

The Evolution of Special Education in Iowa

*As Told Through the Voices of
Those Who Created It*



By Jeff Grimes and Jim Stumme ■ 2016

The Evolution of Special Education in Iowa:

*As Told Through the Voices of
Those Who Created It*



For Sharon Kurns
who worked a lifetime
helping others succeed

Copying and Distribution

The Evolution of Special Education in Iowa – *As Told Through the Voices of Those Who Created It* was written as a not-for-profit, free document. Readers are welcome to make copies. However, it is important to understand that the participants agreed to have their stories shared within the framework of this document, and likewise, many of the pictures and graphics were approved based on the context in which they are included. Thus, this document is to be viewed in its entirety, not as separate unconnected parts. The culture of caring in Iowa for enhancing special education services is to be celebrated as a whole across time and people.

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Foreword

You are about to read a piece of history. It is a story with shared ownership because it is an Iowa experience and the reader, most likely, has a direct connection to the state. Why read history? Author Michael Crichton's viewpoint on this topic is enlightening, "If you don't know history, then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree." The tree described here is the growth of special education in Iowa. It is an amazing story that reveals the progress up to the point of this writing, December 2015. The need for continued improvement does not end with the last period or exclamation point in this text. Others will continue the ongoing saga by acting on their commitment to enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities.

This writing is about discovering what was and considering what will be. The authors learned an enormous amount working on this publication and we hope the reader will do the same. For us, it was tantamount to the findings of the Hubble telescope when the optics were pointed at a black hole, a place where before it was assumed there was nothing, a void. The Hubble findings were the absolute opposite. There were hundreds of galaxies that were previously unknown. How much more is there to discover? The iconic photo called *Pillars of Creation* came from that exploration. In this writing, you too will find pillars of creation in education and stories of those whose work and love of humanity made it possible to have a system serving children, youth and adults with special needs in Iowa.



Image of Deep Space

We are indebted to those who engaged in conversations with the authors. Over a three-year period there were 130 conversations. We greatly value the sharing of information and the enduring passion of the parents and professionals who spent time with us. Most of all, we appreciate the sustained effort of all who are committed to helping children with disabilities and their families.

In this book readers will meet many dedicated parents and professionals who helped improve services for individuals with disabilities in Iowa. Every effort was made to provide a balanced accounting of the evolution of special education in Iowa through many voices and convergent data sources. Clearly it was not possible to include everyone who contributed to this effort. It took a multitude of people to make the

system better. We are grateful to all those who have played a role in improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities.

As a perspective on history, the material in this document is organized in time segments. Following the introduction, the time prior to the 1960s is discussed followed by a chapter devoted to every decade from the 1960s to the present. The last chapter is about the importance of continuing the evolution of special education services. The point is made time and again that progress has occurred because of the deep commitment of parents and professionals working together with dynamic legislators and attorneys who passionately championed the rights of the disabled.

The authors benefited from hearing others' stories, organizing the ideas and writing this text. We hope the reader will enjoy and benefit from what is offered here.

J.G. and J.S.

Acknowledgments

Conversations with the Voices of Experience. One hundred and thirty Iowans participated in conversations in preparing this document. Photos and a brief description of each person is in Appendix A. The authors wholeheartedly appreciate the time and stories provided by these individuals and even more gratitude for their enduring passion that enhanced the lives of children with disabilities and their families.

Randy Allison
Jennifer Andersen
Jim Autry
Larry Bartlett
Anne Berthelsen
Bill Boettcher
Jill Brink
Sarah Brown
Jan Campbell
Sean Casey
Maria Cashman
Jerry Caster
Jim Clark
Joan Turner Clary
Kerri Clopton
Emmy Coder
Melinda Collins
Harold Connolly
Paula Connolly
Mary Covey
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Gus Silzer
Denny Sinclair
Nicole Skaar
Carl Smith
Mary Stevens
Jim Stoycheff
MaryAnn Strawhacker
Jessica Stumme
Curt Sytsma
Deb Thomas
David Tilly
Joe Ulman
Toni Van Cleve
Vernon Vance
Samantha Vancel
Paula Vincent
Jen Waterman
Mary Watkins
Heidi Webber
Doug West
Cheryl Wetzell
Shaun Wilkinson
Barry Wilson
Dee Ann Wilson
Dave Wood
Rhea Wright
Nai-Jiin Yang
Cindy Yelick
Sue Young

Reviewers. We are indebted to the eight reviewers who poured over the initial drafts and made valuable suggestions that helped refine the final version. They represent a wide range of experiences in education, administration, higher education, legal, and field-based practice. Appreciation is expressed to reviewers: Roxanne Cumings, Dennis Dykstra, Sue Grimes, Fritz Krueger, Marvin Lewis, Lana Michelson, Dan Reschly, and Vicki Stumme.

Technical Editing. With great gratitude we acknowledge the extraordinary assistance of Nancy Brees who reviewed the final document with a watchful eye for appropriate grammar and spelling considerations. Her skills and good sense are valued as is her ever-present willingness to help.

Data Sources. Sometimes it takes data to tell the story in the form of graphs, charts or tables. We are appreciative for the assistance of John Lee at the Iowa Department of Education with data and Dan Reschly for his assistance with legal consideration in IDEA and guidance related to this work.

Graphic Design and Consultation. We recognize the unique professional technical assistance provided by Susan Schrader, Director of Resources and Library Services at Heartland AEA, who offered guidance and support in the process of turning the text into print and the web-based version for Internet distribution. Further, Jan Morgan, Graphic Designer at Heartland AEA, and Emily Adickes provided valuable consultation and exhibited skills in the layout of the manuscript, font selection and graphic presentation of this work.

Visual Images. We acknowledge the able assistance of Martha Condon, an AEA regional director, who provided valuable support in creating digital images for selected graphics. Additionally, concerted effort was made to supplement the text with images drawn from Internet website sources. We believe that all images accessed and included in this document were in the public domain, purchased, or used with permission to be used in this text. Appendix B cites the sources of images used in the text. We extend our gratitude to all who made their images available. Their good work and cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Website Distribution. Appreciation is expressed to all who consented to make this web-based publication available on their websites.

Family Support. We also convey our deep gratitude to our spouses, Sue Grimes and Vicki Stumme, who exhibited extraordinary patience in the face of the protracted period of time required to write this document. Sue and Vicki have put up with a lot of shenanigans over the years, including the writing of this text. They were heard to utter on more than one occasion, "When is this project going to be completed?" In truth, the authors frequently asked each other the same question. At last there is an answer: it's done.

JG and JS

Introduction

The largest tree in the world, by volume, is the General Sherman, which is a giant redwood in the Sequoia National Park in California. People travel from all over the world to marvel at the majestic size and miracle of growth of the coastal redwoods. The seeds of these mammoths are miniscule; yet they contain great potential. It takes hundreds of years for this tree to attain full size. To plant the seed of a coastal redwood is to invest in the future – an investment of great possibility.

What follows are many success stories told by the people who created the special education service delivery system in Iowa. Like all sustainable and large-scale changes, the efforts exerted were substantial and unrelenting. In most cases they took a very long time to reach full implementation and some are still in process of reaching fruition. Some realities of the past may surprise you, but through perseverance and strength of character they were overcome. Like planting the tiny redwood seeds, the seeds of special education innovation were, and are, an investment in the future—the future of children with disabilities.

Every year Iowa’s landscape passes through four distinctly different seasons. Clearly change is a natural part of life as witnessed in seasonal alterations, and equally vivid are the differences across time in people, culture, and educational systems. The writing of this brief history is focused on the evolution of special education in Iowa. While there have been individuals with significant physical, learning, sensory and cognitive challenges across time, the advent of an educational system to support these learners is a relatively new phenomena.

Consider the topic of change depicted in three pairs of photos taken across the decades. The hair density has obviously altered, as least for the males, but there are less visible shifts in professional roles. What did not change for these individuals is a deep abiding passion for human services. That remains a constant. The pairs of contrasting photos provide a visual portrayal of personal change. Similarly, as shown later, special education services in Iowa have dramatically changed across the decades.



In 1975 Gary Ross-Reynolds moved to Iowa after graduating with a doctoral degree in school psychology from Fordham University in New York City. In Iowa he was a school psychologist, then supervisor of school psychology before leaving Iowa to join the Faculty of Nicholls State University in

Gary Ross-Reynolds 1975 and 2012

Louisiana. He left that position to become a nurse, another career in the helping professions.

Paula Vincent served as a special education teacher in Shawnee Mission in Overland Park, Kansas in 1978 before moving to Iowa to be a special education teacher at a school district that had never had a special education program before. Paula became



Paula Vincent 1975 And 2015

a special education consultant, a supervisor of consultants, an assistant director of special education and director of special education at AEA 10. She then went to a large urban district to serve as associate superintendent and later as a district superintendent. Paula earned her Ph.D. at the

University of Iowa and is currently the Chief

Administrator at Heartland Area Education Agency. Paula has modeled thoughtful leadership in each position she has held. Her focus on student growth and early literacy has always brought people together on a shared vision of service.

In 1976 Greg Robinson graduated from Northern Illinois University and became a special education teacher for AEA 9 before becoming a school psychologist in AEA 10



Greg Robinson 1978 and 2013

and the Iowa Braille & Sight-Saving School. He subsequently worked for the Iowa Department of Education as the consultant for mental disabilities. Greg received his Ph.D. from Iowa State University in school administration. He became an elementary school principal and retired as superintendent of the Urbandale Community School District. He now

teaches classes in Educational Administration at Iowa State University. Greg has a distinguished career that has always been devoted to enhancing the education of children and youth.

There are dramatic changes in children as they progress through the 13 years of schooling. As we have seen, there are shifts in professional's titles and responsibilities as well. Our understanding is informed by considering the evolution of special education from the vantage point of families, professionals and students.

A Working Relationship

It will be beneficial for readers to have a shared understanding of how this writing task was approached. There are three essential parties in this work: Those who participated in the conversations about special education in Iowa, the readers, and the authors. A nod to each.

Interviews. Conversations occurred with many Iowans to gain a broad perspective on the evolution of the Iowa educational system. Interviews involved parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, attorneys, medical practitioners, and other professionals in the special education system. Their collective voices represent diverse viewpoints that form a choir with an honest and memorable sound. The first names of the people will be used in this writing because we are all part of the same community. It is a gesture of friendship that exists within a caring community. Although there is a wide array of perspectives we know this can only be a sample of the universe of experiences. People's comments shaped the narrative, but may not be named or always quoted in the text. That said, we think the reader will find substance and meaning in these tales from the past. It can be a beacon for the future. When stories appear in this writing they are designated with this symbol ► as a visual cue for the reader.

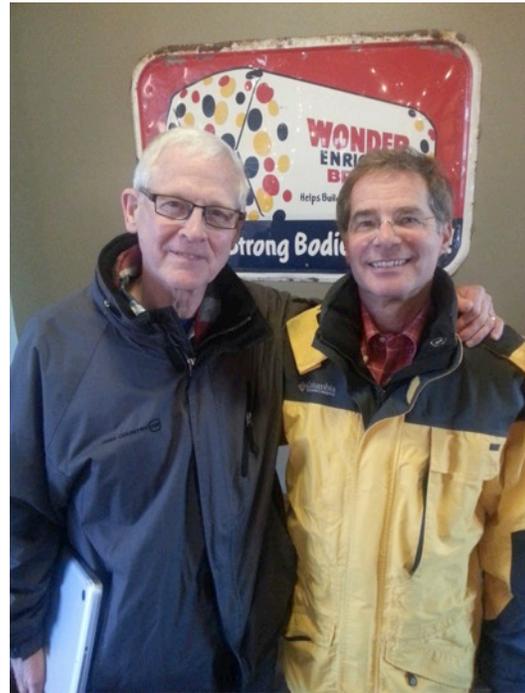
The Reader. As the reader, you bring your own personal experience to this text. This is valued. As Alan Bennett said in *The History Boys*, "The best moments in reading are when you come across something—a thought, a feeling, a way of looking at things—which you had thought special and particular to you. And now, here it is, set down by someone else, a person you have never met, someone even who is long dead. And it is as if a hand has come out, and taken yours." You will likely see implications from the many stories in this text that challenge you to consider how it is similar or different from your own experience.

In this document the reader will encounter names, places and faces that are unfamiliar. History is like that. If the information was about people and events we already knew then reading might be entertaining but not informative. The authors strive to achieve both. People whose stories are included are some of the game changers that substantively improved Iowa's special education system. Collectively, we can be grateful for their efforts that led to the configuration of the current system. Of course this work is ongoing. There will continue to be new improvements and refinements in Iowa's educational system. In the final section you will be invited to consider how the future progress can be advanced because of your action.

The Authors. Jeff Grimes and Jim Stumme, spent their entire professional careers in Iowa, each serving in various roles in education. Both were graduates of school psychology programs at Iowa universities and worked in that profession. Additionally, their combined experience includes work as a special education teacher, AEA supervisor of school psychology, state consultant in the Iowa Department of Education, AEA director of special education, psychology instructor in higher education, and, varied roles and responsibilities in state and national professional associations. Jeff and Jim have been colleagues since the early 1970s, but more importantly they've been friends. For over 40 years they've enjoyed running, bicycling, laughing, and being there during serious times. In the beginning stages of this text they believed they had a firm grasp on the history of special education in

Iowa in much the same way that Woody Allen would describe as “delusions of adequacy.” However, they learned so much through the interviews and research.

The scope of writing this document has dramatically shifted over the three years in the collection of information and writing. The initial focus was about school psychology in Iowa. Then, because of the intimate relationship between that profession and those who are served, the writing morphed into an emphasis on special education. The final iteration has the spotlight shining squarely on special education. The authors are school psychologists and proud of that professional background. We are equally proud to be colleagues and partners with other professionals dedicated to providing quality services for Iowa children with disabilities and their families. Those allied professions include, to name a few, school social workers, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, educational audiologists, school nurses, an array of special education teachers, school administrators, general education teachers, and many others. All are respected professions with distinctive skills. This writing embraces their work too. However, because this work began with a focus on one profession, school psychology, there is a larger representation of interviews with professionals who have that background. Additionally, school psychology will be used to highlight how professions were altered across time. This focus has two reasons. The authors have first hand information about the profession and it is not possible to cover the evolution of all disciplines.



Jeff Grimes and Jim Stumme

As you may have noted, the tone of this text is informal and represents a collegial engagement, like conversing with a friend. You, the readers, are the friends to whom we speak. In the 1980s, ABC Sports called this inside style of reporting, *Up Close and Personal*. The authors strive to do the same. Consequently, the writing is intended to be more conversational rather than a scholarly format with extensive literature citations. There is no bibliography or reference section with source citations. Acknowledgments of sources are generally embedded in the text.

Framework

Telling the story of special education has proven to be a daunting task because we certainly want to do justice to this important topic, which has many partners, roles and faces. We will lift up the stories of those who created change as the primary vehicle for considering our statewide progress. These stories, however, occur in a specific context. Life events occur within a mix of political, scientific, environmental, economic and social forces that impinge on people and shape life's patterns. America's culture is embodied in its music, literature, political agendas and social trends. We will note how these factors interact with educational experiences and are

part of the texture of an era. Each chapter will conclude with observations about how disability awareness was evolving in America at that point in time.

The text is organized in timeframes to provide a perspective of changes in special education in Iowa. The writing begins with background information, which is this section. Next, the time periods unfold beginning with a segment prior to the 1960s. Subsequently, there are decades beginning with the 1960s and continuing to the current time. The final section is about continuing to create a future that is of benefit to students with disabilities, their families and the professionals dedicated to serving them.

As you know, this writing spans more than fifty years in Iowa. When historical events are considered they are simply points in time. That may not do justice to an unfolding story. A snap shot of a garden shows all that is growing at that moment, but a day, or week, or month later it has changed in dramatic ways. Life is an ongoing sequence of experiences that are intimately interlinked. The drawback of seeing the history of special education as parts, is the likelihood of missing the whole, the interconnected story of growth and change. That would be an unfortunate loss. The solution to this quandary is to include a life story. That will happen in your reading.

Many professional services in special education were present for much of the forty years between 1975 and 2015. In the text, some topics are presented in a particular decade although they were part of special education across all time periods. For example, the work of audiologists, speech and language pathology, and occupational therapists services were provided across all decades although their ongoing efforts are not reviewed in each time segment.

The reader will follow the development of one individual, Rick Samson. We are grateful to the parents and to this young man for his permission to include his experience in this writing. There are two benefits for the reader to follow a life story. First, is to make the historical journey across time, the one called history, by embracing the fact that life is simultaneously unfolding in mysterious and miraculous ways. Life's journey is not without bumps, detours, forks in the road where important decisions are made and there are also wondrous times of whirling down the interstate with the top down on the convertible and wind in your face. Life is all of that and more. The second benefit is to acknowledge that education is not limited to a series of grade levels, or accelerating reading scores, or any improvement in this or that behavior. Everything leads to increasing the quality of life after K-12 education. Education is intended to enhance living for a lifetime. This is true just as the wedding event is not the purpose of the marriage. Rather, it is a beginning point for a journey into a relationship in living.

Rick's story will begin in the decade of the 1970s and with each new chapter, a new decade, the story continues. It is a living story.

A Word About Words. Five topics will benefit from clarification. First, societal language has changed when referring to individuals with disabilities who in the 1970s would have been identified as handicapped and prior to that time various descriptors were used that can easily be considered derogatory. We will use the term individual with disabilities.

Next, federal laws have been a major driving force in access to education and service. When Congress passes legislation it has both a name and number. Legislation that has significant funding is periodically reauthorized. On occasion the federal government may have a new name but it is simply an extension and enhancement of the original legislation. An example is the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA), which later became the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Just as water can become ice, it is still the same elements in a different form. EHA and IDEA basically have the same purposes, supporting the education of children with disabilities. It is also worthy to note that here are variations in dates between when a law is passed and when it is enacted. For example, EHA was passed in 1974, enacted in 1975.

Third, at one point the credential for professional practices was designated as certification and later became known as licensure. The words licensure and licensing will be used in this document.

Next, the Iowa Department of Education was once called the Iowa Department of Public Instruction (DPI). The water and ice cube idea applies again. As an aid to the reader, the Iowa Department of Education will be consistently called the Iowa DE.

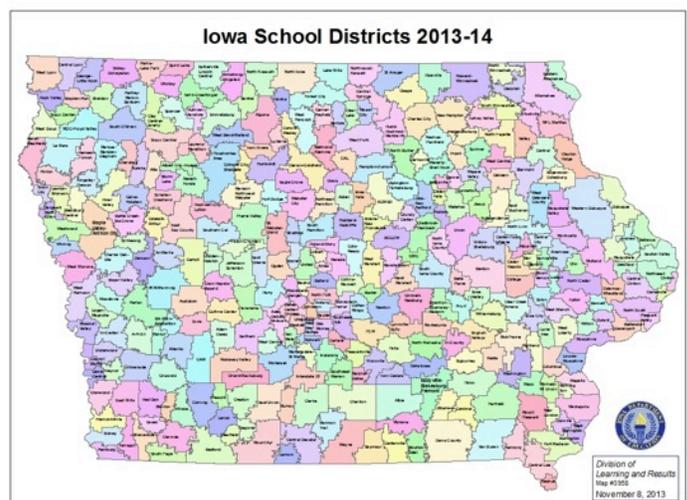


Lastly, we want to acknowledge gender balance in leadership in the early part of history. Change in culture is a slow process. The advocacy for women's rights occurred in America through efforts such as women's suffrage, the crusade to pass the Equal Rights Amendment and passage of Title IX, which created opportunities for women in sports. Similarly special education has benefited from the monumental contributions of women in the Iowa educational system. To name a few Iowa leaders: Sally Pederson, Sharon Kurns, Lana Michelson, Helen Henderson and Jeananne Hagen Schild. The Iowa landscape is transformed because of the efforts of these Iowa leaders.

We next turn our collective attention to information framing the work of Iowa's special education system.

