

IOWA HOUSE REPUBLICANS

September 4, 2025

IowaHouseRepublicans.com

Appropriations

Support for Iowa Community Colleges Has Grown Under House Republicans

Iowa's fifteen community colleges fulfill two roles in the state's education system. Community colleges serve as the home of worker training programs while also giving students another option for completing the first two years of their college education. Despite lower enrollment, House Republicans have ensured that the state budget maintains a strong level of support for these schools.

When Republicans took back control of the Iowa House in the fall of 2010, Iowa's community colleges were experiencing growing enrollment as the country tried to recover from the Great Recession of 2008 & 2009. For the 2010-2011 school year, community colleges were educating and training 106,597 students. That year's enrollment would represent a high-water mark, as an ever-growing number of Iowans entered the workforce.

State funding for community colleges did not follow enrollment's downward trend. In fact, state support for this part of Iowa's education system has grown significantly while enrollment has declined. Funding to community colleges in Fiscal Year 2011 amounted to \$159.6 million. Thanks to the leadership of House Republicans, state support for these institutions would grow to the current level of \$243.4 million. This amounts to a 52.5 percent increase in state funding to community colleges. This trendline occurred even with several years where the overall budget was status quo or declining. Community colleges were maintained even during the tough budget times.

	Community College Enrollment	Community College State Funding	State Funding Per Student		
FY 2011	106,597	\$159,579,244	\$1,497.03		
FY 2012	105,975	\$169,274,647	\$1,597.31		
FY 2013	100,519	\$185,774,647	\$1,848.15		
FY 2014	94,234	\$193,774,647	\$2,056.31		
FY 2015	93,772	\$201,774,647	\$2,151.76		
FY 2016	93,074	\$201,774,647	\$2,167.89		
FY 2017	91,430	\$200,040,605	\$2,187.91		
FY 2018	90,531	\$200,690,889	\$2,216.82		
FY 2019	89,894	\$202,690,889	\$2,254.78		
FY 2020	88,375	\$208,690,889	\$2,361.42		
FY 2021	83,109	\$208,690,889	\$2,511.05		
FY 2022	81,749	\$215,158,161	\$2,631.94		
FY 2023	82,551	\$221,658,161	\$2,685.11		
FY 2024	85,362	\$228,858,161	\$2,681.03		
FY 2025	86,582	\$235,858,161	\$2,724.10		
FY 2026		\$243,358,161			

SOURCES:

Community College Enrollment - "Fall Enrollment Report", Iowa Dept. of Education, 2010 - 2024

State Funding Per Student - "Fiscal Report" Legislative Services Agency, 2010 - 2025

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While the fifteen-year increase in total funding is significant, its impact is even greater when it is considered at the individual student level. For the 2010-2011 school year (Fiscal Year 2011), the state's financial support amounted to \$1497 per community college student. For the just completed 2024-2025 school year, state funding per student equals \$2724. This comes to an 82 percent increase in state funding per student over that time period.

Community colleges have served as a critical component in Iowa's economy while also helping students jumpstart their college educations. And while fewer Iowans have chosen to use these facilities since 2010, House Republicans have led the fight to expand the state's commitment to community colleges and the Iowans these institutions serve.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

Agriculture

IDALS Secretary Naig Announces Streamside Buffer Pilot Project Targeting Priority Watersheds

On Friday, August 25, 2025, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) issued a press release in which Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig announced a new state-funded conservation cost-share pilot project supporting farmers and landowners in the watersheds upstream from the Des Moines and Cedar Rapids metropolitan areas. The [Streamside Buffer Initiative](#) encourages farmers and landowners living in these priority watersheds to add perennial buffers to fields along streams to prevent nutrients from entering these important source water areas. IDALS is initially allocating \$3 million from the state's Water Quality Initiative (WQI) fund to support this pilot project.

