage of minority students (LMQ). Among teachers in all schools, 4.4 percent were in their first year of teaching.

Note: Average teacher salary data are adjusted to account for regional cost of living differences as measured by differences in salaries of other college graduates who are not educators.

State's Highest Poverty Schools – by District and Locale

	Number of State's highest poverty schools	Total number of schools	Percent of teachers in first year in State's highest poverty schools	Percent of teachers without certification or licensure in State's highest poverty schools	Percent of classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified in State's highest poverty schools	Percent of teachers absent more than 10 days in State's highest poverty schools	Adjusted average teacher salary in State's highest poverty schools
District							
Des Moines	49	61	6.8	0.1 ✓	0.0 ✓	25.8 ✓	$51,668 ✓
Davenport	26	33	3.1 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	35.7 ✓	$44,450
Cedar Rapids	17	33	5.7	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	1.4 ✓	$46,564
Sioux City	16	25	4.1	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	60.2	$49,748 ✓
Waterloo	15	19	0.2 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	56.3	$51,116 ✓
Council Bluffs	11	16	7.2	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	44.7	$47,057
Marshalltown	9	9	6.3	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	35.1 ✓	$77,745 ✓
Burlington	8	9	3.8 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	50.8	$38,483
Fort Dodge	6	8	3.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	72.5	$54,442 ✓
Ottumwa	6	11	9.1	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	24.0 ✓	$59,676 ✓
Dubuque	6	18	7.5	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	10.2 ✓	$41,701
Iowa City	6	25	5.0	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	68.6	$46,976
Keokuk	5	5	3.6 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	44.3	$55,857 ✓
Storm Lake	4	4	3.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	21.7 ✓	$60,064 ✓
Denison	4	5	11.5	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	12.2 ✓	$63,513 ✓
Locale [9]							
City	139	238	5.1	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	35.0 ✓	$48,829 ✓
Suburb	9	77	3.4 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	38.1	$49,101 ✓
Town	108	328	5.1	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	36.6	$52,291 ✓
Rural	95	760	5.8	0.3	0.0 ✓	33.3 ✓	$47,205
For comparison							
State average for lowest poverty schools			**3.8**	**0.1**	**0.0**	**36.1**	**$47,591**

How to read this table:

Among the State's highest poverty schools, 49 are located in Des Moines. In those schools, 6.8 percent of teachers were in their first year; this is higher than the percentage of teachers in their first year in the lowest poverty schools in the State (3.8 percent). Among the State's highest poverty schools, 139 are located in cities. In those schools, 5.1 percent of teachers were in their first year; this is higher than the percentage of teachers in their first year in the lowest poverty schools in the State (3.8 percent).

Note: Average teacher salary data are adjusted to account for regional cost of living differences as measured by differences in salaries of other college graduates who are not educators.

✓ Indicates that the State's highest poverty schools in that district (or locale) have equal or lower percentages for each characteristic (or higher salary), on average, than the lowest poverty schools across the entire State.

State's Highest Minority Schools – by District and Locale

	Number of State's highest minority schools	Total number of schools	Percent of teachers in first year in State's highest minority schools	Percent of teachers without certification or licensure in State's highest minority schools	Percent of classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified in State's highest minority schools	Percent of teachers absent more than 10 days in State's highest minority schools	Adjusted average teacher salary in State's highest minority schools
District							
Des Moines	58	61	6.6	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	25.6	$51,818 ✓
Davenport	29	33	2.7 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	35.9	$45,017
Cedar Rapids	25	33	5.1	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.9 ✓	$46,743
Iowa City	21	25	4.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	61.2	$51,503 ✓
Sioux City	20	25	4.9	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	61.8	$51,170 ✓
Waterloo	17	19	0.4 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	57.1	$51,928 ✓
West Des Moines	13	14	2.6 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	68.3	$44,861
Muscatine	10	11	3.9 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	37.5	$57,176 ✓
Ottumwa	10	11	8.3	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	22.3 ✓	$60,842 ✓
Burlington	9	9	5.6	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	46.9	$37,967
Marshalltown	9	9	6.3	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	35.1	$77,745 ✓
Council Bluffs	9	16	7.0	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	44.2	$45,682
Ames	8	8	4.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	62.7	$48,655
Denison	5	5	11.4	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	12.1 ✓	$63,743 ✓
Fort Dodge	5	8	1.6 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	68.7	$53,053 ✓
Locale [9]							
City	190	238	4.4 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	39.5	$49,183 ✓
Suburb	27	77	3.7 ✓	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	50.8	$47,205
Town	91	328	5.7	0.1 ✓	0.0 ✓	34.8	$53,774 ✓
Rural	43	760	6.0	0.0 ✓	0.0 ✓	36.8	$46,445
For comparison							
State average for lowest minority schools			**4.7**	**0.3**	**0.0**	**22.9**	**$49,108**

How to read this table:

Among the State's highest minority schools, 58 are located in Des Moines. In those schools, 6.6 percent of teachers were in their first year; this is higher than the percentage of teachers in their first year in the lowest minority schools in the State (4.7 percent). Among the State's highest minority schools, 190 are located in cities. In those schools, 4.4 percent of teachers were in their first year; this is lower than the percentage of teachers in their first year in the lowest minority schools in the State (4.7 percent).

Note: Average teacher salary data are adjusted to account for regional cost of living differences as measured by differences in salaries of other college graduates who are not educators.

✓ Indicates that the State's highest minority schools in that district (or locale) have equal or lower percentages on each characteristic (or higher salary), on average, than the lowest minority schools across the entire State.

State and District Profile Definitions:

[1] Total number of teachers: The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) classroom teachers; all teacher data are measured in FTEs.

[2] Highest and lowest poverty schools: "Poverty" is defined using the percentage of students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. The highest poverty schools are those in the highest quartile in a State. In Iowa, the schools in the highest poverty quartile have more than 52 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. The lowest poverty schools are those in the lowest poverty quartile in the State; in Iowa, these schools have less than 26 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

[3] Highest and lowest minority schools: "Minority" is defined for purposes of this profile as all students who are American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, or Two or More Races. The highest minority schools are those in the highest quartile in a State. In Iowa, the schools in the highest minority quartile have more than 19 percent minority students. The lowest minority schools are those in the lowest quartile in a State; in Iowa, these schools have less than 5 percent minority students. Note: There is no statutory or regulatory definition of "minority" in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended. The Department has created this definition of "minority" only for purposes of presenting data in this Educator Equity Profile, which is intended to improve transparency about educator equity in each State. In developing its educator equity plan, including analyzing resources for subpopulations of students, each State should exercise its own judgment as to whether this definition of "minority" is appropriate in describing the student racial and ethnic demographics in the State. For further information about developing a State definition of "minority" for the purpose of a State's educator equity plan, please see the document titled "State Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: Frequently Asked Questions."

[4] First year teachers: The number of FTE classroom teachers in their first year of teaching. The number of year(s) of teaching experience includes the current year but does not include any student teaching or other similar preparation experiences. Experience includes teaching in any school, subject, or grade; it does not have to be in the school, subject, or grade that the teacher is presently teaching.

[5] Teachers without certification or licensure: The total number of FTE teachers minus the total number of FTE teachers meeting all applicable State teacher certification requirements for a standard certificate (i.e., has a regular/standard certificate/license/endorsement issued by the State). A beginning teacher who has met the standard teacher education requirements is considered to meet State requirements even if he or she has not completed a State-required probationary period. A teacher with an emergency, temporary, or provisional credential is not considered to meet State requirements. State requirements are determined by the State.

[6] Classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified: In general, a "highly qualified teacher" is one who is: (1) fully certified or licensed by the State, (2) holds at least a bachelor's degree from a four-year institution, and (3) demonstrates competence in each core academic subject area in which the teacher teaches. When used with respect to any teacher teaching in a public charter school, the term "highly qualified" means that the teacher meets the requirements set forth in the State's public charter school law and the teacher has not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis. Classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified are core academic classes taught by teachers who do not meet all of these criteria. Core academic classes are: English, reading/language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

[7] Teachers absent more than 10 days: The total number of FTE teachers who were absent more than 10 days of the regular school year when the teacher would otherwise be expected to be teaching students in an assigned class. Absences include both days taken for sick leave and days taken for personal leave. Personal leave includes voluntary absences for reasons other than sick leave. Absences do not include administratively approved leave for professional development, field trips or other off-campus activities with students.

[8] Adjusted average teacher salary: Total school-level personnel expenditures from State and local funds for teachers divided by the total FTE teachers funded by those expenditures. Personnel expenditures for teachers include all types of salary expenditures (i.e., base salaries, incentive pay, bonuses, and supplemental stipends for mentoring or other roles). Personnel expenditures for teachers exclude expenditures for employee benefits. Teacher salary is often dependent on the number of years of experience, education, and other credentials. Average teacher salary data are adjusted, using the Comparable Wage Index (CWI), to account for regional cost of living differences as measured by differences in salaries of other college graduates who are not educators. Adjusted salary data are not comparable across states.

[9] Locale: Based on National Center for Education Statistics urban-centric locale code. A city is a territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city. A suburb is a territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area. A town is a territory inside an urban cluster that is not inside an urbanized area. A rural area is a Census-defined rural territory that is not inside an urbanized area and not inside an urban cluster.

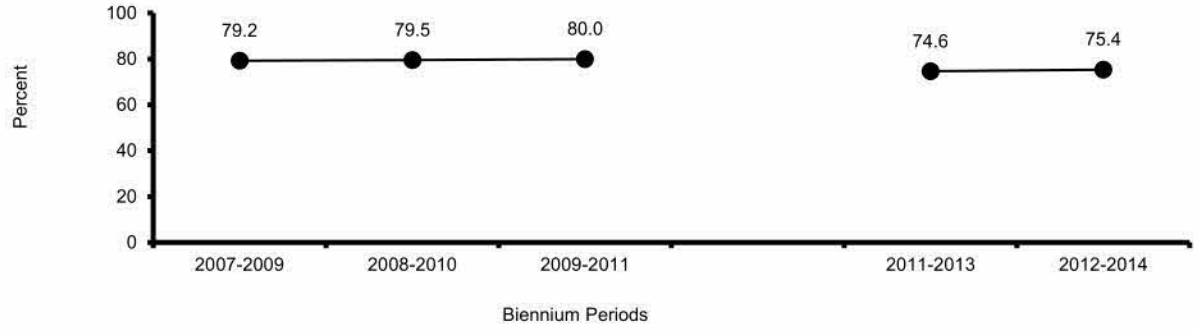
Sources: Data for teachers in their first year, teachers without certification or licensure, teachers who were absent more than 10 days, and adjusted average teacher salary come from the 2011–12 Civil Rights Data Collection. Data for classes taught by highly qualified teachers come from 2011–12 EDFacts. Data on number of schools, number of districts, total student enrollment, total number of teachers, free or reduced-price lunch eligibility, student enrollment by race/ethnicity, and locale come from 2011–12 Common Core of Data school universe file. The Comparable Wage Index (CWI) for the 2012 fiscal year comes from http://bush.tamu.edu/research/faculty/Taylor_CWI/.

Reading

Indicator: : Percentage of 4th, 8th, and 11th grade students achieving proficient or higher reading status on the Iowa Assessments Reading Tests (reported for all students and by gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, primary language status, and migrant status).

Figure 5-1

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test
Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



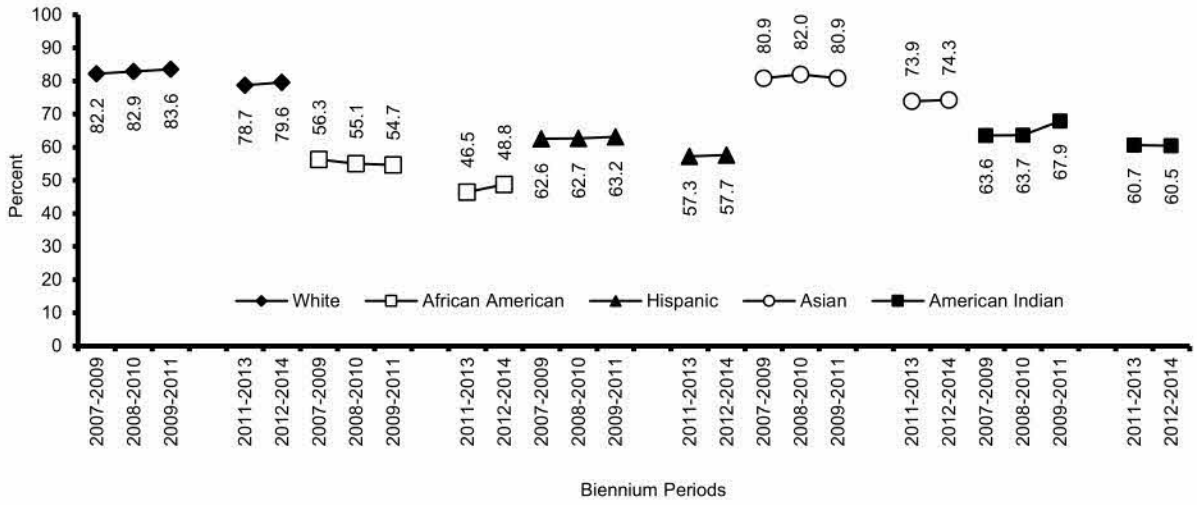
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years. A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually understands factual information and new words in context.
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often can determine a selection's main idea and analyze its style and structure.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-3

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Race/Ethnicity Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



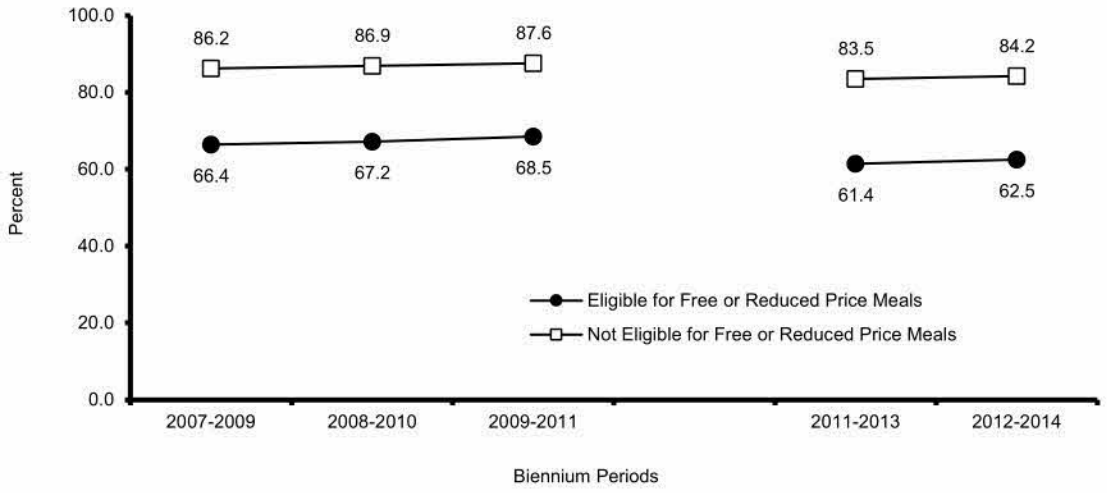
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years. A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually understands factual information and new words in context.
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often can determine a selection's main idea and analyze its style and structure.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-4

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Socioeconomic Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



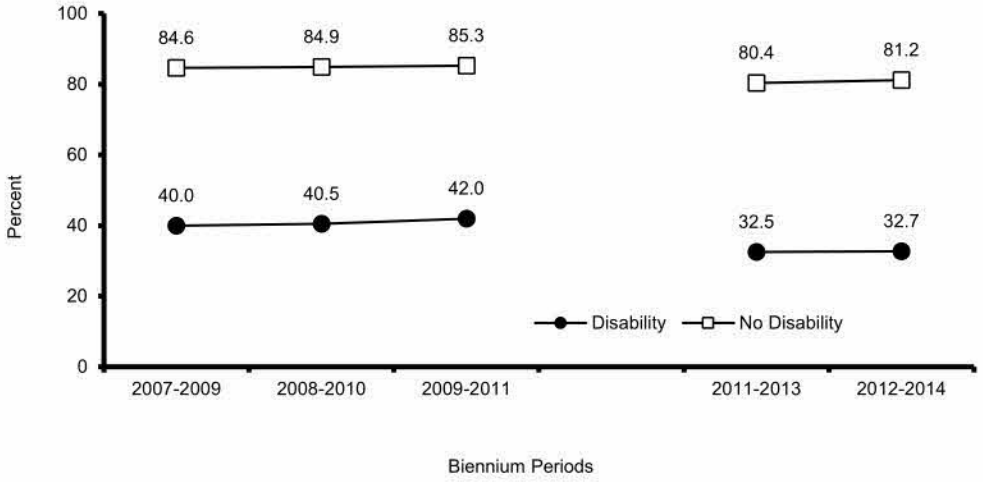
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually understands factual information and new words in context.
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often can determine a selection's main idea and analyze its style and structure.
*Socioeconomic Status is determined by eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-5

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Disability Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



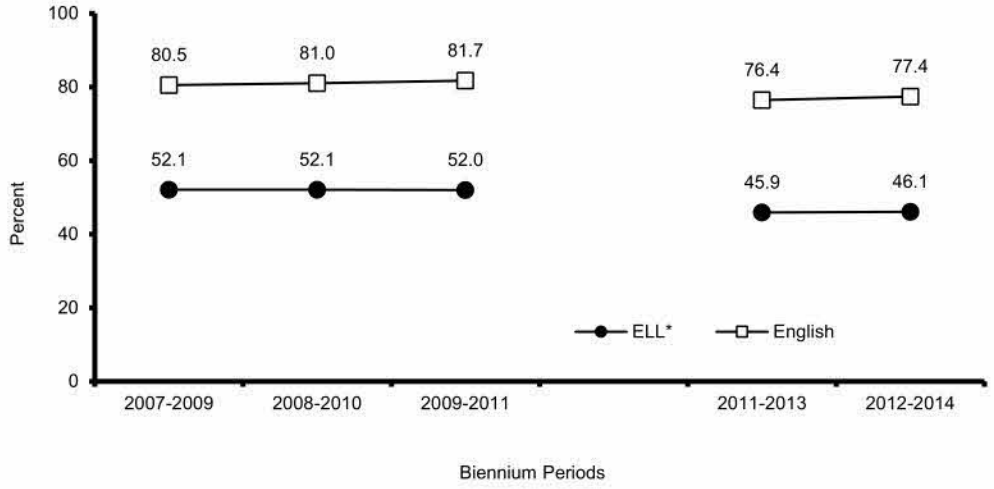
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually understands factual information and new words in context.
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often can determine a selection's main idea and analyze its style and structure.
*Disability Status is determined by the presence of an individualized education plan (IEP).