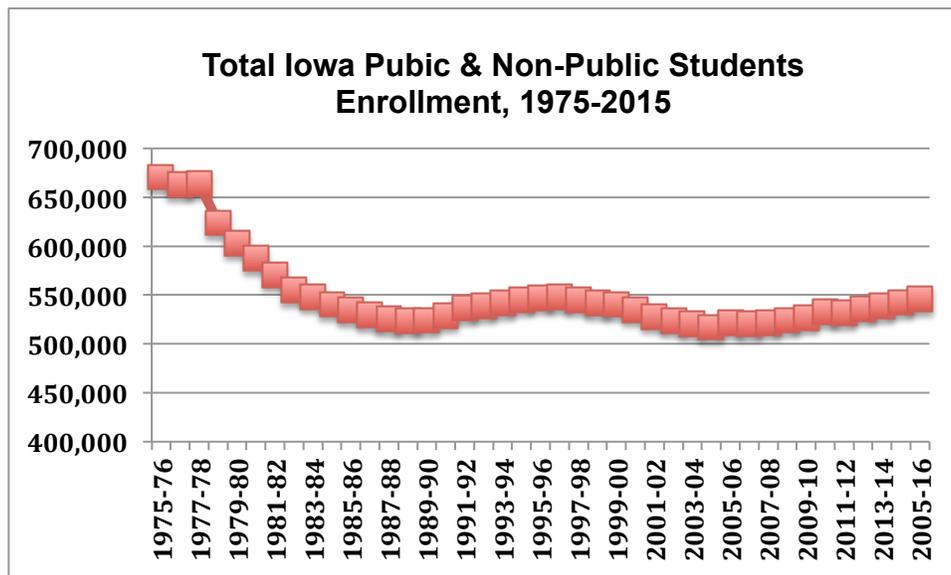
Key Points in Iowa Education. When you travel by car along Iowa highways you may see informational markers that tell about historical facts or important events that happened in a particular location. On this journey there will be informational points to help provide a context for subsequent sections of this book. Three informational points follow: the framework of educational agencies, a brief timeline of when federal legislative events occurred that impacted professional services, and the enrollment pattern of student populations in Iowa schools.

Structures of Education. One of the challenges when providing educational services for students with disabilities is to have enough students to support the employment of specialized personnel. Clearly the one room schoolhouse arrangement would be too small. Size matters. When Iowa formed its 99 county structure in 1858, a county superintendent of education was



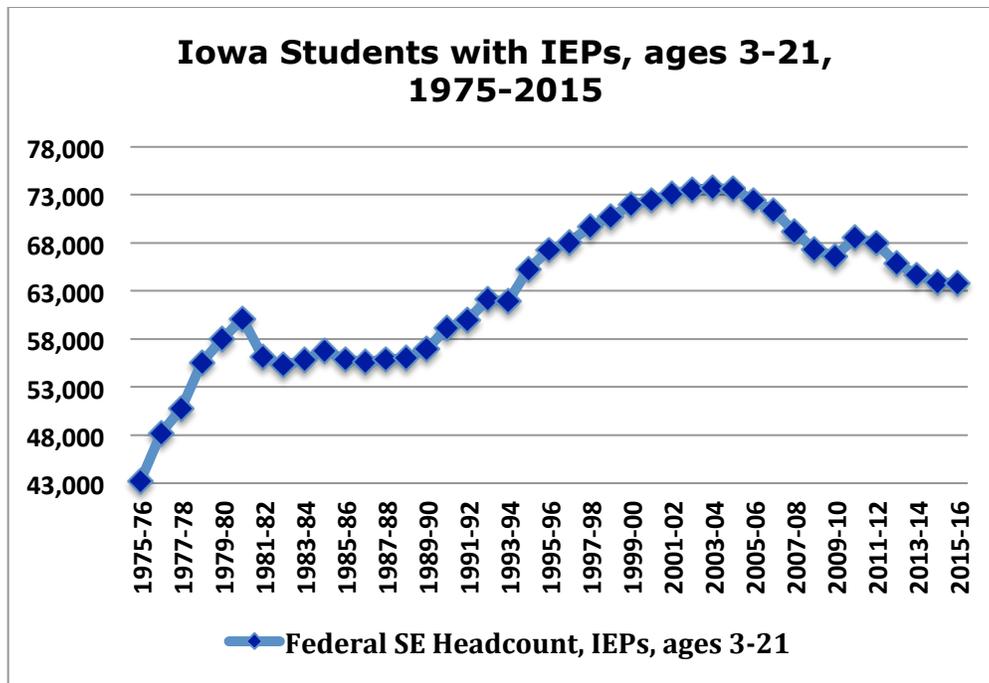
responsible for overseeing local schools. The 99 county structures offered some possibilities by supporting individual districts, which were often single buildings. In 1952 there were 4,649 local school districts in Iowa. Five years later, with supportive legislation, the same superintendents could serve more than one county, another cost-efficient move. In 1965, with additional legislation, counties were authorized to form a joint county unit to better meet educational needs of schools and children. In 1975 the Area Education Agencies began replacing the county and joint county arrangement, again expanding the population base. Special education services benefited from the larger scale of administrative structure that could employ staff such as audiologists, speech-language pathologists, physical therapists, psychologists, social workers and other specialized service providers. Consider the contrast from 4,000+ districts in 1950s to 337 in 2015 and 9 AEAs. Iowa is better positioned to organize and deliver services for children with disabilities.

Number of Iowa Students and Students in Special Education. Iowa’s combined public and nonpublic student population has declined markedly over a fifty-year period as shown below. In the 1970s there were almost 700,000 students in schools across the state and slightly over 500,000 in 2015-16 school year.



Student population trends in Iowa over 40-year period

Following the passage of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, there was a rapid growth in the numbers of Iowa students receiving special education services. The trajectory began to decline in 2005. Currently Iowa is providing educational services for over 63,000 students with IEPs ages 3 to 21. There are no accurate data for the number of Iowa students receiving special education services prior to 1975.



Data provided by John Lee, Iowa DE

Teacher Education and Licensure for Special Education. One day a family ate at a restaurant before flying to a location where they checked into their hotel and rode the elevator to the floor where their room overlooked a spectacular view. This was the beginning of their dream vacation. At first glance there is nothing extraordinary in this statement. Yet, there is more to this scene than meets the eye. There is a backstory that ensured this family's safety. The restaurant, airplane and elevator were all inspected and certified as meeting required standards. This is a process of oversight that is intended to provide support for public safety. In one form or another there are standards, credentials and review processes for myriad situations in life, including securing a drivers license, building permit for home remodeling, water quality standards, to name a few.

The same attention to safety is present in Iowa schools. There are practices that ensure safety for school building construction, school bus inspections, required fire drills, external review of financial accounting of public funds, and assurance of teacher quality with licensing. The focus of this section is about teacher education programs and teacher licensure for working with children with disabilities.

Iowa has 24 colleges or universities in 2015 that have teacher education programs that meet Iowa standards. Three institutions provide early childhood special education programs (Iowa State University, University of Iowa and St. Ambrose College), one institution has a program for the deaf from birth to age 21 (University of Iowa) and one institution has a program for visually impaired (University of Northern Iowa). Iowa is fortunate to have this array of programs preparing special education teachers.

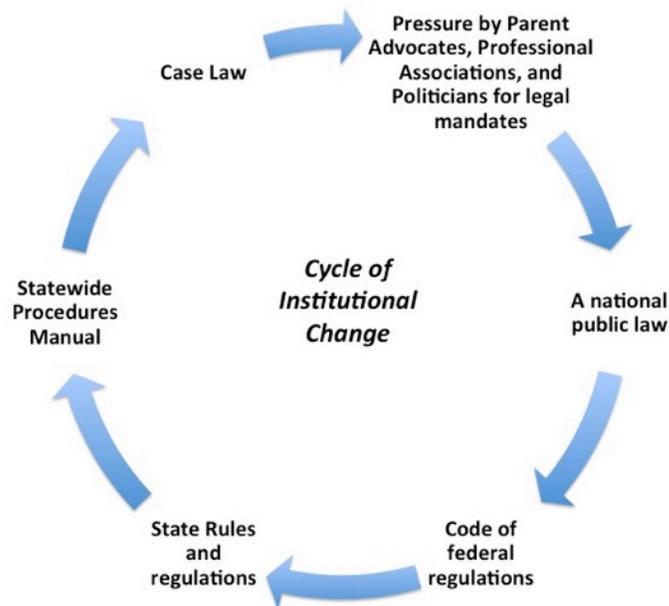
Iowa Colleges and Universities with Programs Leading to Special Education Licensure

Ashford Univ. - Clinton, IA Campus	Luther College
Briar Cliff University	Morningside College
Buena Vista University	Mount Mercy University
Central College	Northwestern College
Clarke University	Saint Ambrose College
Dordt College	Simpson College
Drake University	University of Dubuque
Graceland University	University of Iowa
Grand View University	University of Northern Iowa
Iowa State University	Upper Iowa University
Iowa Wesleyan University	Waldorf College
Loras College	William Penn University

Teachers are the centerpiece of the special education system from preschool through high school. According to John Lee, at the Iowa DE, in 2014 there were over 5,600 special education teachers working with special education as a primary responsibility. Licensing by the Board of Educational Examiners is one step towards quality assurance in special education. Iowa's colleges and universities are a distinct asset in supporting school districts and families in meeting the educational needs of students with disabilities.

Improving Services by Changing the System – The Cycle of Institutional Change. The following is a visual framework for information provided in this document. Each segment is briefly described.

Resolving disputes between parents and schools through mediation, in an effective and timely manner, is by far the norm in the nation, and particularly in Iowa. However, there are times when the only way to improve services for individuals with disabilities is to change the system. Below is a brief discussion of the cycle of institutional change. Albert Einstein is credited with saying "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler." The illustration below depicts the circle of institutional change. There are considerably more details than pictured here, but this will suffice for the discussion that follows.



Pressure by Parents, Advocates, Professional Associations, and Politicians for Legal Mandates. The grass roots of most institutional change starts with parents of children with disabilities. This text highlights the pioneering efforts of parents such as Helen Henderson, Deb Samson, Mary Watkins, Paula Connolly, Sylvia Piper, Sally Pederson, and Jim Autry. There are also advocates for long term changes such as parent attorneys like Curt Sytsma, and advocacy associations like Disability Rights Iowa. There are professional associations that advocate for enhanced rights for individuals with disabilities, including the Council for Exceptional Children, the Council of Administrators of Special Education, and the National Association of School Psychologists. And there are politicians that have provided incredible leadership to make institutional changes like Senator Tom Harkin and staffers like Bobby Silverstein.

A National Public Law. Public laws are enacted to provide equity of services across the United States. They are required to be periodically reauthorized, but this is rarely accomplished within a five-year cycle due to the complicated process of reauthorization. And often public laws are renamed. Examples include PL 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) that was renamed the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA), and the Elementary and Secondary and Education Act (ESEA) that was renamed No Child Left Behind (NCLB), then in December of 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Public laws reflect shifts in the culture and pulse of the country.

Code of Federal Regulations. The Code of Federal Regulations provides interpretation and guidelines for the Public Law. It generally takes considerable effort and time before the regulations are released. In the case of PL 94-142, it took about four years.

State Rules. After a Public Law is enacted each state is required to develop State Rules to demonstrate compliance with the Federal Law. In Iowa the rule promulgation process is systematic and time consuming and can have significant impact on the practices in Iowa.

Statewide Procedural Manual. Currently in Iowa the Statewide Procedural Manual is developed in partnership between the Iowa Department of Education and the AEA Directors of Special Education. The procedural manual provides guidelines for implementing the state rules and regulations. This manual is a State of Iowa practice and not in code.

Case Law. Precedents are established by case law. Case law can substantially change and clarify practices such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Rowley v. Board of Education*, and *Cedar Rapids CSD v. Garret F.* Prior to cases being heard by Administrative Law Judges (ALJs), parents and schools are offered resolution facilitations and/or mediations. If parties are not satisfied with decisions rendered by the ALJ they may appeal their case sequentially to district court, the court of appeals, and the Supreme Court.

Innovative Practices. Innovative thinking and practices can improve services for individuals with disabilities without going through a process of conflict. In Iowa the Renewed Service Delivery System (RSDS) promoted experimentation that allowed special education practitioners to move to intervention focused and outcome-oriented practices.

The components of this process will be discussed later with court decisions, and with changing practices and procedures.

Important Legislative Events. Regardless of the size of the educational structure, it required courts and legislative actions to ensure that a comprehensive network for special education existed. Federal and state legislators have enacted legislation that markedly influences the guarantee of the educational rights of children, parents and educators and how professional services are provided in Iowa’s schools. The table below identifies selected milestones. The implication of these events will be considered in the text. As you look at this timeline it is reminiscent of spilling a bowl of alphabet soup with its jumble of letters of legislative abbreviations. The nutrition, however, energized growth of professional services for children and their families.

Major events influencing special education in Iowa

Selected State, Federal Legislation	Selected content
1946 Iowa Legislation	Special Education Director employed by the Iowa Department of Education. Educational service for handicapped children was authorized.
1954 Brown V. Board of Education	The Supreme Court decision ruled that segregation was unlawful and struck down the prevailing “separate but equal” approach that was legalized in 1896, the Plessy v. Ferguson case. This was a victory for children’s equal access to public education.
1958 National Defense Act	Providing financial support to colleges and universities for training leadership personnel in teaching children with mental retardation. In 1963 Congress expanded Public Law 85–926 to include grants to train college teachers and researchers in a broader array of disabilities.

1964 Civil Rights Act	Prohibits discrimination against racial, ethnic, national and religious minorities, and women. It is unlawful to have racially segregated schools. The Act ensures the right to be served in restaurants, retail stores, hotels, etc.
1965 The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)	The first major federal effort to subsidize direct services to selected populations in public elementary and secondary schools, and it remains the primary vehicle for federal support of public schools today. While the original ESEA did not provide for direct grants on behalf of children with disabilities, in the second year of that Congress, Public Law 89-313 provided that children in state-operated or state-supported schools for the handicapped could be counted for entitlement purposes, and special Title 1 funds could be used to benefit this relatively small population of children in state schools.
1973 The Rehabilitation Act	Section 504 of this Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities for individuals in programs receiving federal funding. Section 504 requires accommodation for persons with disabilities when appropriate.
1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA, PL 94-142)	Four purposes: (1) provide a free appropriate public education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs, (2) protect rights of parents and children with IEPs, (3) funding for programs, (4) assessment of the effectiveness of special education programs.
1975 Iowa's Special Education legislation	Weighting system for financing SE programs was established, AEAs formed, provision for discipline supervisors, definition of students with disabilities was articulated.
1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Protects against discrimination with employment, provides opportunities to people with disabilities by making reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of disabled employees.
1991 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Language moved from identifying individuals as handicapped to disabilities. Increased emphasis on Transition planning. This legislation was renamed from the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA).
1994 Iowa Special Education Rules Revised	The revised Iowa rules incorporated the concepts demonstrated during the 5 years of experimentation with the RSDS. These rules included: The use of functional assessment, non-categorical designation, progress monitoring, and an outcome focus. Also, concepts from IDEA were written into state rules and regulations.
1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	The definition of children with disabilities included developmentally delayed from age 3 to 9. A process for dispute resolution between parents and school districts was outlined.

2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)	Required local school districts to include students with IEPs in assessment and disaggregate results and be publically accountable for the progress of all students. This was renamed from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Specific Learning Disabilities no longer required discrepancy between measures of intelligence and achievement. Instead, response to intervention could suffice. Annual Progress Reports were required.
2009 Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009	Funding for IDEA was provided as a short-term measure.
2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Reflection. Collectively, the information in this chapter provides a foundation to begin seeing Iowa’s evolution of special education. With this background in place it is time to being the process of turning back the pages and look at Iowa in the early years.

Decades Before 1960

In the mid 1800s pioneers traveled from the eastern border of the United States and settled in Iowa to make this their home. Iowa became a state in 1846 with a motto, "Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain." That egalitarian posture towards liberty and individual rights burned brightly in the state's educational system and other arenas. Iowa had safe houses that were part of the Underground Railroad system for African Americans escaping southern slavery by moving north in the 1850s. There are sites in Red Oak, West Des Moines, and Ottumwa where slaves were sheltered in their quest for freedom. The state's motto and constitution were further embraced in the Supreme Court decision in 2010 supporting marriage equality. The motto is not just a collection of words. Iowa walks the talk. Civil Rights matter.

Iowans were a significant part of the nation's battles in the Civil War, World War I, and World War II (WWII) and in more recent conflicts. In 1945 African American soldiers from southern states returned from WWII after risking their lives for freedom to return home only to find separate drinking fountains, separate places to sit on buses and separate seating in restaurants. The injustice of such actions was found unacceptable in schools and elsewhere. The 1954 Supreme Court's landmark decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* forbade racial segregation in public schools by overturning the prevailing concept of "separate but equal" supported by the 1896 ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. The *Brown* decision established a national precedent that reverberated across time and set the stage for the advancement of equal rights for all citizens, including students with disabilities.



Children Protected with the Salk Vaccine

In the 1950s, America faced a national polio epidemic that resulted in a huge impact on children. Children were physically compromised because of the polio epidemic. The potential for the virus to spread in crowded conditions affected community patterns of social interactions. Jonas Salk, a researcher from the University of Pennsylvania, developed a vaccine that was safe and protected children from polio. The nation worked together to achieve a viable, large-scale solution. Time magazine acknowledged Salk's monumental discovery. The

vaccine potentially prevented the risk and its devastating effect on children in the future; however, those afflicted with polio faced challenges with speech, language, mobility and, later employment difficulties in their lives.

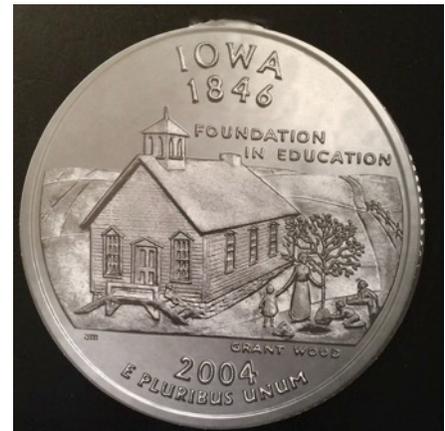
It was a long road from Iowa's one-room schools that were the backbone of education to the present day. It is a worthy journey and an important part of Iowa's proud educational history. As we will see, there is no Big Bang Theory to the beginning of special education in this state. Rather the educational services and professional disciplines emerged as a part of the evolution of Iowa's educational system and its services to children and families. The early pioneers in special education were largely parents creating opportunities through the efforts of the Association for Retarded Children and the Easter Seals Association. Iowa, like many other states, had a few special schools in large communities and regional institutions for individuals with disabilities.

In sports, from bygone days, we find the football stadium at the University of Iowa named for Nile Kinnick and the field named for Jack Trice at Iowa State University. Nile Kinnick won the Heisman Trophy in 1939. He died during WWII. Jack Trice was the first African American to play football at Iowa State University. He was a distinguished athlete who died as a young man from football related injuries. This is Iowa's past that still has a presence. Living legends.

In this section we will explore the development of Iowa schools and how the leadership of parent advocates, philanthropists and state officials were crucial to the formation of special education. Additionally, we will consider how civil rights and social justice were factors in the formation of special education services in Iowa.

Iowa's Early School Experience

Early School Opportunities. The one-room schoolhouse was a common practice in rural states like Iowa in the 1800s and early 1900s. These schools typically had children with a wide variation in ages and often utilized a practice called the Monitorial System when older students who had mastered skills in reading, or math for example, would support younger students who were acquiring this learning. In 1952 there were 4,649 Iowa school districts. In the 2014-15 school year there were 338 public districts. Interestingly, when an image of Iowa was embossed on a quarter in 2004 it was the one-room schoolhouse, as shown in this figure, with a teacher, child and the symbolic tree of knowledge. The slogan, *Foundations in Education*, speaks to the longstanding tradition and value of Iowans.



Iowa's Centennial Quarter

Iowa Pathways Project reports that prior to WWI there were few high schools. Most education occurred in one-room schools, which focused on basic skills. Those schools were mostly inclusive, meaning all students were served if they could get to school. A classroom could have students with a six to eight year age span. Those schools served the members of the community and the community supported their school.

Norman Rockwell's cover on the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1956, entitled *Happy Birthday Miss Jones*, captures the sense of American's general respect for teachers. Although a shared relationship between children and teachers can be tainted by idealism, it was more commonplace in Iowa than the exception.



Classrooms From Bygone Days

Special Schools for a Few. The federal law gave discretion and responsibility to the states to manage their unique educational systems. Iowa took this commitment to heart and invested energy into this enterprise, which eventually allowed all students with disabilities to have a place in school. It was not an easy path. In the first half of the 1900s, students with disabilities were often excluded from school. Larger metropolitan areas were the first to develop educational opportunities for disabled children. Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Davenport and other Iowa cities had some form of programs for individuals with physical and sensory disabilities. At this time many children with disabilities were systematically excluded from school experiences.

Smouse Opportunity School in Des Moines opened in 1931 and served 165 students with physical and sensory disabilities that precluded their attendance in



Smouse Opportunity School in Des Moines

general education classrooms. This school in Des Moines began because of the compassion and extraordinary philanthropy of physician Dr. David W. Smouse. Children with sensory and physical disabilities received unique educational opportunities in this school. Remember, in those days accessibility was an

issue without a solution. At this time specialized schools could provide concentrated services and therapies that were unavailable in other facilities for children. Smouse School remains in operation and provides a vital service for students requiring special education instruction and supports.

Other remarkable accomplishments were seen because of the effort of the Minnie Crippin Fund, which was instrumental in supporting the development of River Hills School in Waterloo. Bill Brown became the director of Exceptional Persons Inc. (EPI), which created community-based living options for adults and children with disabilities in the 1950s. EPI continues its important work in present times. Elsewhere in Iowa administrators such as Harry Stover (Manchester), Dean Jacobson (Ottumwa), Wayne Bruce (Clinton) and Drexel Lange (Iowa DE) worked with local school district leaders to develop public

classrooms and services for children with disabilities. These early pioneers' work in special education continues to live on in current time.

