Policy Wise in Iowa

Nov. 29, 2022

FFA Enrichment Center, DMACC Campus
Ankeny, IA

Margaret Buckton, RSAI Professional Advocate
I am a rural teacher

Thinking about how the rural teaching experience has both unique challenges and advantages, Crystal had the following advice for those interested in the teaching profession:

“Our community and our school really go hand in hand. They say it takes a village to raise a kid. It sure does. And when we have to raise a whole bunch of kids, boy do we need a big village to help with that. Going into teaching itself is challenging, and there's so many things that go into play. Find people that will help you and just hang on tight to them because it's not a one man band. That's what people need to remember. Don't do it by yourself.”

https://iamaruralteacher.org/stories/crystal-stevenson-elkader-ia
Has Iowa Changed?
Median Age 1970
Median Age 2030
Median Age 1970 vs. 2030

[Map showing age distribution in Iowa]
Percentage of Population Under Five Years Old — 2019 Estimate

By County

6.2%
Iowa Percentage

In 2001, only 4 districts had more than 50% of students eligible for FRPL (Waterloo, Keokuk, Wayne and Diagonal. Diagonal was the state high at 60.2% and the only district above 60%)

In FY 2022, of the 63 districts with more than half of their student on FRPL. 19 are urban & 54 are rural. 18 districts have more than 60% of students eligible for FRPL. Those above 70% include Postville, Storm Lake, Council Bluffs, Waterloo, South Page, Hamburg, Des Moines.
Change in FRL 2001-2022
Districts in the largest and smallest enrollment categories had the highest percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch (DE Annual Condition of Education Report Table 1-10).
Stats about Iowa Students

After a 17-year decline, there were eight years of enrollment gains statewide through 2019-20, with the first downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Oct. 2020. Although some rural schools are growing, most are static or losing students.

Demographic Changes:

- Minority student enrollment in Iowa’s public schools, now 26.1% of total, continues to increase and is at an all-time high (125,309).
- Poverty/ percentage of students eligible for FRL in 2021-22 was 41.8%.
- The percent of students who are English language learners (EL) is now 6.3% in 2021-22, up from 2.3% of ELL students in 2000-01.

Iowa is #1 in the nation in college credits earned while in high school per capita.

Iowa’s 4-year cohort graduation rate, over 91%, is among the highest in the nation. Iowa’s 5-year graduation rate (students who graduated but took an extra year to finish high school) was 93.5% for the Class of 2020.

82% of Iowa high school students take higher level math (algebra II), but that includes 86% of girls and 78.2% of boys.

100% Graduation Schools (2018)

By the end of the 2018 school year, the average U.S. graduation rate was about 85%, and the individual states contributed to this total in the following ways. Only fifteen states and one federal district have at least one school with a 100% graduation rate. The District of Columbia has one school from which 100% of the student body graduates and the fifteen states with a 100% graduation rate in 2019 are:

- **Alaska** (5 schools)
- **Arizona** (26 schools)
- **Arkansas** (13 schools)
- **California** (55 schools)
- **Colorado** (14 schools)
- **Connecticut** (5 schools)
- **Florida** (40 schools)
- **Georgia** (11 schools)
- **Idaho** (12 schools)
- **Illinois** (20 schools)
- **Indiana** (14 schools)
- **Iowa** (42 schools)
- **Kansas** (3 schools)
- **Kentucky** (10 schools)
- **Louisiana** (13 schools)
- **Maine** (1 school)

The 100 Percenters

38 Districts in DE’s 2021 graduation data graduated 100% of students:

➤ All rural

➤ Combined, 37% of graduates were low-income students (compared to statewide average of 41%)

➤ These districts were all 100 white

➤ Only 1 had students with disabilities among the graduates (and in that district, all 14 students with IEPs graduated.)

➤ Only 1 had Hispanic students among graduates (and in that district, all 16 students identified as Hispanic graduated.)

➤ Caveat about 2021: COVID Year disclaimer

https://educateiowa.gov/documents/graduation-rates-district-subgroup/2022/03/iowa-public-school-district-class-2021-four
Ben Winchester

*Rewriting the Rural Narrative*

Benjamin Winchester, Rural Sociologist, University of Minnesota Extension, Center for Community Vitality, benw@umn.edu, (320) 589-5033

http://www.extension.umn.edu/Community/brain-gain

https://twitter.com/GrokRural

The recording of Benjamin Winchester’s Presentation around *Rewriting the Rural Narrative* is available for two more months at the link below. Feel free to share with others in your community or school.

[View the Benjamin Winchester Presentation for RSAI](http://www.extension.umn.edu/Community/brain-gain)
Did you know. . . .