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-6

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Primary Language Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



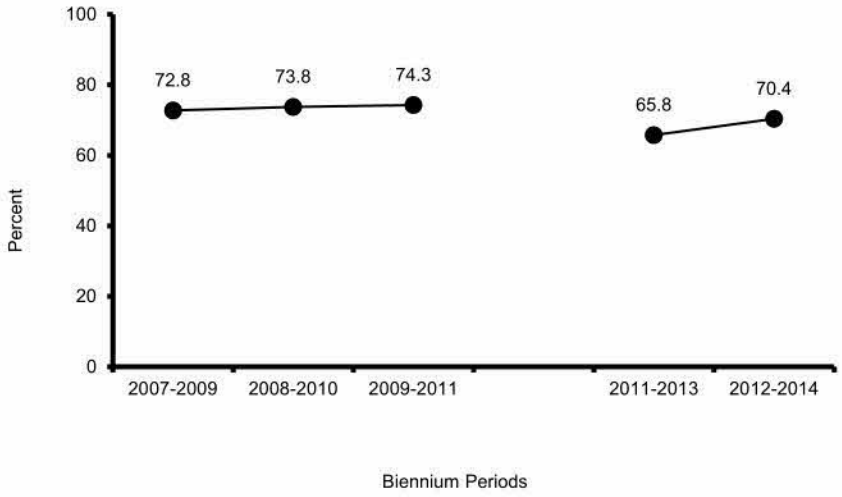
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually understands factual information and new words in context.
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often can determine a selection's main idea and analyze its style and structure.
*Primary Language Status is classified by English and English Language Learner and determined according to the following definition: English Language Learner refers to a student who has a language other than English and the proficiency in English is such that the probability of the student's academic success in an English-only classroom is below that of an academically successful peer with an English language background.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-8

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test
Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



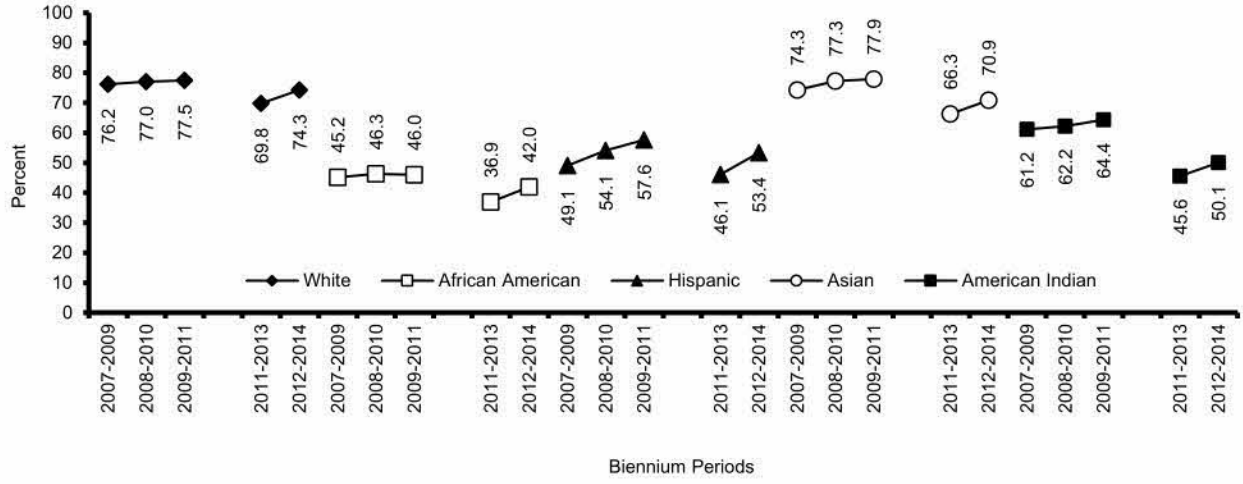
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often is able to determine a selection's main idea, identify the author's purpose or viewpoint, and analyze its style and structure.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-10

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Race/Ethnicity Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



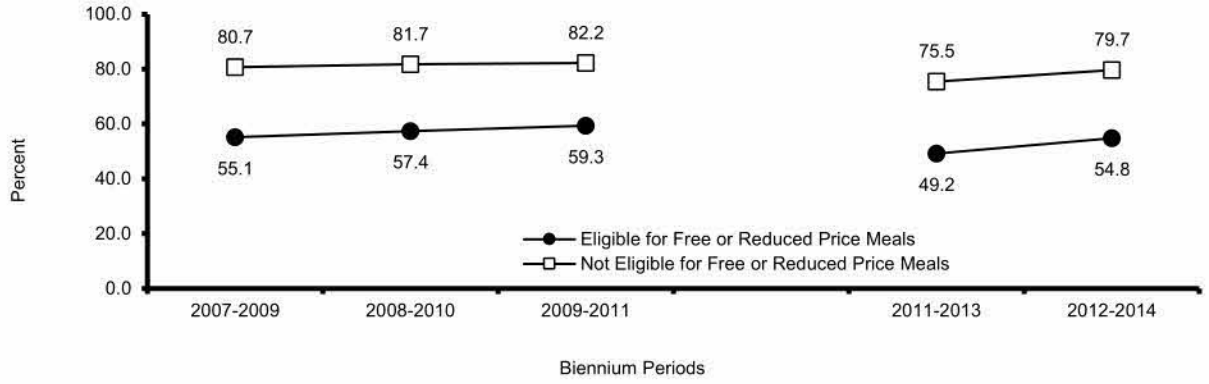
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often is able to determine a selection's main idea, identify the author's purpose or viewpoint, and analyze its style and structure.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-11

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Socioeconomic Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



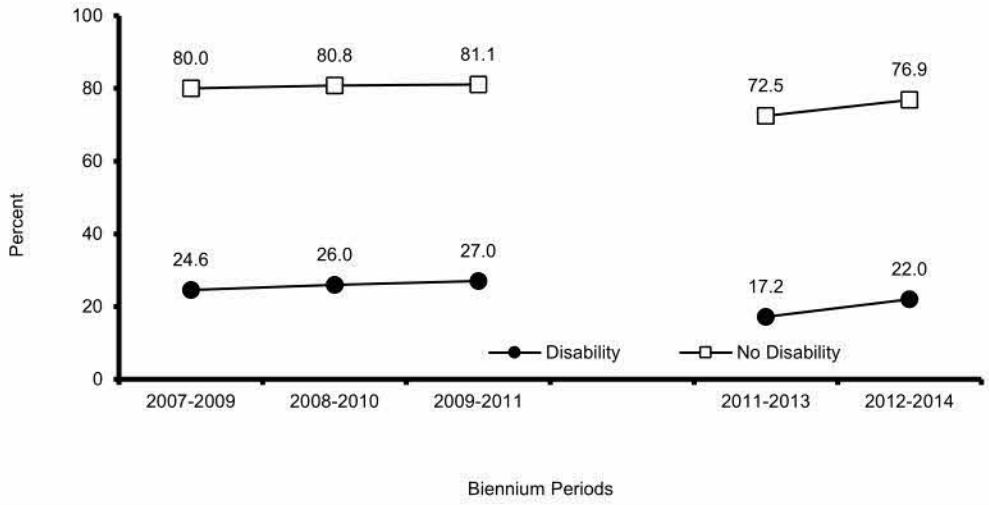
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often is able to determine a selection's main idea, identify the author's purpose or viewpoint, and analyze its style and structure.
*Socioeconomic Status is determined by eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-12

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Disability Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



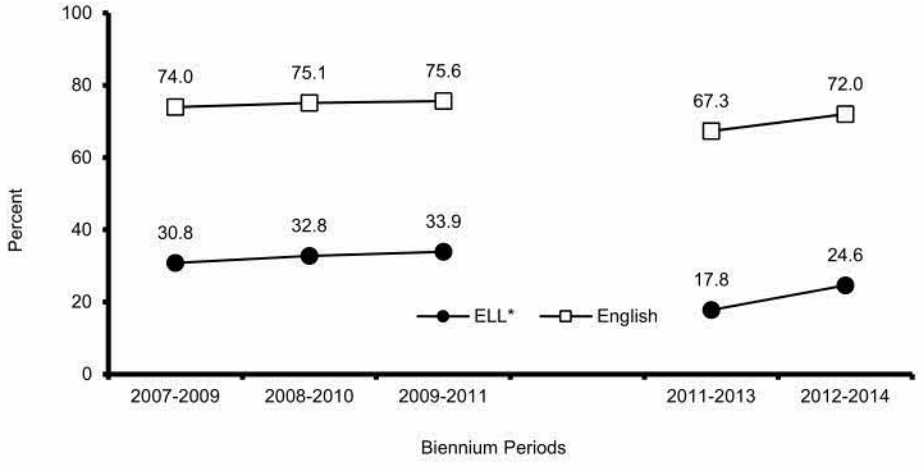
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often is able to determine a selection's main idea, identify the author's purpose or viewpoint, and analyze its style and structure.
*Disability Status is determined by the presence of an individualized education plan (IEP).

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-13

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Primary Language Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



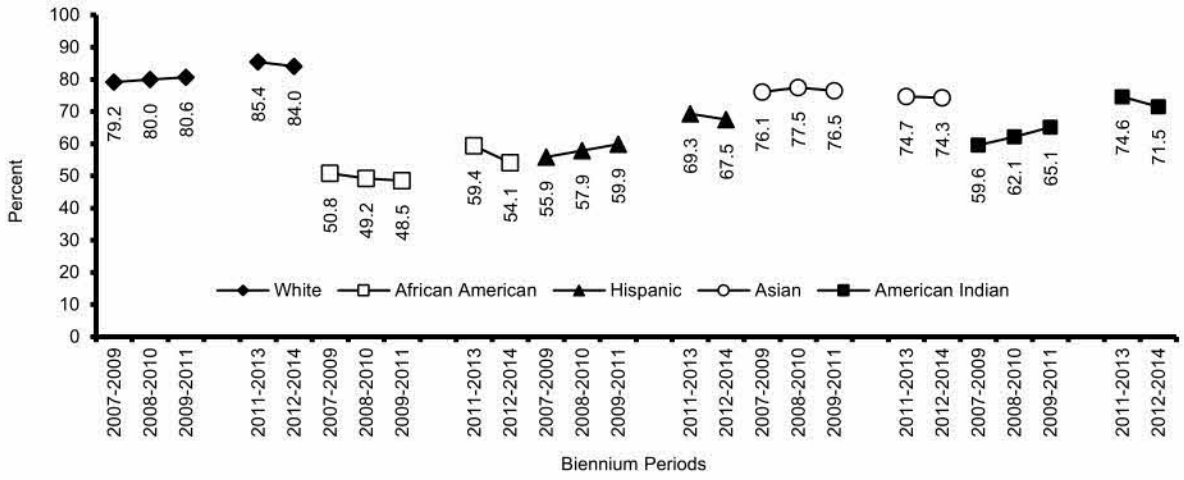
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either nonliteral language or information in new contexts.
Often is able to determine a selection's main idea, identify the author's purpose or viewpoint, and analyze its style and structure.
*Primary Language Status is classified by English and English Language Learner and determined according to the following definition: English Language Learner refers to a student who has a language other than English and the proficiency in English is such that the probability of the student's academic success in an English-only classroom is below that of an academically successful peer with an English language background.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-17

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Race/Ethnicity Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



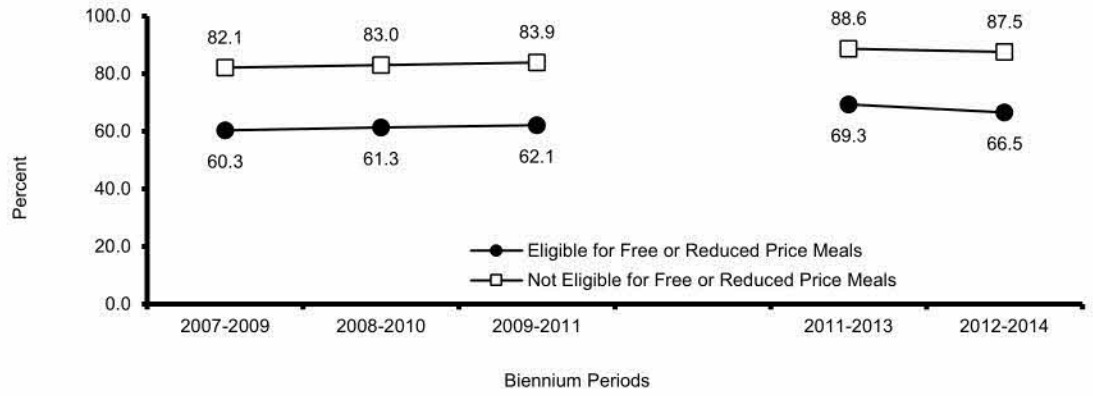
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually understands stated information and ideas; often is able to infer implied meaning, draw conclusions, and interpret nonliteral language; and usually is able to make generalizations from or about a text, identify its authors purpose or viewpoint, and evaluate aspects of its style or structure.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-18

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Socioeconomic Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



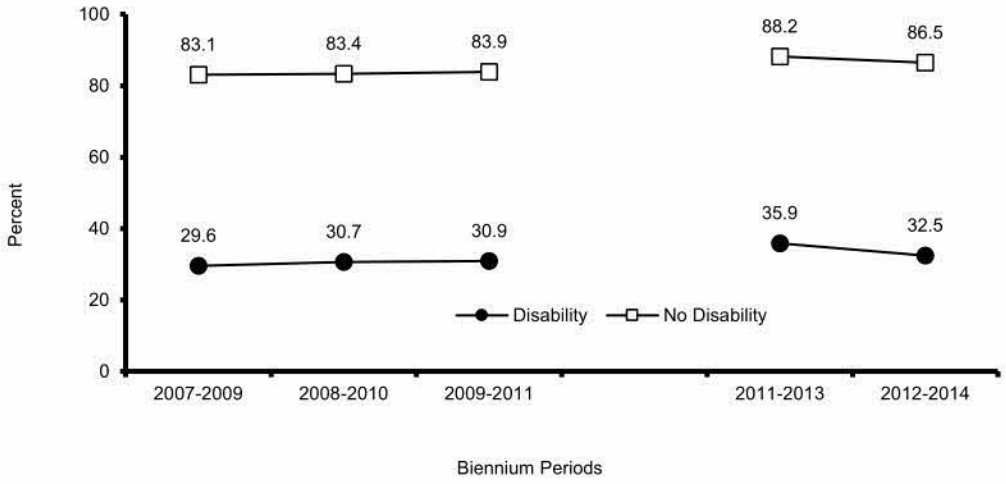
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually understands stated information and ideas; often is able to infer implied meaning, draw conclusions, and interpret nonliteral language; and usually is able to make generalizations from or about a text, identify its authors purpose or viewpoint, and evaluate aspects of its style or structure.
*Socioeconomic Status is determined by eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-19

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Disability Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



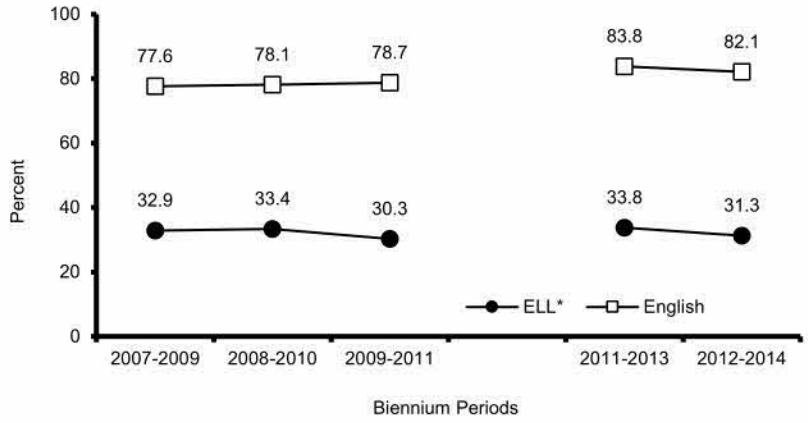
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually understands stated information and ideas; often is able to infer implied meaning, draw conclusions, and interpret nonliteral language; and usually is able to make generalizations from or about a text, identify its authors purpose or viewpoint, and evaluate aspects of its style or structure.
*Disability Status is determined by the presence of an individualized education plan (IEP).

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-20

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Reading Test by Primary Language Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually understands stated information and ideas; often is able to infer implied meaning, draw conclusions, and interpret nonliteral language; and usually is able to make generalizations from or about a text, identify its authors purpose or viewpoint, and evaluate aspects of its style or structure.
*Primary Language Status is classified by English and English Language Learner and determined according to the following definition: English Language Learner refers to a student who has a language other than English and the proficiency in English is such that the probability of the student's academic success in an English-only classroom is below that of an academically successful peer with an English language.

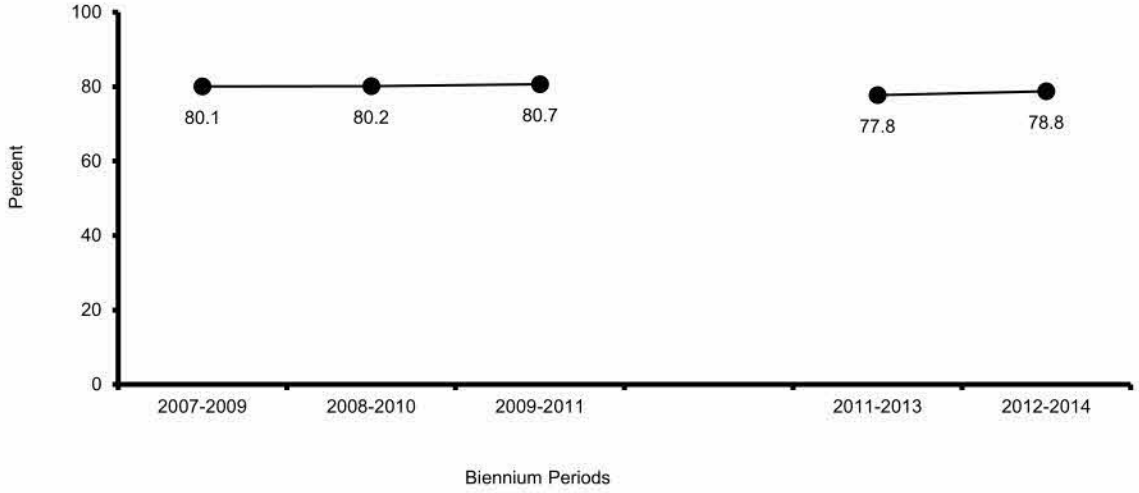
The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Mathematics

Indicator: Percentage of 4th, 8th, and 11th grade students achieving proficient or higher mathematics status on the Iowa Assessments Mathematics Tests (reported for all students and by gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, primary language status, and migrant status).