Some urban settings had schools such as Smouse, but what happened for families in rural Iowa that had a child with a severe disability and were not near a city with specialized services? As you might guess, the societal answer in the 30s, 40s and 50s was often home care or institutionalization, which did not necessarily include educational provisions. The prevailing thought in the 1930s was that public schools could serve many but not all students. Attitudes towards the disabled shifted somewhat when wounded warriors returned from war.

Following the end of WWII, America was in a state of rapid growth and significant change. Some service men and women returned home with disabilities as a result of their war experience. Understanding of the implications of such disabilities was slowly expanding in the public mind, which created a broadening acceptance and understanding of disabilities. The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the G.I. Bill, provided educational opportunities to those in the military who had set aside their college years in favor of service to their country. Broadcaster Tom Brokaw famously called those of this era The Greatest Generation because of their sacrifice and dedication to fight for freedom and equality. It was now their time for education. There was fervor for ongoing learning and acceptance of schooling for adults. While there was a broader embrace of diversity in higher education, this attitude was not typically extended to children with disabilities.

Leadership

Both federal and state level leadership was instrumental in safeguarding rights and expanding learning opportunities for citizens of Iowa and the nation.

Human Rights. Following the conclusion of WWII, humanity was recovering from widespread destruction, atrocities of the holocaust, devastating effects of soldiers' and citizens' injuries, both physical and psychological, and the painful loss of families whose homes, schools, and towns were destroyed. The people of Europe, Japan, England, Pacific Islands, African countries and other territories were recovering. People had suffered worldwide. It was a time of reflection. This was also the beginning of the Cold War. Russia occupied the Baltic States, Poland, Czechoslovakia and other territories. There were significant reasons for concern about human welfare.

In 1946 President Harry Truman appointed Eleanor Roosevelt as the United States representative on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. She was elected to be chair of the group consisting of 17 nations. In 1948 the United Nations adopted the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. This document identified the rights of humans, anywhere in the world. This was a magnificent step towards a shared understanding of what should be the rights of all humans. Although the declaration did not have enforcement powers, it was, as the name of the document indicates, a declaration of rights. It



Eleanor Roosevelt

represents a unique proposition with potential for global advocacy for all human rights.

Is this connected with America's quest for educating children with disabilities and enhancing lives of adults with disabilities? Yes, certainly. The declaration established agreement between nations about what should be the rights of all humans. It expanded the boundaries of respect and set expectations. Article 1 proclaims, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood." The declaration has 30 articles detailing civil, cultural, work, education, economic, social, political and civil rights. This is the right to live with freedom from oppression and to live with freedom from tyranny.

The concepts of treating all people with dignity, nondiscrimination and freedom that is the underpinning of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* are certainly consistent with the intent of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (1975) and Americans with Disabilities Act (1990). At the conclusion of WWII the general mood in the country reflected caring about others. The topic of human rights was slowly gaining traction in America. At this point, we will shift attention from the global scene to Iowa's educational system.

Special Education Leadership. Prior to the 1960s there were institutional settings for children with disabilities. The school for the deaf was in Council Bluffs, school for the blind in Vinton, mental health institutions were in Independence, Mount Pleasant, Cherokee and Clarinda, and individuals with intellectual disabilities were in Woodward and Glenwood. For children in these institutions it meant separation from their families. Alternatives to these institutions were needed. Could that happen? It was a time to do things in education that had never occurred before, such as was happening in the sports world in 1954 when Roger Bannister was the first human in history to run a mile in under four minutes. Likewise, another distinctive performance occurred in 1963 when Wilt Chamberlain scored 100 points in a single NBA game. Bannister and Chamberlain showed that accomplishments could happen with concerted focus. Alternatives for children with disabilities were needed.

The prevailing design of special education in Iowa was inconsistent, a disconnected pattern of programs across the state. Urban settings were most likely to provide special services facilities such as Smouse Opportunity School in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, and Davenport. In 1948 the Hospital School was created in Iowa City. The Association for Retarded Children (ARC) operated schools that offered services to support children and families. The ARC provided school experiences through volunteers and parents when public school programs were limited or nonexistent. The availability and quality of educational services were inconsistent across Iowa. The ARC provided a much-needed service for children and families. This remained in place until 1975 when federal laws supported equity in educational opportunities for children with disabilities. More about this topic will be discussed later in this chapter.



William Winterstein

In 1946, the Iowa legislature created Chapter 281 establishing the provision for special education. William Winterstein became the first state leader and, by law, was responsible for the development of programs and services for students with disabilities in the public schools. It took a long time to fully develop a unified special education system. In 1946 the journey had begun. A modest budget was appropriated to advance this work. At this time provision of special education assistance by Iowa school districts was permissive. It would take substantial leadership efforts and awareness to advance this cause. It is a credit to Iowa when the state leadership position was created in special education because there was no external mandate compelling this action. The state's motto

about championing rights of its citizens is in play with this initiative. This was a beginning effort to support educational

programs for children with disabilities in school districts, thus an alternative to the prevailing institutional settings.

Professionals' Education. America was in a reactive mode when the Russian Sputnik program appeared in the skies in late 1950s. The National Defense Education Act in 1958 (PL 85-804) created the first federal funding support with an emphasis on science and math. That laid the precedent for other federal initiatives. Soon after this, PL 85-926 was passed by Congress and signed by President Eisenhower. This bill authorized federal support for universities to offer fellowships for training leadership personnel for supervision and instruction of mentally retarded children and youth. This federal legislation opened the door for advanced education for many professionals who ended up in leadership roles in Iowa.



President Dwight Eisenhower

- ▶ Vernon Vance and Myron Rodee attended high school together. Following high school Vernon enlisted in the Navy and Myron in the Army prior to their college years at Emporia State University. Their college work prepared them with coursework that led to certificates as school psychologists with an emphasis on instruction and supervision of teachers with children who were mentally retarded or had mental health issues. The coursework resulted in master degrees. At the same time, Robert Gibson also attended Emporia State University

and completed a course of study similar to Vernon and Myron. All three individuals became AEA special education directors when the AEAs were formed in 1975. Federal laws and federal funding clearly had beneficial ripple effects for Iowa.

The process of authorizing personnel to work in Iowa schools and in special education services was a long road. One profession, school psychology, will be used to illustrate the credentialing process at this time. Standards and universities' professional preparation developed over time. The first reference to credentialing for school psychologists by the Iowa DE was in 1954. The requirement for a school psychologist's credential at this time was four years of approved college preparation and a baccalaureate degree from a recognized institution. Prior to 1954, if credentials were granted it would be through the Division of Special Education of the Iowa DE. Reportedly, J.B. Stroud at the University of Iowa, reviewed transcripts for psychologists moving from out of state and made recommendations to the Iowa DE.

In the late 1950s, a considerable number of school psychologists came to Iowa from Emporia State University in Kansas. Records are unavailable, the exact number of professionals who came from Kansas is unclear, but it was substantial because of competitive salaries and abundant job openings. Iowa universities were early in the process of establishing professional preparation programs in special education administration. Leadership would be needed to develop a foundation expanding the equality of educational opportunity for individuals with disabilities.

Steps Towards Equality

Equality is present when appropriate opportunity and rights are extended to people. This can be seen in many forms, including decisions about access to schooling as well as freedoms that are considered to be civil rights.

Screening and Early Special Education Services. In the late 1940s and 1950s some county educational systems employed school psychologists and speech teachers, the forerunner of the speech-language pathologist. Audiologists were valued but few were found in the state before 1960 and there may be a few consultants who worked with classes for children with intellectual disabilities. One of the services from the counties was screening of the student population. In the 1950s and 60s county school office personnel were asked to assist school districts in determining children's readiness for schooling.

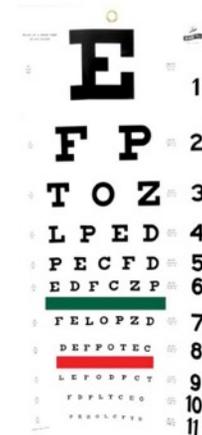
As we know, Goldilocks had a distinct preference for the temperature of porridge. She could determine when it was too hot, too cold or just right. In a similar way Iowa schools often had a preference for children being ready for learning and they often exercised the prerogative to exclude students, which often included some individuals with disabilities. At this time the concept of readiness was biased in favor of the school, meaning children needed to be ready for what would happen in the classroom rather than the schools being ready for the natural diversity of all children. Individuals, because of a lack of readiness, could be excluded. It was presumably a form of red shirting to allow maturation to do its mysterious work.

The early tradition of psychology in education was anchored in individual measurement and understanding of human capabilities. During WWI there was routine screening for the mental ability of American soldiers, eliminating anyone who was considered substandard. This was largely accomplished through the use of the Army Alpha and Army Beta Tests, one nonverbal, one verbal. In subsequent years testing for intelligence became an accepted practice and was used in schools, again often with the purpose of determining who was fit for educational experiences.

Efforts to identify children’s special needs often took the form of screening of the school population. Two stories address that circumstance.

- ▶ Vernon Vance recalled that in the County programs during the middle and late 1950s, the first six to eight weeks of the school year, he would assist the speech “therapist” in conducting hearing screening using the Johnson Method, with equipment accessed from the Iowa DE, that allowed one audiometer to be connected to 10-20 students. The procedure often occurred in locations with background sound coming from gymnasiums and the chorus room. Less than ideal, but it happened. According to Vernon, the school psychologist also conducted follow-up audiological sweep checks and vision screening with telebinocular equipment. Students who failed the screening were referred to physicians for further attention in the areas of need.

- ▶ Robert Gibson and Gus Silzer each described screening practices of that time period which included vision, hearing, motor skills and intellectual abilities. The key word in all of these areas of assessment is screening. These were measures that were meant to be brief in duration and designed to identify if there was a significant difficulty. The Snellen Eye Chart, and selected items from an intelligence test were frequently used. These practices applied the best procedure known at the time to carry out the screening tasks.



Snellen Eye Chart

It was a welcomed circumstance when professional audiologists were part of the special education county office. Gene Pratt graduated from the University of Northern Iowa, called Iowa State Teachers College at the time, and began working as an audiologist in 1959.

- ▶ Gene said the training at UNI was high quality for audiologists and speech pathologists that worked in the schools. However, Gene described the early equipment as very primitive. He said that hearing screening involved a whole bunch of headphones connected to a record player, with students marking what they heard on a piece of paper. Of course they could all see each other. Those students who didn’t pass were referred for an individual

assessment with an audiometer, which was nowhere near as sensitive as the equipment utilized today.

In the mid 1950s, the role of psychology was supportive to educational personnel but there were a very limited number of school programs for children in need of special education, especially in rural settings. The services available to support general education teachers were in the form of consultation. This circumstance is highlighted in this story from 1957 that gives a sense of the practice at that time.

- ▶ A 3rd grade teacher in a rural area was concerned about a student and asked Robert Gibson, the school psychologist from a county office, to come see about the situation. When entering the classroom the student was pointed out as the one sitting under the school desk. This student had Down Syndrome, which in those days was often called Mongolism. No special school opportunities were available in this rural community. The only help available was emotional support for the general education teacher. Teachers at this time did what they could with what they had and supporting teachers in this challenging situation was a vital role of the school psychologist, but it was no substitute for special education instruction.

During this era there were some technologies that allowed for the continuation of education when children were homebound. An example of maintaining communication with a student with significant health issues in 1958 also comes from Robert Gibson.

- ▶ A sixth grade girl named Mary, was confined to her bed at home because of a spinal condition. Robert secured a private telephone line that was coupled with a home-to-school telephone loaned by the State Division of Special Education. This two-way communication allowed Mary to take part in classroom lectures and discussions along with tutoring provided by a visiting teacher. The feeling of participation and closeness of her classmates was an important component to her recovery. In the 1950's The State of Iowa allocated funds for the installation, maintenance of the equipment, and a homebound teacher for children needing this service. The service was coordinated through the county superintendents office. Almost sixty years later this connection between home and school may seem rather primitive considering the technology available today, but at the time it was a welcome tool for students who might otherwise feel isolated.

Another source of information for parents and school personnel was a mobile service from the University of Iowa known as the Crippled Children's Clinic. Perhaps the name is a holdover from the era of the polio epidemic. Local resources, physicians, psychologists and educators could request service, which occurred on an annual basis. Large buses and sixteen wheeler labs traversed Iowa staffed with physicians, nurses, and psychologists to examine the children recommended for further evaluation. Commonly this was a request for a second opinion. These services were important, especially in the time period prior to the

development of special education services as provided by Area Education Agencies.

The case was mounting for early intervention, special education instruction and the availability of special education programs in Iowa. Professionals were doing the best they could but more services were needed. This was a time when strong advocacy for change was necessary. It would take time to effectively mobilize efforts and make a compelling case for special education. Parents and professionals concerned about the lack of educational alternatives for children with disabilities had vivid examples of the advocacy process used to secure justice and equity for persons of color.

Justice Through Peaceful, Persistent Defiance. Earlier in this chapter attention was drawn to Nile Kinnick and Jack Trice, both distinguished athletes. Another football related story of importance is from 1951. Drake University had an outstanding African American football player with a national reputation for athletic excellence, Johnny Bright. He was a potential Heisman Trophy candidate. In a football game in Stillwater, Oklahoma, Bright was the target of intentional violence on the football field that resulted in a broken jaw, which ended his season and contention for the Heisman. It was widely recognized as an act of racial prejudice. Clearly, injustice in many forms needed to be addressed in America.

With the dynamic leadership of Martin Luther King Jr., the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), activists put pressure on local communities and states for freedoms enjoyed by whites but denied to racial minorities. A noteworthy example of such pressure happened in 1955 when Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat for a white person and sit in the back of the bus. Rosa Parks was arrested for violating the law of Montgomery, Alabama. The Montgomery Bus Boycott followed, lasting about a year. The Supreme Court's decision found Montgomery's law, which supported segregation on public buses, to be unconstitutional. While Alabama is not Iowa, the federal court's position supporting racial freedom would later have significant implications for individuals with disabilities.



Bus From the Civil Rights Era

In the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) the Supreme Court unanimously declared that, "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." This is a statement for inclusiveness of America's public schools. This principle of justice was later applied to students with disabilities in segregated settings. Civil rights is a monolithic concept that is equally applied to racial minorities, students with disabilities, and other protected groups. When a cause is championed that impacts one group, it eventually ripples out to touch others like a stone thrown into a pool. This is exactly what happened in the 1960s and 70s in America. The process of evolution was underway.

Disability Awareness – Before the 1960s

In the time before the 1960s there was increasing visibility and early steps towards social acceptance of persons with disabilities. Consider the following. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) was a polio victim whose condition necessitated the use of a wheelchair for the remainder of his life. However FDR seldom allowed the press to photograph him in a wheelchair. Not everyone has the opportunity to minimize one's physical disabilities. At the end of WWII soldiers came home with war injuries that became part of their lives. These warrior's injuries and conditions were accepted and respected. Further, America had experienced a widespread exposure to polio and subsequent treatment in iron lungs. The awareness that physical calamity could strike children was present in the national psyche. Helen Keller, was an astonishing example of how a person with disabilities could have an excellent life. If it was true for her, then perhaps it could be true for others. Another aspect of disability awareness is caring about the well-being of others. That happened in the 1930s when Congress



President Franklin D. Roosevelt

established the Social Security Act. Coming out of the Great Depression, this Act provided a social safety net for those with limited incomes. What is important is to see this legislative action as reflecting shared social responsibility for American citizens, an attitude important in, eventually, extending educational opportunity to all children.

Collectively such events represented a beginning of positive social recognition of persons with disabilities, albeit the circle of acceptance was insufficient to encompass the vast number of Americans who had special needs and a stigma was still present in the minds of many. In a related way, racial injustice was emerging as a pressing issue in America. Some societal progress was beginning to be made, but the process was slow. As the saying goes, "the tallest mountain is scaled one step at a time." In Iowa the journey had begun before the 1960s but the road is long and much remained to be done.

Decade of the 1960s

The early 60s were ushered in with Elvis as the king and an invasion of the English led by the Beatles. The melodic voices of America's crooners with the soft sounds of Bing Crosby, Perry Como, Doris Day and Nat King Cole were fading out as rock and roll ramped up its vibrant beat. The big band sounds of Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Arty Shaw, and Duke Ellington were replaced with the Rolling Stones, the Beatles and the Beach Boys who brought new vibrations to the dance scene. Disc jockey Dick Clark was the nation's music barometer for youth, and Casey Kasem played the countdown of the ever-changing top 25 hits each week. Motown's music was gaining popularity with African American artists such as The Jackson 5, the Supremes, Gladys Knight and the Pips, and Marvin Gaye as headliners. There was way more to this time period than finger snapping and hip gyrations.



Elvis Presley

On a more serious note there was Cuba, off the coast of Florida, poised to be the setting of a dramatic confrontation. A face off between Russia and the United States occurred over the intention of Russia to place rockets with nuclear warheads in Cuba, in easy striking distance to American soil. President John F. Kennedy went to the brink of confrontation and achieved a peaceful resolution. Elsewhere in the world there was a growing awareness of Vietnam and the communist threat. The logic of the day was the Domino Theory: if Vietnam falls to the communists the other Southeast Asian countries will have the same fate. The Vietnam War began with U.S. military advisors, then U.S. troops, and activation of the draft. Conflict moved from the opinion page to the front page of local Iowa newspapers. Tragically, President John F. Kennedy died in Texas in 1963 from a sniper's bullet shot by Lee Harvey Oswald. Five years later civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis. Another national leader lost.

In this decade the nation experienced escalating racial issues. The injustice of discrimination in America was highlighted with the March on Washington. Likewise films such as *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, 1966, with Hollywood's

Sydney Poitier, Spencer Tracy and Katherine Hepburn brings the issue of relationships to the dining room table and America's consciousness. Exposing the hypocrisy in some Americans' lives was the film, *The Graduate*, 1967. The Civil Rights Act in 1964 made discrimination based on race, religion, sex, or national origin illegal. Turning this legislation into a cultural reality took time and racial tension continues to be a national issue to this day. Implementing Lyndon Johnson's legislation, called the War on Poverty, strengthened civil rights provisions. The civil rights actions raised the nation's consciousness and later proved foundational to securing rights for individuals with disabilities. Because of President Johnson's effort the Democrats lost political favor in the southern states.

Science and medicine were not standing still at this time. Dr. Christiaan Barnard successfully transplanted a human heart. Birth control became available through the use of "the pill," which led to women exercising their freedom. This began a sexual revolution that, in some ways, foreshadowed the emergence of the Equal Rights Amendment. The space program continued with a crowning achievement of safely landing a man on the moon and returning the crew to earth. For the first time there were actual photos of the earth taken from space. For many who experienced such an event the world became a little smaller with the possibility of greater connections between all people. That held out hope for working together for a greater good.



On Behalf of All Children, a Stand was Taken for Integration in Little Rock, AR

The 1960s were years of mounting social unrest with an increasing awareness of individual rights. In Iowa, special education was beginning to emerge with early efforts to provide services on a regional basis, while parents and advocacy groups were increasingly calling for improvements in educational opportunities, and a broadening awareness of disabilities. Professionals were also forming into associations to promote and support higher quality assistance for children with

special needs and their families. Professional licensure by the Department of Education influenced some degree of quality control of those who served in special education. The broader civil rights movement, which emphasized racial equality, led the way for those seeking rights in other areas, including those with disabilities.

Framework for Services

Regional Services. As the awareness of the need for expanding civil rights grew in Americans' consciousness, the art world was also seeking new forms of freedom in the 60s. Artists in the Abstract Expression movement were splashing colors in new ways that were intended to be totally non-representational. Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline and Willem de Kooning were prominent in this movement. The University of Iowa's Pollock painting, *Mural*, is now worth millions. While new patterns in art were emerging, changes were also occurring in Iowa's education system.



Abstract Art

Before 1960, a few metro and county schools in Iowa employed psychologists, speech-language pathologists, and audiologists to serve their schools. Most Iowa districts did not have a sufficient student population base or the financial resources to support employing specialized staff. Psychologists were often employed on a county basis yet many counties in Iowa did not have any psychologists. The solution to this dilemma was the provision of five regional psychologists who operated out of the Iowa DE, each with a service area of 20% of the state. This meant that assistance was assessment only and the client was the referring school. A sense of these regional services is noted in the stories below. There was often inadequate workspace in the school so professionals had to adapt. There was no requirement for parent involvement.

Vic Zike was one of the original five school psychologists in Iowa. He was proud of his profession and talked about his travels throughout the state. He described how he would leave his home Sunday evening or early Monday morning and would often not return home again until Friday. The work of school psychologists in those early years was to evaluate the most severely handicapped children and help find educational services. Typically in this time period the only services were institutions or isolated self-contained programs. Only the largest districts had placement options. Vic had numerous stories, which includes the following.

