

2015 Annual Report



iowacollaboration
for**youth**development

State of Iowa
February 2, 2015



Governor Terry E. Branstad
Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds
San Wong, Director

TO: Governor Terry Branstad and
Members of the General Assembly

FROM: San Wong, Chair
Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development Council

Date: January 30, 2015

The Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD) Council respectfully submits its Annual Report, as required by Iowa Code Section 216A.140.

The ICYD Council is committed to providing the Legislature and Governor with information, data, and recommendations to improve the lives and futures of Iowa's youth by continuing to:

- coordinate youth policy and programs across state agencies;
- increase the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of opportunities and services for youth;
- support, adopt and apply positive youth development practices at the state and local level.

The 2015 Annual Report includes our primary issue and goal, data that demonstrates the state's current position, activities and accomplishments in the area of youth development completed by the ICYD Council in 2014; emerging activities being implemented in 2015; and recommended actions that will help Iowa achieve the ICYD goal – *Increasing Iowa's Graduation Rate to 95% by 2020*. With the understanding that several issues (e.g. substance abuse, family, employment, teen pregnancy, and mental health) prevent many youth from graduating from high school, the ICYD Council agencies address these issues as individual agencies and work together as a team by making the best use of existing resources to maximize efficiency in state government in order to create substantial and lasting positive changes for Iowa's youth.

The ICYD Council continues to leverage grant funding and in-kind staff support to implement many of the recommended actions without increased funding. However, as the state continues to invest in Iowa's youth, ICYD has identified prioritized actions where that investment may be directed to maximize positive outcomes. These include sustaining the use of the Iowa Youth Survey every two years, funding for youth to participate in state-level initiatives, and a shift in staff time to consolidate multiple advisory groups into the existing infrastructure of the ICYD Council. In addition, as pilot projects are completed (currently funded with grants), there will be a need to incorporate effective programs into current agency structures that facilitate expansion to other areas in the state.

We look forward to working with the Governor's Office and the Legislature to increase the graduation rate. The ICYD Council will continue to keep you informed of the progress made toward that goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "San Wong".

San Wong, Chair
Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development Council

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February 2015

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Adam Lounsbury, Executive Director, Commission on Volunteer Service
Steven Lukan, Director, Office of Drug Control Policy
Gary Niles, Chief Juvenile Court Officer, 3rd Judicial District
Chuck Palmer, Director, Department of Human Services
Kathy Stone, Department of Public Health
Keli Tallman, ISU Extension and Outreach 4-H Youth Development
Beth Townsend, Director, Iowa Workforce Development
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Acknowledgments

The ICYD Council thanks all of the staff who contributed to producing this report. A special acknowledgment is extended to the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC), who made important contributions in sharing their thoughts, ideas, expertise, and youth voice with us.

Special Thanks

Cyndy Erickson has been a leader as part of the ICYD Council for many years, and is responsible for orchestrating much of the collaborative work necessary to achieve the successes of the ICYD Council. Cyndy retired from the Department of Education in January 2015. Her wisdom, knowledge, and collaborative nature will be missed by all of us. We wish her a wonderful retirement.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – ICYD COUNCIL 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

The Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD) Council members are leaders of 11 state agencies with the vision that **“All Iowa youth will be safe, healthy, successful, and prepared for adulthood.”** The ICYD Council oversees the activities of the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC) and has sought input from these youth leaders in the development of more effective policies, practices, programs, and this Annual Report. SIYAC consists of youth between 14 –21 years of age who reside in Iowa, with the purpose to foster communication with the governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers regarding programs, policies, and practices affecting youth and families; and to advocate for youth on important issues affecting youth. In 2009, legislation passed formalizing the ICYD Council and SIYAC in Iowa Code Section 216A.140.

The ICYD Council has prioritized the following youth issue: **By 2020, Iowa will increase the graduation rate from 89% to 95%.** Several issues (e.g. substance abuse, family, employment, teen pregnancy, and mental health) prevent youth from graduating from high school and the ICYD Council agencies work to address these issues as individual agencies and together as a team to maximize efficiency in state government and make the best use of existing resources. According to the Department of Education’s *State Report Card 2014* the 2012 four-year graduation rate for all students was 89.3%; in 2013 it increased to 89.7%. The five-year fixed cohort graduation rate in 2011 was 91.4%; in 2012 it increased to 92.1%.

ICYD Council has several emerging activities in 2015:

- Full implementation of the Juvenile Justice Reform Project (JJRP), which is assessing the effectiveness of juvenile justice programs and determine the cost-benefit of the programs. The overall goal of the project is to reduce recidivism of juvenile offenders by ensuring that the right services are provided to the right youth at the right time.
- Development of the Juvenile Reentry System Strategic Plan and submitting a proposal for reentry implementation to the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Prepare a Performance Partnership Pilot (P3) proposal that will allow flexibility and blending of federal funds, waiver of federal requirements, and development of innovative strategies to improve outcomes for “disconnected youth”.
- Provide the core membership to new youth-serving advisory groups, which will allow state agencies to utilize the ICYD Council infrastructure to serve as the coordinating body for the required respective advisory groups; and to consolidate multiple advisory groups into the existing ICYD Council.

The ICYD Council seeks the support from the Iowa Legislature and Governor’s Office to continue these activities by modifying laws and policies, as necessary, and providing resources needed to achieve this very ambitious goal. Specific recommendations to support the work of ICYD Council are to:

- Provide resources to continue and expand evidence-based practices and programs, as they are developed and identified, such as:
 - Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment Initiative (JJRRI), which is near the end of the 3-year federal demonstration project period;
 - Promoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience (PROSPER).
- Support the ICYD Council in identifying new and better ways to provide services and supports to Iowa's youth by encouraging the development of innovative strategies and initiatives:
 - Performance Partnership Pilots (P3);
 - Juvenile Reentry System Planning.
- Support the ICYD Council's approach to consolidate multiple advisory groups into the existing infrastructure of the ICYD Council. The model will result in a reduction of duplication, enhanced coordination and collaboration between state agencies, and a reduction in costs.
- Support the Iowa Youth Survey. The survey is administered every two years to 6th, 8th, and 11th graders. The results are valuable to state agencies and communities in assessing self-reported youth behaviors and perceptions.
- Provide resources to support state-level youth opportunities and youth-led initiatives (e.g. State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council, Iowa Youth Congress, Achieving Maximum Potential).
- Engage youth on state boards and commissions, and provide the training and support necessary for youth members to be active participants. In addition, state agencies should seek new and creative ways to involve youth.
- Continue to develop ways to share information among agencies and coordinating bodies to address issues affecting youth who receive services and supports from multiple agencies.
- Support the continued use of state agency staff time to implement activities that meet the goals of the ICYD Council.
- Infuse positive youth development (PYD) principles in all youth programming, which includes PYD trainings for youth workers and establishing policies to include PYD principles in all state-funded youth initiatives.