Figure 5-22

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test
Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



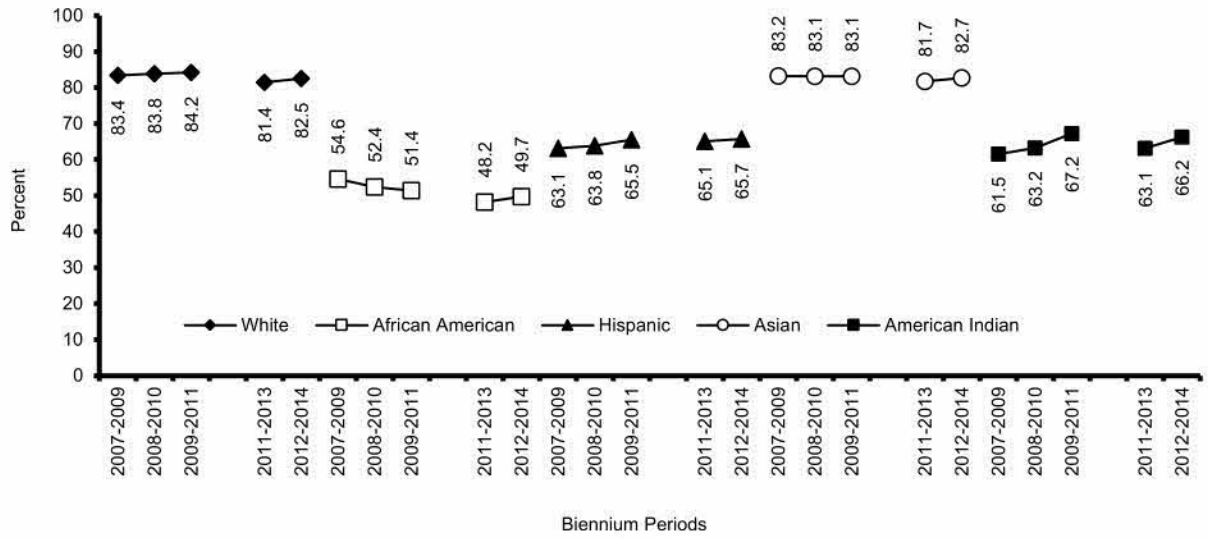
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Is developing an understanding of many math concepts; usually is able to solve simple and complex word problems and use estimation methods; and can interpret data from graphs and tables.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-24

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Race/Ethnicity Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



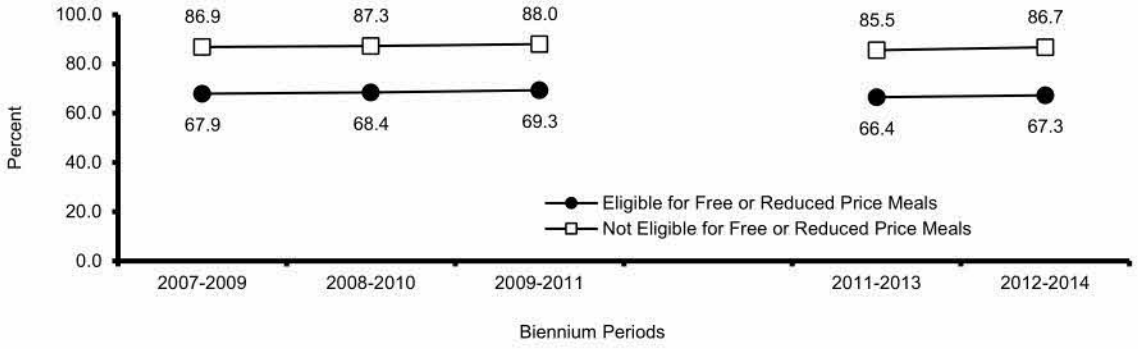
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Is developing an understanding of many math concepts; usually is able to solve simple and complex word problems and use estimation methods; and can interpret data from graphs and tables.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-25

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Socioeconomic Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



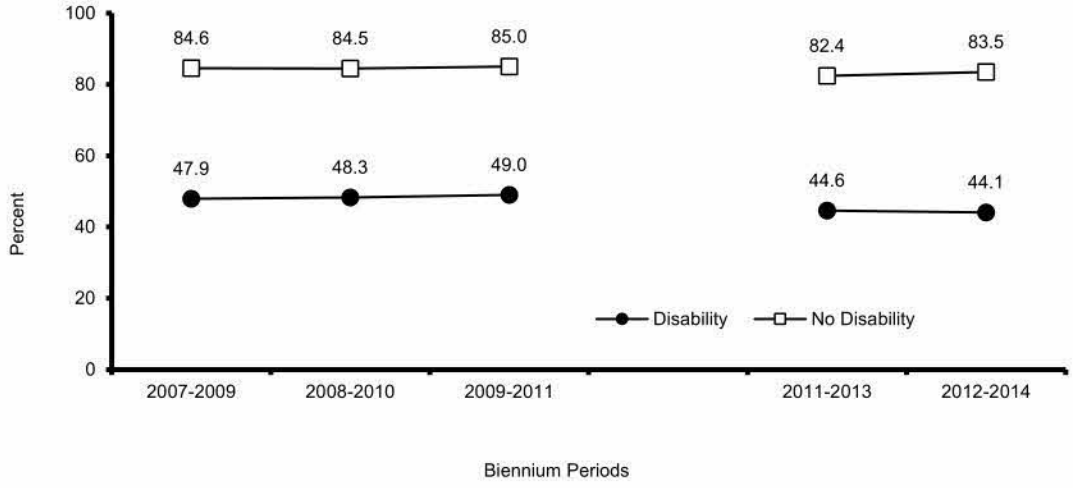
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Is developing an understanding of many math concepts; usually is able to solve simple and complex word problems and use estimation methods; and can interpret data from graphs and tables.
*Socioeconomic Status is determined by eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-26

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Disability Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



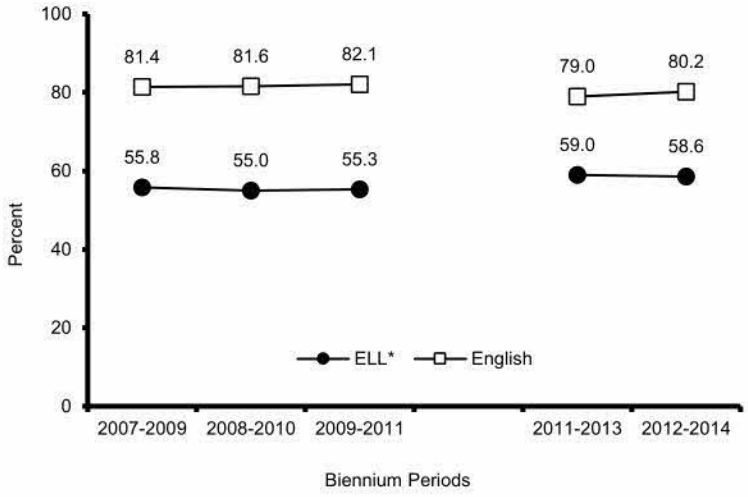
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Is developing an understanding of many math concepts; usually is able to solve simple and complex word problems and use estimation methods; and can interpret data from graphs and tables.
*Disability Status is determined by the presence of an individualized education plan (IEP).

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-27

Percent of Iowa Fourth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Primary Language Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



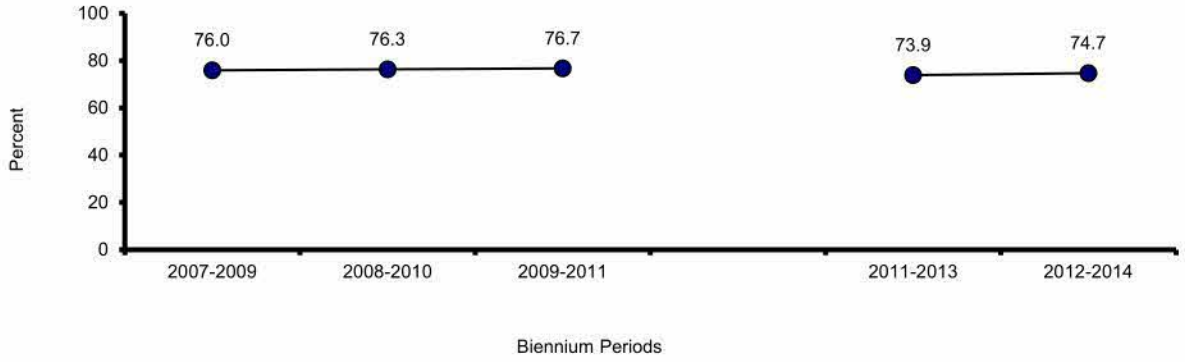
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Is developing an understanding of many math concepts; usually is able to solve simple and complex word problems and use estimation methods; and can interpret data from graphs and tables.
*Primary Language Status is classified by English and English Language Learner and determined according to the following definition: English Language Learner refers to a student who has a language other than English and the proficiency in English is such that the probability of the student's academic success in an English-only classroom is below that of an academically successful peer with an English language background.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-29

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test
Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



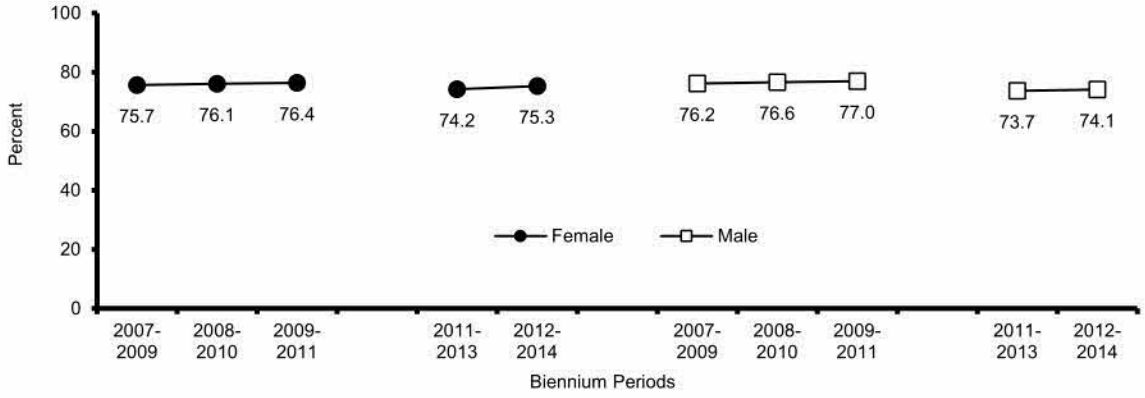
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually can understand math concepts and solve simple and complex word problems, sometimes can use estimation methods, and usually is able to interpret data from graphs and tables.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-30

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Gender
Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2011-2013 and 2012-2014



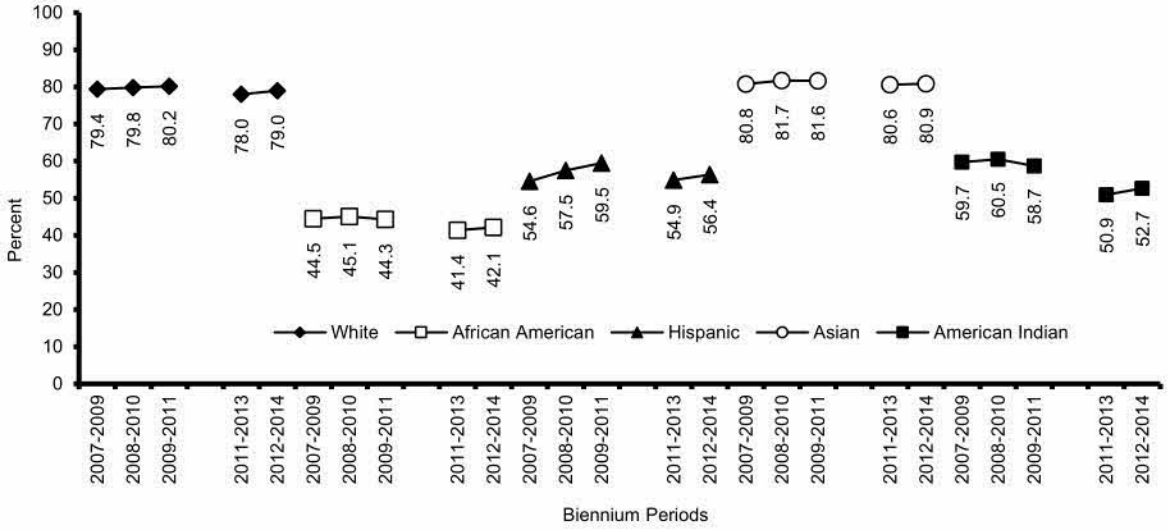
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually can understand math concepts and solve simple and complex word problems, sometimes can use estimation methods, and usually is able to interpret data from graphs and tables.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-31

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Race/Ethnicity Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



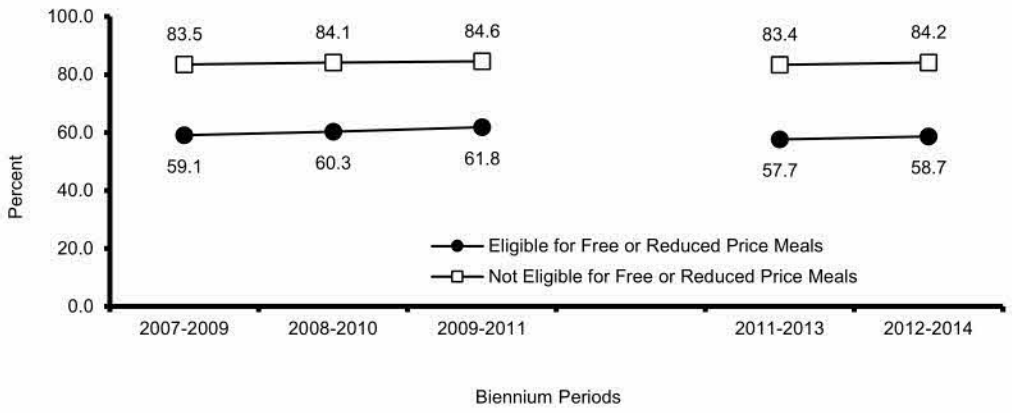
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually can understand math concepts and solve simple and complex word problems, sometimes can use estimation methods, and usually is able to interpret data from graphs and tables.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-32

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Socioeconomic Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



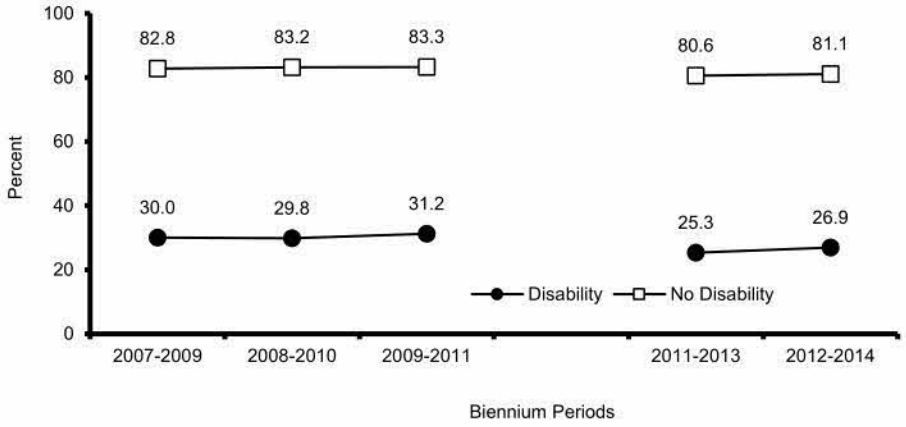
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually can understand math concepts and solve simple and complex word problems, sometimes can use estimation methods, and usually is able to interpret data from graphs and tables.
*Socioeconomic Status is determined by eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-33

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Disability Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



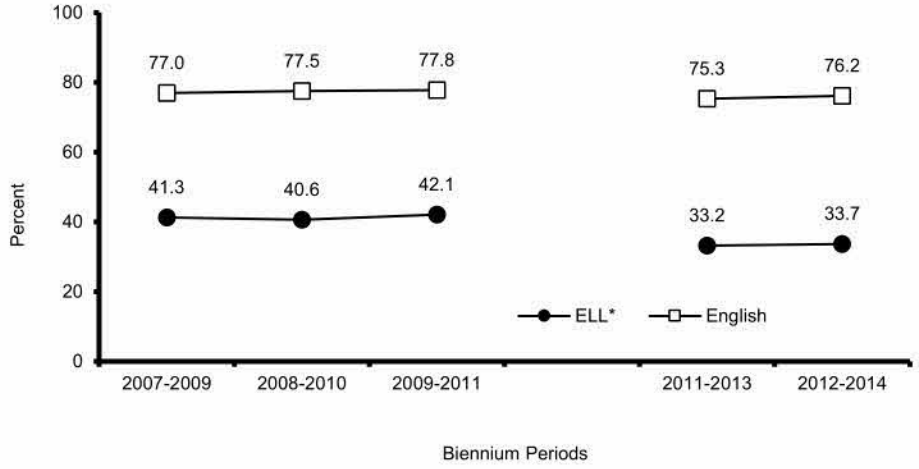
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually can understand math concepts and solve simple and complex word problems, sometimes can use estimation methods, and usually is able to interpret data from graphs and tables.
*Disability Status is determined by the presence of an individualized education plan (IEP).

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-34

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Primary Language Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



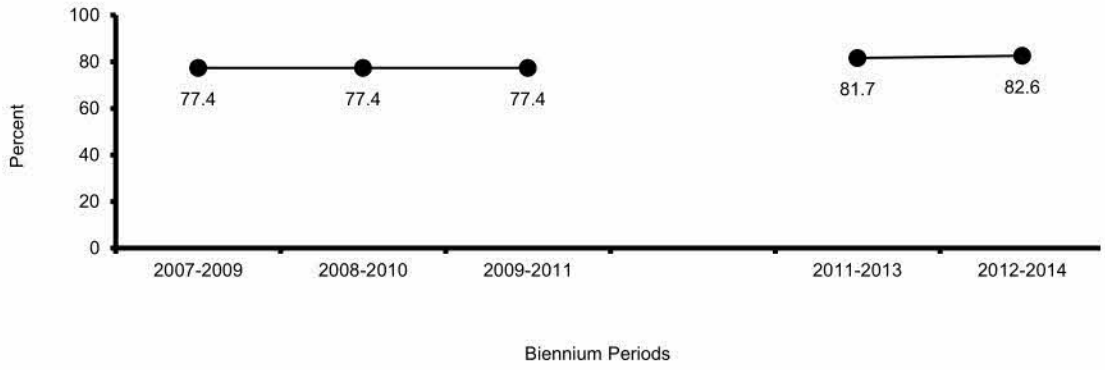
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Usually can understand math concepts and solve simple and complex word problems, sometimes can use estimation methods, and usually is able to interpret data from graphs and tables.
*Primary Language Status is classified by English and English Language Learner and determined according to the following definition: English Language Learner refers to a student who has a language other than English and the proficiency in English is such that the probability of the student's academic success in an English-only classroom is below that of an academically successful peer with an English language background.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-36

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



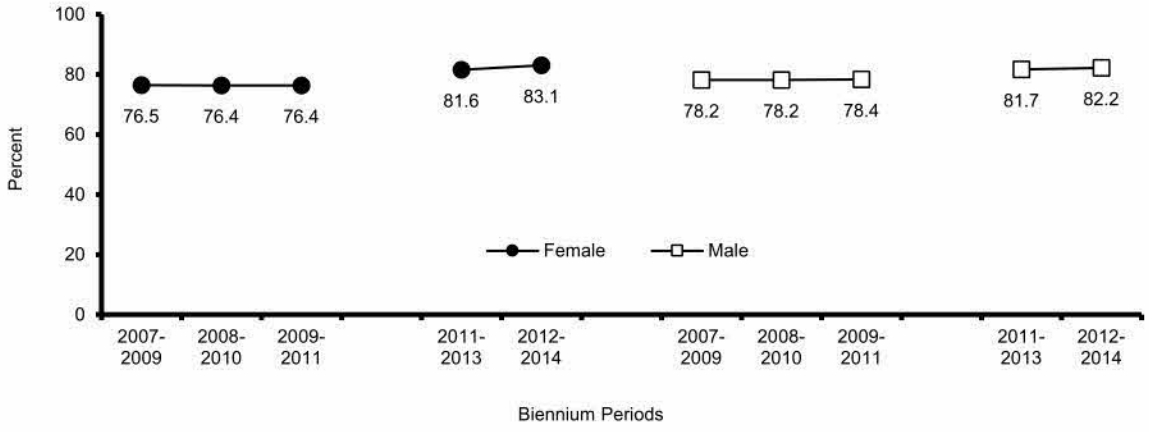
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Sometimes applies math concepts and procedures, makes inferences with quantitative information, and solves variety of quantitative reasoning problems.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-37

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Gender Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