- ▶ Many of the schools Vic visited did not have space for him to test children, so he built a wooden table in the backseat of his Hudson automobile. He would take children to his car, climb in the backseat with them, and administer a series of tests. One cold and snowy day he was testing a girl in his car when there was a knock on the window. Because of the cold he had the car running to power the heater. The windows were frosted up and didn't work. When he opened the door, the school superintendent asked him

why he was in the backseat, with his daughter. Awkward. In those days parents weren't asked or notified when their children were evaluated, not even if they were the school superintendent.

Gus Silzer, another early Iowa school psychologist, also told about routinely testing children in the back seat of his 1956 police interceptor where he built a table to accommodate testing materials and provide a quiet space. This practice was used when there was no room available in the school or the sound level would have been disruptive. One-room schoolhouses left little opportunity for privacy. Imagine, testing in a car. It actually happened.

Statewide and regional psychological services from the Iowa DE were gradually eliminated once Iowa county units began employing school psychologists in the late 1950s and early 1960s. County school offices offered special education assistance by employing school psychologists, speech-language pathologists—who at the time were called speech teachers—and a few audiologists. Physical therapists and occupational therapists were mostly in hospital settings, preschools were private, social workers were in community agencies, vision teachers were at state institutions and personnel to support vocational activities were largely nonexistent. The dearth of professional programs and services was unacceptable. For change to take place, it called for effective advocacy, which appeared in many forms during the 1960s.

Power of Advocacy, 1960s style. It is informative to see the quest for disability rights in the larger societal struggle in the 1960s. Martin Luther King (MLK) gave his memorable *I Have A Dream* speech at the Lincoln Memorial in



MLK at Lincoln Memorial, 1963

1963. MLK's advocacy for civil rights was unwavering in the 50s and 60s. He was seeking justice that struck a chord with many Americans. Pete Seeger penned the song *I Have a Hammer*, made popular by Peter, Paul and Mary, which became an anthem for racial equality. The Coleman Report in 1966, *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, found that comparable funds for

African American schools and suburban schools were not a solution. What seemed to matter was having economically disadvantaged students educated with students who were in higher socioeconomic status situations. This called for integrated classrooms, integrated schools. Changes were needed in how the educational system was organized for racial equality to occur.

Parents of children with disabilities also had a dream and they too took action to secure rights on behalf of those with special needs. The role of parent groups was crucial to the development of special education programs and services in Iowa and the nation. In Iowa, the Association of Retarded Children (ARC), Easter Seals of Iowa, Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa, and other groups were instrumental in leveraging the political system and promoting societal

change on behalf of students with disabilities. In the 1960s parents did not have a guaranteed role in shaping the education of their children, but the collective voice of parents were heard and eventually listened to. As will be shown later, they changed America's educational system to be more inclusive. An illustration of parental influence at the local level is revealed in this story, told by Robert Gibson who was working in southeast Iowa.

- ▶ A prominent physician in the Mt. Pleasant area was successful in influencing the local board of education to allow a child to enter school before the age of five if he or she was judged to be ready for school. This is a strategy for gifted education. The district saw the wisdom in this proposal. The school psychologists conducted pre-kindergarten clinics. This involved screening for hearing, vision and selected items from the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test. Based on this information, and with the recommendation of the school psychologist, expanded educational opportunities became available for students who were judged to have advanced readiness. Likewise, children with a possible hearing or vision problem identified in the screening activities were referred to appropriate community services.

The above story is about changing schooling patterns for gifted children. This type of flexibility was unavailable for individuals with disabilities. At this time the social climate was unwelcoming to families with a child with a disability. Some physicians were promoting institutionalization of children with disabilities because there were limited resources to care for children and adults in many communities. Appallingly, Iowa institutions for mentally handicapped were known to engage in sterilization of adults. This may be a statement that is troubling to imagine, but in the 1960s and before these practices were regularly performed.

Parents who had a child with special needs were acutely aware of the lack of educational services. At this time, children could be excluded from public school, an act that could result in separation of children from their families. Likewise, non-inclusion in schools could be interpreted as a form of stigmatization that a child was not worthy of school or even being in the community. Many parents were understandably upset by such a proposition. Consider this example of the prevailing attitude of the time.

- ▶ A school psychologist told of a family in the late 1960s whose family physician said that their child with Down syndrome would be best served at an institution at Woodward. The parents were told their family might suffer extraordinary stress trying to care



Woodward State Hospital Administrative Office 1918

for this child in their home unless they chose institutional care. The physician's advice was followed. The child was institutionalized. The parents were never free of that decision nor appreciative of the physician's advice. The dilemma was a lack of educational and social service options, a circumstance in the 1960s that called out for advocacy.

School psychologists have a long history of serving as an advocate within their range of influence. Gus Silzer served as a regional psychologist and worked in a district on the eastern border of Iowa.

- ▶ The superintendent wanted a student, who had a visual problem, to be in a special class. Gus's evaluation, in part using the Hiskey-Nebraska Test of Learning Aptitude, determined the student was capable of school success. Gus wanted to talk with the family to share the results of his evaluation before he left the district on a Friday. There was a three-hour drive back to Des Moines. The School officials said the adults in the family would not be coming out of the field from doing farm work until after 6:30. Gus said he'd wait at the school, this was important. At the conference with the family Gus expressed his opinions and support for the child's schooling and referred the family to a Nebraska service with specialized services matching the student's needs.

John Steinbeck's touching depiction of Lennie and George in *Of Mice and Men* (1937) reflected the plight of poverty and disability during the depression years. There was no social safety net in America. Prior to the passage of Public Law 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA), there was very little financial support from the federal government or the State of Iowa for services for children with significant disabilities. There was so little public money for funding services that people were required to privately pay for the education of their significantly disabled child's education and care. Families could literally lose their farm to meet the financial obligations for their institutionalized child. This resulted in some families hiding disabled children so as to not lose their child to an institution and lose precious money needed to care for all family members. It was not a bright time for significantly disabled children across the country or in Iowa. During the mid 1960s, in Iowa, county boards of supervisors were billed by state institutions for the care and maintenance of children in these facilities. The county boards would then, in turn, seek to be reimbursed by the parents of the child in the facility. Mark Draper, AEA 13 special education director in Council Bluffs, told the following story of his mother, Helen, who was one of the people charged with assessing the financial ability of families to pay for such services.

- ▶ Helen Draper worked for Pottawattamie County as the Collector of Institutional Accounts. Pottawattamie County, as did many other counties at that time, collected funds from county residents who had family members in state institutions for individuals with severe mental health and intellectual/multiple disabilities. Facilities in Glenwood, adjacent Mills county, and Clarinda, in nearby Page County, funded by the state of Iowa, billed the



Helen Draper

counties for residents' services. Counties, in turn, sought to recapture the funding by billing families for the services. The responsibility of Helen Draper and her office was to recoup expenses from families as a result of institutionalization of family members. Prior to the social net of Supplemental Security Income (SSI), there were county work farms for the poor, the homeless, the bankrupt, and those with unmanageable debt. Compassionate people like Helen Draper did their best to soften the burden on families, but it was a funding systems problem that needed to be addressed. That solution happened in the 1970s with laws and public financing to support disability services.

Many were hearing the call for change in Iowa. Momentum was building to improve services for individuals with disabilities and their families. What is the chance of being successful? It is a story like David and Goliath in new clothing. This was a time for the bold to assert themselves. Consider Drake University in 1969 when they went to the NCAA basketball tournament, reached the final four and lost to UCLA by one shot. That Drake team was undaunted by the David and Goliath scenario. Likewise, those who championed the cause of improving special education services exemplified the same courage in Iowa. David and Goliath in a new arena.

President John F. Kennedy, in his 1963 message calling for the enactment of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, said, "Simple justice requires that public funds to which all taxpayers of all races contribute, not be spent in any fashion which encourages, entrenches, subsidizes or results in racial discrimination." Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. While individuals with disabilities were not included in the list in 1964, they were later added. This legislation established a national agenda for expanding the scope of justice for its citizens. The implications of the 1964 Civil Rights Act rippled out for decades and was reasserted in future Congressional laws including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Advocacy occurs in many forms and may involve parents, physicians, teachers, psychologists and others who want to influence policymakers. John F. Kennedy, whose sister had an intellectual disability, was a proponent of laws providing services that expanded opportunities for persons with disabilities. There can be common ground for actions when the best interest of the child is the centerpiece of a decision-making process.

Need for Improvement

Although progress was being made in the 1960s and early 70s, Iowa, like most states, did not have a comprehensive educational system that included all children with disabilities. Special education programs in public schools were an option. Organizations like Easter Seals offered sheltered workshops for youth and the Association for Retarded Children (ARC) provided daytime programs for children, often found in church basements and other facilities. Public schools were encouraged to provide services and, although strides were being made to define quality standards, there was not universal acceptance of such practices.

Two contrasting examples reflect the variance that occurred in Iowa during the 1960s.

Toni Van Cleve took a position as a special education teacher in a small district near Des Moines. She accepted the position because it provided a supportive environment for a new teacher.

- ▶ Toni's special education program was in an elementary school. Her students were individuals with mild intellectual disabilities, designated as educable mentally retarded during this time period. The classroom had kitchen facilities for applied learning, a reading series designed for special education, and some level of administrative support. The students had recess and lunch with peers, and were provided classes by the art, music, and physical education teachers. Additional support was provided by weekly services of an educational consultant, psychologist, and speech teacher through the Polk County Special Education Service Area.

Pat Dierks moved to Iowa from Kansas where she had completed coursework to become a school psychologist and teacher. An Iowa school district had reorganized and asked Pat to teach a program for children with disabilities. The facilities in this time period were sometimes located in less desirable conditions as clearly reflected in this story.

- ▶ An abandoned school building became the site for children to be taught by Pat Dierks and another teacher's special education class. Pat's class had 6 children, ages 5-17, classified as, using the terminology of that time period, Trainable Mentally Retarded. The other teacher was instructing nine students considered Educable Mentally Retarded. The disabilities included cerebral palsy, autism, and Down syndrome. Some of the children had never been in school before. Others had been in school settings for only a short duration. The school facility had no hot water, no hot lunch program, no curriculum, and very limited support for these teachers. The limited support they did receive included a speech pathologist that came for an hour every week or two, and a school psychologist who was on call. In this rural setting there were no audiological services, physical therapy or social work services. The teachers made an arrangement to have lunch at a Catholic school three blocks away. Everyday, including winter in northern Iowa, the class walked to the Catholic school so they could enjoy a hot meal. Conditions were far from ideal but two teachers with ingenuity, passion, and commitment, made the best of the situation for the children in their care.

The latter story is radically different from contemporary practices and the reader may want to disavow this happened in Iowa, but it did, at least in some places. There is no evidence that such conditions were widespread but children, teachers and families all deserved better treatment than is reflected in this circumstance.

There are two perspectives on this situation. First, the standard of physical conditions was not on a par with what was happening elsewhere in the school

system for other students. The inequity is obvious. The second, and alternative view is that this class is considerably better than having children reside at home and receive no school services and without social contact. Remember, during this time it was commonplace for children with severe disabilities to be institutionalized in Iowa facilities for the mentally retarded in Glenwood or Woodward.

When this happened there could be a lien on the family's home or farm for the cost of this residential service, which was significant. Additionally, another cost for the family was the emotional anguish of being separated from their child who lived elsewhere. Consequently, something in the local area was better than nothing, even if there was no hot water or hot lunch program. The teachers were compassionate and committed to doing the best they could with what they had to work with. This may sound like the WWII statements of Neville Chamberlain's notion of "Peace in our time". Let there be no mistake, this was not acceptable, just what was happening, not only in Iowa but across the nation.

During this time the issues of justice, fairness and equality were an emerging part of the state and national dialogue. Martin Luther King's statement, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere", reflected the mood in America for equality both in terms of geography and groups of people who were marginalized.

On a global scale, rights for those seeking racial equality, gay rights, women's rights, and right to an education for children with disabilities was in the wind. In 1969 at the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village the gay community took a stand against harassment by police. This is credited with launching the LGBT movement. Likewise, the quest for quality education for students was a growing interest. That meant supporting special education teachers in improving classroom instruction and availability of instructional materials.



Stonewall Inn,
Greenwich Village in NYC

Supporting Special Education Instruction. As special education programs were expanding in Iowa, many school districts were unsure how to meaningfully support their special needs teachers. That was painfully reflected in the story Pat Dierks told where teachers were provided with a substandard classroom and woefully inadequate district support. There was clearly a need for continuing learning opportunities to broaden special education teacher knowledge, skills and teaching material. In the late 1960s and 1970s state and federal staff development projects were designed and implemented in Iowa to assist special education teachers in addition to the ongoing efforts of professional associations. Additionally, the universities and colleges were also improving their instructional focus for teachers who would work with students with disabilities.

To address the absence of instructional materials, the Iowa DE in partnership with the University of Iowa carried out a three-year statewide project called the Special Education Curriculum Development Center (SECDC). It was a training-of-trainers model. In this project, selected special education teachers were brought together for one or two-day staff development trainings on specific topics. These individuals would return to their region, which may be a county or region, and conduct sessions about each topic. Curriculum materials for student

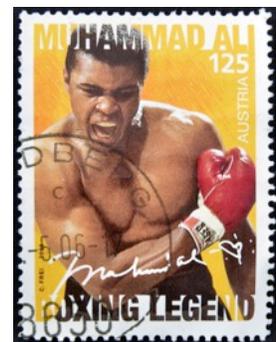
instruction were developed in areas such as social skills, math, reading, self-help skills and were provided to those attending these sessions.

- ▶ Toni Van Cleve was one of many Iowans who functioned as a SECDL trainer. Toni's region was in central Iowa. She explained that all of the trainers were currently working as special education teachers, which ensured a practical emphasis on the topic and sensitivity to the challenges presented by children in special education classes. Toni, as a SECDL trainer, conducted two-hour sessions on specific topics, such as social skills, literacy, and math. Attendance by special education teachers was voluntary. Twenty to thirty special education teachers typically attended these local sessions that occurred in the evenings. Teachers at the local sessions were eager to attend and benefited from talking with other teachers and received materials intended to enhance classroom instruction. The special education teachers would leave these local staff development programs with the SECDL manuals and related documents on how to incorporate the topic into daily lesson plans.

There were also in-service education programs for special education teachers offered by the Iowa Council for Exceptional Children and the special education section of the Iowa State Teachers Association. The Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa (LDA-IA), formed in the early 1970s, also attracted teachers and parents by focusing on classroom instruction.

Public universities and private colleges were offering teacher preparation programs for new teachers and a few offered advanced graduate degrees in special education. Appropriate reading material was often identified as a challenging topic for special education teachers when there was a wide age range in special classes. Edward Meyen at the University of Iowa used what was called Life Experience Charts as a potential solution for teachers. Following a shared classroom experience, the teacher generated a discussion and wrote down the students' words on a chart and the class used this for reading instruction. This approach controlled for vocabulary, used interest-based experiences, and had a social dimension within the specific classroom setting. It was another way to fill the void of age appropriate reading materials for this group of learners.

Language of the Times. A brash young man from Louisville, KY, named Cassius Clay won the national Golden Gloves title then claimed a gold medal at the 1960 Olympics and later earned a world boxing title in 1962. Everyone knew his name, then he changed it. Following the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, Clay's identity shifted when he became a Muslim and took the new name of Muhammad Ali. Language changes, sometimes by choice, as in the case of Ali, sometimes by social preference. Terminology in special education has also improved across the years.



Muhammad Ali

In Iowa during the 1960s and 1970s, students with intellectual challenges were served in two types of programs: *trainable mentally retarded* (TMR) focused on life skills for children with intellectual quotients (IQ) from 30-50. Students with IQ below 30 were much more likely to

be in an institution than public school. The other programs category was for individuals designated as *educationally mentally retarded* (EMR) learners. These students generally had IQs of 50-75. Instruction focused on learning of academics and life skills. Additionally, the term *handicapped* used in the 1975 legislation changed to *disabilities* in 1991. Later, in 2010, the designation *retarded* was replaced by *intellectual disability*. The term *retarded* describes the person whereas *intellectual disability* refers to a condition that the person has. The difference is significant. As Cassius Clay would assert, how one identifies herself or himself matters.

In the mid 1960s, parents and teachers were concerned about students who were not making expected educational progress in their classrooms. There were learners who demonstrated aptitude in many areas of educational development but were thwarted in selected areas of academics. Thus, a student may show excellence in math skills but seriously struggle with reading. In the 1960s this category of student was commonly designated as having a Minimal Brain Dysfunction (MBD). The educational performance was considered to be a result of how the brain functioned. A prevailing thought in this time period was that the neurological mechanism needed appropriate stimulus to allow learning to occur.

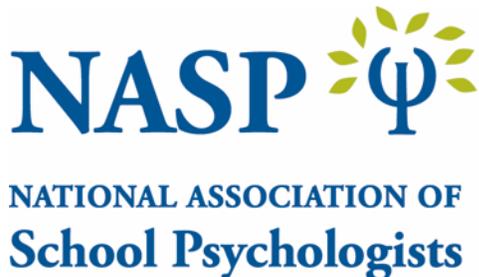
N. C. Kephardt advanced a popular theory in the 1960s that sought sensory reintegration as a way to modify pathways in the brain. The assumption was that children with MBD required activities to counteract the brain dysfunction. Following Kephardt's method young people engaged in activities such as walking a balance beam and doing motions like those used in creating angels-in-the-snow, and a wide range of other physical exercises. Such activities were viewed as a way of restoring brain functioning and thereby enhancing the brain's learning capacity. This approach was not validated by research. The emphasis on MBD was replaced by new terminology, Learning Disabilities (LD) and with that came an emphasis on instruction for students with LD as a means of improving achievement. Just as special education categories, such as TMR and EMR, were undergoing changes, so were efforts in the professional community. The shift was towards enhanced instructional approaches.

One more linguistic flashback in the 1960s; students with behavioral challenges were in classes designated as for the emotionally maladjusted. This is another example of labeling the person as maladjusted. In the 1980s the designation was changed to behavior disorders. The evolutionary process continues to move forward. Parents, professional associations and humanitarians such as Dr. Smouse and Minnie Crippin championed advances in special education. Change in American education was being accelerated by advocacy from parents and the professional community. The wheels of evolution were moving forward, slowly, but it was forward movement.

Professional and Public Advocacy

The Power of Many: Professional Associations. The saying, there is strength in numbers, holds true for political rallies, advancing armies, gang tackling in football and applies to professional associations too. The logic is straightforward: What cannot be done by one, can be done by one and one and one. In the 1960s, The National Learning Disabilities Association was being

formed with the intention of directing attention to this group of children. The Council for Exceptional Children was advocating for more teacher training, the American Speech and Hearing Association was pushing for higher minimum standards, a masters degree, as an entry point into the profession. School social work was a growing force in the National Association of Social Work, a group that strongly supports addressing needs of children and families. Progress was occurring in school psychology at this time as well. We will take a close-up look at one group to illustrate activities of professional associations in this era.



The American Psychological Association (APA) was formed in 1892. APA currently has 54 divisions, each representing sub-specialties including school psychology. With the growing numbers of professionals working in school psychology positions in the 1950s and 1960s, the concern was that the unique interests of this profession would not be well served within the larger APA structure. Therefore, professionals formed The National Association of School Psychology (NASP) in 1969. This would ensure the central focus of efforts would be directed towards this profession and its unique service to children, families and personnel in the educational sector. There has been a harvest of benefits that resulted from that action including establishing ethics and standards for quality service, professional development, and high levels of university training with state licensing standards.

In Iowa, increased requirements for school psychologist credentials were established in 1972 and administered by the Bureau of Certification in the DE.

"School psychologist. For approval by endorsement for service as school psychologist in kindergarten and grades one through fourteen, the applicant shall possess a master's degree in psychology from a recognized institution of higher learning and shall present evidence of completion of an approved program of graduate study in preparation for service as a school psychologist, either included in, or in addition to, the work leading to said master's degree. In addition, applicant shall present evidence of two years of successful teaching experience."

If an applicant came to Iowa and had not completed his or her program through a recognized institution that met the standard of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), there was a process by which the applicant could file his or her material, including transcripts of academic preparation, all teaching or educational experiences, and a list of all certificates held in other states. These materials were evaluated to determine eligibility for a certificate. This rule gave the DE staff the option to seek an evaluation from a recognized Iowa institution if said institution offered an approved program in the same area. For example, a school psychologist or speech-language pathologist

from another state could be employed if they met the standard of an Iowa university with an approved program through a transcript review. This helped Iowa educational agencies employ qualified staff.

Quality standards were rising in all professional disciplines. High levels of skills were needed to meet the educational, behavioral and social challenges of students with special needs. All professions were making adjustments to meet this need.

In the 1960s, Iowa was recruiting personnel from Kansas, Wisconsin, Illinois and other states to support special education needs. There was a growing willingness of educators to include students with disabilities in school services. It was critical that Iowa offered services in all areas based on the highest professional standards. Iowa children and families deserved the best that could be offered.