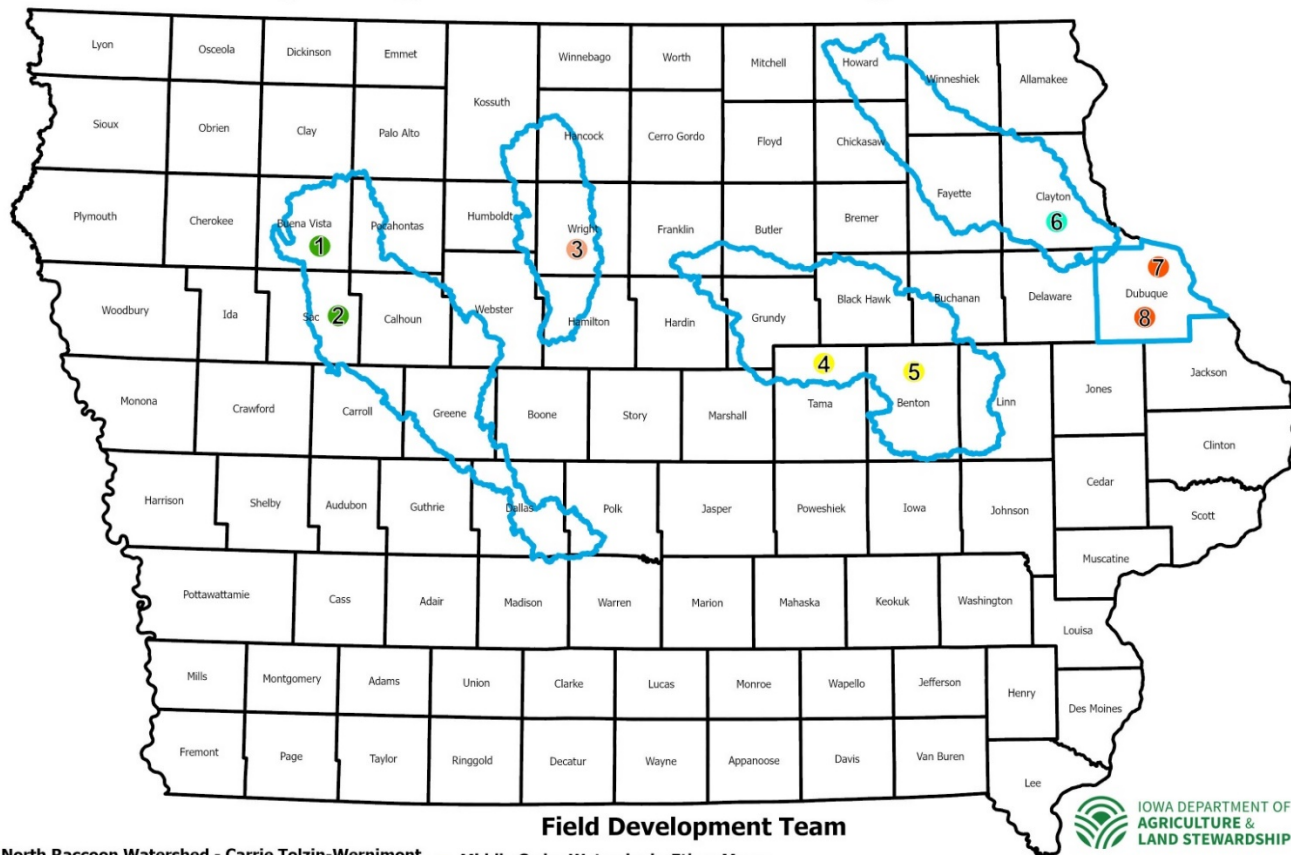
About the Streamside Buffer Initiative

This state-funded cost-share initiative is intended to be more flexible than existing federal cost-share programs to encourage even more farmers and landowners to participate.

- Farmers and landowners living in the North Raccoon, Boone, Middle Cedar and Turkey watersheds and Dubuque County are eligible ([watershed map](#)) for the Streamside Buffer Initiative pilot project.
- Enrolled buffers must be between 30 to 100 feet wide (on average) on at least one side of the stream.
- Payments will only be made on new buffers established on land that is currently in row crop production.
- Streamside buffers must be maintained for at least 10 years.
- Harvested buffers will receive a one-time payment of \$250 per acre for establishment costs and \$1,500 per acre for foregone income (total \$1,750 per acre). Non-harvested buffers will receive a one-time payment of \$500 per acre for establishment costs and \$3,000 per acre for foregone income (total \$3,500 per acre).
- Farmers and landowners are encouraged to incorporate complementary conservation practices, like saturated buffers and bioreactors, on streamside buffers, if feasible, for additional water quality benefits.

Farmers and landowners in the targeted watersheds who are interested in participating in the Streamside Buffer Initiative pilot project should visit their local USDA Service Center to enroll. There are other state and federal cost-share programs available to support farmers and landowners who are interested in adopting conservation practices but live outside of the Streamside Buffer Initiative pilot project area, including IDALS' WQI cover crop cost-share program. All farmers and landowners are encouraged to visit their local USDA Service Centers to discuss available cost-share programs and learn how they can be a part of the state's conservation projects.

Primary WQI Buffer Pilot Program Areas



Field Development Team

- ① **North Raccoon Watershed - Carrie Tolzin-Wernimont**
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ISU Extension & Outreach--Upcoming Webinar to Offer Digital Tool Strategies for Small Farms

On Friday, August 25, 2025, Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach issued a press release announcing that the Farm, Food and Enterprise Development program at ISU Extension and Outreach will host a webinar on October 14 from 10 to 11 a.m. The webinar, titled “Level Up Your Farm: Unlock Profitability with Digital Tools,” will be held in partnership with Big Data in a Box. The one-hour session will highlight how small and mid-sized farms can adopt user-friendly digital tools to track their data, make smarter decisions and ultimately improve their bottom line.

