



## WORK-BASED LEARNING EXPANDS OPPORTUNITIES FOR K-12 STUDENTS

Work-based learning expands the walls of the classroom into the workplace, helping students see how their education can prepare them for future careers.

The [Iowa Intermediary Network](#) is one way our state is providing work-based learning opportunities for K-12 students. The program builds relationships among local employers, youth, schools and the community, and encourages more lowans earn credentials of value to employers, such as the [National Career Readiness Certificate](#).

The Network is made up of 15 regional programs, each associated with a community college. Regional intermediaries develop partnerships with businesses and industries, professional organizations, schools and Iowa STEM.

Last year, each region received about \$97,000 to prepare students for the workforce by connecting them to work-based learning through these partnerships. Students get hands-on experience in potential fields to help them discover the right career path for them. Health sciences, manufacturing and STEM are the more popular fields for Iowa students to explore through work-based learning.

In 2016, Iowa's Intermediary Network and its partners provided internships, job shadowing and workplace tours to 22,643 Iowa students. Additional educational activities—such as career fairs, presentations, business and industry panels, and open house events—gave 41,806 students opportunities to explore careers. It's a cost-effective way to help students align their interests with the best-possible educational opportunities.

[Cedar Valley Career Connections](#) arranges tours, specialized professional development and career exploration opportunities tied to curriculum.

Learn more about our local work-based learning efforts in the latest [Work-Based Learning Intermediary Network Report](#).

## Iowa Intermediary Network



## HOW CAN WE IMPROVE IOWA EDUCATION & GROW OUR ECONOMY?

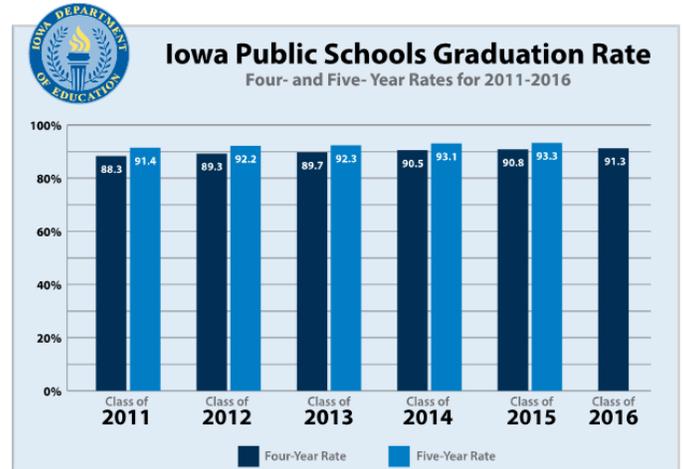
Iowa continues to [lead the nation](#) with a high school graduation rate that has increased five years in a row. More than 91 percent of students in Iowa's Class of 2016 graduated within four years.

This is good news that we can build upon by ensuring all Iowa high school graduates have the knowledge and skills to succeed in college and job training. After all, our students are our future workers, innovators, business owners and community leaders.

We must always be looking to improve Iowa education in ways that benefit our students and strengthen our economy. Businesses consistently report that Iowa's shortage of skilled workers holds us back.

We can lay the groundwork by investing first and foremost in our students, teachers and schools. This includes:

- Making sure kids can get into preschool if their families want them to participate.
- Ensuring all students get the same amount for their studies—regardless of where they go to school—by paying for school transportation costs separately from education.
- Helping students learn to read in a timely way so that they continue to succeed in school and in life.
- Improving civic education so that more young people are encouraged to become active, responsible citizens.
- Preparing students to fill jobs in the most in-demand fields, including health care and manufacturing, by expanding access to STEM education.



We can continue to lead when it comes to keeping our kids in school and graduating on time. But let's also ensure they're getting the best-possible preparation to take on the challenges and opportunities that await them.

For more on the graduation rates in our local schools, visit the [Iowa Department of Education website](#).

## LET'S KEEP IOWA KIDS HEALTHY

"Access to health care is essential to children's healthy development and future success," says Dr. Amy Shriver, an Iowa pediatrician. "Children learn best when they are healthy and safe. They need regular, preventive well-child checkups."

Because a child's health is so important to their future success, Iowa has made health insurance for kids a priority. We have consistently ranked among the top states in the country for children's access to health and dental care.

However, more than 11,000 Iowa children could lose health insurance on January 1 if their parents are no longer able to buy policies previously available to them or if the policies become too expensive. This is a very real possibility for Iowa families that buy their own health insurance, such as small business owners, the self-employed or those who work for organizations that don't offer group plans.