Disability Awareness – Decade of the 1960s

Societal awareness of persons with disabilities was expanding. Blindness and talent were not incompatible as evidenced in Ray Charles' popular music and widespread respect for Helen Keller, which helped expand the circle of acceptance of all persons with disabilities. President John F. Kennedy's sister, Rosemary, had an intellectual disability. Although initially guarded, the family later made no effort to keep this condition a secret. To the contrary, there was the beginning of a call to action. In 1968 Eunice Kennedy Shriver boldly initiated the early efforts that resulted in the Special Olympics. In the world of literature, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee is a story that takes a stand against racial prejudice with Atticus Finch fighting for justice with a sub-plot of daughter and son, Scout and Jem, accepting the reclusive character, Boo Radley. This classic book invited every reader to consider the role of social justice close to home. These examples illustrate how social awareness was raised, a precursor to the broad embrace of progressive legislation in the 1970s. There was ample reason for reform with Iowa institutions in full bloom. The Iowa DE was funding special education services but the lack of a mandate hampered broad-based acceptance by many school administrators and educators. University training programs for school leaders and administrators had, at best, minimal emphasis on educational services for children with disabilities.



Eunice Kennedy Shriver with Youth

Decade of the 1970s



Kent State University, 1970 Site of Protest

Bob Dylan's popular lyrics, "The times, they are a changin'," proved to be an apt description of this era. The early 70s was a time of strong opinions, passions, and protests. Questions about human rights were intensified by reactions to televised images of the Vietnam War and subsequent resistance to the military draft, which was re-established in December of 1969 to begin early 1970. Voices of youth rose with intense objection to the Vietnam conflict, the draft that

required men to fight in a war they fiercely objected to, and a political climate that was largely viewed as untrustworthy. The country was in turmoil and ripe for protests and violence. The incident that became known as the Kent State Massacre in 1970 resulted in four youth dying with the Ohio National Guard holding the smoking gun. Students at Kent State were protesting the invasion of Cambodia. In 1973 military involvement in Vietnam ended with congressional support of the Case-Church Amendment. In 1974 President Nixon resigned as a result of the Watergate Scandal and Gerald Ford took the mantle of the presidency. Jimmy Carter won the Iowa Caucus on the Democratic side, which propelled him into prominence and subsequently he won the general election in 1976. America celebrated its 200-year-milestone since declaring Independence; 1976 was the bicentennial. That same year, in a fight flick, underdog *Rocky* won the Oscar for best picture. *Star Wars* was an immediate cinematic sensation in 1977, with heroes battling the empire. The phrase, "May the force be with you," became iconic. The Women's Movement pushed for



Women Equal Rights Movement

formal adoption of equal rights, but unlike the women's suffrage movement there was insufficient political support for a constitutional amendment.

During this decade the fab four, the Beatles, broke up and went their separate ways. The Rolling Stones and heavy metal bands maintained a strong presence on the airwaves, as did folk singers like Joan Baez, Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie. Disco music and dance moves were popular too. Overall, it was a time of turmoil, unrest, protest, and advocacy. The Supreme Court's decision on Roe v. Wade legalized abortion. It was a time of strong opinions and intense philosophical advocacy for causes of concern to citizens. The national passion for justice had implications for special education.

In this chapter, the 1970s is presented in two sections. The early 70s was marked by ongoing growth in special education programs in Iowa. The second section begins in 1975 when landmark federal legislation guaranteed all children with disabilities the right to an education. The Area Education Agencies (AEAs) were established and that brought with it all the challenges inherent in organizing, recruiting staff, training, financing and serving children and their families. An emphasis on early childhood special education became an important part of the service model in Iowa. For both young children and those of school age an early priority was the identification of students to receive special education services. Iowa universities and professional associations expanded to accommodate the changing times. All of this will be further amplified in the following section.

The First Half of the 70s

The early 1970s was a period of continued slow growth in special education programs, aided by the joint county offices that provided a broader base for supporting specialized services. Some preschool programs provided by Iowa school districts recognized the importance of early intervention as a means for preparing students for school success. Local schools were collaborating with special education personnel from county offices and forming constructive working relationships. Iowa's Area Education Agencies (AEAs) replaced county and joint county offices of education in an effort to provide efficient and economical services statewide. Federal legislation guaranteed children with disabilities access to a free and appropriate education. Now, let's take a closer look at these topics.

Readiness for Learning. Yes, the 70s had protests, but this was also a time of optimism in America's ingenuity following the 1969 moon landing when Neil Armstrong said, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." In this time of innovation some Iowa school districts were reluctant to include children because of diminished readiness. Progressive school districts offered early childhood education. This was often in the form of a teacher visiting homes and working



NASA Moon Landing Occurred in 1969

with the children and their parents to assist in the acquisition of needed skills to be ready for school experiences.

- ▶ In 1966 Joan Turner Clary was an early childhood teacher hired by the Woodward-Granger Community School District to work with parents to develop skills that would aid their children in becoming ready to learn. The intent was that parents' skills would generalize and be useful with interactions with other children in the families. The program in Woodward-Granger called Home Start conveys the notion that school readiness begins early and includes vital home supports. The goal was early learning for children and direct benefit for parents. Home Start involved group meetings with parents, home visits and assessment of school readiness. The pre-kindergarten evaluation included kindergarten teachers and the school psychologist. Home visitations also involved outside agencies such as health and welfare professionals to aid children and their families. The intent was twofold: enhance school readiness and increase parents' skills. This was a progressive approach and quite the opposite from passively holding children out of school while waiting for the mystery of maturation to unfold.

Woodward-Granger was a forward thinking Iowa school district that believed that it was highly desirable for children to be ready for school. To attain this outcome it was necessary for school personnel to work collaboratively with parents and other partners in supporting the education of young children and their families. Such a relationship was established between local schools and county school units with special education professionals.

Special education classrooms were expanding in rural and urban areas in Iowa. The category of learning disabilities and the advent of resource rooms were in ascendancy. At this point, principals often took the position that, since they were less familiar with what special education teachers would do, it was up to those teachers to define their work.

- ▶ Bonnie Green and Jan Campbell were at an elementary school in a large urban district. They recalled being assigned a closet for a workspace and that the instructional materials were mostly the outdated textbooks that remained when a new curriculum was adopted for general education students. Special education teachers needed to be resourceful in working out schedules with general education teachers, communicating with parents and designing instructional groupings for students with similar needs. Collectively, this was a challenging task. Bonnie and Jan were tenacious in their quest to serve the students in their care.

Interventions. In the early part of the 70s there was a shortage of special education programs. Educational interventions intended to improve students' learning and behavior often occurred in general education classrooms. Traditional practice is a relative term. Consider stories by two professionals, before and after PL 94-142, the law that mandates services for children with disabilities.

- ▶ Bruce Jensen started his practice in 1972 as a school psychologist and later a supervisor, then a sector coordinator and an Area Director of Special Education. When he graduated from a school psychology-training program in 1972 the program was primarily diagnostic in orientation and highly inferential in nature. Graduate students were taught inferential measures like the Thematic Apperception Test and Children's Apperception Test, along with intelligence measures. Bruce began working in the schools when there were no resource rooms and teachers were asking for assistance for what they could do to help children in their classroom. The assumption was that the classroom teacher would provide the additional services to the child with supports from the school psychologist or other professionals working with the county school system. Traditional practice for Bruce was a consultative approach to providing assistance for teachers to help children in the general education classroom.

- ▶ This experience is contrasted with Jim Stoycheff's stories when he started his practice in 1977. This was two years following 94-142 and a time when the role of the school psychologist was transformed from one of providing direct assistance and interventions to the classroom teacher to a role with an emphasis on psychometrics. The passage of 94-142 was a tremendous step towards finding and serving students with disabilities, but the focus was primarily on "Child Find" and placement in a special room. 94-142 created the concept of resource rooms for children with disabilities and a seemingly endless funding source to pay for the services. School Psychologists were called upon to test children to find those in need for these programs. Traditional practice for Jim was a test-and-place model that focused on the number of children identified, not on student outcome measures.

In addition to support for parents of preschool children and assistance for general education teachers, there were needs of students with disabilities that required greater supports. There was a growing awareness that changes would be needed in Iowa's educational system.

Improving the System of Service

Progress seldom happens by accident. In fact it is generally very intentional. It happens because of the efforts of people who embrace their passion and fight the good fight. We are, collectively, the benefactors of their courage, indomitable spirit, and willingness to take risk for a cause that they believed in deeply. This was a time that called for advocacy by parents and professionals to exert their leadership and leverage the principles of justice and law of the land.

Power of Advocacy, 70s Style. Robert Crumb was the creator of an iconic symbol of the day with the designation "Keep on Truckin." The attitude of those in the disability community, both professionals



and families, was one of advocacy for change. Although Crumb's slogan and symbol were never specifically associated with the quest for disabilities rights in the 70s, the persistence of advocates was a call for action that required an enduring resolve to keep on truckin' forward, always forward. Advocacy calls for action and attitude, as expressed in the Nike ad, "just do it."

In the 1970s, special education had two emerging faces: one turned towards the sun, the other the shade. The light was shining on the growing strength of public education and its responsibility for expanding services to include children with disabilities. In a dark contrast there were state institutions for simply managing behaviors, which were considered by many to be just another variation of applying the principle of separate but equal. State institutions, in some cases, were referred to as human warehouses. Education in these facilities was often minimized and seldom individualized.

In the 1950s and 60s Iowa had two institutions for the retarded, the terminology of the day, in Woodward and Glenwood. Children were placed in these facilities often at the discretion of county welfare workers. There were tremendous differences between states. An emerging level of concern arose from ill treatment of persons with disabilities in some institutions on the east coast. This situation was made painfully vivid in Burton Blatt's 1966 book, *Christmas in Purgatory*. Blatt, a professor at Syracuse University, and Fred Kaplan, a photographer who used a hidden camera visited five state institutions for the mentally retarded. The photojournalism approach revealed strikingly inhumane conditions in such facilities. This was not in Iowa, but the attitude about fair treatment for residents in such environments was increasingly under scrutiny nationwide. Some groups were involved in initiatives intended to provide options to institutionalization. Both parent associations and the professional community were advocates for reform of special education in Iowa.

Parent Advocacy. Some parent associations took legal action to promote educational opportunities. In 1971, the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) prevailed in court when it was determined that a free and appropriate education must be provided for children with mental disability who were between the ages of 6-21. One year later, *Mills v. District of Columbia Board of Education*, 1972, produced a second landmark decision that determined children had been excluded from schooling opportunities without due process rights, hence without parental consent. These precedent setting legal decisions became translated into federal law that revolutionized special education.

While the court decisions of PARC and Mills were happening on the national scene, in Iowa the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC), led by Helen Henderson, was successful in moving individuals from institutions and hospital wards to a cottage living arrangement on the campuses of institutions, which is a shift towards community-based living. Elsewhere in Iowa, the Easter Seals Association developed and implemented workshops for adults with disabilities to keep individuals in their community and employed. These organizations addressed a significant need in providing early services for children and adults with special needs. Iowa is indebted to the leadership of these organizations for their enduring commitment and unrelenting persistence.

In the early 1970s Iowa legislators were considering how to provide better services for individuals with disabilities. Three special education structures were

considered as service models for Iowa. They studied how services were provided in other states.

- ▶ Chuck Grassley, in the Iowa legislature at the time, was provided information about the three possible models. First, educational cooperatives were being implemented in neighboring states of Minnesota and Illinois, so they were considered. Second, a unified K-14 system implemented under the community colleges of Iowa was examined as it had the potential to reduce governmental bureaucracy. And third, a separate system with its own board of directors was explored. Chuck Grassley was an advocate for the community colleges model overseeing special education on a statewide basis. Three rationales: The community college system was already established, had an existing funding mechanism and would not be creating a new taxing authority. Grassley said that he recalled Helen Henderson from Waterloo as an energetic, dedicated, persistent voice for the disability community. As a parent with a child with a disability and leader of Iowa's ARC, Helen Henderson had a solid understanding of the need for change. Her voice was heard by legislators.

These were interesting times. Fritz Krueger, special education director of a joint county unit in Fort Dodge, recalled the following.

- ▶ The superintendents of the community colleges lobbied hard to have an AEA structure under their umbrella. The county and joint county superintendents were vociferous in their opposition to the community colleges control. They argued that the community colleges focus was postsecondary and vocational education. The county and local superintendents agreed that this focus would remain and general education and special education would just become "step-children" for funding and not the primary focus of interest. In addition, the wide array and complexity of services would be too much for one board to handle. That was the argument for a separate board and organizational structure. The legislature and state superintendent agreed, along with Helen Henderson and the state ARC.

What was needed was a better structure to support and improve the service delivery system for students with disabilities. In Iowa, the Area Education Agency (AEA) held that promise. The bill originating in the Iowa Senate was identified as Senate File 1163.

Professional Advocacy. Special education administrators in Iowa were strong advocates for advancement of Iowa's special education services and the anticipated federal legislation that would guarantee educational opportunities for children with disabilities. Iowa Senate File (SF) 1163 created the AEA structure, established an innovative funding mechanism called the weighting system to support expanded services, and proposed a governance structure for the new agency. By way of example, Fritz Krueger, from Fort Dodge, was one of the directors who met with Iowa legislators to explain the advantages for children and parents. Likewise, Robert Gibson, located in the Des Moines area, was frequently called into sessions with legislators to explore implications of SF

1163. Robert Gibson was on the hill so much he was often considered an informal lobbyist. Other administrators including Vernon Vance (Davenport) and Myron Rodee (Cedar Rapids) were frequently meeting with local legislators and parent groups to muster a broad base of support for passage of the AEA legislation.

Fritz Krueger's passion to increase services is exemplified by the numerous and well articulated letters he wrote to state legislators and United States Congressmen and Senators to urge passage or changes in laws for Children with Disabilities. There was never a question where Fritz stood on a subject. He stood solidly in support of special education programs. It was his tireless work, and that of the original group of AEA Directors of Special Education and State DE staff, that helped enhance services for special needs children in Iowa by supporting state and federal reform.

Beginning of the Area Education Agency. In 1974 a perfect storm was taking shape, drawing upon the compelling legal precedents in the Mills and PARC decisions. The social environment brought together advocacy groups like ARC, progressive legislators, educational leaders in the DE, county special education offices and local districts, in partnership with legal advocates to champion the cause of the rights of the disabled. Likewise, there was a prevailing sentiment in America that the times called for rectifying patterns of social injustice that Martin Luther King, the Women's Movement, anti-war demonstrators and advocates for special education brought to life. Collectively, all of these forces created a social awareness within Iowa and reflected a national sentiment that supported an effort for legislative action that would reform the state's special educational system and federal system.

- ▶ Chuck Grassley was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1974 where he served until 1981 when he was elected to the Senate. He has served in the United States Senate with distinction ever since. Prior to being elected to Congress, Senator Grassley served as an Iowa Legislator from 1959 through 1974. Grassley had served as the Iowa legislative chair of the education committee then later became the chair of the Appropriations Committee. In 1972, then state legislator Grassley was a strong proponent of establishing a K-14 system using the existing community college regional boundaries. The proposal would reduce the size of state government by eliminating the county and joint-county boards of education and superintendents' offices and put the services under the community college boards of education. Grassley stated that this would help parents get the power of government behind them. The bill passed the Iowa House in 1972, but not the Iowa Senate.
- ▶ According to Robert Gibson, the bill met with strong opposition from K-12 schools who feared loss of local control and from community colleges who preferred to stay focused on technical education and on two-year college education. What advocates and legislators learned from this effort led to important components to the establishment of the Area Education Agencies. For example the Board of Directors for the AEAs are elected by the Board of Directors of the local school districts they serve, to accommodate

the concept of local control rather than general elections. In addition, the AEAs are partially financed by flow through moneys through the local districts in their respective regional boundaries.

Iowa legislators created the Area Education Agency (AEA) system that would replace the county and joint county system. The AEA became an intermediate unit in partnership with the DE, and school districts. The AEA structure had political and pragmatic appeal by streamlining communication and supporting enhanced educational opportunities for all children. Regionalization of service had a positive history in Iowa with the community colleges being organized in the 1960s and later the regional media services, which pre-dates the development of the AEA structure. In 1974 the Iowa legislature passed Senate File 1163 that created the AEAs with three purposes: economy, efficiency, effectiveness in providing service and equality of educational opportunity. The AEA was to have three divisions: special education, media services and other services. "Other services" became what was later designated as educational services. Frank Vance, as state director of special education at the DE, penned much of the initial draft pertaining to special education services.



Frank Vance

There was strong statewide advocacy for the AEA system and for enhanced services for special education. Some of those who worked to help legislators support Senate File 1163 were special education directors Robert Gibson (Des Moines area), Fritz Krueger (Fort Dodge) and joint county superintendents John Mecklenburg (Fort Dodge area), and Perry Grier (Waterloo area), Cal Bones (Council Bluffs area), Lou Pickett (Davenport area), Iowa's State Superintendent of Education, Robert Benton, and Helen Henderson with the Association of Retarded Citizens (ARC). There were many, many others. The point is that it was a choir of voices supporting political action that helped legislators accept and understand how this legislation would benefit Iowa's education system and all learners.

Special education was by far the largest portion of AEA personnel. The concept of equitable services was essential in providing education for individuals with disabilities, especially in the low incidence areas of hearing and vision. There were distinctive differences in the availability of services in rural and urban



Iowa's State Capitol

settings in Iowa. Children deserved something better and the inequity was unacceptable. AEAs would employ itinerant personnel to provide essential educational assistance. Additionally, AEAs would help districts with professional development and recruitment of special education teachers. AEAs employed professionals with unique expertise

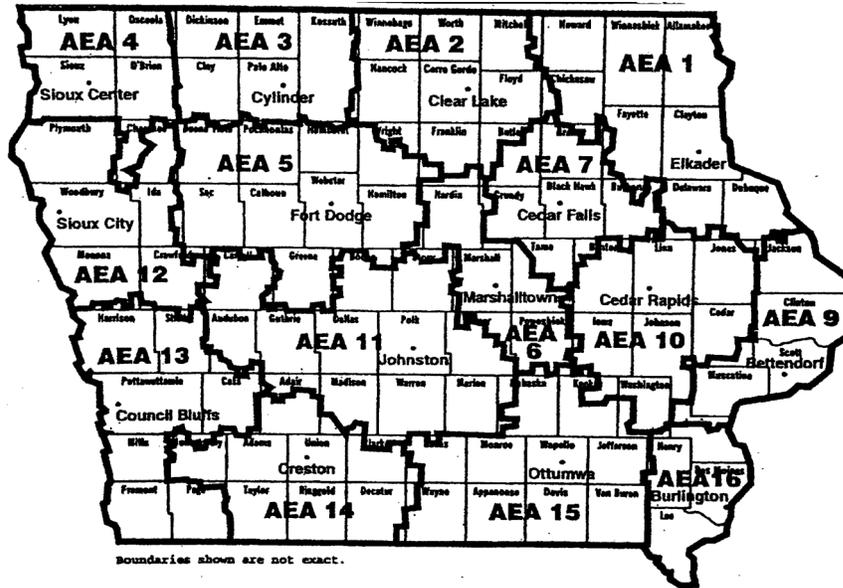
who could contribute important perspectives to help parents and local school personnel make informed decisions about the education of students with disabilities. AEA special education staff included school psychologists, audiologists, speech-language pathologists, social workers, audiologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, special education nurses, and special education consultants.

- ▶ Fritz Krueger, special education director in a joint county unit and later AEA 5, told how the original AEA budgets for 1975 were established based on two factors. Current expenses for special education services in the county and joint county systems along with projections of estimated costs to reach full service in five years. Budgets needed to consider, to name a few components, transportation cost for students and staff, setting up new offices, hiring professional staff in virtually every area of special education, equipment requirements for staff, and insurance. Budgets would be adjusted as students with disabilities were identified to ensure appropriate services.

The builders of these budgets had a challenging task. A crystal ball would have come in handy, but the task required a considerable element of professional judgment, vision and administrative wisdom. Additionally, Iowa legislators had an expectation that full service could be achieved in five years. That would have been in the early 1980s. We will revisit this important expectation in the next decade.

The mechanism for financing special education instructional services in SF 1163 was a unique weighting system. Frank Vance, chief of the bureau of special education in the DE, was instrumental in the design of the state finance strategy that is still in place today, one of the many legacies of this visionary leader. In this structure it was assumed that students with disabilities would require different amounts of services and consequently different levels of funding for instructional programs. There were three levels of funding: 1.8, 2.2 and 4.4. The state legislature determined the funding level for all students, which is 1.0. The weightings take the base level of funding and used the weighting multiplier for additional resources to pay for special education services for identified students according to the three levels of need reflected in the three weightings. Students with severe disabilities who were in self-contained classes and no regular education programming would have the largest level of funding, 4.4. Students with disabilities who were in general education classes for some period of time would be indexed to account for the other two levels of need. Iowa's School Budget Review Committee had the authority to increase or decrease the weightings by a maximum of two-tenths of the additional weighting multiplier in any given year.