Iowa’s 91.6% graduation was highest in the nation in 2019. Since 2011, Iowa’s four-year graduation rate has increased 3.3 percentage points overall, with significant gains in nearly every student demographic subgroup.

- Hispanic students have climbed by 9.3 percentage points,
- Students whose first language is not English have increased by 8.8% and
- African American students have gone up 8.4% since 2011.
- Iowa’s graduation rate slipped to 90.2% in 2020 (COVID Year Caveat).

Iowa’s five-year graduation rate — which reflects students who were part of a graduating class but took an extra year to finish high school — was 93.5% for the Class of 2020, down slightly from 93.8% for the Class of 2019.

82% of Iowa high school students take higher level math (Algebra II), but that includes 86% of girls and 78.2% of boys.
Did you know. . . .

- 35,227 students open enrolled into a neighboring school district last year and 33,840 attended an accredited private school. Iowa’s open enrollment policy is among the most accessible in the nation.

- 23 approved virtual online schools in Iowa, to which students from any district in the state can attend or open enroll. (Can still participate in activities/athletics in their district of residence.)

- 2 kinds of home school: Independent private instruction (no oversight) and competent private instruction (work with teacher in local school district for support with instruction/assessment.)

- Since 2000, when Iowa had 374 school districts, 47 districts have closed or consolidated (we now have 327 school districts.)
Condition of Education Funding in Iowa
2022 Session Historic Tax Cuts

**Historic Tax Cuts Enacted**: HF 2317 was signed by the Governor on March 1. RSAI opposed the bill, which will reduce general fund revenue significantly, hindering the ability of the state to adequately fund schools and other essential state services. During the debate, there was strong difference of opinion, with the Republicans stating that these tax cuts will stimulate Iowa’s economic growth and the Democrats stating that other states’ experiences have not delivered such growth. This chart from the [LSA Fiscal Note](#) shows the total estimated reduction of taxes:

![Chart](image)

$1.8 B revenue loss by FY 2027 (about 20%)
Iowa State Cost Per Pupil Funding History

Set by formula based on economic conditions automatically from the beginning of the formula through 1993-94.

Legislatively set one year in advance of the budget year beginning in 1994-95.

Beginning in FY18, set within 30 days of Gov.’s Budget, no longer a year in advance.

Historical annual cost increase of doing school is 3.0-4.0% (orange band below): SSA set in 12 of the last 13 years lags the cost increase schools have faced.

If 2.5% is the best state effort with a full state savings account and a Billion plus surplus, what happens when revenues drop $1.8 Billion AND religious private school support increases?
Evidence that Funding is Not Keeping Pace

2019 US Census data, May 2021

By the end of 2019, Iowa pupil public elementary and secondary school system expenditures slipped to $1,280 below the national average.

Since 2014, Iowa elementary and secondary education spending has increased 11.6%, while the national average increase has been 19.9%.

In the Midwest region, Nebraska is the only state outpaced by Iowa. **Iowa ranks 40th nationally in the per pupil expenditure increase from 2014 to 2019.**
The Gap widens. US Census data from May 2022 shows Iowa now $1,536 below the national average. Iowa ranks 30th in the nation in per pupil expenditures.
What has changed since the 80s despite demographics?

There are so many sources for the per pupil comparisons. One of the most credible is the National Center for Education statistics. These numbers come from what states report to the federal government.

https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_236.65.asp

The differences between Iowa and USA total expenditures per pupil in fall enrollment have changed over time.

- **In the 1970s and 1980s, Iowa spent more per pupil than the national average.**
  - By 1989-90, Iowa was $453 below the national average.
  - By 2018-19, that shortfall had grown to $1,254.
  - 2019-20 shows Iowa now $1,536 below the national average.
  - With continued low per pupil increases in the school funding formula in Iowa from 2021-2023, Iowa’s expenditure shortfall per pupil is likely even greater.
What does the $$$ buy?

• Staff, supports and programs proven to close achievement gaps so all students graduate prepared for their next adventure

• Sufficient compensation and benefits packages to attract diverse and expert talent so all students have great teachers, mentors, counselors, coaches and support.

• Music and art programs, extracurriculars, theater/speech/debate, career exploration/internships and college credit while in high school all help students find their passions and develop their skills. These programs, sometimes thought of as “extras” are primary to student engagement and success.

• Staff training, curriculum, software and instructional materials are all critical to improved instructional and student success.

• People: 80% of school general funds typically provide the staff, or human capital, to support and educate students. Fewer adults means increased class sizes, fewer course offerings/choices, less student engagement.

• Calculating Return on Investment: e.g., How many college credits or credentials were earned while in high school? How much did that save parents and college students? How much sooner was someone producing tax revenue at the state and local level?
Gap between Iowa Average Teacher Salary and the National Average in 2019 is $4,815 (in 1988, the gap was $3,182). With significant teacher shortages across the nation, beginning teacher pay is also a critical comparison.