The webinar is designed with practicality in mind, and attendees will walk away with insights that can be implemented immediately, making it a valuable opportunity for producers looking to modernize without feeling overwhelmed by technology. Participants will learn strategies to capture and organize farm data, apply insights to planting and labor management, strengthen compliance and explore emerging technologies such as generative artificial intelligence. The session will also provide examples of how data can support value-added ventures, from monitoring production efficiency to identifying profitable market trends. Registration is available at no cost, and all participants will receive a link to join the online session. For more details and to register, visit the [registration page](#). For updates and future events, follow the [Food Innovation Hub on Facebook](#).

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

Duane Arnold Nuclear Plant Restart Approved

The following was provided by [Utility Dive](#):

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on Monday [approved a waiver request](#) that will allow NextEra Energy to restart the Duane Arnold nuclear power plant in Iowa by the end of 2029.

NextEra shuttered the roughly 600-MW, single unit Duane Arnold power plant near Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 2020 because of challenging economic conditions. NextEra owns about 70% of Duane Arnold and Central Iowa Power Cooperative and Corn Belt Power Cooperative own about 20% and 10%, respectively.

After Duane Arnold was decommissioned, NextEra — based in Juno Beach, Florida — planned to use the power plant's interconnection for solar farms.

Now, NextEra needs the waiver so it can use the Midcontinent Independent System Operator's generator replacement process to consolidate solar interconnection agreements at Duane Arnold with a remaining interconnection agreement for the nuclear power plant, according to FERC. Combined, the agreements total Duane Arnold's original capacity.

In part, NextEra needs the waiver from MISO's rules because Duane Arnold would not be back online by Oct. 29, 2026 — the date by which the solar farms must reach commercial operation or have their interconnection agreements terminated, FERC said.

NextEra could bring Duane Arnold back online in the fourth quarter of 2028, but asked for an additional year for the plant to return to service in case there are delays in obtaining equipment or repairs at the plant are needed, according to FERC.

The combined interconnection agreements total Duane Arnold's historic capacity of up to 619 MW. MISO supported NextEra's waiver request.

NextEra expects to spend \$50 million to \$100 million this year to recommission Duane Arnold, according to FERC.

NextEra is talking with potential customers that could buy the output from a restarted Duane Arnold, said John Ketchum, NextEra chairman, president and CEO, during a July 23 earnings conference call.

As part of the potential recommissioning effort, NextEra in January [asked the Nuclear Regulatory Commission](#) to restore Duane Arnold's operating license.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Fairfield is Iowa's Newest Main Street Community

The Iowa Economic Development Authority announced that Fairfield has been designated as the state's newest Main Street Iowa community, marking a significant milestone in the city's commitment to downtown revitalization and long-term economic development. Located in southeast Iowa, Fairfield is home to more than 60 nationalities — a diversity reflected downtown in its mix of historic architecture, international cuisine, and public art. The community's distinctiveness has earned it both national and global recognition, including a nod from Smithsonian magazine as one of

America's best small towns and designation by the Intelligent Community Forum as one of the world's Top 7 Intelligent Communities.

Fairfield becomes the 54th community to join the Main Street Iowa network. As a Main Street Iowa community, Fairfield plans to prioritize walkability and facade improvements; fill underused commercial spaces; mobilize volunteers; promote arts and culture; and reinforce downtown's role as a destination for dining, shopping, and connection.

Since its inception in 1985, Main Street Iowa communities have generated nearly \$2.9 billion in private investment, supported the opening of more than 5,600 new businesses and created more than 17,000 new jobs. Main Street Iowa is one of 46 programs in the national Main Street America network and is widely regarded as a model for downtown revitalization success.

To learn more about Main Street Iowa and resources available to all Iowa communities, visit iowaeda.com/downtown-resource-center.

(Contact: Kristi Kiious 2-5290)

Education

Feedback on New Social Studies Standards Sought

The Iowa Department of Education is seeking public comment on the proposed updates to the state's standards for social studies education.

The [Social Studies Standards Revision Team](#), which consisted of elementary and secondary educators, administrators, content specialists, family members, representatives from higher education and community partners, proposed changes on the state's social studies standards to the Department earlier this year and now requires public review.

Iowans who are interested in providing input on the state's social studies standards are encouraged to [review the proposed updates](#) and attend one of the upcoming public forums. The forums will be held in-person in different locations across the state. The two remaining forums are in Sioux City and Council Bluffs. Interested individuals can also join the scheduled forums online via Zoom. To access the forums online, individuals must sign up or have an existing Zoom account.