I. OVERVIEW OF THE ICYD COUNCIL AND THE STATE OF IOWA YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL (SIYAC)

This is the annual report from the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD) Council to the Governor and General Assembly. The report will provide information on the:

- Purpose, goals, 2014 accomplishments, and emerging activities for 2015,
- Membership of the ICYD Council and the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC);
- Progress on achieving the priority youth issue – ***Increasing Iowa’s graduation rate to 95% by 2020***, with data and information on the progress; and
- Recommendations for action in 2015 to the Governor and General Assembly.

In 2009, legislation passed placing the ICYD Council and SIYAC in Iowa Code Section 216A.140. Prior to becoming “formal” councils, both ICYD and SIYAC operated as non-statutory entities. The ICYD began in 1999 as an informal network of state agencies from 10 departments serving as a forum to foster improvement in and coordination of state and local youth policy and programs.

The ICYD Council meets quarterly to receive reports from state agencies and SIYAC, review progress of current activities, review data, and establish priorities and recommended actions on many issues affecting youth. The prioritized issue – ***Increasing Iowa’s Graduation Rate to 95% by 2020*** – was selected due to its high visibility and as a summative measure of youth development efforts, and the many cross-agency issues that contribute to youth graduating from high school. Each of the agencies represented on the ICYD Council has a role in achieving this goal.

ICYD has historically participated in a variety of state and national youth initiatives and has been recognized nationally (e.g. National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association, federal Interagency Working Group for Youth Programs, Forum for Youth Investment, and Children’s Cabinet Network) for its work in coordinating youth development efforts. The ICYD Council provides a venue to enhance information and data sharing, develop strategies across state agencies, and present prioritized recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly that will improve the lives and futures of Iowa youth.

The Department of Human Rights is the lead agency and oversees activities for the ICYD Council.

ICYD Council’s Purpose

The ICYD Council’s vision statement, as stated in the Iowa Code is:

“All Iowa youth will be safe, healthy, successful, and prepared for adulthood.”

The purpose of the ICYD Council is to improve the lives and futures of Iowa’s youth by:

- Adopting and applying positive youth development principles and practices at the state and local levels;

- Increasing the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of opportunities and services and other supports for youth;
- Improving and coordinating state youth policy and programs across state agencies.

ICYD Council’s Membership

The ICYD Council’s membership is the director or chief administrator (or their designee) of 11 state agencies. The ICYD Council has the ability to expand membership to include others that will assist the Council in achieving its purpose. In 2012, a representative of the Judicial Branch was added to the membership – Gary Niles, chief juvenile court officer of the 3rd Judicial District. In addition to each agency’s director (or designee) serving on the ICYD Council, many of the agencies have additional staff that actively participate in meetings and complete tasks as directed by the ICYD Council on the ICYD Results Team. Below are the agencies and members of the ICYD Council:

ICYD COUNCIL MEMBERS – February 2015

<p>Department of Human Rights Steve Michael, Division Administrator Chair of ICYD Council</p>	<p>Early Childhood Iowa Shanell Wagler, Facilitator</p>
<p>Child Advocacy Board Jim Hennessey, Administrator</p>	<p>Iowa Workforce Development Beth Townsend, Director *Michaela Malloy-Rotert, Executive Officer – Workforce Investment Act</p>
<p>Commission on Volunteer Service Adam Lounsbury, Executive Director *Mary Sheka</p>	<p>ISU Extension and Outreach, 4-H Youth Development Keli Tallman, Youth Development Program Specialist</p>
<p>Department of Education Brad Buck, Director</p>	<p>Judicial Branch Gary Niles, Chief Juvenile Court Officer 3rd Judicial District</p>
<p>Department of Human Services Chuck Palmer, Director *Wendy Rickman, Administrator - Division of Adult, Children, and Family Services</p>	<p>Office of Drug Control Policy Steven Lukan, Director</p>
<p>Department of Public Health Kathy Stone, Administrator, Division of Behavioral Health</p>	

*Agency Designee when member is unable to participate

State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council's (SIYAC) Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of SIYAC, as stated in Iowa Code, Section 216A.140, is to “foster communication among a group of engaged youth and the governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers regarding programs, policies, and practices affecting youth and families; and to advocate for youth on important issues affecting youth.”

The mission statement of SIYAC is: ***“To raise awareness of issues that affect young Iowans by providing civic opportunity and to inspire youth to create a better future for Iowa.”***

SIYAC was established in 2001, and formalized in 2009 in Iowa Code, as a vehicle for youth to inform state leaders on issues important to young people. SIYAC consists of 21 youth between 14 –21 years of age who reside in Iowa. The ICYD Council oversees the activities of SIYAC and seeks input from these youth leaders in the development of more effective policies, practices, programs.

SIYAC meets at least quarterly to identify issues affecting youth, discuss community needs, form partnerships to meet those needs, draft positions on youth issues, communicate those positions with legislators, and plan and conduct service activities. In addition, SIYAC members participate in ICYD Council meetings.

Each year, SIYAC presents independent information and recommendations on youth issues, as well as other pertinent issues affecting the state’s young people, to the General Assembly and Governor’s Office during the legislative session. In addition to addressing youth issues with the legislature, SIYAC members also carry out service projects in their respective communities and statewide.

SIYAC members serve two-year terms that begin in July of each year. In 2014 SIYAC focused on three issues: Education, Health & Wellness, and Mental Health. In addition, as other youth issues arose during the legislative session, SIYAC researched the issues and chose to take positions on a number of them.

Notable SIYAC accomplishments during 2014:

- Partnered with Iowa Youth Congress (IYC) and Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP) and supported IYC’s cyber-bullying legislation, and AMP’s legislative agenda.
- Partnered with Team Nutrition to support Team Nutrition’s Breakfast Campaign.
- Partnered with Community! Youth Concepts to organize sock drives in communities.
- Participated in Governor Branstad’s 2nd Teacher and Principal Leadership Symposium.
- Presented two workshops at the 2014 Iowa School Wellness Forum.
- Partnered with World Youth Leadership Academy (WYLA) to serve community breakfasts at Creative Visions.

- Initiated partnership with Iowa Department of Public Health to create a public service announcement targeting the dangerous effects of teen drinking and drug use.
- Conducted youth outreach in communities, facilitated statewide service projects, and completed presentations in schools.

In addition, the following members accomplished individual achievements and received notable recognition:

- Mary Korch and Jacob Bundt participated in a student panel at Governor Branstad's 2nd Teacher and Principal Leadership Symposium.
- Mary Korch was admitted to the 2014 NRA Youth Education Summit in Washington, D.C.
- Agatha Fenech was named the National Child Awareness Month Ambassador for Iowa and received a \$1,000 grant from Youth Service America to fund a community service project.
- Luke Theuma, SIYAC Vice Chair (2013-14), is attending American University in Washington D.C.
- Sally Ropes and Isabelle Pierotti are serving as Senate Pages during the 2015 Legislative Session.