Figure 3-3


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
<th>2021-22 est’d</th>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>$57,489</td>
<td>$58,184</td>
<td>$58,831</td>
<td>$59,262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>$62,304</td>
<td>$64,133</td>
<td>$65,293</td>
<td>$66,397</td>
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<tr>
<td>IA-USA</td>
<td>($4,815)</td>
<td>($5,949)</td>
<td>($6,462)</td>
<td>($7,135)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3-11

Average Total Salaries of Iowa Full-Time Public School Teachers by Enrollment Category 2000-2001, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;300</td>
<td>$28,811</td>
<td>$48,395</td>
<td>$48,917</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>300-599</td>
<td>$31,557</td>
<td>$52,708</td>
<td>$53,225</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600-999</td>
<td>$33,809</td>
<td>$54,729</td>
<td>$55,864</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,000-2,499</td>
<td>$35,912</td>
<td>$58,820</td>
<td>$59,471</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,500-7,499</td>
<td>$38,266</td>
<td>$62,247</td>
<td>$62,828</td>
<td>62.7%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>7,500+</td>
<td>$40,452</td>
<td>$64,915</td>
<td>$65,313</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
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<td>AEA</td>
<td>$36,196</td>
<td>$68,500</td>
<td>$68,607</td>
<td>89.2%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>$36,479</td>
<td>$60,050</td>
<td>$60,656</td>
<td>64.6%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Information and Analysis, Basic Educational Data Survey, Staff files.

Notes: Includes AEA teachers. Teacher figures for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 represent average salaries for full-time public school staff with teaching position codes. There were approximately 6,000 full-time public staff in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 with teaching position codes who also reported that they served in the capacity of administrator (superintendent, principal, etc.) and/or student support personnel (Curriculum Consultant, Teacher Leader, etc.). Average salaries for these staff include salaries for these additional responsibilities.
In 2019-20, Iowa ranked 38 in beginning teacher pay.

https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/understanding-teacher-compensation-state-by-state-analysis
Data was Reported in **Teacher Retention and Recruitment: Shortages in Iowa/Nation, 50-state Comparison of Strategies**, Education Commission of the States. ISFIS created the chart from the ECS tabular data.

Pre-pandemic

10 largest states by population average 36.1% loss in completion (loss of 42,126 teachers)

Midwestern states average 16.6% loss

Percent Change Teacher Prep Completion
2007-08 to 2016-17 by State
Teacher Shortage

- Wage inflation and economic growth have outpaced school funding
- 80% of Iowa School budgets pay for staff
- Shortage is a result of many things, inadequate pay and negative media and political rhetoric about teachers among them. Some concerns about the pandemic or safety, too.
- Iowa school funding is based on enrollment: fewer students and/or low SSA has only two possible outcomes. Increase class size or continued lower pay compared to private sector.

*If private schools expand, they will have to hire teachers from this limited pool.*
Rural Assets

- Everyone shows up/Community
- When collaborative work is required, you get good at it
- Wearing many hats helps you make connections
- Few or no cracks through which to fall
- Quality of life (aided by including much improving internet connections)
- More nimble and able to change with urgency and leadership
Ingredients

• 4 center-cut boneless pork chops
• 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
• 1 large SugarBee® apple, cored, and sliced on the bias
• 1 large red onion, sliced in half, and then on the bias
• 16 ounces Brussels sprouts, sliced in half
• ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
• 1 tablespoon chopped rosemary, plus more

One Skillet Pork Chops, Brussels Sprouts & Sugarbee Apples

By Annessa Chumbley
Prep Time: 30 mins Servings: 4

Directions

1. Heat a large cast-iron skillet to medium high, adding 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Season both sides of the pork chops with kosher salt and ground pepper.
2. Add pork chops to skillet, and let them cook undisturbed to get a good sear, about 2-3 minutes, then flip and cook 2-3 minutes on the other side, until chops are cooked through (the time needed will depend upon the thickness of your pork chops). Remove and set aside to a plate; cover to keep hot.
3. In a large bowl, mix apples, onion, and Brussels sprouts, tossing with the rest of the olive oil, ¾ teaspoon kosher salt, and chopped rosemary. Pour mixture into the skillet and sauté on medium high for 7-9 minutes, until mixture is seared around the edges, and Brussels sprouts are fork-tender.
4. Turn off heat and add pork chops back to skillet, so that each one is surrounded by the Brussels sprout mixture. Sprinkle a little more fresh rosemary over the skillet, and serve!

https://fruitsandveggies.org/recipes/one-skillet-pork-chops-brussels-sprouts-sugarbee-apples/