All public forums will be held from 4-6 p.m. The upcoming forums are scheduled for the following dates and locations:

- **Sioux City - Monday, Sept. 8**
In-person: West High School, 2001 Casselman, Media Center
Virtual: [Zoom link](#)
Meeting ID: 894 4025 2189
Passcode: 374854
- **Council Bluffs - Tuesday, Sept. 9**
In-person: Anne E. Nelson Early Learning Center, 620 N. 8th Street, Multipurpose Room
Virtual: [Zoom link](#)
Meeting ID: 849 4602 0679
Passcode: 894891

Individuals who are unable to attend a public forum can also submit comments through the Department's [public survey link](#) through Sept. 25. Input from the forums and survey responses will be considered in the review team's final recommendations to the State Board of Education.

State law requires an ongoing review of Iowa's academic standards, including public comment, to ensure that current content aligns with best practices. The proposed social studies standards and public comments will be reviewed by a committee of educators, content specialists and other stakeholders.

About Iowa's academic standards: Iowa's academic standards provide a set of common expectations for school districts across the state while allowing for decisions regarding curriculum and how it is delivered to be made locally. The standards establish what students must learn to be prepared for success after high school. Local schools and educators continue to set and oversee curriculum and instruction decisions.

In addition to social studies, Iowa's [academic standards](#) cover mathematics, literacy, science and 21st-century skills, such as financial literacy. They also include recommended standards for computer science, fine arts, physical education and health.

(Info from Iowa Department of Education)

Iowa Achieves Impressive Gains in Early Literacy and Science in New 2025 Assessment Results

The Iowa Department of Education today released new spring 2025 assessment results from the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) for students in grades 3-11. The state-level results show encouraging improvements in student achievement across most grade levels in English language arts and science, while high school math proficiency rates continue to lag behind those of earlier grade levels.

Overall state-level results from the 2024-25 ISASP show gains in student performance over last year, often surpassing pre-pandemic levels across most grades and subjects. Iowa's proficiency rates for English language arts (ELA) ranged from 68 to 80 percent while mathematics ranged between 64 and 76 percent. Science ranged between 64 and 70 percent.

"Iowa made literacy a priority in every classroom and for every student over the past year by implementing proven, evidence-based approaches that we know work," said Governor Kim Reynolds. "By empowering Iowa teachers with critical training in the Science of Reading and through strong collaboration with students, families and school partners, ELA proficiency for last year's third graders jumped an impressive 11 percentage points just one year later. Together we will continue this transformational work in literacy while also prioritizing math through the implementation of the Math Counts Act to ensure Iowa's education system is helping every student achieve their potential."

Following the enactment of landmark early literacy [legislation enacted in 2024](#), students who were in third grade during the 2023-24 school year showed outstanding gains as fourth graders in 2024-25, with ELA proficiency increasing 11 percentage points. Compared to last year, ELA proficiency rates increased or were maintained in grades 3-5 and 8-10, with grades 3 and 8 showing the most significant increases of 4 and 3 percentage points, respectively. "Over the past two years, Iowa has advanced rigorous academic standards, high-quality instructional materials, early student identification, strong instructional interventions, professional learning, educator preparation, and family-centered resources—and our collective work has made a remarkable difference for students across Iowa," said Iowa Department of Education Director McKenzie Snow. "Together, we celebrate the extraordinary gains of our young readers and the leadership of Iowa's teachers and families in implementing these comprehensive, statewide investments in evidence-based instruction."

Math proficiency in high school grades is much lower than that of earlier grade levels, with differences ranging between 4 to 12 percentage points lower. Students in ninth grade experienced the largest long-term decrease in math proficiency, down 5 percentage points from 2019. Compared to last year, math proficiency rates do not show change beyond 1-2 percentage points, reinforcing the need for the Math Counts Act passed in 2025.

“The data show Iowa’s investment in evidence-based literacy instruction is working, and, last winter, we set out to mirror these transformational structures in math through the historic Math Counts Act,” said Snow. “Heartened by student progress and determined to meet student needs, Iowa will continue to reassert our commitment to evidence-based instruction that improves student achievement and narrows and closes achievement gaps.”

Following the recent passage of the [Math Counts Act](#), Iowa is implementing new statewide supports for mathematics teaching and learning. This will include early identification and progress monitoring for students who are not on track to be proficient, personalized math plans and interventions for students in need of support, evidence-based professional development for teachers, alignment of Iowa’s educator preparation programs to evidence-based instruction and availability of family-centered resources to support children’s mathematics development at home.

In the 2024-25 school year, [science proficiency](#) was included in Iowa’s new, unified school accountability system for the first time. This spring, science proficiency rates show gains across all tested grades, exceeding pre-pandemic performance with a 12-percentage point increase in both 5th and 8th grade since 2019. In just one year, science proficiency increased by 4 percentage points in 5th grade, 5 percentage points in 8th grade, and 7 percentage points in 10th grade.