The legislation passed and aligned three systems of service: The Iowa media center network, community colleges and AEAs. This was an opportunity to support interagency collaboration and cooperation. Fifteen AEAs were formed. The legislation required the AEA to have a director of special education. Interestingly, the original legislation did not include a chief administrator.



AEA Boundaries on July 1 1975

The AEA Special Education Directors had diverse professional backgrounds and experience in working with individuals with disabilities and their families. Fritz Krueger was of assistance in identifying the individuals who were the original leaders in the fifteen AEAs and their professional backgrounds.

AEA	Special Education Director	Professional background
1	Gene Pratt	Speech and Hearing
2	Harold Webb	Speech and Hearing
3	Dixey Morrison	Psychology
4	Bob Tegeler	Speech and Hearing
5	Fritz Krueger	Speech and Hearing
6	Mike Donahue	Psychology
7	Wayne Mooers	Speech and Hearing
9	Vernon Vance	Psychology
10	Myron Rodee	Psychology
11	Robert Gibson	Psychology
12	Lloyd Bach	Psychology
13	Jim Ziolkowski	Psychology
14	Pete Malmberg	Instruction
15	Dean Jacobs	Psychology
16	Bill Johnson	Speech and Hearing

It is noteworthy that the creation of the Iowa AEA structure in 1974 pre-dated the federal mandate in special education, the *Education of All Handicapped Children Act* of 1975. The point is that Iowans valued education and were accepting the responsibility of educating students with disabilities. The state's motto, "Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain," took on new life with a sustained effort to include students with disabilities in Iowa's educational system. Both the AEA structure and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act commenced on July 1, 1975. The federal laws provided a legal framework to advance a unified service delivery system in Iowa.

The Second Half of the 70s

In 1975 the evolution of special education went into hyper speed with the implementation of Federal Legislation (PL 94-142) guaranteeing an education for all handicapped children. Earlier in the same year the Iowa legislature established the AEAs as a means for providing educational opportunities statewide.

Federal Legislation Expanded Special Education Services. Throughout this decade the passion for honoring civil rights was front and center in the minds of the majority of Iowa citizens. The time had arrived to ensure equal educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This included preschool children and school age youth. The Area Education Agencies began operating and offered an array of professional services to all districts statewide. This was intended to be statewide equity for children.

At the federal level two congressional acts in the 1970s transformed the rising tide of public support for civil and human rights. This was not a passive attitude about social justice; rather it became federal law that provided guarantees and protections. With the dedicated work of advocacy groups for persons with disabilities, educators and champions in Congress, legislation was passed advancing education and fair treatment of persons with disabilities. The two laws are considered next.

The Rehabilitation Act (1973) prohibited discrimination of individuals with disabilities in programs receiving Federal financial assistance. Since virtually all of America's schools received federal funds the implications were widespread. Section 504 of this Act required reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities in both schools and at work sites. This included program accessibility as well as effective communication for persons with hearing or vision loss. The law included the concept of structural accommodations in buildings to provide for equal access to schooling and employment. While this law takes the high ground of championing equitable treatment for individuals with disabilities, there was no funding to support such actions. The authority for requiring accommodations to level the playing field became established with this law. The concept of requiring accommodations became strengthened in the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990).

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Effective on July 1, 1975, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) was also known as PL 94-142. To decode the alphabet soup: PL means public law; it was the 142nd federal law passed by the 94th Congress. It was common practice to refer to the requirements as those in PL 94-142 rather than the name of the Act or even initials, EHA. Perhaps this was done because saying PL 94-142 emphasized that this was federal law.

This law, signed by President Ford, had four bold purposes, which established the framework for addressing educational services for children and youth with disabilities nationwide. These purposes have demonstrated resilience as evidenced by these themes being continued when the law was reauthorized in subsequent years:

- To assure that all children with disabilities have available to them... a free appropriate education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs.
- To assure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected.
- To assist States and localities to provide for the education of all children with disabilities.
- To assess and assure the effectiveness of efforts to educate all children with disabilities.



President Gerald Ford Signed EHA legislation

The implications of this legislation are significant. A zero reject position had been established that required states and districts to provide a free and appropriate education for all children with disabilities. For this to happen students must be identified using nondiscriminatory testing procedures. Additionally, educational opportunities would be provided in the least restrictive environment where benefits could be achieved and instruction would be guided by an individualized educational program. Further, due process procedures were guaranteed that allowed decisions to be challenged in a hearing process and parents or guardians were to be involved in the decision-making process about their child's special education identification and educational services. All states were now accountable to the federal government, which was a bold shift from the past.

At this time most states did not have a legal mandate to educate all children with disabilities. School districts could, and did, exclude students because in some circumstances there were no programs for students with unique needs or because individuals were considered to be unready for schooling. However, federal law trumps state law. Children with disabilities would be provided educational opportunities. In Iowa it was up to local school districts, working with the AEAs and parents to determine how this responsibility may be effectively advanced. Federal funding was attached to this law, which functions as a very strong incentive.

The table below is a brief look at the functions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and PL 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. The scope of responsibility, ages covered by the laws and funding parameters differ considerably.

Contrasting Features of Two Laws

<i>The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504</i>	<i>The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) PL 94-142</i>
Anti-discrimination	Entitlement
What you must not do	What you must do
Unfunded	Funded
Birth through adulthood	Birth to graduation or 21

Structure of Iowa’s Service Agencies. There are currently three levels of Iowa educational agencies supporting families and their children. They include the Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies (AEAs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs). These three are not hierarchical, but interdependent forms of support. AEAs were conceived as a service delivery system and a means of economically supporting local districts. Further, Iowa’s AEAs have set boundaries and prescribed responsibilities. AEAs were charged with assisting districts in meeting the new special education mandate. The AEA system offers a stable service delivery model that has stood the test of time.

Originally, sixteen AEAs were proposed by the Iowa legislature, but that number soon changed to fifteen. An AEA could provide equity of services across a broad geographic area. This was especially critical for low incidence populations: deaf, blind, physical disabilities, severe and profoundly handicapped, and severe behavior disorder. A broadly defined service base allowed for supporting students closer to their homes. Some AEAs established names, others stayed with numeric designations.

AEAs Original Locations in 1975

<u>AEA Name and Number</u>	<u>Administrative Center</u>
Keystone AEA 1	Elkader
Northern Trails AEA 2	Clear Lake
Lakeland AEA 3	Cylinder
AEA 4	Sioux Center
Arrowhead AEA 5	Fort Dodge
AEA 6	Marshalltown
AEA 7	Cedar Falls
Mississippi Bend AEA 9	Bettendorf
Grant Wood AEA 10	Cedar Rapids
Heartland AEA 11	Ankeny, later Johnston
Western Hills AEA 12	Sioux City
Loess Hills AEA 13	Treynor, later Council Bluffs
Green Valley AEA 14	Creston
Southern Prairie AEA 15	Ottumwa
Great River AEA 16	Mt Pleasant, later Burlington

Iowa had 15 AEAs numbered from 1 to 16. There was no AEA 8. This was not by design but by default. Gene Pratt was the original Special Education Director in AEA 1 and told this story.

- ▶ In 1974 the proposed AEA boundaries were intended to be large enough to provide a population base that allowed for special education services and economic sustainability. After the initial

area maps were drawn it was determined that AEA 8 did not have enough population to support the agency's work. The solution was to divide the districts between AEA 9 (Mississippi Bend AEA) on the south and AEA 1 (Keystone AEA) on the north. The established number designations of the AEA's remained. AEA 8 vanished in 1974, before the first year of the AEA's operation in 1975.

Like a solid base under a new home, the federal and state laws were a solid foundation for the constructive actions that would follow. All Iowans benefited from the efforts of those who worked to establish this legal framework and the legislators who took action and supported disability rights.

Fiscal Considerations

When an Oscar Award winning movie is made it is most likely that people will attribute success to the prominent actors who perform the roles that appear on the silver screen. In the past, star power would shine from the likes of Jimmy Stewart, Katherine Hepburn, Marlon Brando and Ingrid Bergman; or current day celebrities Jennifer Lawrence, Brad Pitt, Reese Witherspoon, and Morgan Freeman. Indeed, these performers are the ones we see, but that is not the complete picture. Behind the scene are writers, film editors, costume designers, carpenters that create the sets, and a host of others whose professional expertise helps mold the film's perfection. In fact, without them there would be no film. Special education also has its share of professionals to ensure the system functions effectively. These roles include secretarial staff, administrative assistants, technicians, media van and bus drivers, and those in the finance office. This section will focus on the behind the scene story of finance.

AEA Fiscal Management. Building a system of supports for special education brings to mind parents, educators, advocates and lawmakers. But there are other critical professionals who helped pave the road for special education services. Take for example the work of David King. Fiscal year 1974-75 was a bridge year between the County Superintendents Office and the creation of the AEA's that commenced operations on July 1, 1975. The County Superintendents Office was a subdivision of the County Board of Supervisors. Generally the County Superintendents offices did not provide their own financial services. So when the AEA's were created there was no established system for accounting. Moreover, most school districts in Iowa at the time, used a single entry accounting system based on how districts received reimbursements. This single entry system created inconsistent financial information across districts, a low standard of fiscal accountability, and was entirely inadequate for the newly formed AEA's.



Oscar Statue

AEA's were created to be their own legal entity separate from the counties they served. As such they would be responsible for their own administrative functions including personnel, finance, accounting and data processing. They needed a

very unique financial accounting and reporting system that was yet to be created. Enter David King. AEA 11 hired David in June 1975, immediately upon graduation from Drake University with a degree in accounting. David was hired as AEA 11's accountant and his charge was to create an accounting system and establish standard business practices for AEA 11. The then called Department of Public Instruction (now called Department of Education) looked to David to help establish an accounting system based on national accounting standards, sound principles, with strong accountability. He worked with the Iowa DE's administrative and financial departments to get the AEA's accounting, budgeting and financial accounting system off the ground. David recommended using a double entry modified accrual accounting system which was the emerging standard governmental accounting model that still stands today as the practice for AEAs. He also developed an AEA chart of accounts number structure to create relevant uniform financial data. This structure of accounts was an eleven-digit account code that provided for program (service area) oriented budget, accounting and financial reporting. This uniformity and consistency between all AEAs elevated their financial data to higher standards than used by all Iowa schools, except Des Moines. This also met the criteria for financial reporting as set by the National Center of Educational Statistics. David, in conjunction with the DE, did all this in the first year of the AEAs existence.

State and Local District Financial Information. Every school district and AEA has someone who is responsible for keeping tabs on local expenditures, creating reports on fiscal balances for the Board of Education and communicating information to state and federal agencies. Such procedures ensure that funding for particular purposes are used in the intended manner and not diverted for alternative purposes. That provides for both accounting and fiscal accountability. These individuals are part of the ever present, and mostly often behind the scene, cadre of professionals who keep the accounting records that keeps the ship afloat.

The Iowa DE has professionals accounting for the intake of federal and state monies and the distribution of funds to local districts and state projects. Dennis Dykstra, John Lee, Nancy Brees, and others have worked for years at the Iowa DE being diligent in accounting for millions of dollars in state and federal funds for special education. There was a concerted effort to maintain a system of checks and balances of precious financial resources for special education. This meant accountability for federal funds and keeping AEAs and local districts out of harms way by promoting a system of oversight and support for fiscal responsibility. Think about this. When Congress and the State Legislature appropriate money for special populations they want assurance that these funds are utilized as intended. For example, there may be requirements that resources not be co-mingled with other funds, development of reports on the equity of funding distribution within the state and verification that local districts and AEAs use specialized funding only for a target population. Consequently this requires agencies to create policies, practices and evidence-based paper trails that can verify how dollars are spent. Legislators require authentication that monies were spent for specific purposes. The accountants and financial personnel at the Iowa DE, AEA and local districts do this work. It is all behind the scenes and absolutely essential.

While the financial caretakers in the local school district, AEA and Iowa DE are seldom in the limelight they are the ones that keep the lights on for the rest of

those in the system. There is abundant gratitude for their work, which allows everyone else to do their educational work. If there were Oscar statues for educational accounting they would be on the mantels in the homes of those who do these valued tasks. We take our hats off to those who have labored on behalf of others. Their work may be behind the scene, but they are in the spotlight at this moment.

Funding Implications for Legal Mandates. There is a cost in terms of human resource allocation and financial implications when laws are passed mandating services. This is true in all aspects of state and federal government, including expanding services to individuals with disabilities. Below is a chart graciously provided by Dan Reschly, summarizing the alignment of IDEA principles, the practices that bring services to life and implications for funding these services. When the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was initially established in 1975, Congress determined that the federal government would pay up to 40 percent of the excess cost of educating children with disabilities, which is referred to as full funding. The reality that played out over time was less supportive. Since 1981, the federal share has remained less than half of this stated federal commitment of full funding. The following table identifies principles articulated in IDEA, services required to implement the principle and funding implications. Understanding this relationship is particularly important at times when political decision makers call for restricted funding for education.

Summary of IDEA Legal Principles and Implication for Funding and Services

Principle	Services Required	Funding Implications
Child Find	Vigorous efforts to identify children who potentially have educationally related disabilities	Public awareness campaigns. Communications with medical, social services, and other agencies. School screening.
Eligibility Determination	Full and individual evaluations by appropriate specialists to determine if symptoms match a category of disability, interfere with education, and need exists for specially designed instruction	Salary and other costs for wide range of related services personnel such as psychologists, speech-language therapists, and others
Protection in Evaluation Procedures	Avoid both misclassifying normal students as SWD and failure to classify as SWD students with disabilities. Prevention of racial/ethnic discrimination	Expensive evaluation of students in all areas potentially related to an educational disability, team decision making, determination of specific educational needs, nondiscrimination in evaluation procedures and decision making
Free, Appropriate Education at Public Expense	Delivery of appropriate programs and related services for SWD, typically involving greater individualization and increased instructional intensity	Significantly higher costs for SWD than general education students due to greater intensity of instruction and necessary related services

Individualized Educational Program (IEP)	IEP that meets extensive regulations, developed by multidisciplinary team including parents. Goals, objectives, assessment of progress, supplementary aids and services, etc.	Personnel costs associated with staffing meetings, IEP annual review and update, implementation of all services listed on the IEP
Least Restrictive Environment	Education of SWD in most normal environment appropriate to delivering the IEP, provision of supplementary aids and services to facilitate attainment of LRE goals	Personnel costs to support SWD in more normal classroom settings; High costs of separate classes or settings
Procedural Safeguards	Extensive due process provisions involving informed parental consent prior to a full and individual evaluation prior to special education placement, parental involvement in decision making, right to appeal educational decisions, including cases brought to impartial hearing officer and to state and federal courts	Costs of legal assistance in establishing procedural safeguards, advice on parental appeals of multidisciplinary decisions, defending the district in hearings or courts, indirect costs of defensive practices designed to avoid parental complaints, personnel to implement and monitor procedures

Despite IDEA being underfunded, there have been dramatic gains in services for, and benefits to, children with disabilities and their families in Iowa.

Broad-based Services

Collaborative Leadership. With the advent of PL 94-142, supporting special education’s rapid growth required leaders to guide the development of a unified system. These three are not hierarchical, but rather like a three-legged stool, which are interdependent forms of supporting, coordinating and delivering services for children with disabilities and their families: state, AEA and local school districts. This, of course, augments other services in the private and public sector. A brief thumbnail of the responsibilities at the three levels shows how collaboration was important and strengthened the system.



State. In 1975 the Bureau of Special Education at the DE had a staff of more than 20 personnel. The state director of special education was J. Frank Vance. The state director worked with federal officials in Washington DC to maintain funding and assure legal responsibilities were being met in Iowa. Additionally, the director worked with other state agencies, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health to ensure a coordinated effort on behalf of others. Frank’s staff was composed of consultants in areas including speech, audiology, nursing, physical therapy, school psychology, social work, mental retardation, behavior disorders, learning disabilities, early childhood, and other services. Consultants in the discipline

areas were expected to carry out leadership functions in their areas of expertise and enhance the quality of statewide services by working in coordination with AEAs and university leaders. These consultants organized professional staff development programs to expand knowledge and enhance skills of staff in AEAs and LEAs. The consultants also collaborated with university faculty and professional associations in their areas of specialization to support high standards of professional practices in Iowa's schools.

AEA. Fifteen AEAs each had a special education director who was responsible for the staff they employed, to ensure planning, budgeting and coordination of services were provided for local schools and for the identification of individuals in need of special education services. Additionally, the director endeavored to maintain positive working relationships with school district leaders. Another level of leadership was at middle management. AEAs had supervisors who would oversee the professional disciplines such as speech and audiology, school psychology, early childhood and other areas of service. Supervisors were responsible for recruiting, training, and supporting professionals in effectively resolving day-to-day challenges that arose. Additionally, some AEAs had regional coordinators. They needed to know the laws, develop effective relationships with school district personnel and parents, as well as ensure appropriate services for children.

Local District. Regardless of the district's size, someone in the local school organization was assigned to take responsibility for special education. In large districts, such as Des Moines, Davenport, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, Sioux City and Council Bluffs, there typically was a person with special education as a primary duty. In medium sized districts like Mason City, Ottumwa or Ankeny, an administrator often had special education and other areas assigned. In small school districts, typically one of the school principals often took the lead. The tasks included employing teachers for special education classes, ensuring special education teachers had the necessary professional development and instructional resources, and collaborating with AEA staff, completing required paperwork and working with parents to resolve issues related to the education of their children.

AEA Directors of Special Education. The original group of administrators who assumed the duties of the AEA Director of Special Education transitioned from single county or joint county units into agencies with vastly larger budgets, number of districts to be served, and staff to hire and supervise. An administrative style that may have worked well in a single county needed to be adapted to the larger challenge and more expansive governance structure. Administrators were faced with new laws, regulations and a mandate to provide an appropriate education for all children with disabilities.

One of the major responsibilities of an AEA Special Education Director was to certify the eligibility of students for special education, and assign weightings based on an individual's need for service. While the AEA and LEA staff made decisions and provided input, in 1975 the director had the sole legal responsibility for these decisions and the consequences of such judgments. The 1970s were a time of exciting opportunities and high expectations. These agencies benefited from strong leaders who were flexible, inventive and willing to put forth the extra effort needed for success. The original 15 AEA directors were truly pioneers. They worked tirelessly and constructed a solid foundation

on which to build a statewide system.

Early in the 1970s, foreseeing Iowa's need for solid administrative leadership, Frank Vance proposed that the University of Iowa strengthen its training program for special education directors. Cliff Howe returned to Iowa from Long Beach, California where he had been the director of special education. For over a decade Howe's program provided advanced training for administrators culminating in a doctoral degree and preparation for being a director of special education. AEA special education administrators were often graduates of this preparation program. Those accepted into the program would have to have functioned as a classroom teacher at some point in their career. Cliff required teaching experience without exceptions.



Dr. Cliff Howe

Cliff Howe brought a breadth of practical experience to his teaching duties. The end goal was to train special education administrators who were independent thinkers. He used a procedure called the In-Box Activity. Paula Vincent explained how this classroom practice worked.

- ▶ A basket containing 4x6 cards was placed in the middle of the table. Participants would draw a card, read it aloud then tell how they might respond to the quandary presented. An example: A parent says on the telephone that... The hypothetical situations required the individual to think quickly, weigh information and make decisions. This is what directors had to do on the job. It was in fact the way life unfolds. The seminar group would critique the response. It was a dynamic learning activity for everyone. This was extraordinary preparation for the reality and decision making pace that would face these administrators. Cliff's leadership was essential to Iowa's early development. Cliff Howe's knowledge, passion and practical perspective were an asset for Iowa.

The in-basket activity in Howe's class gave practice with applying current federal and state regulations and principle-based decision-making. Such activities are comparable to the mock trials that students experience in law school. The real-life simulations were an important part of a professional education process.

Implementing Special Education Law. Even after federal laws are promulgated societal inertia is often evident. Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation but that did not bring immediate freedom to all residents in the southern states. The conclusion of the Iraq War did not bring peace to the Middle East. Likewise, passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act with its mandate for services did not immediately open the school's doors.

A story of one school district's resistance and parental persistence is highlighted in the following situation. This example illustrates that parents advocating for their child with a disability is not one extraordinary event, but rather ongoing advocacy, often across an individual's lifespan for the individual with a disability. We will discuss Rick's early childhood and elementary school experiences in this

section of the 1970s. We will come back to his story in the 1980s for junior high and high school, and provide a current update as of 2015. This story will go into greater detail than others in this book for the purpose of understanding the parent tenacity required during these times to gain appropriate FAPE and LRE for their child.