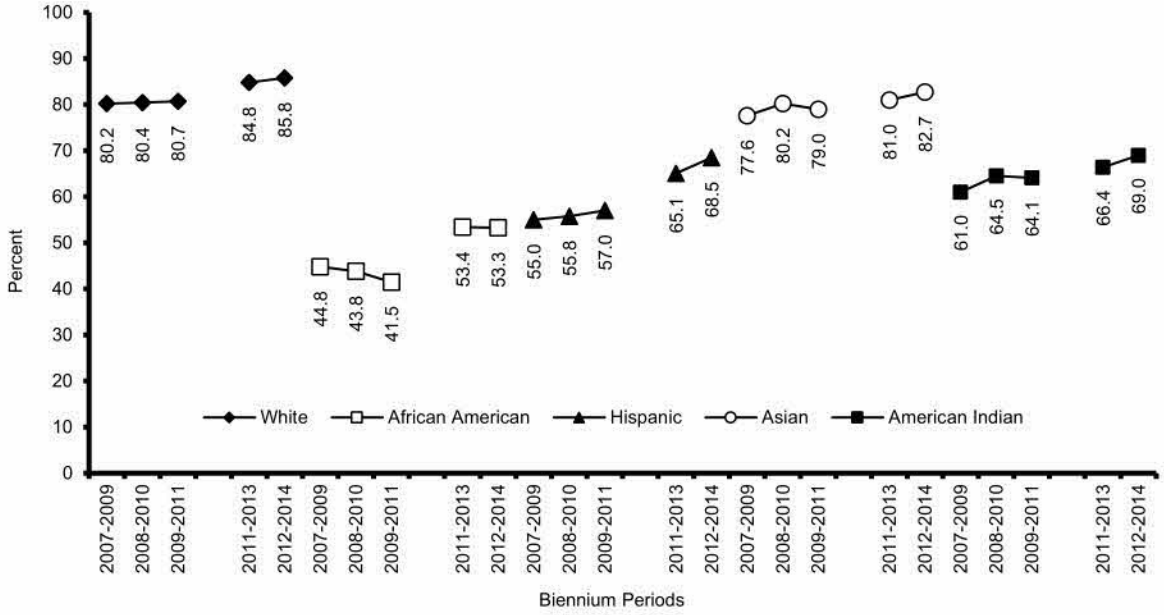
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Sometimes applies math concepts and procedures, makes inferences with quantitative information, and solves variety of quantitative reasoning problems.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-38

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Race/ Ethnicity Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



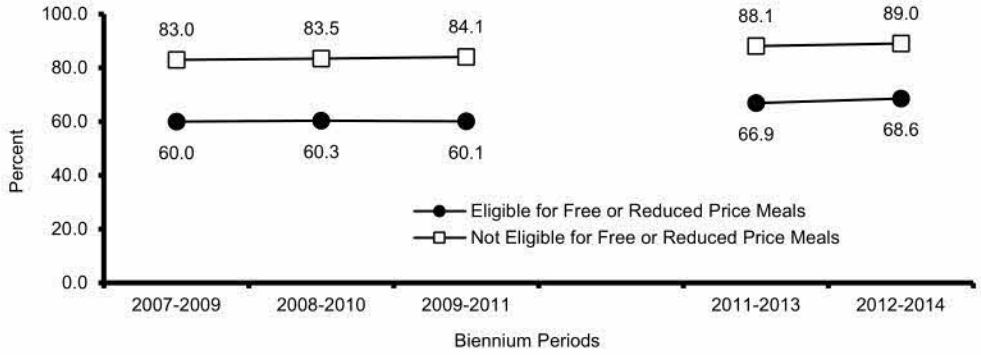
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Sometimes applies math concepts and procedures, makes inferences with quantitative information, and solves variety of quantitative reasoning problems.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-39

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Socioeconomic Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
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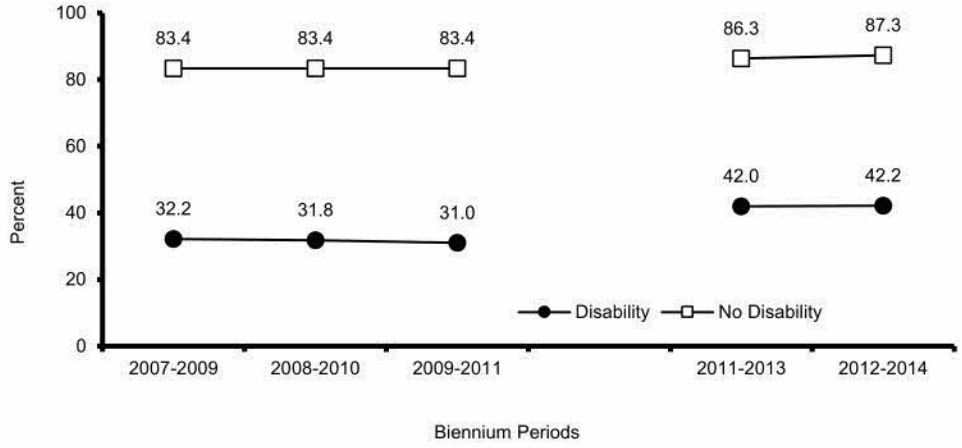
Figure 5-40

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Disability Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Sometimes applies math concepts and procedures, makes inferences with quantitative information, and solves variety of quantitative reasoning problems.

*Disability Status is determined by the presence of an individualized education plan (IEP).

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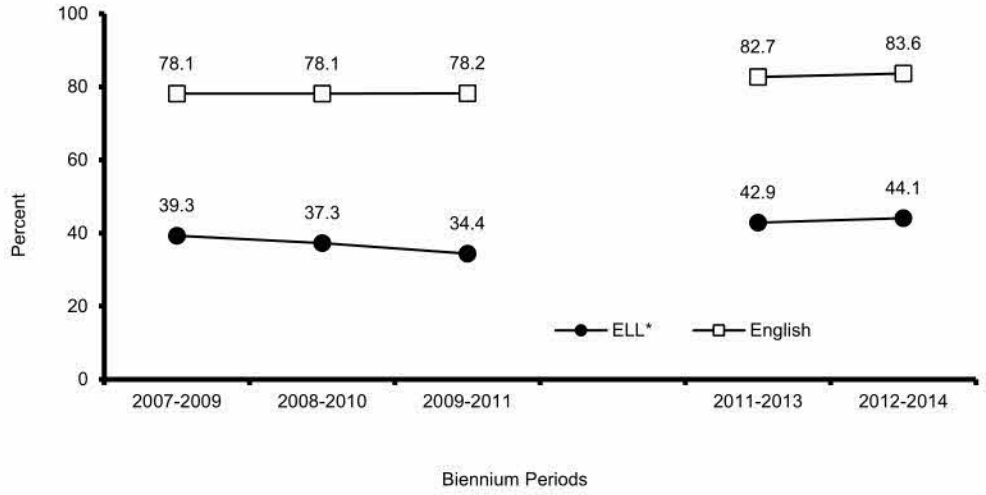
Figure 5-41

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Mathematics Test by Primary Language Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
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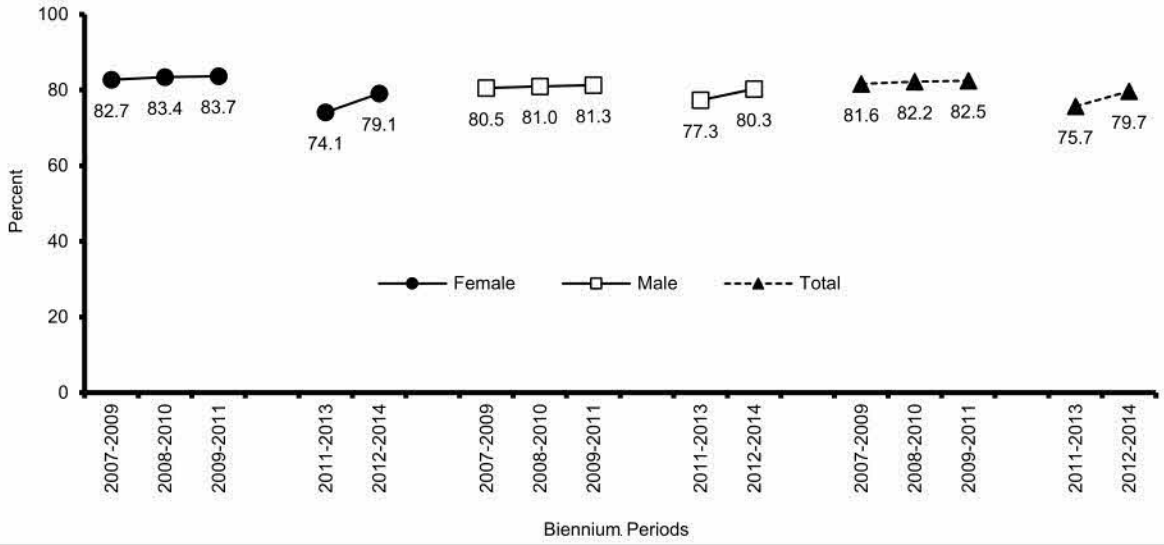
Science

Indicator: Percentage of eighth and 11th grade students achieving proficient or higher science status on the Iowa Assessments Science Tests (reported for all students and by gender, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, disability, primary language status, and migrant status).

Figure 5-43

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Science Test by Gender Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



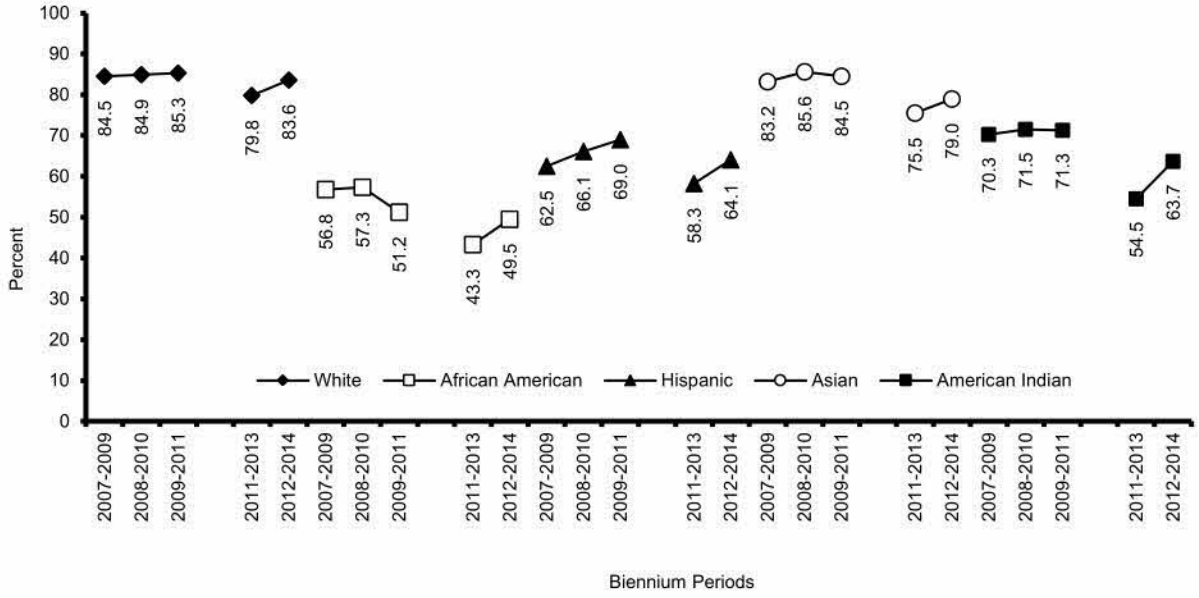
Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:
Sometimes understands ideas related to Earth, the universe, and the life science.
Usually understands ideas related to the physical sciences and often can demonstrate the skills of scientific inquiry.

The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Figure 5-44

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Science Test by Race/Ethnicity Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
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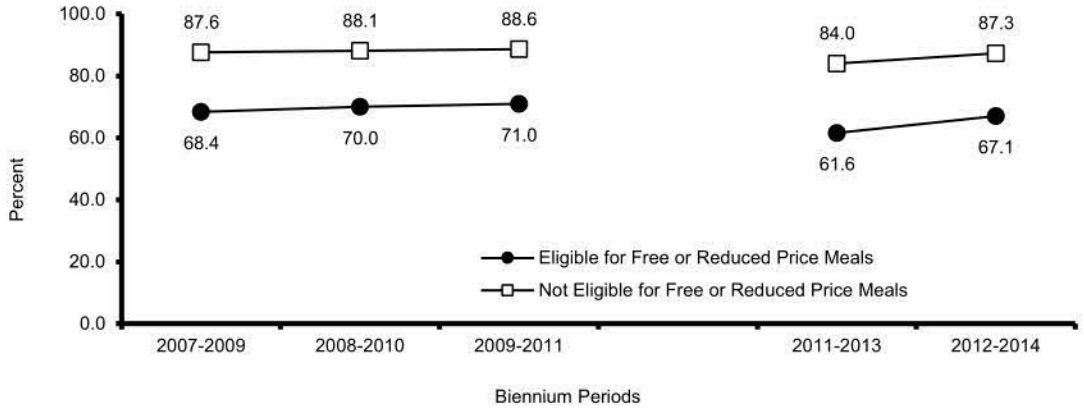
Figure 5-45

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Science Test by Socioeconomic Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
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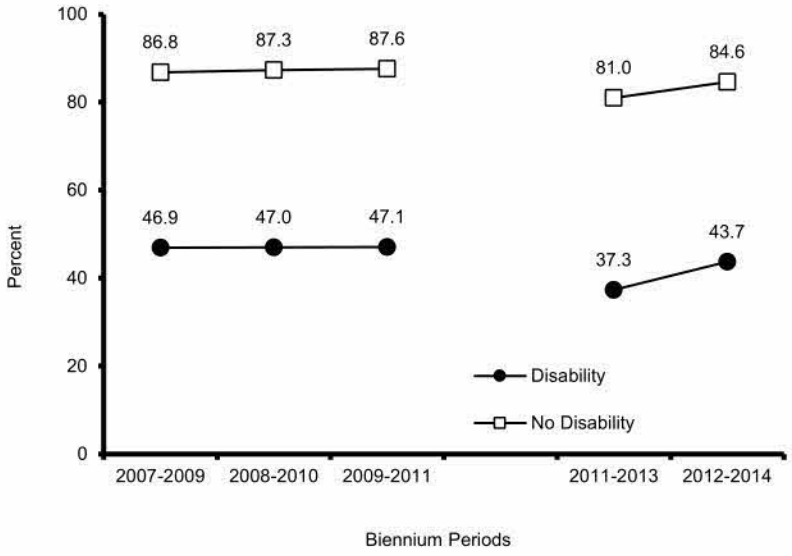
Figure 5-46

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessments Science Test by Disability Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
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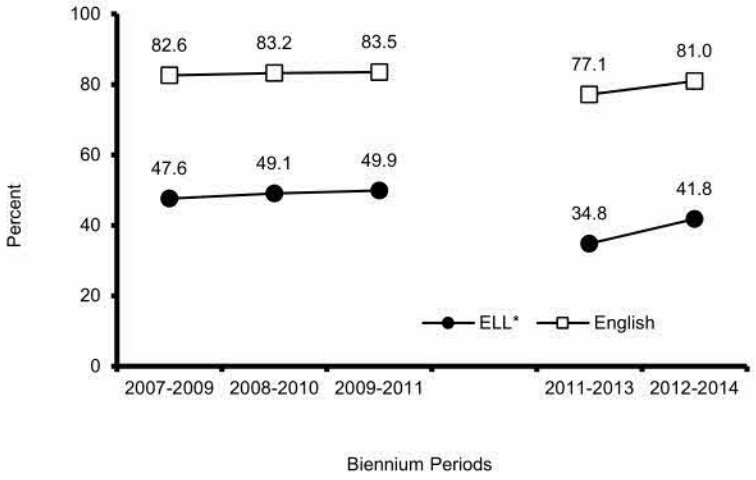
Figure 5-47

Percent of Iowa Eighth Grade Students Proficient on ITBS/Iowa Assessment Science Test by Primary Language Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

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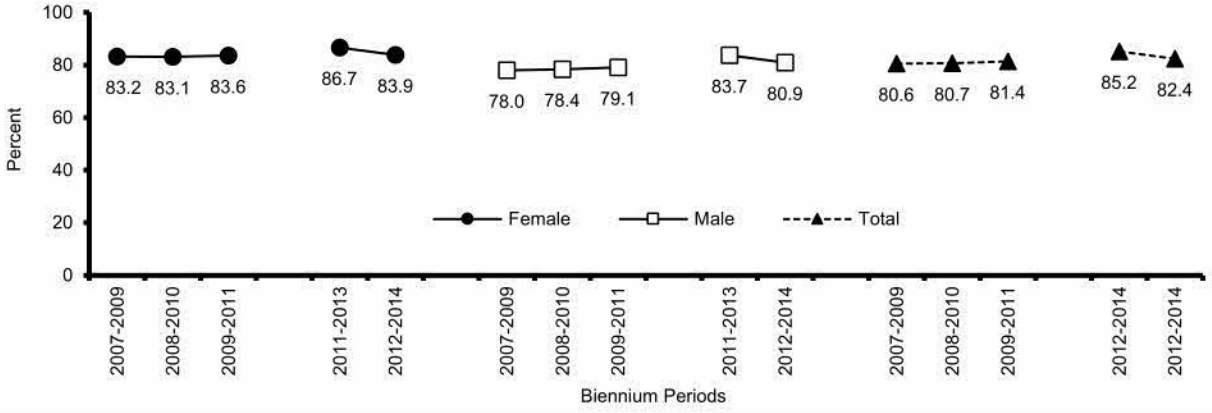
Figure 5-49

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Science Test by Gender Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
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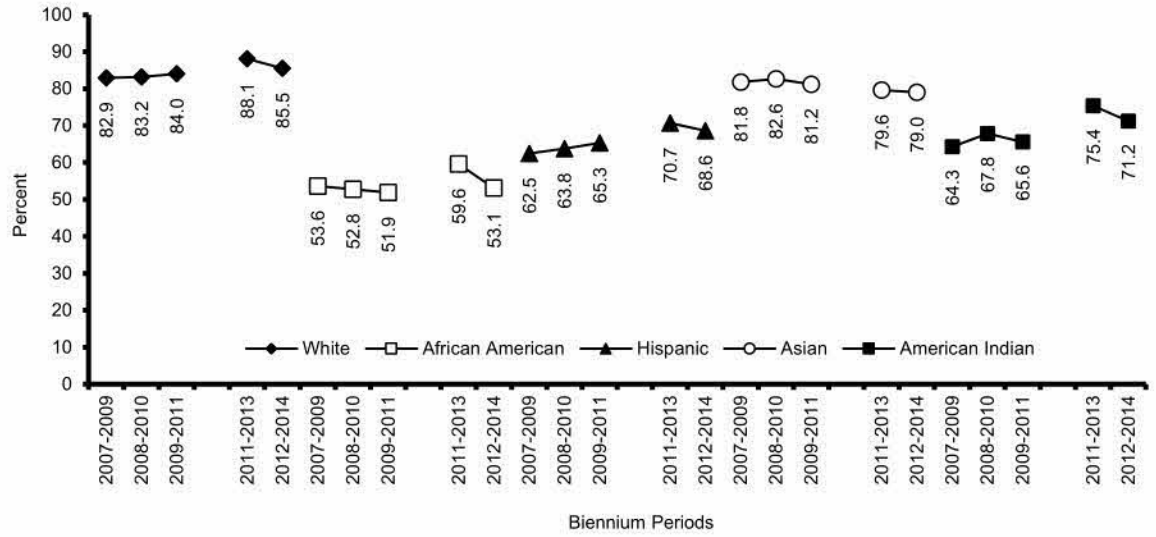
Figure 5-50

