



## DOGE Report Summary

The governor's [DOGE task force report recommendations](#) were released this week. Many of those recommendations impact K-12 public education. One of the recommendations, changing the IPERS program, has been summarily dismissed by the governor, so we do not anticipate that it will be part of any legislative recommendation. Key House and Senate leaders have also said they have no intention of making any changes to IPERS. Most of the recommendations will require legislative action. The governor will likely include those she thinks are sound recommendations in her state of the state address and legislative agenda for the upcoming legislative session.

### Work-Based Learning and Upskilling Pathways (pg. 28)

#### **Recommendation: Expand apprenticeships, internships and pre-apprenticeships**

Starting career exploration and on-the-job learning by 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade

**Recommendation: Incentivize high schools to grant elective credit for internships or work experience and implement a system to “tag” career-aligned coursework so that employers can easily gauge student skill readiness**

**Recommendation: Fund programs that enable experienced industry workers to teach part-time**

#### **Proposed legislative/administrative action:**

- Fund programs that enable experienced industry workers to teach part-time while keeping their primary jobs.
- Work with licensing boards and accrediting bodies to streamline the pathway for seasoned professionals to become instructors.
- Promote co-location or regional sharing of instructors and subject matter experts among multiple community colleges, K-12 CTE programs and employer training sites.
- Scale up employer-led youth internships and pre-apprenticeships.
- Provide funding for student transportation, liability coverage, and stipends to encourage participation.
- When funding facility or equipment projects, give preference to proposals demonstrating collaboration across multiple colleges, school districts or employee consortia and those expanding reach without duplicating infrastructure.

#### **Measures of success:**

- Percentage of Iowa high school students completing a meaningful WBL experience before graduation.
- Number of registered youth apprentices (under the age of 18) enrolled.

- Number of employers hosting student interns or pre-apprentices.
- Number of students earning certifications through WBL programs.
- Percentage of WBL participants who are either employed in Iowa or enrolled in Iowa postsecondary education within one year of high school graduation.
- Increase in the number of industry-recognized credentials awarded in priority sectors within two years
- Number of regional WBL partnerships established (and active) across Iowa
- Fund programs that enable experienced industry workers to teach part-time while keeping their primary jobs.
- Increase in rural student access to credentialed training programs, measured by enrollment or completion data in rural ZIP codes.

## Improved Education Results (pg. 86)

### **Recommendation: Establish a merit-based compensation framework**

- Bonus structure, PD, incentives for those in high-need schools
- Incentives to recruit and retain high-achieving teachers in high-need schools

### **Recommendation: Develop outcome-based funding and accountability framework**

- Align public investment with measurable improvements in student achievement, STEM proficiency, and workforce readiness
- Create public dashboard to track how dollars are spent (admin vs. classroom expenditures)

### **Recommendation: Expand and incentivize regional shared-service models**

- Streamline admin functions: HR, IT, food service, curriculum planning and procurement
- Modernize school transportation
- Increase share of spending that goes into instruction

### **Proposed legislative/administrative action:**

- Merit-based teacher compensation system
  - Pilot for 2-3 years in a voluntary group of districts to include urban, rural and high-need districts. Fund merit bonuses and stipends
  - Enhance existing TLC framework, integrating TLC roles with new performance tiers. Provide coaching and training aligned with performance evaluations.
- Incentives for top educators to teach in rural or low-income districts, including relocation bonuses or supplemental pay
- Establish sustainable funding for performance pay: creating a dedicated fund or adjusting the school aid formula
- Set statewide outcome targets and accountability measures
  - Funding for early literacy and math programs
  - Prioritize resources for districts not meeting proficiency benchmarks
- Competitive grants for STEM and AI-driven learning
- Performance-based incentives for districts showing significant gains
- Statewide dashboard to track education spending and results

- DE to establish voluntary, regional shared-service centers for HR, IT support, and procurement services
- Provide standard legal and operational frameworks for sharing agreements
- Encourage innovative models
- Regional teaching positions in specialized areas
- Joint transportation services; AI route optimization; share bus fleets; bus electrification
- Aim for 70-30 spending ratio between instruction and administration

#### **Measures of success:**

- Improved retention (target of 90%) and distribution of top-rated teachers
- Improved student outcomes in pilot districts: 5% increase in proficiency in core subjects within 3 years of implementation
- 25% of districts opting in to performance pay pilot within 3 years and at least 50% of teachers in the pilot districts pursuing advanced designations or participating in evaluation-based leadership roles
- Improved cost-effectiveness measures: cost per additional proficient student, cost per retained high-performing teacher
- At least 80% of teachers agreeing by the third year that evaluations are rigorous and bonuses awarded fairly
- 15% increase in students proficient in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading by 2030
- 10% increase in students proficient in 8<sup>th</sup> grade math by 2030
- Top 15 in NAEP scores for reading and math
- All Iowa high school students completing a work-based learning experience by 2030
- Double the number of high school students earning an industry-recognized credential by 2030
- Every district piloting an AI-powered or personalized learning platform by 2027 and achieving at least 15% proficiency gains
- More districts with an instructional spending ratio above the statewide median
- 1/3 of districts participating in shared service agreements by 2027
- Target an average instruction to administration expenditure ratio of 10:1 by 2027
- At least \$10 million in statewide savings by 2028
- 10% decrease in cost per graduate in smaller and rural districts
- Increased advanced academic offerings through shared instructors: college prep and CTE courses
- Majority of shared services agreements drafted using state templates; 85% satisfaction with the ease, quality and cost-effectiveness

### **Modernized Public Workforce Attraction, Retention and Development (pg. 104)**

**Recommendation: Commission a regular compensation and benefits study to benchmark and optimize the total rewards package for public sector employees.**

**Proposed legislative/administrative action:**

- Regularly conduct a comprehensive compensation/benefits study and use it to benchmark Iowa's public-sector total compensation (i.e., salary plus all benefits) against private-sector and peer government standards.
- Preserve all pension and benefit commitments made to existing employees. Any new defined-contribution retirement option should be strictly voluntary for current staff and structured to protect the solvency of the traditional pension system.

**Measures of success:**

- Track the ratio of public-sector total compensation (salary plus benefits) to comparable private-sector compensation over time.

## Maximize Operational Efficiencies (pg. 119)

**Recommendation: Establish an online portal for public entities to post required notices**

- Hosted by the Secretary of State's office
- Searchable by city, county, school district and allow for people to sign up for notifications
- Public entities pay a flat fee per costing
- Public entities required to post physical copies at their office

**Recommendation: Searchable portal for Iowa Cooperative Purchasing Program**

- Allows school districts to participate in state-negotiated contracts
- Eliminates duplicate bidding processes

**Proposed legislative/administrative action:**

- Establish statewide electronic notices portal and phase out newspaper publication of notices

**Measures of success:**

- 100% of state and local governments posting public notices to new online portal within 6 months
- Master contracts portal deployed by the end of 2026; at least 65% of eligible cities, counties and school districts make purchases through the portal