During the 2014-2015 year, SIYAC is working to strengthen partnerships with other youth-led councils, including the IYC and AMP. By involving more youth in discussions of youth issues, SIYAC will be able to more fully represent Iowa's youth. In addition, SIYAC is continuing the partnership with *Your Life Iowa*.

The 2014-15 SIYAC committees and planned activities are:

- Education Committee:
 - Continuing the partnership between SIYAC and Reach Out and Read Iowa to improve Reading abilities in Iowa's youth and expanding parents' knowledge in the importance of reading.
 - Establish a strong partnership with the Campaign for Grade Level Reading to help young Iowans achieve reading proficiency by the end of third grade.
 - Examining AMP's legislative agenda and its universal implications for youth outside of foster care.
 - Identifying key stakeholders for the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act and student evaluation reform.
- Health Committee:
 - Promoting healthy lifestyle choices among Iowa's young people.
 - Creating a public service announcement targeting the dangerous effects of teen drinking and drug use.
 - Gaining support for tanning prevention legislation that will prohibit teens under the age of 18 from using tanning beds for risk of enduring serious health problems.

- Facilitate a school service project that will spread awareness of the risks of tanning beds.
- Marketing SIYAC as “Youth Experts” to Iowa Legislators and informing them of SIYAC’s goals for the 2014-15 year.
- Human Rights Committee:
 - Develop strategies to gain support for the following issues:
 - Suicide prevention
 - Human trafficking
 - Conversion therapy
 - Cyberbullying
 - Raising awareness on *Your Life Iowa*’s program by promoting its efforts to local organizations and schools.
 - Participating in suicide prevention awareness training and summits.
 - Initiating community service projects.
 - Understanding the impact of bullying behaviors and raising awareness among youth and relevant stakeholders.
 - Partnering with IYC supporting sexual assault prevention legislation.

2014-2015 SIYAC Members:

Name	Office Held	City	County
Harshini Abbaraju		Johnston	Polk
Nicholas Beckwith		Clinton	Clinton
Jacob Bundt		Churdan	Greene
Anne Edwards		Dubuque	Dubuque
Agatha Fenech	<i>Vice Executive Chairperson</i>	Cedar Falls	Black Hawk
T.J. Foley	<i>Legislative Affairs Chair</i>	Clive	Polk
Amiah Gooding		Davenport	Scott
Pablo Haake	<i>Chairperson Emeritus</i>	Davenport	Scott
Rekha Karuparth	<i>Secretary</i>	Bettendorf	Scott
Priya Khanolkar		Keokuk	Lee
Mary Korch	<i>Service Chair</i>	Cedar Rapids	Linn
Xiao Liu	<i>Health Committee Chair</i>	Johnston	Polk
Ethan Lowder		Cedar Rapids	Linn
Katie Melbourne		Bettendorf	Scott
Sruthi Palaniappan		Cedar Rapids	Linn
Isabelle Pierotti		Cumming	Polk
Aditi Rao		Cedar Falls	Black Hawk
Danielle Reyes		Clive	Polk
Sally Ropes	<i>Education Committee Chair</i>	Pella	Marion
Cody Woodruff	<i>Executive Chairperson</i>	Carlisle	Warren
Nina Yu		Hiawatha	Linn

II. PRIORITIZED ISSUE: INCREASING IOWA'S GRADUATION RATE

Good is the enemy of great. And that is one of the reasons that we have so little that becomes great. We don't have great schools, principally because we have good schools.
 -Jim Collins in *Good to Great* (2001)

During the time the ICYD Council was an informal network there were many positive things accomplished, including:

- Promoting youth development and community planning on youth issues in communities;
- Providing resources and assistance addressing the needs of youth transitioning to adulthood;
- Creating a results framework for Iowa youth; and
- Providing technical assistance and training on quality youth development practices.

The ICYD Council members have agreed that the focal point for collaborative efforts be a specific and aggressive goal for the state. The ICYD Council has prioritized two of the Youth Development Result Areas: *All Iowa youth are successful in school; and all youth are prepared for a productive adulthood.* Graduation and dropout rates are both included as measures, or indicators, for these result areas. The ICYD Council agreed on the following goal in the first Annual Report, dated February 1, 2010:

By 2020 Iowa will increase the graduation rate from 89% to 95%. If the cohort enrollment remains approximately 39,000 students, about 2,000 additional youth will graduate each year.

In addition to this overarching goal, an intermediate goal is: *By 2015, Iowa will decrease the number of annual dropouts by 25%, or 1,100 youth.*

It is with the understanding that several issues (e.g. substance abuse, family, employment, teen pregnancy, and mental health) prevent many youth from graduating from high school, that the ICYD Council agencies work to address these issues as individual agencies and together as a team to maximize efficiency in state government, make the best use of existing resources, and create substantial and lasting positive changes for Iowa's youth.

The below measures are critical in monitoring progress for all Iowa youth towards the graduation goal:

1. The number of students at each high school grade level who are on the trajectory to graduate on time.
2. The gaps for graduation and dropout rates for subpopulations (i.e. race, ethnicity, second language learners, low socioeconomic, and students with disabilities).

Economic Impact of the Graduation Rate on Iowa's Economy

Iowans can take pride in having one of the highest graduation rates in the nation. The overall graduation rate in 2012 was 89.3%. While Iowa's dropout rate of 2.18% is also low in comparison with other states, the loss of 4,733 students from the graduating class of 2012 damages Iowa's economy. The "costs" of dropping out include decreased personal income and revenues, increased unemployment and welfare burden, and increased risk of incarceration and poor health outcomes. These "costs" affect all of the ICYD partnering state agencies.

A closer look at graduation and dropout rates in Iowa reveals that there are **significant gaps for students enrolled in urban districts, minority students, and students with disabilities**. In order to compete nationally and globally and to overcome current economic challenges, all students in Iowa need to graduate prepared for college, work, and life. What will it take to move Iowa from good to great in graduating Iowa students?

Graduation for "some" is not acceptable in Iowa.

The graduation rate has significant implications for Iowa's economy. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education:

- More than \$336 million would be added to Iowa's economy by 2020 if students of color graduated at the same rate as white students
- Iowa would save more than \$84.4 million in health care costs over the course of the lifetimes of each class of dropouts had they earned their diplomas.
- Iowa's economy would see a combination of savings and revenue of about \$44 million in reduced crime spending and increased earnings each year if the male high school graduation rate increased by just five percent.

Graduation and Dropout Data

The information and data on the graduation and dropout rates are from the Department of Education's *Condition of Education Report 2014*.