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Science Test by Race/Ethnicity Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

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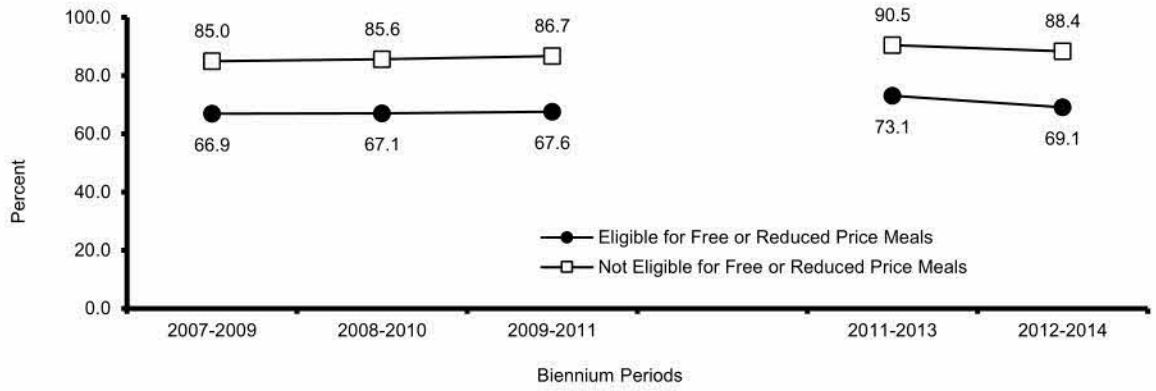
Figure 5-51

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Science Test by Socioeconomic Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

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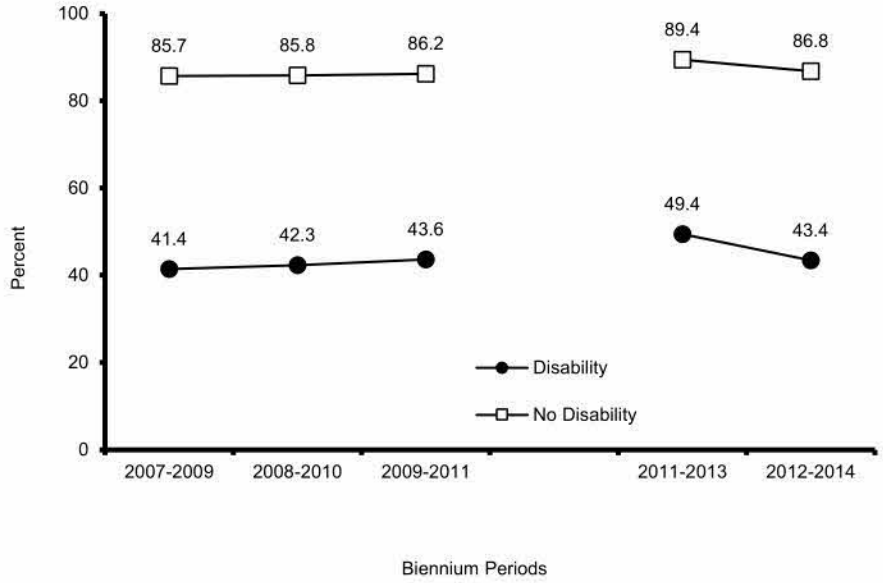
Figure 5-52

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Science Test by Disability Status*
Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

Notes: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g., 2009-2011 represents the average for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years.
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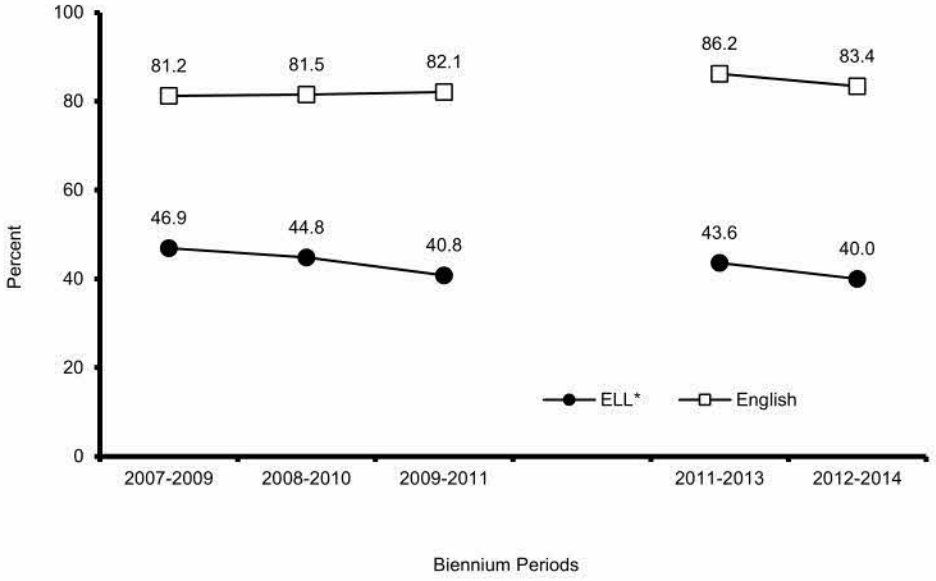
Figure 5-53

Percent of Iowa Eleventh Grade Students Proficient on ITED/Iowa Assessments Science Test by Primary Language Status* Biennium Periods 2007-2009 to 2009-2011 and 2011-2013 to 2012-2014



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, The University of Iowa.

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The 2011-2013 and 2012-2014 biennium data were based on the new Iowa Assessments and 2010 national norms while the other biennium periods data were based on the ITBS/ITED A/B forms and 2000 national norms.

Reading

Note: All of the data we are looking at are "Percent Proficient"

Fourth Grade

Overall Performance

Median =

Racial/Ethnic Groups Median Gap

White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease				

Students with Disabilities Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

ELL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

FRPL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

Eighth Grade

Overall Performance

Median =

Racial/Ethnic Groups Median Gap

White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease				

Students with Disabilities Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

ELL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

FRPL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

Eleventh Grade

Overall Performance

Median =

Racial/Ethnic Groups Median Gap

White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease				

Students with Disabilities Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

ELL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

FRPL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

Mathematics

Note: All of the data we are looking at are "Percent Proficient"

Fourth Grade

Overall Performance

Median =

Racial/Ethnic Groups Median Gap

White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease				

Students with Disabilities Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

ELL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

FRPL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

Eighth Grade

Overall Performance

Median =

Racial/Ethnic Groups Median Gap

White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease				

Students with Disabilities Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

ELL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

FRPL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

Eleventh Grade

Overall Performance

Median =

Racial/Ethnic Groups Median Gap

White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease				

Students with Disabilities Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

ELL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

FRPL Students Median Gap (All Students-Students with Disabilities)

What is happening to the Gap over time? Increase/Decrease

APPENDIX XXXX

SECTION 3 – SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

The Department is soliciting Proposals from qualified Vendors to evaluate two (2) statewide initiatives over a three (3) year period for the Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) and Collaborating for Iowa's Kids (C4K) programs.

Proposals will be accepted from Vendors who meet the criteria as indicated in TABLE 1. In order to submit a Proposal for this RFP, the Vendor(s) must be able to answer "YES" to each question in TABLE 1 and provide evidence as indicated within this RFP.

TABLE 1. QUALIFYING CRITERIA

Question	YES	NO
1. Is your organization a Level 1 Research Institute OR an organization that is nationally recognized for research/evaluation expertise/experience?		
2. Does your organization have experience collaborating with other agencies/institutions on program evaluation and/or research design and implementation?		
3. Is your organization familiar with the National Program Evaluation Standards? Do the National Program Evaluation Standards and/or other program evaluation standards undergird your work?		
4. Is your organization capable of conduction meaningful analyses with appropriate interpretation of data?		
5. Does your organization have an established process to protect personally identifiable data as required under then Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)?		
6. Does your organization have experience evaluating one or more of the following: MTSS/RTI, teacher leadership, effective teaching, improving teaching, coaching or mentoring?		
7. Does your organization understand the critical components of one or more of the following: MTSS/RTI, teacher leadership, effective teaching, improving teaching, coaching or mentoring?		
8. Is your organization able to commit to evaluate TLC/C4K within the timelines indicated within this RFP?		

3.1.1 Deliverables: Evaluation of Teacher Leadership and Compensation and Collaborating for Iowa's Kids

In TABLE 2 are the broadly defined deliverables required for both statewide initiatives for a Vendor to evaluate TLC/C4K, however these are two distinct evaluations. Therefore, the Vendor must develop a common program evaluation design to apply to both statewide initiatives while taking into consideration those elements that are unique to TLC, those elements that are unique to C4K, and those that are common across both initiatives (See Section 1.1, Figure 1). It is important to note that the Vendor must implement program evaluation separately for TLC and C4K.

Specific deliverables for TLC are outlined in Section 3.1.1.1 and TABLES 3 & 4. Specific deliverables for C4K

and outlined in Section 3.1.1.2 and TABLE 5. All project deliverables must be completed in collaboration with the Statewide Evaluation Design Team.

TABLE 2. AREA AND DELIVERABLE

Area	Deliverable
A. Program Evaluation Design	Develop and implement a common program evaluation design
B. Survey Development, implementation and analysis	Develop and implement surveys as needed for formative and/or summative evaluation of state initiatives.
C. Focus group development, implementation and analysis	Develop and implement focus groups as needed for formative and/or summative evaluation of state initiatives.
D. Data collection, analysis and reporting	Develop a program evaluation timeline for data collection, analysis and reporting for TLC/C4K. Data collection, analysis and reporting includes achievement data as well as other data needed in relation of the outcomes defined in Sections 3.1.1.1 and 3.1.1.2. Additional data may be determined as a team after contract is awarded.
E. Formative and Summative data and reports	Develop and implement examination of effectiveness across a) formative evaluation to inform process and going revisions to the work, and b) summative evaluation to inform TLC and C4K defined outcomes.

Note that TLC requires three to four formative reports and one annual summative report and C4K requires 3 formative reports and one annual summative report. These reports require the Vendor to attend statewide team meetings to present report information and lead team (s) in discussion toward understanding of the data and potential revision of the work.

3.1.1.1 Teacher Leadership and Compensation

In the state of Iowa, bipartisan legislation created a four-year process to fully develop the statewide Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) system, with the goal of all school districts voluntarily participating by the 2016-17 school year. In the 2014 Legislative session, $50 million in new funding was designated to launch the TLC system.

Through the system, teacher leaders taken on extra responsibilities, including helping colleagues analyze data and fine tune instructional strategies as well as coaching and co-teaching. Individual Program Evaluation Deliverables for TLC at the current time includes program evaluation, including specific survey needs, focus groups, data collection, analysis and reporting, and formative and summative data and reports. TLC has described key goals and outcomes anticipated from implementation of this state initiative. These are outlined in TABLE 3. In addition, TLC has identified key components and measures that a Vendor must build into any data collection, analysis and reporting plan as well as formative/summative data and reports. These are outlined in TABLE 4. The key goals, outcomes components and measures for TCL serve as the foundation for the Vendor to create a comprehensive evaluation for TLC as they contain the salient focus for this initiative's program evaluation. The state collects currently identified measures across several state data systems. It is expected that formative evaluation occurs approximately three to four times each year to inform TLC committees and teams.

TABLE 3. TEACHER LEADERSHIP AND COMPENSATION GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Key Goals	Outcome(s)
1. Attract able and promising new teachers	A. Has the development of the TLC program increased: • The overall number of high school students intending to pursue a degree in education

	• The average ACT score of high school students intending to pursue a degree in education • The number of applicants for teacher licensure in Iowa • The diversity (in terms of race, gender and geography) of applicants for teacher licensure in Iowa
2. Retain effective teachers	A. Has the adoption of a local TLC plan increased teacher retention in the school districts with approved plans? B. Has the development of the TLC system increased teacher retention state-wide? C. Has the development of the TLC system led to differences in retention rates between urban and rural school districts?
3. Promote Collaboration	A. Are teachers more likely to: • Co-plan with other teachers • Observe with teachers • Be observed by other teachers • Co-teach with other teachers following the implementation of a local TLC plan B. Do teachers now have more time available for collaboration once a district has adopted a local TLC plan and has the quality of collaborative opportunities increased?
4. Reward professional growth and effective teaching	A. Has the development of the TLC program created multiple new leadership roles for teachers?
5. Improved student achievement	A. Has the development of a local TLC plan led to improved student achievement results, as measured by the annual state assessments as well as other sources such as district formative assessments and other student learning and performance measures? B. Has the development of a local TLC plan led to an increase in the graduation rate? C. Has the development of a local TLC plan led to improved attendance?

TABLE 4. TEACHER LEADERSHIP AND COMPENSATION KEY COMPONENTS AND MEASURES

Key Component (or Element)	Measures
1. Increase minimum salary to $33,500	A. How many districts increased their minimum salary to $33,500? B. What was the average of the increase? C. What impact has the development of the TLC system had on the average beginning teacher salary and average teacher salary (for all teachers) in Iowa?
2. Improve entry into the profession	A. What supports are bring provided for first and second year teachers? B. What impact is that having on first and second year teachers instructional practice, satisfaction, efficacy?
3. Create multiple, meaningful, differentiated teacher leadership roles in which at	A. Has the development of the TLC system created multiple new leadership roles for teachers? B. What percentage of teachers are now in leadership roles because of TLC

least 25% of the teachers serve	funding? C. How much time, on average, is each teacher serving in a leadership capacity outside of their own classroom? D. What teacher leadership roles have districts defined?
4. Develop a rigorous selection process for leadership roles	A. What criteria was used for selecting teachers into the leadership role?
5. Align professional development with the IPDM and the local TLC plan	A. What characteristics of collaborative inquiry are evident within the school culture and the professional learning opportunities? B. Area teachers more involved in designing and facilitating school-wide collaborative inquiry processes as the key means of professional learning as a result of implementing the TLC plan?
6. Scholl District Fidelity in Plan Implementation	A. Have districts implemented their initial TLC plan as described in their TLC application? B. What adjustments have districts made to their plans and what factors caused these changes?

3.1.1.2 Collaborating for Iowa's Kids

C4K is a state led effort to align multiple systems from the Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies (AEA) and Iowa School Districts, and serves as the infrastructure through which Iowa implements statewide work and supports. TABLE 5 provides C4K key components, outcomes and measures to be evaluated. The intent of C4K is to work for effectively and efficiently as a full educational system to accomplish a few agreed upon priorities. The focus of C4K is Early Learning Standards/Iowa Core within a framework of Multi-Tiers System of Supports (MTSS) with the current goal that every child is proficient in reading by the end of third grade. MTSS is a process by which schools use data to identify academic and behavioral needs of students, match student needs with evidence-based instruction and interventions, and monitor student progress to improve educational outcomes. MTSS also allows educators to evaluate the overall health of their system and target resources by providing the necessary data to determine which elements of the education system are performing adequately and which require further development.

Individual Program Evaluation Deliverables for C4K at the current time includes program evaluation, data collection, analysis and reporting, and formative and summative data and reports. C4K has identified key components, outcomes and measures for this state initiative as outlines in TABLE 5. Additional measures may be identified as a team after the contract is awarded, however analysis must include the measures identified at a minimum. The state collects these measures in a state-developed and supported data system: Iowa TIER. It is expected that formative evaluation occurs three times each year to inform C4K Oversight and Implementation Teams, paralleling implementation of universal screeners across the date in Fall, Winter and Spring.

TABLE 5. COLLABORATING FOR IOWA'S KIDS KEY COMPENETS, OUTCOMES AND MEASURES

Key Component	Outcome(s)	Measures
1. Assessment and Data-Based Decision-Making	A. All students are assessed with a valid and reliable universal screener B. All students are assessed with a valid and reliable progress monitoring assessment	A. percent of students assessed with a valid and reliable universal screener B. Percent of students not meeting benchmark assessed with a valid and

	C. All districts/schools have a comprehensive balanced assessment system in place	reliable progress monitoring assessment C. Not known at this time
2. Universal Instruction	A. All students have access to, and are successful in, evidence-based universal instruction B. All districts/schools have an evidence-based universal core?	A. Percent of students at benchmark on universal screening assessment-and change in percentage at benchmark over time B. Percent of districts/schools scoring at the acceptable range for universal instruction on the MTSS School Implementation Tool
3. Targeted and Intensive Supports	A. All students who require targeted support receive evidence-based targeted interventions B. All students who required intensive support receive evidence-based intensive interventions C. All districts/schools use progress monitoring data to monitor intervention efficacy (targeted and intensive) over time to make instructional changes	A. Percent of schools implementing evidence-based interventions for student identified as at-risk B. Percent of schools implementing evidence-based interventions for students identified as substantially deficient C. Percent of at-risk/substantially deficient students exhibiting acceptable growth
4. Leadership	A. All districts/schools have a process to establish consensus to implement and sustain MTSS. All districts/schools have consensus to implement and sustain MTSS B. All districts/schools have an established quality leadership team to implement and sustain MTSS	A. Percent of districts/schools scoring at the acceptable range for consensus on the MTSS School Implementation Tool B. Percent of districts/schools scoring at the acceptable range for quality leadership on the MTSS School Implementation Tool
5. Infrastructure	A. All districts/schools use the Iowa Professional Development Model to provide ongoing professional learning and coaching to support staff members B. All MTSS districts/schools implement, and use the results of, the School Implementation Tool to monitor the progress of MTSS over time	A. Percent of districts/schools using IPDM to provide professional learning and coaching B. Percent of districts/schools using the MTSS School Implementation Tool to monitor progress of MTSS over time

3.2 SCOPE OF WORK

It is expected that the Vendor:

- Commit to Project Management duties as described in Section 3.3.
- Complete deliverables as described in Section 3.1.1.
- Develop one program evaluation plan for both TLC and C4K that contains consistent formative and summative evaluation structures. Although there will be common data elements across TLC and C4K, it is required that separate data elements are analyzed, interpreted and reported for each initiative. The Proposal should include a

projected program evaluation design that provides the overall structure for evaluation that will be used, and a hypothesized structure for data analysis and reporting based on the outcomes and projected data elements indicated under TLC and C4K.

- Develop and implement surveys on an as-needed basis to inform state initiative progress and outcomes. The Proposal should provide an example survey.
- Develop and implement focus group formats as needed for formative and/or summative evaluation of TLC/C4K. The Proposal should provide an example focus group format and process.
- Develop a program evaluation timeline for data collection, analysis and reporting for both TLC and C4K. For the purposes of this Proposal, provide a projected data collection, analysis and reporting timeline that includes achievement data as well as other data needed in relation to the outcomes and measures for TLC/C4K. Additional data may be determined as a team after contracts is awarded.
- Develop and implement examination of effectiveness across a) formative evaluation to inform process and ongoing revisions to the work, and b) summative evaluation to inform TLC and C4K defined outcomes. For the purposes of this RFP, include examples of formative and summative data reports within the timeline for data collection, analysis and reporting. In addition, address the required reporting monthly and quarterly reports as described in Section 3.3.1.3. Note that TLC requires three to four formative reports and one annual summative report, and C4K required three formative reports and one annual summative report. These reports required the Vendor to attend statewide team meetings to present report information and lead team(s) in discussion toward understanding of the data and potential revision of the work.
- Develop a Cost Proposal that parallels the work indicated and project management needs.