The companies that have sold health insurance directly to lowans are discontinuing those policies. Wellmark and Aetna have already dropped out, while Medica wants to increase insurance rates by 57 percent for some lowans. At the same time, the U.S. Congress has made little progress coming up with an affordable solution that provides Americans with the health care they need.

Under a new proposal, Iowa families unable to purchase health insurance elsewhere could buy insurance for their kids through [Hawk-I](#), Iowa's children's health insurance program. Since it was started in 1999, Hawk-I has earned widespread praise for offering good care while being cost effective. Hawk-I provides coverage to more than 60,000 children, with parents paying premiums on a sliding scale, depending on their income.

Allowing additional families to purchase health insurance for their kids through Hawk-I is a straightforward solution. Parents would pay the full cost of the premiums, which are expected to be affordable due to the relatively low cost of insuring kids.

All we need is the federal government's approval for Iowa parents to buy into Hawk-I. Please encourage Governor Reynolds to ask the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to allow more Iowa parents to purchase—without subsidy—Hawk-I coverage for their children.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### *High school students: apply to be a page*

Each year, high school juniors and seniors work as pages at the Iowa Capitol during the legislative session, which runs from January through April.

This is an excellent opportunity for students to learn firsthand about state government, work with elected officials, and see how ideas for a better Iowa become law.

Job duties include responding to requests from legislators and staff, assisting during committee meetings, and distributing and organizing materials and supplies. Pages are paid \$9.05 per hour. They may also arrange for academic credit with their high school.



The application deadline for the 2018 session is October 6. For complete details, go to [www.legis.iowa.gov/careers](http://www.legis.iowa.gov/careers).

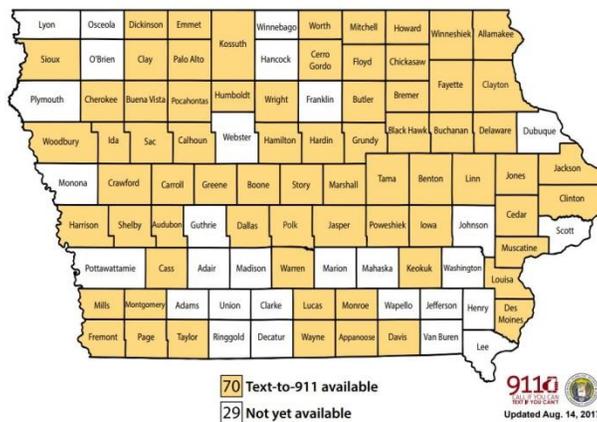
### *Texting to 911 available in most Iowa counties*

Did you know you can send a text to 911 in 70 Iowa counties? Many more counties are quickly making the service available. Sometimes it's just not safe to make the phone call—so call if you can, but text if you can't. For complete details and the most up-to-date map of where texting to 911 is available, go to [www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/programs/E\\_911.html](http://www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/programs/E_911.html).

### *Locally-led water quality monitoring opportunities*

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is launching a

### Text-to-911 Availability



new, locally-led volunteer water monitoring program to help Iowans better understand the water quality in their area. The DNR can help communities, watersheds, counties and regions get started by training local project leaders. Local leaders will in turn train volunteers and work with them on sampling water and [reporting data](#). For more on starting a local water monitoring initiative, visit the DNR's [volunteer water monitoring](#) site.

### ***Keep Iowa Beautiful photography contest***

Keep Iowa Beautiful's annual photography contest highlights Iowa's beauty through the work of amateur and professional photographers. Photos should be of Iowa places that capture the attractiveness of our state, including rural landscapes and urban and community settings. The deadline is December 15. Complete details can be found at [www.KeepIowaBeautiful.com/photography-contest-entry](http://www.KeepIowaBeautiful.com/photography-contest-entry).

### **Contact information**

*State Senator Jeff Danielson serves Hudson, Cedar Falls and Waterloo. He can be reached at 319-231-7192. E-mail him at [jeffdanielson@gmail.com](mailto:jeffdanielson@gmail.com).*

*Senator Danielson is ranking member on the Education Budget. He also serves on the Appropriations, Education, State Government and Transportation committees.*

*For further information, go to [www.senate.iowa.gov/senator/danielson](http://www.senate.iowa.gov/senator/danielson) and [www.jeffdanielson.org](http://www.jeffdanielson.org).*