“Instructional leadership and accountability matter, and we commend our students, educators, and families for the long-term progress and exceptional improvements made following the inclusion of science proficiency in our new accountability system last year,” said Snow.

While the data show some long-term narrowing of proficiency gaps between overall student results and those of certain student groups, significant proficiency gaps persist. Students with disabilities and students who are English learners experienced much lower proficiency rates than their classmates, with average differences across grade levels in ELA proficiency of 45 and 53 percentage points, respectively. The average proficiency rate gaps in mathematics for students with disabilities and students who are English learners was slightly lower at 41 and 45 percentage points, respectively.

The ISASP is administered each spring and is the general summative accountability assessment in Iowa that meets the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The assessment reflects what’s being taught in Iowa classrooms and how students are progressing toward grade-level expectations outlined in Iowa’s academic standards. The ISASP helps teachers understand where students are succeeding and where they may need more help.

The spring 2025 ISASP results, proficiency rates by public district, public school building, nonpublic school building and [fact sheet with additional graphs and charts](#) can be found on the Iowa Department of Education’s [PK-12 Education Statistics webpage](#).

(Info from Iowa Department of Education)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Environmental Protection

EPA Releases Statement Following Favorable D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals Ruling

On Tuesday, September 2, 2025, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a press release containing a statement following the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit favorable decision in support of EPA’s termination of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) grants. The release noted-- “*It’s fantastic to see reason prevail in the court system. EPA has a duty to be an exceptional steward of taxpayer dollars. Administrator Zeldin cancelled these grants due to well documented concerns about self-dealing and conflicts of interest, unqualified*

recipients, and intentionally reduced agency oversight. The gold bar recipients were wrong about jurisdiction all along and wrong to act so entitled to these precious public funds that belong to hardworking American taxpayers.”

As the [opinion](#) states,

- “The month before President Trump’s inauguration, EPA modified the grant agreements—with no apparent consideration from the grantees—to make it more difficult for the government to terminate the grants.”
- “[N]othing in the Inflation Reduction Act prevented EPA from taking care that the grant programs be faithfully executed.... [T]his preliminary injunction ... bar[red] EPA from carrying out basic executive functions to ensure the prudent and effective management of substantial public funds.”
- “The district court also ignored the government’s evidence of mismanagement of the grant funds, such as the damning ‘gold bars’ video, which further supports EPA’s good faith in deciding to terminate the grants and recommit the funds with proper supervision and accountability.”
- “Our jurisdiction, however, rests on law, not on the severity of the alleged wrongdoing claimed by the grantees and reported by *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and *Politico*.”

Background:

In March, EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin notified National Clean Investment Fund and Clean Communities Investment Accelerator recipients of the termination of their grant agreements under the Biden-Harris Administration’s \$20 billion “gold bar” approach to implementing GGRF. This termination was based on substantial concerns regarding the GGRF program integrity, the award process, wasteful spending, and misalignment with agency’s priorities, which collectively undermine the fundamental goals and statutory objectives of the award. Following a comprehensive review and consistent with multiple ongoing independent federal investigations into the program, EPA identified material deficiencies which pose an unacceptable risk to the lawful execution of these grants. The Biden EPA parked \$20 billion dollars at an outside financial institution in a manner that deliberately reduced the ability of EPA to conduct proper oversight. The termination of these grants reflects EPA’s duty to protect public funds and maintain the integrity of its grant programs. The agency is committed to administering taxpayer funding in a transparent and accountable manner with the highest standards of fiscal responsibility.

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

Health and Human Services

Lee Grossman Named Iowa Medicaid Director

The following was provided by the Department of Health and Human Services:

DHHS recently announced that Lee Grossman has been appointed as the new Director of Iowa Medicaid.

Grossman, an Iowa native, brings more than 14 years of experience from the Wyoming Department of Health, where he most recently served as Medicaid Director since February 2023.

“I’m thrilled to welcome Lee back home to Iowa as he steps into this role,” said Iowa DHHS Director Kelly Garcia. “His leadership and invaluable expertise make him an ideal fit to guide our Medicaid team through this critical work at this critical time. As I’ve had the pleasure of getting to know Lee, what I see is deep Medicaid knowledge, a steady hand and a clear commitment to the people this program supports. Lee’s knowledge of building rural health care access will be an attribute perfectly focused for this moment.”

The appointment follows a comprehensive nationwide search. During the interim period, DHHS conducted an internal evaluation to strengthen the Medicaid team’s structure and lay the foundation for long-term success. This foundational work adds expertise in-house and deepens the agency’s commitment to strong oversight and accountability.