To submit a Proposal to evaluate TLC/C4K, a Vendor must submit the following for review. Maximum points are provided for each area. Each area will be reviewed with the Vendor Proposal submitted, and used as part of the determination for award.

- ❑ Evidence of specific knowledge, skills or expertise as delineated in TABLE 6: **50 points**
- ❑ A projected program evaluation design and structure for data analysis and reporting based on the outcomes and measures indicated for TLC and C4K—this should include an example timeline for data collection, analysis and reporting, formative and summative date reports and the required monthly and quarterly reports as described in Section 3.3: **100 points**
- ❑ An example Survey: **15 points**
- ❑ An example focus group format and process: **15 points**
- ❑ Program Management information as detailed in Section 3.3: **70 points**
- ❑ A Cost Proposal as described in Section 4.3: **50 points**
- ❑ All information as indicated in the RFP (e.g. assurances, letter of intent, Proposal format, etc): **There are no points associated with completing the RFP as indicated in the instructions; however, the Proposal will not be reviewed if it is incomplete.**

TABLE 6. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS OR EXPERTISE AND POSSIBLE FORMS OF EVIDENCE

Knowledge, Skills or Expertise	Possible Forms of Evidence
A. Level 1 Research Institution OR Organization that is nationally recognized for research/evaluation expertise/experience	➢ Documentation of Level 1 research status, documentation of national status as a research institution
B. Experience collaborating with other agencies/ institutions on program evaluation and/or research design and implementation	➢ List of program evaluation and/or research projects completed in collaboration with other agencies/ institutions

C. Familiar with the National Program Evaluation Standards. Do the National Program Evaluation Standards and/or other program evaluation standards undergird your work?	➢ One page description of how the National Evaluation Standards support the Vendor's work or one page description of alternative standards used in the Vendor's organization
D. Capable of conducting meaningful analyses with appropriate interpretation of data	➢ Up to three (3) examples of published education studies in referenced journals or technical/white paper reports and brief organizational vita listing education publications in referenced journals and technical/white paper reports (no more than 10 pages)
E. Established process to protect personally identifiable data as required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	➢ Copy of the Vendor's process to protect personally identifiable data as required by FERPA
F. Experience evaluating, and having an understanding of, one or more of the following: MTSS/RTI, teacher leadership, effective teaching, improving teaching, coaching or mentoring	➢ Up to three (3) examples of published education studies in referenced journals or technical/white paper reports and brief organizational vita listing education publications in referenced journals and technical/white paper reports (no more than 10 pages)
G. Commitment to evaluate TLC/C4K within the timeline indicated in this RFP	➢ Completed and submitted Proposal

3.3 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The Department will work to assist the Vendor on the deliverables required by this RFP. The Department will provide a Project Manager to lead the project. The Department Project Manager will be part of the Statewide Evaluation Design Team and be responsible for ensuring that the project is in compliance with the contract and satisfies the requirements stated in this RFP. This joint effort will ensure that evaluation and related products are properly implemented and progress monitored as well as deliverables properly provided/documented.

The Department Project Manager will provide expertise, assistance, and technical leadership in matters such as policy, organization, staff, environment, data and evaluation structures within the Department. The Department Project Manager will work closely with the Vendor Project Manager on a week-to-week basis.

The Department Project Manager will provide the following services:

- Provide state facilities as needed.
- Coordinate state resources necessary for the project.
- Facilitate coordination between the Vendor and the following groups:
  - Statewide Evaluation Design Team
  - TLC Commission
  - C4K Oversight and Implementation Team
  - Other State Agencies
- Resolution of project issues.
- Handle escalation of outstanding and/or high priority issues.
- Conduct regular and ongoing reviews of the project to ensure that it meets all objectives, requirements, and deliverables.

- Document important project decisions.

The Department will provide a project team that will work with the Vendor, called the Statewide Evaluation Design Team. If the Vendor identifies a need for additional department staff with specific technical qualifications, the Vendor shall indicate those needs as part of their Proposal. At the Department's discretion, Department personnel may be substituted or added as needed.

Any questions which may arise as to the quality and acceptability of the work, the manner of performance and rate of progress of the work, and the satisfactory and acceptable fulfillment of the terms of the agreement shall be decided by the Department and the Department Project Manager working with the Statewide Evaluation Design Team.

3.3.1 Project Management the Vendor needs to address includes:

3.3.1.1 Vendor Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Provide a description, and evidence of, the Principle Investigator, Director or Manager, and evaluation team's qualifications and responsibilities to this project.

All persons assigned to this contract shall be employees, or subcontractors, of the Vendor and in the case of key personnel, meet the qualifications of the following positions:

Principle Investigator

The Principle Investigator's responsibilities, at a minimum, will include the following:

- Evaluate and recommend staff with appropriate skills for a project team.
- Provide leadership, guidance and overall direction of the project.
- Evaluate the work product of project team members.
- Ensure all program and system documentation is complete before approvals and payments are made.

The Principle Investigator must have a minimum of five (5) years of program evaluation experience.

Director or Manager

The Director or Manager's responsibilities, at a minimum, will include the following:

- In collaboration with the Principle Investigator, evaluate and recommend staff with appropriate skills for a project team.
- In collaboration with the Principle Investigator, evaluate the work product of project team members.
- Coordinate the activities of project team members, schedule work assignments, set priorities, direct work, and address deviations from plans.
- Develop and execute communication plans for the good of the project team.
- Maintain the risk management document, risk and mitigation activities, keeping aware of the current risk status of a project and the need to employ mitigation measures.
- Maintain records of work completed and deliverables.
- Help others adapt to new and unfamiliar concepts and tools and solve the most difficult barriers to the completion of the assignment.

The Director or Manager must have a minimum of two (2) years of recent project management experience specific to program evaluation and have demonstrated expert knowledge, skills and abilities in evaluation and project management.

Evaluation Team Requirements

Evaluation team members must have expertise in identified areas needed to completed deliverables as defined in this RFP. Identification of knowledge and skills needed must be provided for evaluation team members.

In additional to the key roles listed above, a resume must be submitted for each person that will spend greater than thirty percent (30%) of their time on the project.

The Department Project Manager shall have the absolute right to approve or disapprove the Vendor's, and any subcontractor's, key personnel assigned to this contract. The Department Project Manager may also approve or disapprove any proposed changes in key staff or require the removal or reassignment of any Vendor employee or subcontractors personnel found unacceptable by the Department.

The Vendor shall provide sufficient qualified staffing to satisfy the deliverables of this RFP. The Vendor must provide representative job descriptions for all positions identified in their Proposal, along with the following:

- Personnel with the ability to work professionally with the Department, other key education personnel, and other state agencies serving the citizens of the State of Iowa.
- Personnel with the ability to work with state and local education agency personnel that have the knowledge and skills to conduct program evaluation.
- Personnel with the knowledge of one or more of the following—MTSS/RTI, teacher leadership, effective teaching, improving teaching, coaching or mentoring.
- Personnel with the ability to document problems, fixes, resolutions, and preventative measures for the future.
- Personnel with the ability to troubleshoot problems and provide timely resolutions in order to prevent down time.

3.3.1.2 Project Plan

The Vendor shall provide a proposed project plan with corresponding timeline as a requirement for this RFP. The project plan shall clearly define each state of the project plan to encompass the entire potential three (3) year project. The project will be reviewed annually to determine continuation of the work. The plan shall include action steps, resources and a timeline. The timeline shall include brief monthly written reports.

3.3.1.3 Reports Due for Each Statewide Initiative—TLC and C4K

The Vendor shall provide a proposed project plan with corresponding timeline as a requirement for this RFP.

- **Monthly Progress Reports** that outline work accomplished during the previous reporting period and work to be completed for the upcoming reporting period. Each monthly progress report may contain:
    - Project schedule status. Identify if the project is on schedule or if there is any deviation from the previously agreed upon schedule. If the project has deviated from the previously agreed upon schedule, identify the reason for the deviation and the affected areas. Identify in detail the steps that will be taken to resolve the deviation. Specify any schedule adjustments that have resulted from the deviation.
    - Summary of the actions taken and progress made on the project during the past month.
    - Summary of the actions planned for the following month in order to meet the project delivery and performance schedule requirements.
    - Identification of deliverables delivered to the Department in the past month and deliverables planned for delivery to the Department the following month.
    - Identification of problems, difficulties, either anticipated or encountered, and suggested solutions.
    - Identification of resolutions to issues identified in previous progress reports.

- Percentage completed for each task defined in the work plan during the past month and total percentage completed for the project.

- **Formative and Summative data and reports** that examine the effectiveness of a) formative evaluation to inform process and ongoing revisions to the work, and b) summative evaluation to inform TLC and C4K defined outcomes. These reports must be in a format easily discussed across stakeholder groups (e.g. TCL Commission and C4K Oversight and Implementation team). Note that TCL requires three to four formative reports and one annual summative report and C4K requires three formative reports and one annual summative report. These reports require the Vendor to attend statewide team meetings to present report information and lead team(s) in discussion toward understanding of the data and potential revision of the work. In addition:
  - The Vendor must maintain progress and resource schedules for all tasks under this contract. The documentation shall include, as appropriate, progress Gantt charts, resource schedule reports, and progress reports. The Vendor is responsible for tracking hours expenses on tasks.
  - All documentation prepared by the Vendor must be submitted to the Department in mutually agreed upon formats.
  - All deliverables to be furnished by the Vendor will be delivered to the Department Project Manager for their approval.
  - The Vendor agrees to provide the Department prompt written notification when seventy-five percent (75%) of the actual project budget has been expended.

3.3.1.4 Meetings

The Vendor shall conduct status meetings in person or via distance technology (e.g. telephone, online meeting software) on a weekly basis, or more frequently at the Department's request, with the Director or Manager, the Principle Investigator as necessary, and designated Department staff. Further, the Vendor must build in the cost of potential face-to-face meetings to present formative and summative reports to the TLC Commission as well as C4K Oversight and Implementation teams. Note that TCL requires three to four formative reports and one annual summative report and C4K requires three formative reports and one annual summative report. These reports require the Vendor to attend statewide team meetings to present report information and lead team(s) in discussion toward understanding of the data and potential revision of the work.

- **Issue Log and Risk Management**

  An issue is an identified event that if not addressed may affect the schedule, scope, quality or budget. The Vendor shall maintain an issue log for issues related to the provision of support, services and deliverables under the contract. The issue log must be communicated to the Department Project Manager on an agreed upon schedule with electronic mail notifications and updates. The issue log must be updated and must contain the following elements, at a minimum:
  - Description of issue
  - Issue identification date
  - Responsibility for resolving issue
  - Priority for issue resolution (to be agreed upon by the Department and the Vendor)
  - Resources assigned responsibility for resolution
  - Resolution date
  - Resolution description

  A risk is a potential circumstance or event that, if it occurs, may have a positive or negative impact on the contract. Risk Management in general involves:

- Identification of the risk
- Assigning a level or priority based on the probability if occurrence and impact to the project
- Definition of mitigation strategy
- Monitoring of risk and mitigation strategy

The Vendor must create a risk management plan. A risk management plan format will be submitted to the Department for approval within thirty (30) calendar days after the effective date of the contract resulting from this RFP. This plan format will be the same across Vendors. Once all parties have agreed to the format of the plan, it shall become the standard to follow for the duration of the project.

ADDENDUM TO IOWA'S STATE PLAN TO ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EXCELLENT EDUCATORS

Iowa Department of Education, November, 2015

Contents:

1. Information provided to the USDE on July 7, 2015 (Pages 1- 4)
2. Information regarding the evaluation plan for studying the implementation and impact of the strategies identified in the Equity Plan for closing achievement gaps (Pages 5 – 20)
3. Information about Iowa's plans to disaggregate data including poor, minority, students with disabilities and English Language Learners for the purposes of monitoring progress related to implementation and impact of the strategies for closing the achievement gaps (Page 21)
4. Connections between the proposed strategies and the achievement gaps the state is experiencing (Pages 22 – 24)

David Tilly, Deputy Director, Iowa Department of Education
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1. Response to Questions from Carol Manitaris, July 7, 2015

1. All data sources used for calculating the equity gaps for poor and minority students taught by inexperienced, unqualified and out of field.

The data we used for examining the differences in the number of inexperienced teachers serving in schools with the highest and lowest percentages of students in poverty and minority students were provided in our Iowa Equity Profile. For the purposes of that profile – inexperienced was defined as: "the number of FTE classroom teachers in their first year of teaching. The number of year(s) of teaching experience includes the current year but does not include any student teaching or other similar preparation experiences. Experience includes teaching in any school, subject, or grade; it does not have to be in the school, subject, or grade that the teacher is presently teaching." For the purposes of our deeper study (see Tables included under question 2) inexperienced teachers was defined as the number of FTE classroom teachers in their first year of teaching (initial teaching license).

The data sources we used to calculate the differences in the qualifications of the teachers included the fall statewide Basic Education Data Survey - Staff and Enrollment Files and the Board of Educational Examiners educator licensing data system. In order to get the high minority/low minority and the high poverty/low poverty breakdown we used the student reporting in Iowa (SRI) data collection.

We did not go further to calculate equity gaps based on these criteria (differences in tenure and qualifications of teachers in high and low poverty schools and high and low minority schools) because the differences in qualifications were not significant and therefore not likely to explain the differences in achievement.

We then used the number of Class B and Executive Director Decision Conditional Licenses to further study the potential impact of underqualified and out-of-field teachers. (For the purposes of this plan, the Class B and the Executive Director Decision conditional licenses are both considered to be equivalent to the federal definition of non-highly qualified.)

- Class B conditional licenses can be obtained if the licensed educator has completed 2/3 of the program of study in the area for which they are seeking additional licensure or endorsement.
- An Executive Director Decision conditional license can be obtained for 1 year if the district has done extensive search for a fully qualified candidate and one can not be found. This conditional license is only available to licensed teachers seeking additional licensure in specific areas and requires that the teacher has completed nearly half the program of study. Areas such as K-6 elementary classroom teacher, PK-12 principal/supervisor of special education, and superintendent are excluded from this conditional license. One factor related to this type of license that needs to be considered is that most of these licenses are held by teachers teaching in other areas and the license may only apply to a portion of their teaching assignment – often only one period of the day. It would take further analysis of the data to determine the percentage of the total teaching load that is covered by Executive Director Decisions and we do not have access to this data at this time if it is even available.

As we reviewed the data for these types of licenses we observed no differences in the percent of Executive Director Decision conditional licenses granted in high poverty/high minority schools as compared to low poverty/low minority schools and all schools.

As for the achievement gaps in general, we have studied the achievement gaps for poor and minority students using the Iowa Test data (our statewide accountability assessment) for grades 4, 8, and 11 looking at both reading and mathematics over multiple years. We looked at the differences in the percentage of students meeting the proficiency standard by sub-groups of students as compared to everyone else over time. This data analysis was reported in the full report.

2. Calculations showing the equity gaps for the subgroups: inexperienced, unqualified and out of field.

2013-14 Full Time Public School Teacher Licensed

	High Poverty			**Low Poverty**			**All Schools**		
License Type	Total License	Total License with License Type	Percent	Total License	Total License with License Type	Percent	Total License	Total License with License Type	Percent
Initial License	19,899	285	1.43	17,857	146	0.82	66,462	681	1.02
Class B	19,899	2,375	11.94	17,857	1,927	10.79	66,462	7,815	11.76
Executive Director Decision	19,899	195	.98	17,857	120	0.67	66,462	534	0.80

	High Minority			**Low Minority**			**All Schools**		
License Type	Total Licenses	Total License with License Type	Percent	Total Licenses	Total License with License Type	Percent	Total License	Total License with License Type	Percent
Initial License	22,959	304	1.32	10,873	114	1.05	66,462	681	1.02
Class B	22,959	2,621	11.42	10,873	1,434	13.19	66,462	7,815	11.76
Executive Director Decision	22,959	186	0.81	10,873	98	0.90	66,462	534	0.80

The percent of teachers on initial licenses does not differ significantly between high poverty and low poverty schools, or between high minority and low minority schools, and all four categories (high poverty, low poverty, high minority, and low minority) are similar as compared to all schools as a whole.

The percent of teachers on Class B licenses does not differ significantly between high poverty and low poverty schools, or between high minority and low minority schools, and all four categories (high poverty, low poverty, high minority, and low minority) are similar as compared to all schools as a whole.

The percent of teachers on Executive Director Decision licenses does not differ significantly between high poverty and low poverty schools, or between high minority and low minority schools, and all four categories (high poverty, low poverty, high minority, and low minority) are similar as compared to all schools as a whole.

3. Rationale for reporting no correlation between subgroups and achievement gaps.

Iowa used a very specific logic model to drive the evaluation of our equity data, set forth in John Salvia (Penn State University) and Jim Ysseldyke's (University of Minnesota) seminal text "Assessment" (1988). In essence, the model states that every data analysis should be conducted to answer specific questions – otherwise the data analysis is ungrounded and can often lead evaluators astray. The logic model follows a specific, positivist approach to examination of data. The questions are as follows:

Assessment Decision	Question Answered	Action Taken
Screening	Is there a problem and what is it?	1. There is a problem: move to Diagnostic Analysis 2. No problem identified: Stop and/or redefine the problem
Diagnostic	Why is it happening?	Once hypotheses regarding problem etiology are generated and validated, interventions are selected to match proximate causes.
Intervention	What shall we do about it?	Intervention data are collected during implementation to ensure interventions are implemented with fidelity.
Progress Monitoring	Is our intervention working?	Sensitive, formative data are collected on intervention results to determine in-vivo whether the intervention is working to diminish the problem

Evaluation	To what extent is the problem solved?	Re-do Screening to determine whether the size of the gap has been reduced sufficiently

This decision making model is at the heart of nearly every strategic planning or continuous improvement model in one form or another (citations provided in our plan). An important result of these linked decisions is that only enough of the right kind of data are collected to answer any specific question. Also, ALL decisions are made in a data-based way. Stated differently, and this is important to our context here, we follow what the data tell us.

To our point, then. With regard to inexperienced, underqualified and out of field teachers, we examined the data provided in our data profiles and found very small differences in these summaries across high poverty/low poverty and high minority/low minority dimensions. Where there were differences, they were very small, likely due to measurement error, not of a size that we considered meaningful and practically not actionable. Indeed, differences of this magnitude could certainly not explain the large differences in achievement gaps that in Iowa, which we believe represent inequities in result, if not in opportunity. In short, the data did not provide an affirmative answer to the screening question. That is, the answer from our initial data analysis was NO, there did not appear to be an equity problem in Iowa as a result of inequities in being taught by inexperienced, under-qualified and out of field teachers. In other words, when thinking of inputs and outcomes, we found significant gaps in the student learning outcomes between students living in poverty and minority students as compared to all other students but we did not find significant gaps in the inputs when studying the data related to inexperienced, under-qualified and out of field teachers. Therefore, we assume that some other "inputs" must be contributing to the differences we see in outcomes. Based on the research and best thinking in the field, which convincingly illustrates the powerful impact of the quality of teaching on student learning (*one researcher concludes ". . .the single most important factor for improving student learning is the quality of instruction they receive.")* our hypothesis is that significant variability exists in the quality/effectiveness of the teaching in our schools serving high percentages of poor and/or minority children as compared to our low poverty, low minority schools. With that hypothesis in mind, we developed our strategies around building a statewide system of support for improving teaching and learning with an emphasis on increasing instructional effectiveness and stability in the schools serving our most needy students.