Iowa's 2012 and 2013 graduating classes had statewide identification numbers for five years or longer. With this identification system and SRI data, Iowa can follow the same group of students over several years and implement the first-time freshman cohort rates (students who repeated their freshmen year were not included in the cohort). The four-year fixed cohort graduation rate is calculated for the class of 2013 (or class of 2012) by dividing the number of students in the cohort (denominator) who graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years or less by the number of first-time 9th graders enrolled in the fall of 2009 (or first-time 9th graders enrolled in the fall of 2008 for class of 2012) minus the number of students who transferred out plus the total number of students who transferred in.

Iowa Four-Year Fixed Cohort Graduation Rate = $(FG + TIG) / (F + TI - TO)$ for the graduating class of 2013.

- FG = First-time 9th grade students in fall of 2009 and graduated in 2013 or earlier
- TIG = Students who transferred in grades 9 to 12 and graduated in 2013 or sooner
- F = First-time 9th grade students in fall of 2009
- TI = Transferred in the first-time 9th graders' cohort in grades 9 to 12
- TO = Transfer out (including emigrates and deceased)

For the graduating class of 2012:

- FG = First-time 9th grade students in fall of 2008 and graduated in 2012 or earlier
- TIG = Students who transferred in grades 9 to 12 and graduated in 2012 or sooner
- F = First-time 9th grade students in fall of 2008

First-time freshmen and transferred-in students include: resident students attending a public school in the district; non-resident students open-enrolled in, whole-grade sharing in, or tuition in; and foreign students on Visa. Those excluded are: home-schooled and nonpublic schooled students; public school student enrolled in another district but taking courses part time; and foreign exchange students. Students receiving regular diplomas are included as graduates in the numerator. Early graduates are included to the original cohort. All students who take longer to graduate (including students with IEPs) are included in the denominator but not in the numerator for the four-year rate.

The five-year cohort graduation rate is calculated using a similar methodology as the four-year cohort rate. This rate is calculated by dividing the number of students in the cohort (denominator) who graduate with a regular high school diploma in five years or less (by the 2011-2012 school year) by the number of first-time 9th graders enrolled in the fall of 2008 minus the number of students who transferred out plus the total number of students who transferred in. The five-year cohort rate will maintain the same denominator as the previous year's four-year cohort rate, simply adding students who graduate in the fifth year to the numerator.

Table 1 displays the four-year fixed cohort graduation rates for graduating classes of 2012 and 2013. The rates listed are for all students and 13 subgroups. In gender comparison, females had higher graduation rates than males on average. Among the ethnic/race subgroups, White and Asian students had higher graduation rates than other race groups; the students who were eligible for free or reduced price lunch, IEP, and English Language Learners (ELL) had graduation rates lower than the "all students" group on average.

Table 1

Iowa Public High School Four-Year Fixed Cohort Graduation Rate by Subgroup						
	Class of 2012			Class of 2013		
	Numerator	Denominator	Graduation Rate	Numerator	Denominator	Graduation Rate
All Students	30,367	34,019	89.3%	29,977	33,426	89.7%
African American	1,042	1,406	74.1	1,060	1,436	73.8
American Indian	104	143	72.7	134	161	83.2
Asian	533	593	89.9	616	676	91.1
Hispanic	1,720	2,220	77.5	1,885	2,371	79.5
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	30	39	76.9	27	40	67.5
Two or More	519	615	84.4	573	675	84.9
White	26,419	29,003	91.1	25,682	28,067	91.5
Disability*	3,387	4,659	72.7	3,284	4,515	72.7
ELL**	765	1,035	73.9	824	1,088	75.7
Low SES***	9,801	12,293	79.7	10,230	12,721	80.4
Migrant+	38	56	67.9	48	63	76.2
Female+	15,335	16,773	91.4	15,054	16,398	91.8
Male+	15,032	17,246	87.2	14,923	17,028	87.6

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Information and Analysis, SRI files.

Notes: *Disability status is determined by the presence of an individualized education program (IEP).

**ELL indicates English Language learner.

***Low SES is determined by the eligibility for free or reduced prices meals.

+ Not required for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) report.

- Data are not available.

The five-year fixed cohort graduation rates for the graduating class of 2011 and 2012 are displayed in Table 2. The graduation rates are higher than the four-year fixed cohort for all students and for all reported subgroups. The 2012 graduation rates are higher than the 2011 graduation rates in all subgroups, except American Indian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Migrant. The overall graduation rate in 2012 is 92.1%. Four of the subgroups exceeded 90% - Asian, White, Female, and Male. Three of the subgroups, African American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Migrant, had graduation rates below 80%, all other subgroups are over 80%.

Table 2

Iowa Public High School Five-Year Fixed Cohort Graduation Rate

by Subgroup for the Graduation Classes of 2011 and 2012

	Class of 2011			Class of 2012		
	Numerator	Denominator	Graduation Rate	Numerator	Denominator	Graduation Rate
All Students	32,624	35,676	91.4%	31,348	34,019	92.1%
African American	1,223	1,543	79.3%	1,119	1,406	79.6
American Indian	127	154	82.5%	115	143	80.4
Asian	577	627	92.0%	554	593	93.4
Hispanic	1,800	2,186	82.3%	1,856	2,220	83.6
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	33	38	86.8%	31	39	79.5
Two or More Races	463	538	86.1%	541	615	88.0
White	28,401	30,590	92.8%	27,132	29,003	93.5
Disability*	4,273	5,296	80.7%	3,837	4,659	82.4
ELL**	800	999	80.1%	858	1,035	82.9
Low SES***	10,575	12,646	83.6%	10,429	12,293	84.8
Migrant+	133	166	80.1%	41	56	73.2
Female+	16,203	17,417	93.0%	15,720	16,773	93.7
Male+	16,421	18,259	89.9%	15,628	17,246	90.6

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Information and Analysis, SRI files.

Notes: *Disability status is determined by the presence of an individualized education program (IEP).