“It’s an honor to return to the state where I grew up and contribute in such a meaningful way,” said Grossman. “I look forward to working with this team that’s deeply committed to helping thousands of Iowans live healthier lives in the community of their choice.”

Lee began this new role on September 2nd. Iowa Medicaid provides health coverage to over 700,000 Iowans each year, including children, low-income individuals, pregnant women, older adults, and people with disabilities.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Labor

Vocational Rehabilitation Services—What Is It?

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services division of Iowa Workforce Development is an employment program for individuals who experience a disability. As Iowa’s VR program, it focuses on service delivery that **helps Iowans prepare for, obtain, keep, and advance in employment.**

VR is an individualized program. It delivers employment services based on someone’s unique individualized employment plan. Their goal is two-fold:

1. Helping job candidates find employment that meets their needs and interests
2. Meeting the workforce needs of our business partners.

VR approaches what they do in collaboration. They team up with:

- Job candidates
- Business partners
- Community providers
- One-Stop Core Partners

Vocational Rehabilitation Services also has an increasing presence in Iowa high schools. By providing transition services for students with disabilities, we are preparing a new Future Ready Iowa Workforce.

- Vocational Rehabilitation Services is Iowa’s state vocational rehabilitation program.
- It is a division of [Iowa Workforce Development \(IWD\)](#), and part of the state-federal vocational rehabilitation system.

VR Funding:

Each state receives funding to operate a VR program(s) based on the **Rehabilitation Act of 1973**, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

- \$31,810,986 was the total amount of grant funds awarded to VR for Federal Fiscal Year 2025.

Iowa’s Vocational Rehabilitation program is supported by the U.S. Department of Education. 78.7% of the program is traditionally provided by federal funds. For Federal Fiscal Year 2025, a total of \$34,060,986, of the program is financed with federal funds, and \$6,245,238 is funded by the State of Iowa. *Steven’s Amendment*.

Pre-Employment Transition Services gets 100% of its funding from the U.S. Department of Education. For Federal Fiscal Year

- **78.7% of Iowa's VR program is funding from the U.S. Department of Education.**
- **21.3% is the percentage of its budget that VR receives through** state appropriations and other non-federal allowable sources.
- **100% of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) budget comes from the US Department of Education.**
- **\$4,771,647.90 was the total amount of grant funds required to be reserved for Pre-ETS for Federal Fiscal Year 2025.**

2025, the total amount of grant funds required to be reserved for these services is \$4,771,647.90.

Next newsletter we will go into the resources VR has for students and employers.

(Info from Vocational Rehabilitation Services under Iowa Workforce Development)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Natural Resources

DNR Annual Pheasant Survey Shows Iowa's Population at 20-Year High

On Tuesday, September 2, 2025, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued a press release announcing that Iowa's statewide pheasant population is at a 20-year high, and state wildlife experts are forecasting a banner year for hunters.

The statewide average of 28 birds per route is the highest since 2005. Regionally, the northwest region was the highest since 2005; northeast region was the highest since 1998; west central similar to last year; east central highest since 2007; south central highest since 2017; and southeast, highest since 2020.

The Iowa DNR and Pheasants Forever are celebrating 100 years of pheasant hunting in the Hawkeye State. The first season was held Oct. 20-22, 1925, when 13 counties in north central Iowa were opened to pheasant hunting. Hunters were allowed a three-rooster limit, for a half-day of hunting. An estimated 75,000 hunters participated. Hunters can commemorate the 100th anniversary by purchasing a hard card featuring Iowa Pheasants Forever Print of the Year. Pheasants Forever is offering commemorative apparel featuring both the 100 Years of Pheasant Hunting graphic and PF logo through an online, pop-up store. The store will be accepting apparel orders as the pheasant season approaches.

Pheasant season

- Oct. 25 – Jan. 10, 2026
- Oct. 18-19 Youth only pheasant season – Iowa residents only, age 15 or younger

Additional information

August Roadside Survey

Survey routes are 30 miles long and are entirely on gravel roads. When conditions are favorable, Iowa DNR biologists and conservation officers drive their assigned routes, at 10-15 mph, and count all the pheasants, quail, partridge, rabbits, and jackrabbits seen. In all, there are 210-30 mile routes driven (6,300 miles) every August to assess Iowa's upland game populations. Most counties have 2 routes, and the information from all of these routes is condensed to produce the following:

- [2025 Small Game Distribution Map](#)
- [2025 August Roadside Survey Map](#)

- Shows the current information on ring-necked pheasants, along with comparisons to the previous year's survey.
- [2025 August Roadside Survey Report](#)
 - The full report is also provided online for individuals who would like to see more detailed and long-term trend information.