- ▶ Rick was born to parents Deb and Roger Samson in the late 1960s. Deb reported that she knew something was up with Rick at four months, even though he was not diagnosed until eleven months of age. At the time, Deb served as an aid at the hospital in Nevada, Iowa and had access to medical records and reference books at the medical library. Through unrelenting diligent research Deb found that Rick matched many of the clinical manifestations for cerebral palsy in a thick neurological text. No one has more motivation to determine their child's needs than a parent. There were no copy machines in the lounge so Deb took copious notes on a yellow legal pad. This was the late 1960s with very minimal access for parents to medical information. With no computers, Internet, or worldwide web, parents were very isolated from the knowledge they needed to adequately advocate for their own child. They were dependent on others, particularly medical personnel, and their own resourcefulness.

At eleven months of age Rick was diagnosed as having cerebral palsy and received services in Iowa City at the Hospital School, much to the credit of Deb's persistence. This was before 1975 so there was no Education for the Handicapped law, nor Area Education Agencies. Rick went to Iowa City every quarter for re-evaluation for speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological and educational testing. These evaluations started out as one-day events and gradually expanded to several days. Rick spent his entire kindergarten year in Iowa City. Having their son in Iowa City when Deb and Roger lived 100+ miles away in Nevada was very difficult, particularly when their daughter was born. Bonding as a family was tough.

Deb made an appointment with the elementary principal in the Nevada School District to talk about her son starting school. Deb came prepared to discuss all the deficits her child had, as that was how people talked about children with disabilities in the day, what they couldn't do, not what they could do. The principal said, after listening for a while, he had only one question, "Is Rick a kid?" When Deb replied, "Yes." The principal stated, "then they could educate him". Parents remember inclusive comments like this forever with high regard. Rick repeated kindergarten in Nevada. Rick was in a wheelchair, but that presented no problem for education in the one story elementary school.

In kindergarten, first and second grade, Rick attended every other quarter in Nevada, with the other quarters in Iowa City. He attended third and fourth grade full time at the Nevada elementary school. Deb quit her job as a medical aid so she could

be present to support her son at school and be available for the administrative hearings.

At fifth grade the class moved to the junior high which was a two-story facility. The superintendent claimed that Rick could not be educated in his home school because of school-based physical barriers and stated that he would need to be bussed to another school district many miles away. Personnel at the Iowa Department of Education, including DE attorney Larry Bartlett and DE administrative consultant Kathy Skinner, helped these parents understand the federal law and their rights under PL 94-142. The district continued to refuse access to an education in the community school, which was not configured for easy wheelchair access to the second story of the building. The principal personally stood in the doorway to deny entrance in the school. A due process hearing was held, with the issue eventually reaching the State Board of Education. The parents and child, eventually prevailed, but not without undue stress to the family. Once the legal position was clarified, the school district was amenable.

The lesson here is that passing a law is just the first step in accessing rights. In this situation local educators did not immediately make the adjustments needed to support students. The parents' enduring advocacy was necessary for the system to do what the law required. Representatives of the legal system stood with resolve on the side of the parents and the child. Years later Deb Samson was hired by the DE to be a part of the Parent and Educator Connection (PEC). The intent of the PEC is to assist parents in learning about their rights, how the system functions and to support families. Many parents to this day refer to Deb as their hero for her courageous advocacy for her child and the advocacy she has consistently exhibited for all children with disabilities. This was the first Special Education Due Process action held in Iowa.



Justice Symbol

Over time, a long time, all Iowa educators became convinced that education of all children meant *all*. In addition to the mandate for education there needed to be a comprehensive system of support. The AEA was crucial in moving special education from good intentions to a reality for children and families.

Jim Stoycheff conveyed a story about a school's resistance to serving children with disabilities during the 1970s. Jim started his school psychology career in AEA 14 and spoke of the time when a superintendent yelled and pounded on the table at a staffing declaring that a student would never attend that school district. This was a circumstance that was inconsistent with the federal mandate and needed to be addressed.

- ▶ Jim informed the AEA director of special education, Harold Connolly, about the incident and was told that it would be taken care of. Jim doesn't know the specifics of the discussion between Harold and the superintendent, but he does know that at the next

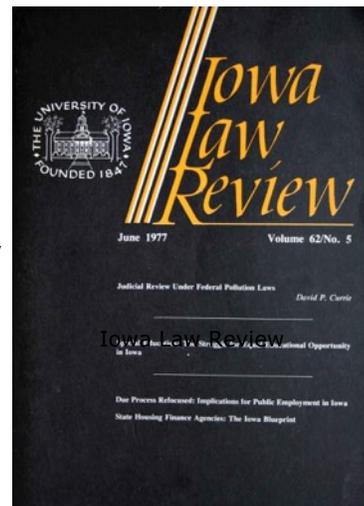
meeting the superintendent told the parents and school staff the he was looking forward to the child attending his district.

Perhaps the next story will shed light on what might have been the tone of the discussion between Harold and the superintendent.

- ▶ Harold was attending a staffing when the father angrily stood up and invited anyone on the team to step outside to settle the matter. Harold immediately stood up and accepted the offer. On the way out the door Harold thanked the father because Harold said he was tired of sitting and needed a cigarette. He offered the parent a smoke and they visited outside. While sharing a smoke outside Harold was able to calm the father down and assure him that they were doing the right thing for his child. Harold and the father reached an agreement for what would be shared with others when they went back inside to complete the staffing. The important point here is that Harold supported his staff as they worked with families and schools to find viable solutions for children. And he met parents at their level. This might not work for everyone, but it did for Harold because of his unique ability to engage others.

Strong advocacy and resolve were needed to establish that federal laws were honored in all parts of Iowa. Occasionally, it was essential to take firm stands to ensure implementation of these laws.

In 1977, two years after the state and federal laws were passed, the *Iowa Law Review* wrote an extensive analysis of the early implementation in Iowa. The article is entitled *Special Education: The Struggle for Equal Educational Opportunity in Iowa*. The Law Review authors asserted that despite the best intentions and a concerted effort by educators, the beginning of the statewide implementation was a challenging task. An example of a survey question: Iowa parents were asked, "Did the school or AEA personnel inform you that if you objected to your child's placement in a special education program, you could appeal that decision to a state hearing officer?" Fifty-six percent responded No, 28% said Yes and the remainder were unsure. Changing practices statewide requires time and attention. Assessing statewide improvement may well be better done with a calendar rather than a stopwatch. As will be seen, Iowa leaders made adjustments and improvement in how services were provided in the future.



Growth in Learning Disabilities. The numbers of children in Iowa identified and receiving special education services was rapidly expanding in the 1970s. At the same time, it was clear that large-scale implementation of procedural practices requires time and learning as the process moves forward. Widespread success of this important undertaking required strong collaboration between educators, parents, and special education advocates.

Winifred Carr was a pioneer in the field of Learning Disabilities in Iowa. The national association, the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (ACLD), was founded in 1964. The Iowa Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (IACLD) was established in 1968. The national association is now called the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA) and the Iowa affiliate is LDA-IA. Winifred was instrumental in the origins of the Iowa LD association and a powerful force in expanding others knowledge and services for children with learning disabilities. Tom Jeschke, special education director in Des Moines, said that whenever possible, Winifred seized the opportunity, or created the opportunity, to discuss the needs of learning disabled students with parents, teachers, school administrators, and members of the Iowa legislature. Winifred, along with other special education advocates, helped make Iowa one of the strongest and most recognized special education states of the times.

The numbers of students identified and served as learning disabled expanded greatly after the enactment of the EHA in 1975. For example, the number of LD students served in the state of Iowa in January 1975 was recorded as 4,131, while the number three years later in January 1978 was 19,415. This enormous expansion had important implications. This child-find effort put stressors on recruiting and hiring special education teachers, AEA staff, and on local district facility needs.

The success of early intervention of students requiring specially designed instruction is well documented. Consider an example.

- ▶ In the spring of 1976 a first grade boy we will call Edward was reported by his parents to not read anything. He was diagnosed as having a learning disability in reading and placed in a special education resource room, the terminology of the day, for services. By third grade he was exited from the program, a huge success. Edward's parents credit this success to several key ingredients. First, Edward's reading disability was caught and rigorously treated early with specially designed instruction. Second, Edward's parents understood the importance of continuing his reading instruction and hired a special education teacher to tutor him during the summer. Third, Edward was told that if he put forth adequate effort during his reading instruction he would be allowed to go to the local swimming pool, which was a preferred activity for him. The combination of early detection, continuous intensive instruction, and behavioral contingencies for applying his best effort, all contributed to rapid increase in reading skills and being dismissed from special education. This would be considered a successful education intervention program in anyone's view.

AEA Staff and District Personnel Relationships. As the saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child and an educational community to educate a child. Building strong working relationships to effectively help children happens at every level in the school building. Greg Robinson came to Iowa from the Illinois State University school psychology program. Over the course of a distinguished career he served as a school psychologist in public schools and for a segregated facility working with severely and profoundly disabled children. He also served

as a consultant for mental disabilities at the Iowa Department of Education, an elementary principal, associate superintendent, and a superintendent of schools.

- ▶ While a psychologist in a rural school district, Greg said he would show up early in the morning to peel potatoes with school cooks. The cooks knew the community and could provide him with a social history of every child and family in the school. Likewise, building strong relationships with school custodians is invaluable for determining areas where staff can get work done. Learning about the formal and informal power players in the building is crucial. Strong working relationships with cooks, custodians, teachers, principals and superintendents is important to make schools a place for the education of all children. If it takes a village, it is important to value everyone in the village.

Having an understanding of whose house you are in makes a difference in how services are provided. This perspective was made clear for AEA staff when Randy Allison moved to the Mississippi Bend AEA.

- ▶ Randy told about his first orientation meeting in Bettendorf at AEA 9 where the Director of Special Education, Vernon Vance, referring to working in local districts, told the group to always remember, "You're a guest in their home, act accordingly." This sets the tone for a respectful interaction of equals who have a shared interest. That shared interest, of course, is working with parents and families of children with special needs.

In the early 1970s, AEAs had many new staff members and they were getting connected with local district staff. How do you know that your presence and identity in a school needs to be strengthened? This story from Bruce Jensen humorously shed some light on that question.

- ▶ As a new school psychologist to a school district Bruce was standing in the teachers lounge when the wrestling coach, whom he did not know, approached him. The coach proceeded to tell Bruce about his new home, finances and other personal information. It took a period of time before Bruce realized that the coach thought Bruce was the Horace Mann Insurance representative. Bruce stated, "This is when you know you haven't been to a school building near enough."

Collectively these stories highlight the important role of a working relationship between personnel in the larger educational community. These relationships were crucial as the system was growing and expanding the types of special educational classes and support that would be available for students.

The Cascade of Services. Multidisciplinary teams are in a positive position to make decisions for students when there is a full cascade of services available. In 1970 Evelyn Deno, at the University of Minnesota, passionately advocated for a cascade of services for students with disabilities with options ranging from assistance provided in the regular education classroom to institutionalized programs with varied intensity of services between these two polar extremes. The presence of a cascade of services allows for appropriate special education

services to be provided in the least restrictive environment. The absence of this element may mean there is a mismatch between the child's educational need and what is provided. Iowa AEAs and LEAs work together to provide these options.

Sometimes there are circumstances where, as part of a full continuum, students' intensive needs may necessitate institutionalization. That was the case for a child with serious mental health issues in a northern part of Iowa. Institutionalization would separate the child and family, which is not an easy situation for the parent or child. Education and treatment may be the goal but dealing with the emotional trauma for parents is equally important.



Cascade of Service

- ▶ Joe Ulman practiced school psychology in the early 70s in a small rural area, which had few resources for children with significant disabilities. One example of Joe's dedication is demonstrated by his work with parents whose child was sent to an institution. Joe met weekly with the parents to help them work through their grief regarding their child living in an institution away from home. He counseled and supported them for as long as it took. Compassion was a hallmark of his practice. Listening, understanding and supporting parents is an important aspect of service that includes the needs of family members as well as children with disabilities.

Sometimes specialized help is not about getting students into or out of special services. Sometimes it is just a matter of caring interactions and support for youth and their family.

- ▶ When Gary Ross-Reynolds started as a school psychologist in Iowa it was the mid-70s and he sported an afro-hairstyle, Fu Manchu moustache, and a New York style of attire. He was noticed in Iowa rural schools. On the last day of the school year, which was in early June, Gary received a call. The principal wanted him to visit with a high school boy who was thinking about dropping out. Gary contemplated whether this was an adolescent rebelling in the form of pulling the chain of adults without real intent, or a case of school fatigue at the end of a school year, or whether this was a youth wanting to avoid another year of pain related to schooling. Gary met with the student, formed a relationship and gained an understanding of the youth's concerns. Because of this supportive interaction, the student stayed in school and graduated with his class. The student became a farrier, a specialist in equine hoof care. After graduation the young man's family asked Gary to join

them on a canoe trip to the boundary waters, a strong indication of the family's deep appreciation of the professional assistance and support for their son's continued education.

These stories are intended to illustrate that a full continuum, a cascade of services, can range from intervention with children that may not require special services to intensive special education service located in a separate facility. However, there was a continued need for advocacy for the diversity of programs.

- ▶ Parent advocacy for children with a hearing loss has been crucial for moving services forward. Larry Gile tells the story of a parent whose child was deaf, but the parent was too meek to push for adequate and appropriate services. Larry provided encouragement and information on parent's rights to the mother for her to be more assertive. The idea was that she was going to have more success advocating for her own child than the AEA staff could. She grew in her knowledge base and confidence and became a very good long-term advocate for her child.

A cascade of service options was an important development in the mid-1970s as was the importance of multidisciplinary teams in the new AEA system.

Multidisciplinary Team Functioning. When the AEAs started in 1975 there was a strong push for multidisciplinary team assessments and decision-making. The three disciplines involved in a majority of cases were the school psychologist, school social worker, and special education consultant. Each brought specialized training and experiences to the case that strengthened the ability to view the child and environment in a multidimensional manner. The disciplines were never considered interchangeable because of the unique viewpoints they utilized to understand a child's life. Let's take a moment to examine the unique contributions these team members bring to the table.

School Psychologists' Unique Contributions to the Team. The rigorous training and supervision requirements of the National Association of School Psychologists ensures that these professionals have a sound background in standardized and curriculum-based assessments, applied behavior analysis, and a Response-to-Intervention frame of reference. The scientist-practitioner model provides a solid data-based orientation to the multidisciplinary team.

Practice Example, Jim Stoycheff began his career as a school psychologist in 1977. His training served him well in providing assessments to children and direct assistance to classroom teachers. Since 1979 he has served River Hills, which is part of the continuum of services provided by Cedar Falls CSD. Over time his work has shifted from serving students with significant intellectual disabilities to working primarily with children on the Autism spectrum and with students who have significant challenging behaviors. Jim's assessment and data-based intervention skills have made him an invaluable team member on the Autism Resource Team.

School Social Workers' Unique Contributions to the Team. The MSW is a generalist program that follows the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)

graduate training program model. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) established practice standards for school social workers and provided support for the development of school social work programs. Further, the CSWE established universal standards for graduate social work programs. School social workers apply a psychosocial orientation regarding assessment and intervention. They are trained in situational assessment, in other words, how the person (family) fits into the environment. This holistic perspective assists the multidisciplinary team by looking at the family and community and how they interact. The perspective is that helping a parent better understand their child's disability can help them better relate to and assist their child, and better help them understand the school program.

Practice Example. Jim Clark talks with pride about his years of serving as a school social worker. He shares the sobering experience of making home visits where homes had dirt floors. But notes that even with rough living conditions, parents cared so very deeply about their children and their child's education. Jim said he saw his job as telling the rest of the story. Making the parent's perspective relevant to the educational process. The job of the school social worker is to be a third party advocate and dance the fine line between helping parents and risking friction with staff in the schools and even teammates. The unique training and perspective of school social workers provides them the skills and passion to balance allegiance with parents and school staff. An example includes assisting parents to thoroughly understand the special education process, not just signing the required paperwork. And, importantly, providing ongoing follow-up to keep the parent apprised of and engaged in their child's education.

Special Education Consultants' Unique Contributions to the Team. Special education consultants bring classroom teaching coursework and experience to the multidisciplinary team. Having been responsible for academic instruction, classroom discipline, and working in the school environment is a very helpful perspective to bring to the classroom intervention and IEP process. To serve as a consultant for deaf or hard of hearing or visually disabled requires the respective special education instructional endorsement. Many special education consultants belong to professional educational organizations like the Council for Exceptional Children, but there is no professional organization with training and standards specific to special education consultants. Each state dictates their unique requirements for similar positions.

Practice Example. Penny Hudson served as a special education teacher for many years with students with various ages and grade levels, different disabilities, and a wide range of levels of severity. Penny uses that knowledge and those experiences in her work as a special education consultant for an AEA. She is highly involved with educational evaluations, assisting teachers in designing progress monitoring data collection, and helping write IEPs with well articulated specially designed instruction. Special education consultants are skilled in developing an understanding of students' educational needs. For example, in this last year Penny was integral to a reevaluation of a child whose parents disagreed with the special education status of their child. Penny's professional expertise and professional style was instrumental in resolving this situation in an amicable way.

Teachers benefit from the unique perspective of these three professional groups. This team of three each brings a distinctive body of knowledge to working with families and school staff.

In addition to school age services, PL 94-142 includes early childhood services for individuals with disabilities.

Rebirth of Early Childhood. The 1974 Iowa law creating the AEAs included the provision for services for preschool children with disabilities. This was a bold move by leaders across the state since this happened prior to the federal mandate. It was considered to be the right thing to do at the right time and for the right reasons. Early intervention supports for children and families was viewed as essential to the long-term educational process of supporting children with disabilities and their families. Public Law 94-142, included discretionary funding that could be aligned with state priorities for effectively educating children with disabilities. Iowa's first priority for the use of discretionary federal funds was early childhood special education services.

- ▶ Joe Ulman observed that one of the strongest aspects of the new AEA system was the employment of early childhood consultants and early childhood teachers. Iowa led the nation in birth-to-three services. This initiative was led by the Iowa DE in collaboration with AEAs.



In 1975 Joan Turner Clary was hired as the state consultant for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services at the Iowa DE in the Bureau of Special Education. There were four major challenges in establishing statewide ECSE services. First was the idea of serving very young children. Talking about early childhood with most educators is a shift from a K-12 mentality to Preschool through 12th grade. Children who were age three and four were often considered to be square pegs in a system with only round holes, seemingly not a comfortable match. That needed to change to ensure young children with disabilities and their families would received the support needed for long-term success in school.

Next was the need to set up a leadership system for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE). A leadership network was created to link the Iowa DE and AEA supervisors of ECSE. The network was essential for effectively promoting services and providing support to local districts. Further, the network would create connections between schools and community agencies. Each AEA had an ECSE supervisor to spearhead this undertaking. Within the AEAs there were interdisciplinary teams focused on ECSE services. These AEA teams carried out their responsibility to establish technical assistance teams that included education, human services, health services and other preschool providers. Creating this leadership network was a huge undertaking requiring interagency

cooperation and collaboration but it was absolutely essential to providing necessary services for children with disabilities. ECSE in Iowa modeled the multidisciplinary approach before this was legally mandated.

Third, but equally important, was having quality teachers for early childhood. The children enrolled in ECSE programs were often more medically fragile students that required more coordinated services and training for those working with this population. This necessitated promoting ECSE teacher-training programs in Iowa universities. One of the major challenges was for universities to establish early childhood training programs that included a focus on children with disabilities. The universities were eventually persuaded.

Lastly, there was the challenge of credentialing of qualified teachers. This task required the development of standards and competencies for licensing, a.k.a., teacher certification. The Iowa DE leaders, ECSE supervisors and university faculty needed to arrive at a shared understanding and did so. That, not surprisingly, is a rather significant accomplishment.

All four of these issues received attention by Joan Turner Clary, collaborating with AEA ECSE supervisors, universities and colleges across Iowa, leaders in local school districts, and AEA Special Education Directors. Progress was made on all fronts. It is another example of creating a total comprehensive service system without a model to follow. Ingenuity, passion, wisdom and statewide collaboration were required and received. The development of the ECSE system took decades of focused attention and that work continues today. The ECSE process relies on teachers and support personnel, such as audiologists. Enhancing children's hearing is a crucial component of a competent and comprehensive special education system.

Hearing Services. Jim Doyle, an AEA supervisor of hearing services, said the 1970s were very exciting times for building the hearing profession because of adequate funding and a passion for experimentation. There was a strong push to make greater connections around audiology in the educational context. It was a big change to discuss hearing acuity outside of the medical community and into the educational environment. Prior to this, audiologists were practicing in the schools, but primarily in a medical way.

Defining Disability Categories and Instructional Needs. State and federal laws required that students who receive special education programs and services be designated in one of the disability categories. These data are also used in the child count for state and federal funding purposes.