**ELL indicates English Language learner. - Data are not available.

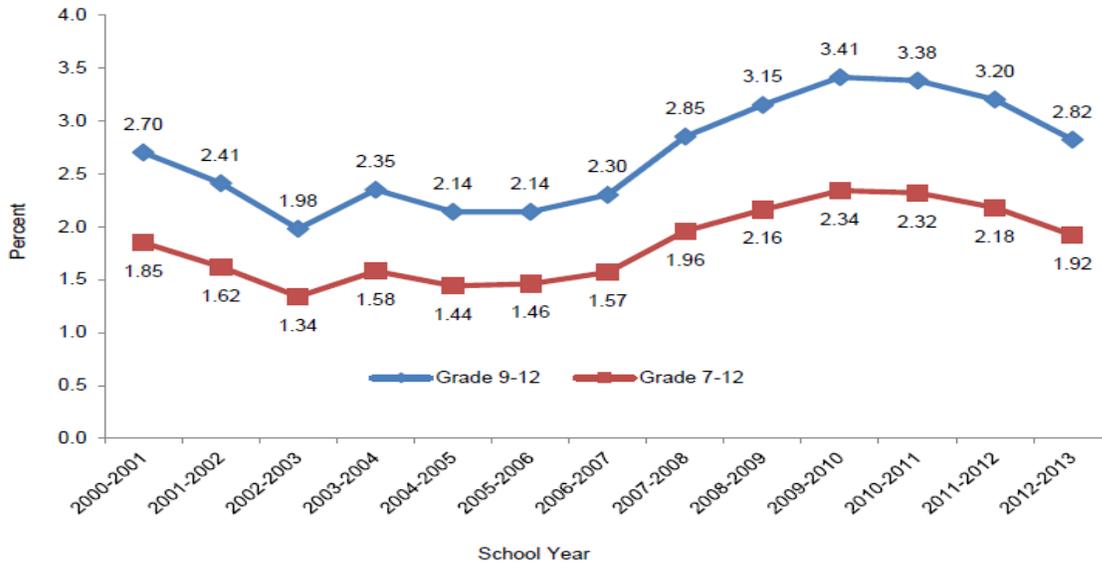
***Low SES is determined by the eligibility for free or reduced prices meals.

+ Not required for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) report.

Figure 1 (below) shows two statewide trends for dropout rates. The lower line is for grades 7-12 and the upper line is for grades 9-12 dropout rates of Iowa public schools. The trends have been upward since 2007-08, until the 2012-13 school year, which show a slight decrease in the dropout rates for both groups.

Figure 1

Iowa Public School Grades 7-12 and Grades 9-12 Dropout Rates 2000-2001 to 2012-2013



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

Table 3 (below) shows the public school grade 7-12 dropout and enrollment data by race/ethnicity for 2012-2013. With the exception of the Asian group, the dropout rates were higher for minority groups than for the non-minority.

Table 3

2012-13 Iowa Public School Grades 7-12 Dropout and Enrollments by Race/ Ethnicity

Race/Ethnic Group	Dropout Rate	Total Dropouts	% of Total Dropouts	Total Enrollment	% of Total Enrollment
All Minority	3.53%	1,419	34.05%	40,176	18.50%
African American	4.65%	511	12.26%	10,979	5.05%
American Indian	4.60%	46	1.10%	1,001	.46%
Asian	1.38%	64	1.54%	4,633	2.13%
Hispanic	3.47%	625	15.00%	18,012	8.29%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	3.95%	13	.31%	329	.15%
Two or More	3.06%	160	3.84%	5,222	2.4%
White	1.55%	2,748	65.95%	177,039	81.50%
State	1.92%	4,167	100.00%	217,215	100.00%

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Information and Analysis, SRI files.

Barriers to Learning

The reasons that students drop out of school or do not graduate on time are many and varied. Some students have negative experiences at school while other students have responsibilities that compete with school such as helping to support their families. There are also multiple reasons why students leave school. Contributing circumstances are in place long before the actual event of “dropping out.”

Dropping out of school is a process that can begin very early in a child’s life. An example of this would be a child with behavioral challenges in an early childhood program who may experience challenges as he or she enters school and begins to fall behind both academically and socially. Children who do not acquire the necessary reading skills at the elementary level will continue to “learn to read” as they enter middle school while their peers are “reading to learn.” Students who do not feel accepted by peers in the early years will become socially isolated and by the time they reach high school, will not feel competent or connected and may give up on academics, connect to peers with similar problems, and eventually drop out.

Reasons for dropping out of school can be described as “push” and “pull” effects. Push effects occur within the school such as not liking school, the inability to get along with teachers and/or students, frequent suspensions, not feeling safe at or connected to school or peers, falling behind with school work, and failing grades. Pull effects come from the external environment and include things like needing to work, having a child, being influenced by peers who have dropped out, and needing to care for family members.

Data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 found that school-related push effects were the most frequently reported reasons for dropping out. The High School and Beyond longitudinal study included interviews with nearly 2,000 students who had dropped out of school. When asked for their reasons for leaving school, 10% or more of those interviewed identified these reasons:

- Did not like school (33%)
- Poor grades (33%)
- Were offered a job and chose to work (19%)
- Getting married (18%)
- Could not get along with teachers (15%)
- Had to help support family (11%)
- Pregnancy (11%)
- Expelled or suspended (10%)

The Silent Epidemic report further supports the above findings:

- Nearly 70 percent of dropouts said they were not motivated to work hard, and two-thirds would have worked harder if more had been demanded of them.
- Approximately one-third left for personal reasons and one-third cited “failing in school” as a major factor.

By looking beyond these “symptoms” of dropping out and by identifying the root causes, a comprehensive system of integrated quality supports can be developed that will keep students in school until graduation and prepare them for success after

high school. Through the work of this Council and the singular focus of increasing the graduation rate, agency members will make their respective contributions go further toward developing a healthy, competent workforce for Iowa's future.

III. ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2014 AND EMERGING ACTIVITIES IN 2015

The ICYD Council's activities have been guided by the following "Recommended Actions":

- Focus on underperforming schools and communities.
- Assess current state initiatives and maximize existing resources.
- Investigate research-based approaches and effective strategies.
- Coordinate across systems to identify and support vulnerable students.
- Engage additional stakeholders.

Based on the graduation and dropout data, the ICYD Council recognizes that minority youth, migrant youth, youth in poverty, and youth with disabilities are in need of additional and specific supports and services. Engaging these youth and removing barriers so these students are able to stay in school and graduate from high school will be required to reach the goal of 95% graduation rate. Below are ICYD Council accomplishments and emerging ongoing activities that address the broad recommended actions.

A. Focus on Underperforming Schools and Communities

IOWA SAFE and SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS (IS³)

The Department of Education continues to lead IS³ in the implementation of the 21 high schools' approved plans and programmatic strategies to improve conditions for learning. The 21 high schools (HS) and middle schools (MS) selected to receive IS³ funding for this multi-year project are:

North Union HS	Louisa-Muscatine HS
Burlington HS	Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn HS
Columbus HS	Oelwein HS
Council Bluffs Abraham Lincoln HS	Anamosa HS
Davenport Central HS	Ottumwa HS
Des Moines East HS	Sioux City, North and West HS
Dubuque Senior HS	Waterloo, East and West HS
Greene County HS	West Sioux HS
Iowa Valley Junior High (JH) and HS	Winfield-Mt. Union JH and HS
Keokuk HS	

During 2014, in addition to each high school successfully establishing a youth-driven leadership team, the activities and strategies implemented by the IS³ schools include:

- 40 Developmental Assets
- Capturing Kids Hearts (Character Development)
- Character Development and Leadership Curriculum

- Check and Connect – A model of sustained intervention for promoting students’ engagement with school and learning.
- Continuous Improvement Process for Conditions for Learning
- Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) Training
- Gradual Release of Responsibility
- Olweus Bullying Prevention
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Service Learning
- Teaching Tolerance

In addition to implementing these strategies, the IS³ schools participated in workshops and trainings, along with ongoing technical assistance provided by the local Area Education Agency (AEA) learning support and data consultants and ISU Extension and Outreach – 4H Youth Development. The training and technical assistance included:

- Keeping Kids in the Classroom: Student Engagement and Discipline,
- Using Data to Improve Adult-Student Relationships,
- Youth Adult Partnerships,
- Using Data in Youth Leadership Teams,
- Bullying/Harassment Investigator Training,
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports,
- Olweus Bullying Prevention, and
- Sustainability.