DNR--Iowa's Mourning Dove Season Opened September 1st

On Tuesday, August 26, 2025, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued a press release touting that Iowa's mourning dove season began September 1st. Last year, hunter numbers increased an estimated 3 percent to 14,000, but dove harvest fell 27 percent, to 143,000. Mourning doves are the most abundant game bird in the country, with a population estimated at more than 345 million. Hunters are reminded that if they hunt mourning doves or other migratory game birds that they are required to register for HIP annually, either through the Go Outdoors Iowa app on their smartphone or through a link at www.iowadnr.gov/waterfowl. Migratory game birds include doves, ducks, geese, coots, woodcock and snipe.

Doves are most often hunted in fields of mowed sunflowers, burned winter wheat, alfalfa or small grains and around farm ponds. The Iowa DNR identifies state managed public areas with dove fields on its online hunting atlas with a pin on the nearest parking lot to the field. As with all types of hunting, safety and communication is important. Know each hunter's zone of fire, be aware of where everyone is and properly identify the dove before taking a shot. Be sure to pick up the spent shell casings – leaving them in the field is considered littering. Shooting hours begin one-half hour before sunrise until sunset.

DNR State Forest Nursery Seedling Orders Start September 2nd

On Tuesday, August 26, 2025, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued a press release announcing that the DNR State Forest Nursery is gearing up for fall 2025 and spring 2026 seedling orders. Seedlings can be ordered now. The bare-root seedlings are packaged in bundles of 25 inside sealed and labeled plastic bags. Tree varieties include 23 species of native hardwoods, eight evergreen species and 15 smaller trees and shrubs. Prices range from \$1.00 to \$1.30 per seedling. Seedlings are sold in three age classifications, and range in size from 10-30 inches depending on the species. Evergreens and a few other species are only available for spring delivery; all other species are available both spring and fall. Fall delivery is in November and spring delivery is in April and May.

Customers can choose to have their order shipped or they can pick it up at the State Forest Nursery in Ames. The DNR State Forest Nursery sells approximately 1 million seedlings per year, and 3-5 million seedlings are grown on-site at any given time. Located on 98 acres just south of Highway 30 in Ames, the nursery was established by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, and has operated continuously ever since. For more information, visit the online sales site at <http://nursery.iowadnr.gov/>.

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

Public Safety

DPS Updates the Iowa Sex Offender Registry Website

The Iowa Department of Public Safety (DPS) has announced a redesign of the Sex Offender Registry (SOR) website. The updated site will make it easier for Iowans to access information on registered sex offenders. The website can be found here <https://www.iowasexoffender.gov/>

According to a DPS press release, new features of the site include:

- Homepage links to active registrants and most wanted registrants
- Enhanced search functions that include a wider range of options and helpful tips
- Interactive maps that display the number of registrants in specific areas of the state
- Personalized notifications
- Links to helpful crime prevention and safety information aimed at fostering community safety and awareness

The Sex Offender Registry was established in 1995 and provides 24-hour access to sex offender registrant information. The registry provides an image of the offender along with a description, their address, the sex offender tier, residency and employment restrictions, as well as the crime they were convicted of.

As of September, there are 6,979 offenders on the registry. Concerned citizens can search for offenders by name, or address. Individuals on the registry have been convicted of various offenses including sex crimes against minors, sexual exploitation, and sexually violent crimes.

If you have questions or concerns about the website, DPS urges you to contact sorinfo@dps.state.ia.us or 515.725.6050.

(Contact: Amanda Wille 1-5230)

State Government

Combating Misinformation in Reporting on Health Care Facilities Standards

The Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing (DIAL) released a new “DIALED IN” podcast to correct some inaccuracies in recent local reporting.

In the new episode, "Facts over Fiction: Dispatching Misinformation" ([Season 2, Episode 1](#)), DIAL staff fact-check recent reporting regarding audit findings, explain what federal report data actually says, and explain why some reports aren't legally DIAL's to release.

Additionally, the episode celebrates the two long-term care facilities recently honored with the 2025 Governor's Award for Quality Care in Health Care Facilities:

- Briarwood Health Care Center in Iowa City (Johnson County)
- Ruthven Community Care Center in Ruthven (Palo Alto County)

The new episode, hosted by Communications Director Stefanie Bond, also features these DIAL staff members: Director Larry Johnson, Jr.; Acute and Continuing Care Bureau Chief Linda Kellen; and Long-term Care Bureau Chief Vicki Worth.

"Truthful, transparent, and respectful reporting is of the utmost importance, and when facts aren't presented accurately, completely, and fairly it is important to ensure Iowans have all of the facts to make informed decisions," said DIAL Director Larry Johnson.

"This podcast provides a more complete and accurate background regarding the federal metrics for healthcare facilities, including that Iowa exceeds federal requirements for long-term care annual inspections. I am proud of the work our team does here at DIAL and I'm confident when Iowans have all of the facts, they will too. In fact, DIAL is now publishing the long-term care annual survey statistics on its website so Iowans can see for themselves on a quarterly basis."