To illustrate the defensibility of this logic, a medical analogy will be used. Physicians (and most professions) use this same general logic model when diagnosing and treating disease. When any of us go to the doctor for an annual check-up, the doctor does a physical exam. S/he examines data on a series of screening variables (called vital signs). Data from these screening variables are considered against a standard to identify deviations, or "gaps" from normalcy. Once those data are collected, a screening decision is made by the physician – and this is the important part.

The physician decides whether a problem or problems exist that warrants further data collection. Remember that a screening decision only says there IS a problem, not what is causing that problem. If a problem exists (the screening question answer is YES), the doc will likely order additional diagnostic tests. HOWEVER, if the answer to the screening question is no, it is not assumed that a problem exists and NO ADDITIONAL diagnostic data are collected or analyzed. Stated bluntly, if all of your vital sign data look good, you do not get an X-Ray or an MRI. It would not be rational, defensible nor cost effective to collect additional expensive data nor to implement expensive, intrusive interventions on variables that we do not have compelling data to demonstrate they are causally related (or even correlation ally related) to our observed gaps in equitable outcomes (a proxy for equitable access to high quality teaching).

We as a state stand ready to re-examine our analyses, conclusions and strategies if USED finds inaccuracies in our approach, our data or our analyses.

<u>But the Problem Persists</u>

Despite our unsuccessful efforts to identify teacher variables related to inequities in opportunity for students, our workteams acknowledged that large gaps in achievement persist in our state. These gaps, to us, reflected inequity in result – which to our group is unacceptable. At this point in our deliberations, a decision had to be made – should we keep searching for a needle in a hay stack related to teacher qualifications variables, or should we acknowledge the large gaps in achievement and begin exploring other variables that are highly likely to be operational in the observed achievement gaps. Our group chose the latter approach, which is described at length in our overall equity plan.

2. Information regarding the evaluation plan for studying the implementation and impact of the key strategies identified in the Equity Plan for closing achievement gaps.

Table 1: Key goals and outcomes associated with developing teacher leaders within Iowa school districts (Referred to as the Teacher Leadership and Compensation Initiative - TLC) - Strategy 3 supported by Strategy 2.

Key Goals	Outcome(s)
1. Attract able and promising new teachers	A. Has the development of the TLC program increased: • The overall number of high school students intending to pursue a degree in education • The average ACT score of high school students intending to pursue a degree in education • The number of applicants for teacher licensure in Iowa • The diversity (in terms of race, gender and geography) of applicants for teacher licensure in Iowa
2. Retain effective teachers	A. Has the adoption of a local TLC plan increased teacher retention in the school districts with approved plans? B. Has the development of the TLC system increased teacher retention state- wide? C. Has the development of the TLC system led to differences in retention rates between urban and rural school
3. Promote Collaboration	A. Are teachers more likely to: • Co-plan with other teachers • Observe with teachers • Be observed by other teachers • Co-teach with other teachers following the implementation of a local TLC plan B. Do teachers now have more time available for collaboration once a district has adopted a local TLC plan and has the quality of collaborative opportunities increased?
4. Reward professional growth and effective teaching	A. Has the development of the TLC program created multiple new leadership roles for teachers?

5. Improved student achievement	A. Has the development of a local TLC plan led to improved student achievement results, as measured by the annual state assessments as well as other sources such as district formative assessments and other student learning and performance measures? B. Has the development of a local TLC plan led to an increase in the graduation rate?

Table 2: Key components and measures associated with developing teacher leaders within Iowa school districts (Referred to as the Teacher Leadership and Compensation Initiative - TLC) - Strategy 3 supported by Strategy 2.

Key Component (or Element)	Measures
1. Increase minimum salary to $33,500	A. How many districts increased their minimum salary to $33,500? B. What was the average of the increase? C. What impact has the development of the TLC system had on the average beginning teacher salary and average teacher salary (for all teachers) in Iowa?
2. Improve entry into the profession	A. What supports are bring provided for first and second year teachers? B. What impact is that having on first and second year teachers instructional practice, satisfaction, efficacy?
3. Create multiple, meaningful, differentiated teacher leadership roles in which at least 25% of the teachers serve	A. Has the development of the TLC system created multiple new leadership roles for teachers? B. What percentage of teachers are now in leadership roles because of TLC funding? C. How much time, on average, is each teacher serving in a leadership capacity outside of their own classroom? D. What teacher leadership roles have districts defined?
4. Develop a rigorous selection process for leadership roles	A. What criteria was used for selecting teachers into the leadership role?
5. Align professional development with the IPDM and the local TLC plan	A. What characteristics of collaborative inquiry are evident within the school culture and the professional learning opportunities? B. Area teachers more involved in designing and facilitating school-wide collaborative inquiry processes as the key means of professional learning as a result of implementing the TLC plan?
6. Scholl District Fidelity in Plan Implementation	A. Have districts implemented their initial TLC plan as described in their TLC application? B. What adjustments have districts made to their plans and what factors caused these changes?

Table 3: Key components, outcomes, and measures for the systemic collaboration strategies (Referred to as the Collaborating for Iowa's Kids initiative – C4K) – Strategies 1, 2, 4, and 5.

Key Component	Outcome(s)	Measures
1. Assessment and Data-Based Decision-Making	A. All students are assessed with a valid and reliable universal screener B. All students are assessed with a valid and reliable progress monitoring assessment	A. percent of students assessed with a valid and reliable universal screener B. Percent of students not meeting benchmark assessed with a valid and reliable progress monitoring assessment
	C. All districts/schools have a comprehensive balanced assessment system in place	C. Not known at this time
2. Universal Instruction	A. All students have access to, and are successful in, evidence-based universal instruction B. All districts/schools have an evidence-based universal core?	A. Percent of students at benchmark on universal screening assessment-and change in percentage at benchmark over time B. Percent of districts/schools scoring at the acceptable range for universal instruction on the MTSS School Implementation Tool
3. Targeted and Intensive Supports	A. All students who require targeted support receive evidence-based targeted interventions B. All students who required intensive support receive evidence-based intensive interventions C. All districts/schools use progress monitoring data to monitor intervention efficacy (targeted and intensive) over time to make instructional changes	A. Percent of schools implementing evidence-based interventions for student identified as at-risk B. Percent of schools implementing evidence-based interventions for students identified as substantially deficient C. Percent of at-risk/substantially deficient students exhibiting acceptable growth
4. Leadership	A. All districts/schools have a process to establish consensus to implement and sustain MTSS. All districts/schools have consensus to implement and sustain MTSS B. All districts/schools have an established quality leadership team to implement and sustain MTSS	A. Percent of districts/schools scoring at the acceptable range for consensus on the MTSS School Implementation Tool B. Percent of districts/schools scoring at the acceptable range for quality leadership on the MTSS School Implementation Tool

5. Infrastructure	A. All districts/schools use the Iowa Professional Development Model to provide ongoing professional learning and coaching to support staff members B. All MTSS districts/schools implement, and use the results of, the School Implementation Tool to monitor the	A. Percent of districts/schools using IPDM to provide professional learning and coaching B. Percent of districts/schools using the MTSS School Implementation Tool to monitor progress of MTSS over time

Table 4: Research questions and data sources for the study of implementation and impact

Research Questions	Tchr Survey	Tchr Leader Focus Groups	AEA/Dist Intrview	Extant Data	Studnt Ach. Data	Tchr Eval	Analytic Method
Implementation							
Has the development of TLC created multiple new leadership roles for teachers? How have districts defined these roles? How are teachers selected for leadership roles, and how many teachers participate in leadership roles? What percentage of time is spent on these roles?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
What supports are being provided to new teachers? What are teachers' perceptions of the association of these supports and their impact on instructional practice, satisfaction, and efficacy?	X	X	X				Descriptive, qualitative
Has teacher collaboration increased? Is there more time for teachers to collaborate and has the quality of collaboration improved?	X	X					Descriptive, qualitative
Do teachers in TLC districts see alignment between IPDM	X	X					Descriptive, qualitative

and TLC? Is collaborative inquiry evident within schools and how are teachers involved in this process?							
Have TLC districts implemented their plans with fidelity?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
To what extent have TLC districts increased their minimum salary? Has TLC impacted teacher salaries across the state?				X			Descriptive, qualitative
Are all students assessed with evidence-based assessments? Are evidence-based assessments delivered with fidelity (to vendor specifications)?	X	X		X	X		Descriptive, qualitative
Do all students have access to and are successful in evidence-based universal instruction?				X			Descriptive, qualitative
Is there a process for identifying movement across levels of intervention and determining appropriate instruction and interventions based on student need?	X	X		X			Descriptive, qualitative
Are students who require targeted or intensive support receiving evidence-based interventions? Are data used to align interventions with student needs? Are they delivered with fidelity (to vendor specifications or intervention plans)?	X	X		X			Descriptive, qualitative
Have schools and districts established a leadership team to implement and sustain MTSS? Are processes within the team collaborative?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
Has the IPDM been implemented with fidelity? Does IPDM provide teachers with professional	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative

development and coaching needed to effectively implement assessments, interventions, and making data-informed decisions?							
Has the MTSS School Implementation Tool been implemented with fidelity?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
Does C4K support the alignment of the Iowa Core Standards, research-based strategies, and differentiated instruction? Has the DE and the AEAs aligned their guidance and support for MTSS?	X	X	X	X			Descriptive, qualitative
Have students receiving targeted and intensive interventions shown growth over time?	X	X		X	X		Descriptive, qualitative
Student and Teacher Impact							
Is TLC associated with an increase in high-quality and diverse teacher applicants? Has teacher retention improved in TLC districts and across the state? Is TLC associated with retention differences between urban and rural districts?				X			Descriptive, inferential
Is TLC associated with improved teacher effectiveness?				X	X	X	Inferential
Is TLC associated with improved student outcomes (student achievement, graduate rates, and student attendance)?				X	X		Inferential
Has the distribution of student performance changed over time? Has the percentage of students moving from more intensive tiers to less intensive tiers changed over time? Is MTSS				X	X		Descriptive, inferential

associated with improved student achievement?							

Table 5: Evaluation activities and priorities for Year 1 (H=high priority, M=medium priority, L=low priority)

Research Activities	DE has data	Year 1	
		Priority TLC	Priority C4K
Develop theory of action for overall evaluation - initial kick off meeting in-person		H	H
Annual online surveys - Likert-type resonse scales		H	H
Annual Teacher Leader Focus groups in 8 districts		H	L
Incentives for participation in surveys, focus groups, and interviews		L	L
Annual district and AEA staff interviews in the 8 districts		H	L
Travel to Iowa on the schedule mentioned below: initial, quarterly (3 formative and 1 summative), one week to conduct interviews and focus groups - repeated annually		H	H
Extant District Data			
Human Resources Data			
Years of service - teachers	y	H	L
Date of hire	y	H	L
compensation history	y	H	L
leadership history	y	H	L
individual demographic characteristics	y	H	L
school, grade, and subjects taught	y	H	L
teacher applicant - ACT scores and other performance measures	n	L	L
Applicant characteristics	n	H	L
Whether or not applicants were offered and accepted a position	n	H	L
DE, AEA, District Data			
TLC program data on implementation plans	y	H	L
C4K program data on implementation plans	n		M
assessment schedules	y	H	L
leadership positions	y	H	L
guidance and support documents related to MTSS	y	M	H
data on all teacher evaluations since implementing TLC	y	M	L
data on all teacher evaluations since implementing C4K	y	M	L
Evaluation data from the period prior to implementing TLC		L	L
Evaluation data from the period prior to implementing C4K		L	L

Iowa assessment data	y	H	H
NEW (2016-17) Assessment data		H	H
Iowa TIER data	y	L	H
Healthy Indicators for ELI, Phase I, Implementation tool (year 2)	*half yes*	H	H
Teacher mean student growth percentiles	maybe	H	H
Ensure ability to link data from all of these sources at the teacher and student levels		H	H
Data Analysis - Implementation			
Analyze survey data - desriptive, Rasch model for ordered categories, psychometric validation, vertical equation, distribution of responses on individual items, disaggregate results by teacher characteristics & leadership role		H	H
Analyze focus group data - M&H sequential processes - identify themes on transcripts, analyze transcripts using Nvivo, inductive approach incorporating systematic method of management of data through reduction, organization, and connection. Second coder cross check. create and analyze summaries and data displays.		H	
analyze interview data - same processes as focus group data		H	
analyze extant data - program data to study fidelity of implementation,		H	H
Data Analysis - Teacher & Student Outcomes			
Student Outcomes - CITS design - see detail pages 14-16		H	H
Teacher recruitment, retention, and effectiveness - pages 16-17		H	
Communication and Reporting			
In-person meeting at project initiation		H	H
PI and PD meet twice monthly with key DE program staff		H	H
In-person quarterly meetings with PI/PD and DE to review findings		H	H
Three interim formative reports		H	M
One annual summative report		H	H

PLANNED RESEARCH/EVALUATION ACTIVITIES:

This section contains information about our current plans for conducting the evaluation activities. The subsections are related to data collection, data analysis, communication and reporting activities recommended by our external evaluator (American Institute for Research – AIR) in collaboration with our evaluation team within the Department of Education.

Data Collection

Surveys. Online surveys will be administered annually to all relevant, participating Iowa teachers. The surveys will be administered in March each year. The content of the survey will cover constructs on both program implementation fidelity and satisfaction with the programs' components. AIR will work closely with the DE staff to identify the core set of constructs for the surveys and items for the constructs (see Appendix A for a sample survey).

The surveys will include primarily fixed-response items with Likert-type response scales (e.g., agreement scales, frequency scales). The surveys will be designed to gather information on the TLC and C4K components and processes to examine respondents' perceptions of:

- **TLC:** Leadership roles, supports for teachers, teacher collaboration, alignment of TLC with the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM), TLC program implementation fidelity, and general perceptions
- **C4K:** Implementing evidence-based assessment, instruction, intervention, and support, leadership roles, use of IPDM to support MTSS professional development, MTSS implementation fidelity, alignment of the DE and AEA MTSS guidance and support, the association between interventions and student growth, and general perceptions

To ensure a high response rate, we will implement multiple strategies that have been successful in past project work. Before launching the surveys, we will ask the DE to send an e-mail to AEAs and districts to introduce the survey and ask them to encourage participation. We also will work closely with the DE to identify incentives to encourage survey completion. The online survey interface will allow for follow-up with nonrespondents to ensure that response rates are as high as possible.

Teacher Leader Focus Groups. To supplement the data collected through the teacher survey and to gain the perspectives of teacher leaders who are essential to both TLC and C4K, we will conduct teacher leader focus groups each April. The content of the focus groups will be similar to that of the survey. However, the focus group format will allow for richer responses than a fixed-response survey and will allow us to probe areas of interest particular with regard to teacher leaders (see Appendix B for a sample focus group protocol and process). In total, data from the two data sources will provide a detailed picture of TLC and C4K program implementation, highlighting what is working well, and where improvements and refinements are needed.

Each April, we will conduct eight teacher leader focus groups. To identify focus group participants, we will first draw a stratified sample of districts and AEAs from across the state. We propose selecting districts/AEAs so that they are representative of the state in terms of urbanicity, demographic makeup, and past academic performance. However, we will work closely with the DE to identify districts/AEAs that would be most meaningful to include in our sample. Within each sampled district/AEA, we will draw a random sample of eight to 10 teachers and invite them to participate in the focus group. The process that we undertake during the development of the survey instrument will inform focus group protocol development, allowing us to ask the teacher leaders targeted questions about TLC and C4K. Focus groups will last approximately 90 minutes and will be held in a central location within selected districts/AEAs. All focus groups will be conducted in person and will be led by experienced facilitators. We will work with districts/AEAs to find a time that will work well for convening teachers without interfering with instruction. With permission, focus groups will be recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy.

District and AEA Staff Interviews. In each of the eight sampled districts/AEAs, we will also conduct interviews with two or three key district and AEA staff working on TLC and MTSS in those sites. Like the teacher leader focus groups, these interviews will deepen our understanding TLC and C4K implementation. The interviews will be conducted in person, if possible, in April of each year of the evaluation, and will last approximately 30 minutes. If key staff are unavailable for an in-person

interview, we will conduct the interview by phone. The interview protocols will be semistructured, designed to gather open-ended responses about the constructs covered in the teacher survey and teacher leader focus groups. Like the focus groups, all interviews will be recorded, with permission, and transcribed to ensure accuracy.

Extant District Data. In addition to the new data collection described previously, the evaluation will draw on existing data collected by the DE, AEAs, and districts. Extant data that will be used in the evaluation will include human resources data, program data, evaluation system data, and student achievement and Iowa TIER data. From the DE and districts' human resources offices, we will request data on the teachers who are employed by the district, including years of service, date of hire, compensation history, leadership history, and individual demographic characteristics, as well as school, grade, and subjects taught. In addition, we will request data on teacher applicants, including their ACT scores and other available measures of performance, as well as their individual characteristics and whether they were offered and accepted a teaching position to examine the association between TLC and increases in quality and diversity of teacher candidates. From the DE, AEAs, and districts, we will request TLC and C4K program data on implementation plans, assessment schedules, leadership positions, and guidance and support documents related to MTSS. We will request data on all teacher evaluations conducted since implementing TLC and C4K and any evaluation data that may have been kept from the period prior to program implementation. We also will request data on student performance as measured by the Iowa Assessments and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Finally, we will request teacher mean student growth percentiles (SGPs), as available. We will work with the DE, AEAs, and districts to ensure that we are able to link data from all of these sources at the teacher and student levels. For all of these sources, we will request data, if possible, from the 2012–13 school year through the final evaluation year (2017–18).

Data Analysis

The data collected from the above sources will be analyzed using the following approaches.

Examining Implementation. The AIR evaluation team will analyze survey, focus group, interview, and extant data to further understand TLC and C4K program implementation, for the state overall and for each district in TLC. AIR will descriptively analyze the ***surveys*** at each administration to depict progress in implementing TLC and C4K. To analyze survey constructs, AIR will employ the Rasch model for ordered categories (Andrich, 1978; Rasch, 1980; Wright & Masters, 1982; Wright & Stone, 1979). Psychometric validation allows the evaluator to create scale scores for each of the constructs described above. These scale scores, which are made up of multiple items that fit together from a theoretical perspective, provide a summary of the consistency and intensity of an individual's responses related to each of the constructs (e.g., leadership roles, teacher collaboration, use of IPDM to support MTSS professional development). We also will vertically equate the survey to allow for the rigorous measurement of changes in response patterns over time. As needed, we also will examine the distribution of responses on individual survey items. The evaluation team will disaggregate all results by teacher characteristics (e.g., years of experience, grades served, evaluation rating) and by leadership role.

The analysis of data gathered from ***focus groups*** and ***interviews*** will follow a rigorous process to summarize data while maintaining the rich variation in interviewees' perceptions. Evaluators will analyze data using the following sequential processes, as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994). First, we will

review the transcriptions of the focus group and interview audio recordings for clarity and to identify themes that might be included in the coding structure. Second, we will analyze transcripts from focus groups, using NVivo qualitative software, using an inductive approach and incorporating a systematic method of managing data through reduction, organization, and connection (Dey, 1993; LeCompte, 2000). This process relies on structured procedures for coding and categorizing the data in order to recognize patterns within and across sites. A second coder will independently cross-check the coding to ensure that codes are appropriately and consistently applied. Third, we will create and analyze summaries and data displays and, finally, consider this analysis in conjunction with all other data analyses.