The initial results reported in the most recent performance report are found in Table 4 and summarized below.

Table 4
IS³ School Results Since Beginning the Grant (2011-2014).

<u>School</u>	<u>30-Day Alcohol Use</u>	<u>Bullying/ Harassment at School</u>	<u>IS³ Index</u>	<u>S/E for Fighting or Violence w/o Injury</u>	<u>Number of Improved Measures</u>	<u>Percent of Improved Measures</u>
1	*	*	Increase	Decrease	2/2	100%
2	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Increase	3/4	75%
3	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Increase	3/4	75%
4	Decrease	Increase	Increase	Decrease	3/4	75%
5	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Increase	3/4	75%
6	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Decrease	4/4	100%
7	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Increase	3/4	75%
8	*	*	Increase	Decrease	2/2	100%
9	Decrease	Increase	Increase	Decrease	3/4	75%
10	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Decrease	4/4	100%
11	Decrease	Decrease	Same	Increase	2/4	50%
12	*	*	Increase	Decrease	2/2	100%
13	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Decrease	4/4	100%
14	*	*	Same	Increase	0/2	0%

15	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Increase	3/4	75%
16	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Decrease	4/4	100%
17	Decrease	Increase	Increase	Increase	2/4	50%
18	*	*	Increase	Decrease	2/2	100%
19	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Increase	3/4	75%
20	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Same	3/4	75%
21	Decrease	Decrease	Increase	Decrease	4/4	100%

* In 2011, schools were to have 50% of students take the survey that contained these items (the other 50% took a different survey). Due to low participation rates, schools with less than 25% of the student body represented in the data for these items noted above were excluded from calculations.

- 16 out of 21 schools (76%) experienced a decrease in the percentage of students who reported current (30 day) alcohol use since beginning the grant (2014 vs. 2011).
- 13 out of 21 schools (62%) experienced a decrease in the percentage of students who reported personal harassment or bullying on school property since beginning the grant (2014 vs. 2011).
- 19 out of 21 schools (90%) experienced an improvement on their overall Safe and Supportive Schools Index since beginning the grant (2013 vs. 2011). The Index measures School Safety, Student Engagement and the overall Learning Environment.
- 10 out of 21 schools (48%) experienced a decrease in the number of suspensions for fighting or violence without physical injury since beginning the grant (2014 vs. 2011).

On these four primary measures of the IS³ grant (alcohol use, bullying/harassment, IS³ Index, and suspensions/expulsions for fighting or violence without physical injury), 18/21 schools (86%) improved on at least 75% of their reported measures.

B. Assess Current State Initiatives and Maximize Existing Resources

JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM AND REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE (JJRRI)

The overall goals of the JJRRI are to reduce recidivism of juvenile offenders, increase public safety and lower costs. Additional positive effects could include improved family and peer relations, mental health symptoms, and school attendance, by ensuring that ***the right youth receive the right service at the right time.***

The ICYD Council is overseeing the implementation of the JJRRI through the three year demonstration award (ends in September 2015) from the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, received by the Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP) of the Department of Human Rights.

The JJRRI uses the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) to assess effectiveness of services. The SPEP assesses four domains:

- Classification/Service Type
- Quality of Service
- Amount of Service
- Risk Level

The SPEP has been completed on a total of 71 services in the three pilot judicial districts (see map below), in the following service-type classifications:

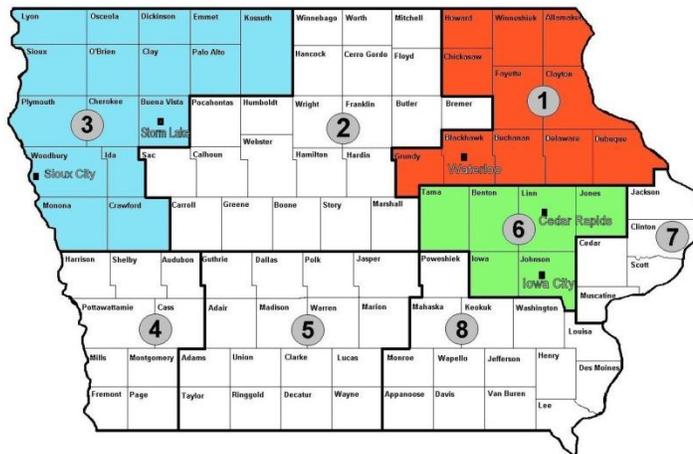
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
- Mentoring
- Family Counseling
- Remedial Academic
- Job-related Training
- Group Counseling
- Restitution – Community Service
- Social Skills Training
- Individual Counseling

Each service receives Program Improvement Plans (PIP) with recommendations for improvement. During the summer of 2015, the second round of SPEP will be conducted on the same services.

Ultimately, system officials will be able to take aggregate results and make more informed decisions about resources and services for justice-involved youth. They will also be better equipped to formalize statewide evidence-based practices and improve the overall functioning of the juvenile justice system.

Sustaining the JJRRI beyond the end of federal funding will be necessary to expand beyond the three pilot judicial districts. Additional resources will be sought. The ICYD Council will continue to oversee implementation of the JJRRI and its expansion.

Map of JJRRI Target Judicial Districts



PERFORMANCE PARTNERSHIP PILOTS (P3): CREATING MORE FLEXIBILITY TO SERVE DISCONNECTED YOUTH

The ICYD Council is preparing a proposal to become a Performance Partnership Pilot (P3). The proposal is due on March 4, 2015. P3 is an effort by five federal agencies that are collaborating to offer a new opportunity to help states and communities overcome the obstacles they face in achieving better outcomes for disconnected youth. The P3 initiative enables pilots to blend funds that they already receive from different federal discretionary programs administered by the:

- Departments of Education,

- Departments of Labor,
- Departments of Health and Human Services
- Corporation for National and Community Service and the
- Institute for Museum and Library Services.