The first “DIALED IN” podcast was released in October 2024 to provide additional context to the department's mission, role, and duties. DIAL’s podcast episodes are available [online](#), and through streaming services like [Spotify](#), [iHeart](#), [Amazon Music](#), and more.

(Information from DIAL)

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Transportation

DOT Hands Out Public Transit Infrastructure Funds

Students at the University of Iowa and Iowa State University were the big winners this year as the Iowa Department of Transportation handed out funding for public transit programs.

The Iowa Transportation Commission approved four requests for funding from the Public Transit Infrastructure Grant Program at its August board meeting. This program is funded annually by the state legislature to fund some of the vertical infrastructure needs of Iowa’s transit systems.

Projects can involve new construction, reconstruction, or remodeling, but must include a vertical component to qualify. Submitted projects are evaluated based on the anticipated benefits to transit, as well as the ability to have projects completed quickly. The program limits the funding permitted for a project to no more than 80 percent of the cost and cannot, in combination with federal funding, exceed that number. No single transit system can receive more than 40 percent of the available infrastructure funding in a given year.

For Fiscal Year 2026, the Commission handed out just over \$1.4 million from the Program. These funds are appropriated as part of the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund appropriations bill. The winning projects are:

- University of Iowa’s Cambus system, which received \$566,096 for maintenance facility expansion and modernization;
- Ames Transit Agency’s CyRide system, which received \$566,096 for replace of in-ground hoists;
- Sioux City Transit, which received \$163,048 for passenger elevator replacement; and
- Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority, which received \$120,000 for revolving door replacement.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

Veterans Affairs

National Guard to Assist ICE Beginning September 8

The following was provided by the Governor’s office:

In response to a request by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Governor Reynolds has directed the Iowa National Guard to commence a supportive federal Title 32 mission alongside Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) beginning September 8, 2025.

Twenty Iowa National Guard soldiers will provide administrative and logistical support to Iowa-based ICE officials in enforcing immigration laws. The current authorization is approved by the Secretary of Defense through November 15, 2025.

“Just as we supported Texas when the Biden Administration left them to defend the border, Iowa will continue to assist in the enforcement of federal immigration laws — this time, by working with the Trump Administration to support U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials in our state,” Governor Reynolds said. “By providing administrative and logistical support, the Iowa National Guard will free up local ICE officials to continue their work outside the office to enforce the law and keep our state safe.”

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Ways & Means

Senate File 657—New Sustainable Aviation Fuel Production Tax Credit

This article will focus on the new sustainable aviation fuel incentive program. Division XV of Senate File 657 created the Sustainable Aviation Fuel Production Tax Credit Program. The program provides that *sustainable aviation fuel* (SAF) is to mean a liquid fuel derived from feedstock not including palm fatty acid distillates and that achieves at least a 50 percent life cycle greenhouse gas emissions reduction in comparison with petroleum-based aviation gasoline, aviation turbine fuel, and jet fuel as determined by other tests further defined. It defines *feedstock* to mean any organic matter processed or refined in the state suitable for sustainable aviation fuel production without further enhancement. Finally, it defines *eligible business* to mean a business engaged in the manufacturing of SAF from feedstock.

The program provides that an eligible business that produces SAF in this state during a calendar year may apply to IEDA for the tax credit for the SAF produced during the 2026 calendar year through the 2035 calendar year. It requires an eligible business that produces SAF to apply to IEDA for the credit in the calendar year following the calendar year in which the SAF is produced. Each application shall be reviewed and scored on a competitive basis by IEDA pursuant to rules adopted by the authority. Before being issued a tax credit, the program requires an eligible business to enter into an agreement with IEDA for the successful completion of all requirements of the program.

The program provides that if all of the requirements of the program and the agreement have been fulfilled, IEDA will issue a tax credit certificate to the eligible business in an amount equal to the product of 25 cents multiplied by the number of gallons of SAF produced in this state. The SAF tax credit is refundable. In lieu of claiming a refund, the eligible business may elect to have the overpayment shown on the taxpayer’s final, completed return credited to the tax liability for the following tax year. The SAF tax credits are not transferable.

The maximum amount of SAF tax credits combined with the chemical production tax credit shall not exceed \$10 million in a fiscal year. Additionally, the maximum amount of tax credits issued to an eligible business shall not exceed \$1 million in a calendar year. An eligible business also shall not be issued more than five tax credit certificates under the program and the SAF production tax credit is repealed January 1, 2037.

For the next newsletter, this article will focus on the last six divisions of the bill that made small scale changes to existing programs.

(Contact: Kristi Kiious 2-5290)