In addition to the data from surveys, focus groups, and interviews, we will draw on ***TLC and C4K program data*** to examine whether the programs have been implemented with fidelity. Specifically, we will examine whether

- ***TLC and C4K created new leadership roles for teachers.*** We will examine the extent to which these roles have been developed, how districts have defined these roles, how teachers are selected for these roles, and what percent of time teachers spend on leadership-related activities.
- ***TLC has had an impact on minimum salaries.*** One goal of TLC is to increase minimum salaries in participating districts and across the state. Drawing on compensation data from the DE, we will examine changes in compensation and, specifically, changes in minimum salaries, for districts participating in TLC as compared to those that are not and for districts with varying urbanicity (e.g., rural vs. urban districts).
- ***All students are assessed, instructed, and supported using evidenced-based tools.*** We will examine program data from the DE, AEAs, and districts, including the Iowa TIER and results from the MTSS School Implementation Tool, to determine the extent to which each of these five components in the Iowa MTSS framework are being implemented within schools.
- ***IPDM is used to support TLC and C4K.*** TLC and C4K are intended to complement and be supported by the IPDM and its operating principles, which include a focus on curriculum, instruction and assessment, participative decision making (school and district), leadership, and simultaneity. We will review program documentation from TLC and C4K (e.g., district TLC plans, school and district implementation plans for MTSS, professional development schedules) to determine the extent to which TLC and MTSS are aligned and supported by IPDM.
- ***MTSS guidance and support from the DE, AEAs, and districts are aligned.*** Given that C4K is intended to align efforts across the DE, AEAs, and school districts to focus on early literacy and closing achievement gaps through MTSS implementation, guidance and support from each entity should be consistently aligned. Similar to the document review of the alignment between TLC, C4K, and IPDM, we will review MTSS guidance and support documents from the DE, AEAs, and districts to evaluate their alignment and make recommendations for improving their integration and streamlining communication related to MTSS.

Examining Student and Teacher Outcomes. The TLC and C4K programs are ultimately designed to improve student achievement and teacher effectiveness in participating districts and schools across the state. The proposed evaluation will examine whether student achievement has improved since implementing TLC and C4K. The proposed evaluation will also draw on extant district data to examine

whether the teacher applicant pool has improved and become more diversified, whether the best teachers stay, and how teacher effectiveness changes over time.

Student Outcomes. The ultimate goal of the TLC and C4K programs is to improve the performance of Iowa students. The proposed evaluation will use a comparative interrupted time series (CITS) design to examine the effect of program implementation on student outcomes. CITS is one of the strongest quasi-experimental designs when a comparison or control series can be constructed (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). In such a design, the program effects are identified by comparing changes in the outcomes of one group over time to changes in the outcomes of another (comparison) group over the same time period. This approach thus relies on two sources of variation to inform the analyses: comparisons across individuals and comparisons over time. This combination supports more robust impact estimates than a design that relies only on change over time (the standard interrupted time series framework) or on comparisons across individuals (such as a propensity score analysis).

To estimate the impact of TLC on student outcomes, we will conduct a CITS analysis at the district level, comparing districts participating in TLC with similar districts who have not yet implemented TLC. We will work with the DE staff to identify appropriate comparison districts to draw on for this analysis. We will begin by identifying districts with performance prior to 2014 that closely parallels that of districts participating in TLC. We will then ask the DE staff to confirm whether these are appropriate comparison districts.

If the data are available, we will conduct a similar CITS analysis to estimate the impact of MTSS on student outcomes, although this analysis will be performed at the school level.9 Again, we will work with the DE and AEAs along with district staff to identify appropriate comparison schools for this analysis, following the process described above.

The analysis will compare the outcome trends in participating districts (TLC) and schools (MTSS) in the years preceding implementation to outcome trends in the years following program implementation to determine: (1) the extent to which there is a sharp discontinuity at the point of implementation and (2) the extent to which there is a change in the slope after the program was introduced.

The simplest CITS design specification for TLC[11] is as follows:

$$Y_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_t + \beta_2 TLC_i + \beta_3 T_t TLC_i + u_i + e_{it}$$

where Y_{it} is the average student achievement for district i in time t; β_0 is a constant term showing average outcomes in comparison districts before the intervention; T_t is a vector of indicators for each postintervention time period t;[12] β_1 is a vector showing the difference in average outcomes between the preintervention time period and each postintervention time period t for comparison units; TLC_i is an indicator for whether the district has implemented TLC; β_2 shows the average difference in performance between TLC and comparison districts in the preintervention time period; β_3 is a vector showing the change in the difference in average performance between TLC districts and comparison districts at each time t after the intervention was implemented (the treatment effect); u_i is a unit-level random error term, with an assumed normal distribution with mean zero and variance ϕ^2; and e_{it} is an individual-level error term at time t, also assumed to have a normal distribution with mean zero and variance σ^2. We will examine the pretreatment trends in TLC districts and the comparison districts

to determine if the model should account for differential pretreatment trends.

To the extent that it is possible, we will also explore the impact of TLC and MTSS jointly on average student achievement. That is, we will examine the effect of implementing MTSS in a school located in a district that has implemented TLC. We will account for the nested structure of the data (i.e., that schools within the same district are more similar than schools in different districts) by clustering standard errors.

There are two important caveats to this modeling approach. First, many things could have changed in the implementation year in the participating districts (or schools, for MTSS) to affect student achievement. The CITS design cannot disentangle the effect of these other changes that occurred simultaneously with TLC and MTSS implementation on student achievement. We will consult with the DE staff to examine the extent to which other major changes occurred at the same time as program implementation that could confound any treatment effects identified in this analysis. Second, Iowa is transitioning from the Iowa Assessments to the PARCC assessment. To ensure that this change does not bias the results of this analysis, we will standardize student assessment data within year and grade prior to analysis, putting the outcomes on a comparable scale. Further, the change in assessment will affect both comparison and treatment district and will therefore be accounted for in the CITS design.

Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Effectiveness. One of the key goals of the TLC program is to recruit and retain high-quality teachers and to improve teacher effectiveness. In addition, TLC seeks to increase the diversity of the applicant pool and mitigate differences in retention between urban and rural districts. We will examine progress toward recruitment goals by describing any observable changes in the diversity (in terms of race, gender, and geography) and quality of applicants over time (as measured by mean SGP scores and teacher evaluation ratings, and historical measures of teacher candidate quality such as Praxis exam scores and competitiveness of undergraduate institution).

To estimate the effect of TLC on teacher retention within participating districts and across the state, we will employ linear probability models to estimate the probability of individual teachers departing from their current teaching position as a result of TLC, other individual characteristics, and the characteristics of the school in which they teach.13 Probability models are conceptually appealing for studies of teacher mobility. They predict the probability of a teacher departing from his or her school after year *t*, depending on the length of time the teacher has been at a school. Each model represents time as discrete because the school year provides the field with an annual hiring cycle during which most new hires, transfers, or exits occur. Accounting for time is important because new teachers are significantly more likely to move or leave than those who have more teaching experience.

The simplest estimating equation is analogous to the one we presented previously, although the dependent variable of interest $P(leave)_{idt}$ is the probability that a teacher will depart in time *t*, given that the teacher has remained in that district through time *t* rather than departing. These models provide some flexibility with the data by allowing us to analyze the movement of teachers without necessarily viewing the entire career of all teachers. The models also allow the effects of explanatory variables to differ, depending on the type of move the teacher makes.

We will examine changes in overall effectiveness, drawing on teacher evaluation ratings and mean SGPs as available, of teachers in participating TLC districts and whether there is evidence that the most effective teachers are more likely to remain in these districts over time. We will disaggregate these analyses by important teacher characteristics, including seniority, level of education, whether teachers

have leadership roles, whether they teach in low-performing schools, and grades and subjects they teach. Although these descriptive analyses will not be able to distinguish the impact of TLC on teacher effectiveness and retention from other potential influences, they will provide important information on TLC districts' progress towards improving teacher effectiveness.

Communication and Reporting

Implementing the TLC and C4K programs is multifaceted and evolving. Therefore, it is especially important that we closely coordinate our work with the DE staff and with other stakeholders to ensure the findings from our evaluation are relevant and informative to decision making. To ensure that our evaluation meets the DE's needs, we propose working collaboratively with the DE to finalize the evaluation plan. To begin this work, we suggest an in-person meeting at project initiation to discuss the evaluation plan, as proposed, and to make any needed changes to better meet state and stakeholder needs, and in light of the data available. In addition, to facilitate ongoing coordination, we suggest that the AIR principal investigator and project director meet twice monthly with key DE program staff.

The evaluation of the TLC and C4K programs is designed to provide ongoing formative and summative feedback to the DE that is useful, relevant, and actionable. To provide this ongoing actionable feedback, the primary reporting format for the evaluation will be reports coupled with in-person meetings, in which we present findings in an accessible format and provide concrete guidance for the ongoing work around teacher effectiveness and student performance in Iowa.

In-person meetings to present findings are proposed to facilitate conversation between our team and key DE stakeholders. The principal investigator and project director will be available to travel to Des Moines, Iowa, four times annually to present and discuss findings from these reports; other team members will participate in person or via teleconference. During the meetings, we will work with the DE stakeholders to cointerpret findings presented during the meeting. The cointerpretation process consists of several steps, starting with interpreting the data from individual data sets, followed by identifying key findings across data sets, and concluding with identifying program strengths and potential restraining forces that may be brought to bear on the issues facing the DE, AEAs/districts, schools, and teachers.

The basis for the meetings will be three interim, formative reports and one annual, summative report that will synthesize findings across data sources (see Project Timeline section). In the interim reports, we will provide a written summary of the most recent data collection activities and subsequent recommendations for improvement and refinement of the program components. In the annual reports we will fully explore evaluation topics so that stakeholders understand key findings, which will be illustrated to clearly convey meaning in the context of program design and implementation. Discussions of findings also will address conditions and circumstances that create variance across school settings and over time. The reports will be written in clear and accessible language and will avoid technical jargon. The organizational structure of the reports will be logical, and formatting approaches will visually convey report structure and key points.

3. Project Timeline

The evaluation will begin in June 2015 and conclude in August 2018. As mentioned previously, the primary reporting format will be in the form of three interim reports and one summative report,

annually, accompanied by meetings to cointerpret the findings. Reports and meetings will occur approximately once a quarter. We propose the following report/meeting schedule but plan to work with the DE to revise and refine this schedule as needed:

- Quarter 1 (March): Student achievement and teacher effectiveness findings
- Quarter 2 (June): Survey and qualitative findings
- Quarter 3 (September): Summative findings
- Quarter 4 (December): Program fidelity, teacher recruitment and retention

We will implement the evaluation with quality and efficiency, using the proposed timeline outlined in Table 6.

Table 6. Timeline of Major Evaluation Activities

Evaluation Activity	2015			2016				2017				2018		
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Finalize evaluation plan	X	X												
Develop/revise teacher surveys		X	X	X			X	X			X	X		
Administer teacher surveys				X				X				X		
Analyze teacher surveys					X				X				X	
Develop/revise interview and focus group protocols		X	X				X				X			
Conduct interviews and focus groups				X				X				X		
Analyze qualitative data				X				X				X		
Interim report and presentation on teacher survey and qualitative findings					X				X				X	
Collect extant		X	X			X			X					

achievement and effectiveness data														
Analyze extant achievement and effectiveness data			X	X			X	X			X	X		
Present achievement and effectiveness analysis				X				X				X		
Collect extant program, HR and retention data		X	X	X			X	X			X	X		
Analyze program, HR, and retention data				X	X			X	X			X	X	
Interim report and presentation on program, HR and retention data			X				X				X			
Submit annual report						X				X				X

3. Information about Iowa's plans to disaggregate data (including poor, minority, students with disabilities and English Language Learners) for the purposes of monitoring progress related to implementation and impact of the strategies for closing the achievement gaps.

The IDE recognizes the importance of ensuring educational equity is maintained between different groups of students statewide. To address this issue, the IDE will annually analyze and disaggregate data to ensure equity is maintained. The IDE will breakdown data by key subgroups including: low SES, race/ethnicity, students with disabilities and English Language Learners. The IDE will examine differences such as high minority and low minority schools and high SES and low SES breakdown to determine if parity exists between groups.

The IDE is working to develop a School Report Card for all schools in Iowa. The launch for the report card is December 2015. The purpose of Iowa's School Report card is to establish specific performance goals and evaluate the effectiveness of each attendance center. The Report Card combines multiple measures to create an overall school ranking. Measures include: Proficiency, Growth, Closing the Achievement Gap, College Readiness, Graduation Rate, Attendance and Staff Retention.

While an overall school ranking does not provide important contextual information about a school nor does it make a conclusion about the quality of staff or ongoing work to raise student achievement, it does provide a high level view of student performance across a number of measures. Users can use these data to compare a school against the state average and show trends in performance. Schools can use this information to assist in developing achievement goals and to guide improvement efforts.

More specifically, the information contained in the School Report Card can be used in analyzing Iowa's educational equity. The Closing the Achievement gap measure will provide a score for all schools on this important topic. The score will identify schools that are struggling as well as showcase those that are making significant progress in closing performance gaps between subgroups. Further, the Closing the Achievement Gap metric will be used in the IDE's analysis of education equity. As we have done for this report, we will continue to analyze and report gaps between the achievement of students in our highest poverty and highest minority schools as compared to other schools in our state. This analysis will also include a study of the rates at which students in the high poverty and high minority schools are being taught by inexperienced, underqualified and/or out-of-field teachers as compared to their peers in other schools.

4. **Connections between the proposed strategies and the achievement gaps the state is experiencing.**

Five of the six strategies described in Iowa's Equity Plan were selected based on the research providing evidence of success these strategies have demonstrated for helping teachers and leaders increase their effectiveness in relation to generating high and equitable student learning outcomes.

For a complete description of these strategies, please see Section 4, pages 40 – 66, of the original Equity Plan. The following Table is an effort to make the connections between the identified strategies and the anticipated impact on student learning more explicit.

Table 1: Equity Plan strategies and connection to intended outcomes:

Strategy	Connections
Strategy 1: Implement multi-tiered systems of support in all Iowa schools that are sustained by evidence based practices, early warning systems and ongoing progress monitoring	The multi-tiered systems of support is a decision making model that has been shown to be especially effective for closing gaps among our hardest to reach students – including students living in poverty and minority students. This is accomplished by increasing teachers' and leaders' capacity to use data and information to inform decision making about student progress and needed interventions to ensure students succeed. Improving the core instruction and providing immediate and forceful intervention for those who need more has had significant impact on ensuring all students succeed and closing achievement gaps.
Strategy 2: Create and support coaching networks that focus on building the capacity of teachers and leaders to create effective cultures of learning for students and adults	Ensuring poor and minority students are taught by highly effective educators is critical for closing the achievement gaps that exist in our state. Our hypothesis regarding the variability of teaching effectiveness in our highest poverty and highest minority schools caused us to examine strategies that build the capacity of the teachers and leaders as the means for improving the interactions between teachers and students that result in improved student learning. A key lever for change and closing achievement gaps within the 2011 McKinsey Study was building the technical skills of teachers and principals through group or cascaded training and support. Developing teachers as leaders to support principals' instructional leadership and capacity building for the teachers has been shown to have positive effects on the ability of teachers to increase their repertoire of skills necessary for ensuring the success of their students and significantly closing

	achievement gaps. This is being accomplished through the direct training of teacher leaders and principals, coaching for teacher leaders and principals, and building the capacity of teacher leaders and principals to create and sustain a culture of learning for both students and adults.
Strategy 3: Create structures and supports for increasing teacher leadership roles within Iowa schools	In order for strategy 2 to be as effective as possible for closing the significant achievement gaps in our state we realized we would need to increase the instructional leadership within our schools serving the highest percentages of poor and minority students. Developing teachers as leaders to support principals' instructional leadership and capacity building for teachers has been shown to have positive effects on the ability of teachers to increase their repertoire of skills necessary for ensuring the success of their students and significantly closing achievement gaps. This is being accomplished through the direct training of teacher leaders and principals, coaching for teacher leaders and principals, and building the capacity of teacher leaders and principals to provide coaching and support for the teachers they serve.
Strategy 4: Create a statewide structure for scaling instructional improvement initiatives with consistent levels of support and accountability at the local, state, and regional level	Schools serving the highest number of high poverty and high minority schools are scattered across the state and are served by different regional service agencies. In the past, this has contributed to significantly different levels of support and guidance for improvement efforts to improve student learning and close achievement gaps – resulting in very little change. A review of the research on implementation science indicates that systemic efforts to change learning outcomes had better results after developing an infrastructure to support and sustain the implementation efforts. As a result, we are creating an infrastructure for scaling initiatives in partnership with our regional service agencies with the intent of creating consistency of support and accountability during implementation and ultimately reducing the variability in the instructional effectiveness across classrooms. This new structure provides leverage in four ways: (1) Alignment of resources, including fiscal and personnel, focused on one priority (literacy) across priority areas that have the greatest success across children/youth (work teams); (2) Collaboration of the DE, AEA and LEAs as part of C4K; (3) Identification/development of evidence-based frameworks, strategies and programs by experts in the field regardless of affiliation or location; and (4) Intentional statewide scaling based on implementation science. The infrastructure for scaling helps us ensure that all students benefit from the initiatives being scaled, regardless of the district or AEA in which they reside. This is critical to our effort to ensure

	high and equitable achievement for all students while closing the achievement gaps for sub-groups of students.
Strategy 5: Create and implement a statewide differentiated accountability system aligned to our continuous improvement model	Our schools serving our most needy students currently receive the same "cookie cutter" approach to accountability as any other school in our state. Obviously, schools serving higher numbers of students in poverty and/or minority students and demonstrating larger achievement gaps need more support and should be able to count on that support from all levels of the system. To reduce fragmentation and increase focus on improving outcomes for our most needy students, Iowa is developing a differentiated approach to accountability and school improvement (referred to as Differentiated Accountability). The intent of Differentiated Accountability is to leverage compliance to improve implementation of evidence-based content (i.e., the Iowa Early Learning Standards and Iowa Core Standards) and practices (i.e., multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)). This approach relies upon the Iowa Department of Education monitoring compliance while our statewide delivery system known as Collaborating for Iowa's Kids (C4K) engages in on-site coaching and support to diagnose implementation barriers and to identify evidence-based solutions to those identified barriers. Iowa's approach to Differentiated Accountability includes the following: (a) data-based, tiered support for schools and districts; (b) use of healthy indicators to help prioritize focus areas; (c) earned school and district autonomy based on performance; (d) a collaborative approach to improvement grounded in a common set of collaborative inquiry questions; (e) a single, unified continuous improvement process grounded in the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM); (f) streamlined reporting; and (g) an emphasis on results for Iowa's learners preK-Grade 12. Our differentiated accountability approach will allow us to provide differentiated support to schools and districts that need it most and increase their capacity to close achievement gaps and increase learning for all of their students.
Strategy 6: Create a statewide definition of effective teaching which can	In order to ensure students in our high poverty and high minority schools are receiving equally effective instruction as those in other schools in our state – we must first clarify what effective

guide strategic actions focused on improving teaching and learning.	teaching looks likes and use that "definition" to monitor the instructional practices of educators. Building agreement and shared understanding about the research on effective instruction that has the biggest impact on student learning outcomes will undergird all the other strategies. Each strategy is intended to impact the effectiveness of teaching in order to improve student learning. A clear definition of the characteristics of effective teaching will be necessary to focus our efforts, monitor progress, and adjust actions to accomplish intended results for both adults and students.