For purposes of P3, the ICYD Council has defined “Disconnected Youth” as, emerging adults (ages 16 – 24) who are low-income, AND are homeless, or have either a history of child welfare/juvenile justice system involvement, or who are not in school and not working.

P3 offers a unique opportunity to test innovative, cost-effective, and outcome-focused strategies for improving results for disconnected youth. In order to provide applicants with the flexibility required to implement a pilot through the effective blending of Federal and non-Federal funds, programmatic requirements may be waived. Agencies may use existing waiver authority, and may also waive any statutory, regulatory, or administrative requirement, so long as the waiver is in keeping with important safeguards.

In practice, P3 waiver authority should enable applicants to take a more outcome-focused approach to providing services:

- identifying the population to be served;
- determining the most effective strategies for serving that population;
- selecting funding streams appropriate to support those strategies; and,
- clarifying which program rules and requirements would need to be waived in order to implement the strategies.

The waiver authority will allow communities and the Federal government to identify eligible youth and design the allowable activities to support the goals and objectives of the pilot.

At the time of this report, the proposal is still in development.

C. Investigate Research-Based Approaches and Effective Strategies

JUVENILE REENTRY SYSTEM PLANNING

The ICYD Council is the oversight body for the Juvenile Reentry System Planning initiative, which has received a \$100,000 federal grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to develop a comprehensive statewide juvenile reentry system strategic plan. This plan will guide efforts to reduce the historical baseline recidivism rates for youth returning from confinement in juvenile correctional facilities. The plan will also guide efforts to reform the system to include:

- improved assessment policies and practices,
- a more integrated approach to pre-release services and planning and post-release evidence-based services and supervision that will improve youth outcomes, and
- enhanced program/policy monitoring, quality assessments, implementation supports, accountability practices, and youth outcome data collection, analysis, reporting, and decision making.

Upon completing the strategic plan in July 2015, a proposal will be submitted to OJJDP to be considered for a competitive grant of between \$1 and \$2 million to implement the strategic plan.

A sub-committee of the ICYD Council has been formed to develop the plan.

Juvenile ReEntry Systems Planning Task Force		
Ralph Allbee Iowa Aftercare Services Network Marshalltown		Jessica Kropf Boys State Training School Eldora
Ruth Buckels Achieving Maximum Potential Ames		Brett Lawrence Boys State Training School Eldora
Amy Carpenter Child Advocacy Board/CASA Sac City		Steve Michael, Chair Iowa Department of Human Rights Des Moines
Jim Chesnik Iowa Department of Human Services Des Moines		Steve Miller Insight Des Moines
DeAnn Decker Iowa Department of Public Health Des Moines		Gary Niles Juvenile Court Services, 3rd District Sioux City
David Hicks Youth & Shelter Services of Marshall County Marshalltown		Lettie Prell Iowa Department of Corrections Des Moines
Mary Jackson Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services Des Moines		Susan Walkup Iowa Department of Education Des Moines
Karen Jones Christian Homes Association Council Bluffs		Rep. Mary Lynn Wolfe Iowa House - District 98 Clinton
Kristi Judkins Iowa Workforce Development Des Moines		Youth Up to four youth members
Facilitators:	Jim Swaim Iowa City	Joan VandenBerg Iowa City

PROMOTING SCHOOL-COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS TO ENHANCE RESILIENCE (PROSPER)

Promoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience (PROSPER) was designed and tested by researchers at Iowa State University in partnership with researchers at Penn State University. Together they tested this model with over 10,000 youth and found it to be a sustainable approach for delivery of evidence-based programs to middle school youth and their families. While evidence-based programs have been proven effective, they are often the most difficult to implement and sustain long-term. This model is unique in that it uses existing and stable resources of Land Grant University and Extension systems, along with public schools to:

- Develop and maintain ongoing partnerships focused on programming
- Select, implement, and evaluate the evidence-based interventions with the greatest likelihood of producing favorable individual- and community-level outcomes
- Make a population level impact in a community since youth in 6th and 7th grades receive programs year after year. (Original PROSPER communities are now 13 years old and continue to program without funding assistance.)

The ICYD Council reviewed the outcomes of PROSPER and how the positive results can support the goal of decreasing dropout rates in Iowa. While the goals of the agencies and outcomes of the model¹ were a good match, the populations served were different in that most agencies are funded to serve higher risk youth while PROSPER programs are universal (for all youth).

The overall societal net benefit from PROSPER Model implementation is between \$6,307 and \$6,377 per participant². This Model has the potential to not only enhance positive youth development in Iowa but do so using fewer resources. Additional discussion needs to be initiated to see where the Model might be used most effectively in conjunction with other state efforts to develop a plan for expansion in Iowa.

A feasibility study is currently being completed that will yield actual cost savings to Iowa state government agencies. The ICYD Council will review the findings of that study and strategize on how to use PROSPER to maximize existing resources to serve more youth and families.

ADOLESCENT BRAIN RESEARCH and ITS IMPLICATIONS for YOUNG PEOPLE TRANSITIONING from FOSTER CARE

Research by the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative found that youth gradually transition to adulthood between 18 and 25 years of age. It was also found that

¹ The programs implemented have demonstrated increased school engagement, improved grades, enhanced life skills, reduced risky sexual behaviors, benefits related to mental health, enhanced young adult well-being, and improved family functioning in areas of general child management, parent-child affective quality, parent-child activities, and family environment.

² Crowley, Greenberg, Feinberg, Spoth, & Redmond, 2012; Crowley, Jones, Greenberg, Feinberg, & Spoth, 2011.

adolescence is a time of “use it or lose it” in brain development: When young people are actively engaged in positive relationships and opportunities to contribute, create, and lead, they “use it” to develop skills to become successful adults. There are five recommendations that come from the research:

- Take a positive youth development approach to all opportunities for young people in foster care.
- Provide “interdependent” living services that connect young people with family and caring adults.
- Engage young people in their own planning and decision-making.
- Be trauma-informed to promote healing and emotional security.
- Extend developmentally appropriate foster care to 21.

The ICYD Council is continuing to apply these recommendations in policy and practice when making decisions affecting youth in foster care and for all youth.

D. Coordinate Across Systems to Identify and Support Vulnerable Students

COORDINATE, CONSOLIDATE, and CONVENE REQUIRED ADVISORY GROUPS

There is a growing trend of funders (e.g. federal agencies, private foundations) that require advisory groups as part of funded initiatives. Many state agency staff are asked to participate on several multi-agency advisory groups created to address specific youth-related issues. Advisory groups may have similar representation, yet have a different youth focus. In addition, some of the advisory groups may replicate activities and creating additional silos within state agencies.

The ICYD Council is now offering to provide the core membership to new youth-serving advisory groups, which will allow state agencies to utilize the ICYD Council as the coordinating body for the required respective advisory groups. It will be possible to consolidate multiple advisory groups into the existing infrastructure of the ICYD Council.

The alignment of youth advisory groups will create more effective and efficient services and supports for youth and families. The Forum for Youth Investment has identified ways to reduce the inefficiency and burden of having disconnected youth councils/commissions/coalitions:

- Use existing councils.
- Identify and publicize existing councils.
- Compare councils side-by-side.
- Connect related efforts.
- Develop common language and complementary goals.
- Look to broad councils to coordinate the coordinating bodies.
- Consolidate existing councils.³

³ Evennou, Danielle, (January 2011). Don’t Stop Collaborating – Just Stop Creating New Collaboratives. Washington, DC: The Forum for Youth Investment.

The coordination of advisory groups will:

- Reduce duplication of planning and services.
- Result in cost avoidance with a more efficient use of staff time and agency resources (time, state staff and travel costs).
- Enhance collaborative opportunities, combined trainings, common use of data and information.
- Generate new funding opportunities.⁴

The ICYD Council approach will be a model for cross-agency collaboration and government efficiency.

IOWA YOUTH SURVEY

The Iowa Youth Survey (IYS) is a collaborative effort led by the Department of Public Health's Division of Behavioral Health with assistance by the following agencies:

- Department of Education,
- Office of Drug Control Policy,
- Department of Human Rights' Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning and Statistical Analysis Center, and
- Department of Human Services.

In the fall of 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014 students in the 6th, 8th, and 11th grades across the state of Iowa answered questions about their attitudes and experiences regarding alcohol and other drug use and violence, and their perceptions of their peer, family, school, and neighborhood/ community environments. In 2008 the survey was administered online for the first time.

IYS reports list responses to every question on the survey, providing total percentages and breakdowns by grade and gender. Thirty-four constructs within nine framework domains are included.

Reports are available in the following categories:

- State of Iowa,
- Counties,
- Judicial Districts
- Department of Public Health Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Planning Regions,
- Decategorization areas,
- Department of Human Services Regions,
- School Districts*.

*With the exception of School Districts, IYS reports are available online at <http://www.iowayouthsurvey.iowa.gov>. Individual school district reports can be accessed by contacting the district.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Also available is the Iowa Youth Survey Trend Report which contains comparisons across all surveys using the ICYD Council's Youth Development Results Framework.

E. Engage Additional Stakeholders

COORDINATE and ALIGN "YOUTH-FUELED"⁵ COUNCILS and INITIATIVES and EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES for YOUTH to PARTICIPATE

The challenge: Several state agencies have state-level youth initiatives providing opportunities for youth. The multiple initiatives need to be better aligned and work better together to attract more youth to participate and to specifically seek more diverse youth. The state-level youth-fueled councils and initiatives include:

- Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP),
- Capitol Girls,
- Iowa Youth Congress (IYC),
- ISU Extension and Outreach, 4-H Youth Development,
- State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC),
- Youth Leadership Forum (YLF),
- Iowa Students for Tobacco Education and Prevention (I-STEP).

Many of these initiatives target underrepresented youth. All of them promote opportunities for youth to engage state leaders, discuss issues affecting youth, and develop leadership skills.

The Department of Human Rights (DHR) is leading the coordination effort of the multiple agencies and organizations that support state-level youth-fueled councils and initiatives. The goal is to effectively remove barriers to leadership for historically underrepresented youth by empowering youth to realize their leadership capabilities and by challenging adults to recognize and engage youth. The effort will equip youth with the tools to communicate their vision, inspire collaboration, and make significant contributions that result in positive change.

The following strategies will be implemented to create a pathway to actively engage youth:

- Market state-level youth initiatives;
- Identify and recruit underrepresented youth;
- Develop venues to offer leadership training opportunities for youth; and
- Provide adult leaders information on quality youth engagement and opportunities to engage and value youth voice in their ongoing decision making.

Increasing the number of youth selected to serve on state boards and commissions is a way to engage youth in state government. Agencies and commissions need to articulate the skill sets necessary for youth members and training should be available

⁵ Youth-fueled – The participation of youth contributes to achieving the goals of the initiative. Youth participate either as leaders or participants. All of youth-fueled initiatives are conducted “with” youth, not “to” youth.

to prepare youth to ensure active participation. ICYD will explore additional opportunities for youth engagement.

IV. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IN 2015

Achieving a 95% graduation rate by 2020 is an ambitious target. The ICYD Council is committed to concentrating its attention on and monitoring progress toward this goal, but reaching it will require continued, concerted, coordinated efforts by policymakers, education systems, and multiple state and community partners. The Council's work (see *Section III Accomplishments in 2014 and Emerging Activities in 2015*) will be refined and also expanded into specific action steps to accomplish the goal by 2020. To maintain focus on these efforts, the ICYD Council will continue to address the following five broad areas:

- Focus on underperforming schools and communities.
- Assess current state initiatives and maximize existing resources.
- Investigate research-based approaches and effective strategies.
- Coordinate across systems to identify and support vulnerable students.
- Engage additional stakeholders.

The ICYD Council seeks the support from the Iowa Legislature and Governor's Office to continue these activities by modifying laws and policies, as necessary, and providing resources needed to achieve this very ambitious goal. Specific recommendations to support the ICYD Council are to:

- Provide resources to continue and expand evidence-based practices and programs, as they are developed and identified, such as:
 - Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment Initiative (JJRRI), which is near the end of the 3-year federal demonstration project period;
 - Promoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience (PROSPER).
- Support the ICYD Council in identifying new and better ways to provide services and supports to Iowa's youth by encouraging the development of innovative strategies and initiatives:
 - Performance Partnership Pilots (P3);
 - Juvenile Reentry System Planning.
- Support the ICYD Council's approach to consolidate multiple advisory groups into the existing infrastructure of the ICYD Council. The model will result in a reduction of duplication, enhanced coordination and collaboration between state agencies, and a reduction in costs.
- Support the Iowa Youth Survey. The survey is administered every two years to 6th, 8th, and 11th graders. The results are valuable to state agencies and communities in assessing self-reported youth behaviors and perceptions.
- Provide resources to support state-level youth opportunities and youth-led initiatives (e.g. State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council, Iowa Youth Congress, Achieving Maximum Potential).

- Engage youth on state boards and commissions, and provide the training and support necessary for youth members to be active participants. In addition, state agencies should seek new and creative ways to involve youth.
- Continue to develop ways to share information among agencies and coordinating bodies to address issues affecting youth who receive services and supports from multiple agencies.
- Support the continued use of state agency staff time to implement activities that meet the goals of the ICYD Council.
- Infuse positive youth development (PYD) principles in all youth programming, which includes PYD trainings for youth workers and establishing policies to include PYD principles in all state-funded youth initiatives.