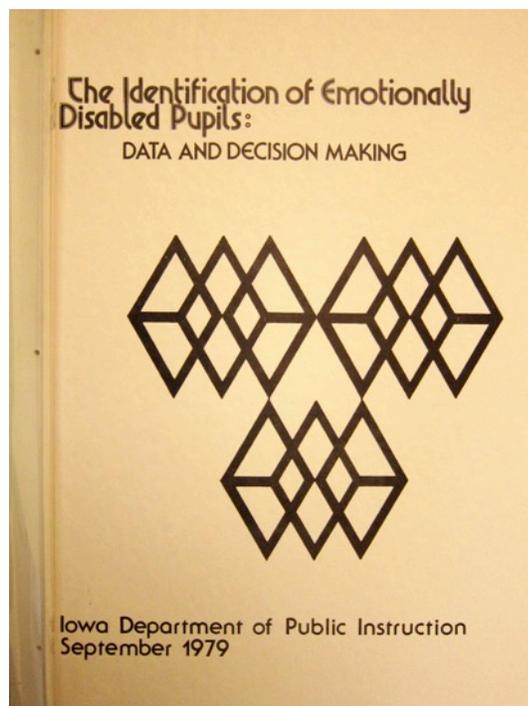
There are two faces to the topic of categorical designations. One view is that there are benefits from such decisions. A categorical designation allows for research, program planning, advocacy, and treatment planning. The other view is that labels are detrimental because of stigmatizing factors. It was generally agreed that students seldom fell neatly in a single categorical group. For example, an individual could have an intellectual disability and emotional disability. Physical disabilities could easily co-exist with speech or hearing disabilities. A student with a learning disability may have other behavioral manifestations. Conversely, the process of reading may seriously vex a student with a behavioral disability. Despite such mixed needs, a single categorical designation would be determined, mostly for purposes of financial accounting.

When IEPs were developed, student needs were to be the sole consideration. However, in the 1970s special education instructional programs were exclusively by categories. Therefore special education teachers with LD certification were to only serve students who had that categorical designation. Likewise this was an issue in other special education categories. Consequently there were separate programs for each grouping of students, which led to two significant challenges. Finding teachers with appropriate categorical licenses and finding students with the same categorical match. For schools with a small enrollment this was a significant obstacle. Flexibility was needed, especially for students with mild disabilities who would require instructional support from a resource teacher.

The SPURT program (Special Program Utilizing Resource Teachers) was a pilot project initiated by the Iowa DE to allow teachers to serve students with mild disabilities in three categories: MD, LD, BD, and individuals who were recommended for resource room assistance in their IEP. The SPURT programs were popular and successful. A policy change followed the piloting phase that allowed resource teachers to qualify for a multicategorical teaching license and serve students with varied disabilities. That pattern continues today.

There was differential diagnosis within an area of service. As an example, a speech-language pathologist (SLP) would determine if the nature of a student's difficulty fell within the areas of articulation, dysfluency, pragmatics or phonation. Treatment would be based on what particular sounds or language performance needed instruction.

The category identified in PL 94-142 as Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) needed additional clarification. In the late 1970s and 80s, Carl Smith, then Consultant for Behavioral Disorders in the Iowa DE, was diligent in his effort to create a broadbase of understanding of essential services and promote programs for students with behavioral needs. The general societal perspective was shifting from a position of punishing those whose behavior was disruptive to moving towards support and guidance to assist youth in developing effective coping skills. Two categories of need were used in Iowa: emotional disabilities (ED) and chronically disruptive (CD). These two categories were combined when reporting to the federal government under the designation Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED). When the category of Serious Emotional Disturbed was created by PL 94-142, a psychologist licensed by the Iowa Board of Psychology Examiners, was required to review the IEP team decision to evaluate whether the diagnosed child would be harmed by placing them into a program with other SED students. This protection was included so that SED students who were significantly



depressed and withdrawn were not placed with SED students who were bullies and would take advantage of weak students and exacerbate their fragile mental state. The identification process was focused on direct observation in a school setting, determining patterns of situational inappropriate behavior from multiple sources, the use of assessment processes that were valid, reliable and useful for understanding and supporting behavioral improvements. The purpose of assessment practices was to determine how student behaviors of concern interfered with the learning, peer and adult relations and overall adjustment. Based on such information an IEP could be developed to support student improvement.

Carl Smith worked with national experts, Iowa universities, and AEA leaders regarding the identification and treatment for students with behavioral needs. Over a ten-year period Carl helped rewrite Iowa's identification standards, produced numerous publications, conducted staff development, and worked with mental health professionals in public and private practices to assist Iowa educators and families improve services for this group of students. Carl's tireless efforts and leadership were instrumental in establishing a network of support for Iowa youth.

AEA Staff Recruitment, Supervision, and Retention

Revision of Iowa Rules of Special Education. In 1975 the Iowa rules were revised to align with progressive state and national trends and to accommodate the requirements and opportunities in PL 94-142. For the first time, the Iowa rules allowed the newly formed AEAs to have discipline supervisors in instructional and support service areas. That meant AEAs could have supervisors in areas such as early childhood, social work, special education consultants, speech-language pathology and school psychology to assist staff in providing quality services.

The most common pattern for designating a supervisor was to select from within the existing ranks of individuals on staff, the person with the greatest leadership potential to guide professional services. However, this does not guarantee those professionals had the skillset for carrying out the administrative task with excellence. Fritz Krueger, an AEA director recognized this situation and took decisive action.

- ▶ To enhance the leadership and administrative skills of the newly appointed supervisors Fritz created learning opportunities by contracting with university faculty to provide seminars and coursework at the AEA. These classes occurred after work hours and on Saturdays. Courses were paid for with funds from the Special Education budget. The instructors were the primary professors providing administrative courses in major universities across Iowa. The faculty included Jim Sweeney, ISU; Tom Little, UNI; Cliff Howe, U of IA. This innovative arrangement took decisive steps to ensure that the AEA supervisory staff had the essential skills to be successful leaders.

Supervisors planned staff meetings, collaborated with other AEA leaders in planning agency practices and provided for staff development training, provided staff evaluations engaged in recruitment, assisted district personnel in

understanding professional services, and represented the professions in administrative meetings within the AEA. All 15 AEAs had a designated supervisor in most areas of professional services. Most supervisors in the less populated AEAs also had school-based assignments. Again, we will use school psychology as an illustration of this role.

- ▶ Over his career, Joe Ulman served as a school psychologist, supervisor of school psychologists, and later a director of special education. He always maintained a field based assignment because this kept him directly connected to services for children with disabilities and their families. At one point his chief administrator informed Joe that he needed to discontinue his direct service because of his increasing administrative responsibilities. Joe responded that he would keep his field based psychology assignment, but would, tongue-in-cheek, agree to adamantly deny this to his chief administrator when asked. His chief administrator appreciated this candor and also understood the strong commitment Joe had for supporting and understanding his staff and the children they served.

Some of the most important factors that led to high quality services for children and youth are the recruitment, supervision and retention of special education personnel. Over the course of many years Iowa developed a unified system to coordinate professional development and leadership for practitioners, with the intent to improve the educational quality of life for all children. The examples below are primarily taken from school psychology, but this discipline specific training can be generalized to a wide variety of disciplines in the AEAs.

Recruitment. AEA discipline supervisors understood that one of the most important job responsibilities they had was to hire quality personnel. Recruitment was a high priority and a continuous process throughout the year. The fact that each AEA employed discipline specific supervisors was a definite advantage for recruiting, supervising, and retaining qualified personnel compared to other states. School psychology supervisors Joe Ulman, Larry Gile, Bruce Jensen, and Randy Allison represented the smallest, middle sized, and largest AEAs in Iowa, but their zeal to hire the best was similar. They spent a great deal of time nurturing professional relationships with the faculty of training programs from which they hoped to recruit. Randy and Joe would routinely make contacts with the university training program leaders and the students in the programs to highlight the progressive role of professionals in Iowa. In many cases, they initiated contacts with students from their first year of graduate school until coursework completion. Through ongoing communication and participating in AEA presentations at the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), students were able to gain knowledge regarding how their training was a good fit to the practices in Iowa.

- ▶ New psychologists in the AEAs frequently communicated with their university training programs regarding their satisfaction with the professional practices in Iowa and of the strong supervision they received from their school psychology supervisors. These new professionals served as goodwill ambassadors back to their respective schools. This was a powerful recruitment tool for the state.

The same type of professional commitment was occurring in social work, speech-language pathology and other service areas.

Supervision. Professional guidance and support are critical ingredients for enhancing skills of practitioners, particularly new staff. It's like the aerial combat training in the movie *Top Gun*, "We take the best of the best, and make them better". So it is with ongoing professional development; it's a lifelong commitment to skill improvement for the benefit of children and youth.

Next, supervision will be considered from three disciplines: School psychology, special education consultants, and school social work.

The supervision of school psychologists in Iowa has historically been a very high priority. For the first twenty-five years of the AEAs, each AEA had a Supervisor of School Psychological Services that held a license and endorsement to serve in that capacity. An example of facilitating skill development of practicing school psychologists is highlighted by the work of Randy Allison.

► Randy met with each staff member in individual, small group, and large group meetings. One of the strengths of his guidance was to provide case study reviews. Randy held small group meetings in which staff presented a case they were working on. As you might imagine, staff were not real excited about the idea



Staff Supervision

to begin with. They felt exposed and were leery that their work would be critically judged. But Randy built an environment of trust and support that helped staff grow professionally and increase confidence in their practice. Each professional presented a case by discussing the issues, the assessments, and interventions and support for parents and school personnel. The emphasis was on how they thought through the case, not just what they did. The discussions did not, in fact, embarrass staff or talk about what was done incorrectly. If Randy had specific feedback about correcting an error, he would do that privately. The small group case study approach focused on asking the right kinds of questions over knowing the right answers. This clinical approach encouraged practitioners to learn from each other. Randy found that the person presenting cases was often the most critical of their own work.

In addition to the case study approach, Randy helped staff learn where to find information. He spent time asking hypothetical special education questions, and then guiding staff on how to find information through Federal Regulations, LRP

reference books, and other sources. The rationale was that if you train a professional well they won't need you any more. The emphasis was on learning to think correctly, rather than knowing the answers. Answers change, but smart thinking doesn't. The bottom line of this intensive supervision was that staff recognized that they really knew what they were doing and they walked away with increased confidence and competence.

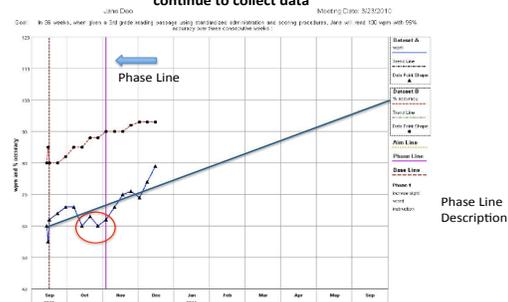
A critical component to enhancing cohesive agency AEA services was that Sharon Kurns, Supervisor for Special Education Consultants, used the same case study protocols for professional development. Jim Clark, Supervisor for School Social Workers also used a similar protocol for skill development with his staff. Together, the supervisors for psychologists, consultants, and social workers were able to provide protocols and procedures for their discipline's unique skills, and concurrently, converge complementary skills sets to enhance multidisciplinary team decision-making and follow-up. This ensured continuity of services to students and a broadened support base for the team members working together.

High quality supervision aids professionals in becoming independent and resourceful.

- ▶ When staff would contact Bruce Jensen, school psychology supervisor, he would ask, "What does the special education procedures manual say?" He would then guide them through thinking in a step-wise scientific process. Bruce viewed his job as teaching staff how to think critically. He told staff that they *should* agonize over solving problems because it is someone's child they were helping. Bruce would often role-play with staff to give them wording and experiences in dealing with difficult situations. Moreover, he would model appropriate interactions with staff who were experiencing interpersonal conflicts with team members at the AEA or in schools. Bruce enjoys sharing that he often felt like the "Johnnie Appleseed of school psychology", in that he frequently shared the good ideas he obtained from one professional with another.

Jim Clark, School Social Work Supervisor, advised his staff that it was not supposed to be easy, that's why they call it "work". He followed this up by providing substantial professional guidance and the tools staff needed to do the job he asked them to do. The message was that the processes of helping students achieve his or her full potential required a high level of professional skill and dedication. He taught this through example.

**Four Point Decision Making:
If 4 consecutive data points are below goal line, change intervention and continue to collect data**



Graph Data

- ▶ Jim provided case reviews that focused on data-based decision rules. He would work on data-based decision-making using graphs to display the data in a meaningful way. One time Jim had a staff member examine her own data and graph and exclaim, "OMG, I

made the wrong decision!” Jim congratulated the person for understanding the importance of how to use data to make important decisions. This was good teaching and good learning that would serve the staff members throughout their professional life. This example highlights the quality professional support that helps good practitioners become even better.

Larry Gile was a school psychology supervisor in a small and rural AEA. The attraction to this AEA was the strong sense of community that Larry and the director of special education, Harold Connolly, built for AEA support staff. Larry met with each psychologist on average of every other week. The AEA was sparsely populated, but it was a large geographical area. Larry would drive to wherever the staff member was located to facilitate that staff member not having to leave their assignment and to demonstrate how he valued their time. He would listen to their concerns and offer support to help them improve services to children. Larry’s calm and reassuring demeanor was an asset in building trust and the sense of caring in this AEA.

Just like how a positive relationship with a building principal facilitates access to building supports, a positive relationship between school psychologists, supervisors, and special education directors is essential to an optimal working environment. Denny Sinclair served as a school psychologist, supervisor for school psychological services, and now is an Area Director of Special Education in an AEA. Denny’s experience in different roles has given him a keen sense of the type of support necessary to assist AEA staff. Denny’s reflective manner and expertise is a good example of how discipline specific knowledge can help staff grow and learn.

There are many other excellent examples of discipline specific supervision across Iowa in instruction, speech, hearing and vision services, OT & PT, special education nurses, special education consultants, and other disciplines. The purpose of this writing is not to exhaustively cover all these stories, but rather to underscore the importance of high quality supervision. The stronger the skill level of support for professionals the higher the likelihood of quality services and enhanced achievement for children.

Retention of Staff. There are many valid reasons for staff leaving an organization, such as returning to one’s home to aid ailing parents, moving because of a spouse’s job, and change of career trajectory by returning to school for advanced education. These factors will always be present in employment situations. While good pay and responsible benefits are factors in retention of staff, so is quality support and meaningful work. When staff members’ work is supported they are learning and growing in professional knowledge and skills. When they find their work to be personally challenging and professionally fulfilling they want to remain in a position. Retention of good staff is a crucial leadership function. AEAs and local school districts endeavor to retain quality staff by creating positive work environments that enhance educational services for children and families.

University Connection to Practice and Leadership in Iowa

Iowa can be very proud of the productive relationship between school districts, AEA's, the Iowa DE, and the colleges and university training institutions. The partnership between these interconnected entities has been nurtured over time and is one of the most effective in the country. AEA's in Iowa have employed strong professionals in all disciplines nationwide. A majority of speech-language pathologists, special education consultants, school social workers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, etc. come from Iowa graduate training programs. For purposes of illustration, we will focus on the history of school psychology training programs in Iowa.

University Programs. The universities and colleges in Iowa do an outstanding job in preservice training at the undergraduate and graduate level for teachers and other professionals. At one time there were four school psychology training-programs in Iowa: Drake University, Iowa State University (ISU), the University of Iowa (U of I), and the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). Now there are two programs: the U of I and UNI. The current entry-level degree in school psychology is a specialist degree with two years of academic coursework plus a one-year internship. Next, a look back on the history of university supports in this professional discipline.

Drake University. Drake began its Specialist Degree in School psychology in 1976 and ended in 1986. During that relatively short time span the program graduated somewhere between 9 and 11 school psychologists. The Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree was a hybrid program between the psychology and education departments and directed by



Scott Wood. The Ed.S. Degree was a vigorous program to teach behavior principles. Students learned applied behavior analysis and had practicum sites like Woodward to practice the intervention skills they were learning. The strong behavioral approach gave students a theory that was prescriptive and provided an internal mindset with great analytic power.

Iowa State University. Dan Reschly reinstated the School Psychology training program in 1975 after being dormant for several years. The program continued from 1975 to 1998 and graduated approximately 90 school psychologists, of which about 50% continue to practice in Iowa. Like the other training programs in Iowa it met the strict NASP requirements of at least 60 graduate course hours, and a minimum of 1500 clock hours of practice during the internship year. Dan insisted that all students were involved in practicum experiences with a licensed school psychologist from the first week of their program until they graduated. This field-based work ensured a strong connection between coursework and applied practice in the schools. Dan also involved many of his students in research activities connected to the Department of Education on innovative school psychology practices. This included vanguard work in functional assessment and measuring student outcome data.



University of Iowa. The University of Iowa was the first university in Iowa to train school psychologists. The first director of the program was James B. Stroud. J.B. Stroud began the program in 1960. To date, the program has graduated over 200 school psychologists with Ed.S. or Ph.D. degrees. The current student demographics are interesting. Approximately 30% of the attending students have an Iowa connection, 10% are international students (i.e. India, Korea, China), and 60% come from other states. After graduation most students leave Iowa and go back to similar locations from which they came. About one-third of graduates practice in school settings, one-third in academic settings, and one-third in clinical settings such as Boys Town, mental health centers, and hospitals. Their Ph.D. comes from the Department of Psychological and Quantitative Foundations, College of Education. The Ph.D. is a five-year program, with fourth year students helping to supervise first year students to gain supervision experience. The current school psychology faculty at the time of this writing included Kathryn Gerken, Stewart Ehly, Ann Santos, and Kristen Missall. The graduate students interviewed were Jennifer Andersen, Jill Brink, Anna Ing, Nicole Hendrix, Gunsung Lee, Nicole Linstig, Kristin Miller, Ginna Moreano, Samantha Vancel, Shaun Wilkinson, and Nai-Jiin Yang.



University of Northern Iowa. The first school psychology graduate programs at UNI started in 1961. At that time the state required 33 graduate hours and a Masters degree to receive certification to be a school psychologist. By 1978 UNI had graduated 8 school psychology students with an Ed.S. After 1978 UNI averaged 8 Ed.S. school psychologists per year. Barry Wilson, Department Head at UNI until his retirement, estimates that UNI trained 325-345 school psychologists from 1961 until 2015. In 2000, one in four school psychologists in Iowa were UNI graduates. As is true of teachers, UNI school psychology graduates tend to remain in Iowa. The current school psychology faculty includes Kerri Clopton, Stephanie Schmitz, and Nicole Skaar. The graduate students interviewed were Emmy Coder, Molly Freie, Jenny Merk, Jessica Stumme, and Jen Waterman.



Overall, the training programs in Iowa are, and have been, some of the best in the country. School psychology students are placed in schools in the first month of training and have field based experiences until they receive their degree. The programs have shifted their focus of training in keeping with research, changes in federal law and regulations, state administrative rules, and case law. Moreover, they have been highly involved in special education initiatives that have improved practices. School psychology programs at the University of Iowa and the University of Northern Iowa both have NASP accreditation and their students are highly recruited. Kerri Clopton, chair of the school psychology training program at UNI, emphasized that training programs in Iowa adhere to all NASP standards. This breadth and depth of training provides graduates the foundation to qualify for sitting for the national exam to become a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP). By having a standardized national

certification process there is a high level of quality control for the profession of school psychology and the training that goes into preparing school psychologists for their professional career.

We want to acknowledge that school psychology was used as an in-depth example of one profession. This could be done with every other profession serving in the Iowa educational system. All disciplines are well trained, respected, and have expertise that is absolutely critical to serve children of Iowa.

Professional Licensure in Special Education. Special education grew rapidly after PL 94-142 was in place. There was a pressing need for qualified special education teachers, speech pathologists, and every other service provider. The pressure was on to get people in place to ensure the system had qualified staff to serve the identified needs of students and support parents in the process. That meant recruiting professionals with appropriate training who would meet Iowa DE certification (licensure) standards.

Doug West was hired as a consultant to work in the certification bureau at the Iowa Department of Education. Those seeking licensure were in three clusters. Applicants who were qualified, those who may be lacking some type of course work, and those who were unqualified but wanted to see if they could secure a license to be employed in special education. There were instances when people tried to make their credentials look complete when this was not the case. Doug West related this story.

- ▶ An applicant for school psychology licensure had completed a doctoral program in psychology. There was no coursework specifically matching all of the requirements to serve as a school psychologist in Iowa. The individual, using a cut and paste approach, tried to make the transcript content appear complete. The deed was detected and the requirement enforced. In a similar manner, and being a guardian at the gates of the profession, licensure professionals also ensure that ill prepared candidates were not awarded licenses for the protection of children and their families.

The point is that licensing procedures by the DE are another link in the strong chain with university training programs, quality professional supervision, and staff development that support quality services for children with disabilities and their families. Doug West, Dee Ann Wilson, Jane Heinsen and other staff did this important work across time.

Disability Awareness – Decade of the 1970s



United States Capitol

The NY Yankees were a powerhouse of talent in major league baseball with Mickey Mantel, Joe DiMaggio, Roger Maris and other outstanding athletes. There is no World Series of parents, but if there were the early pioneers in the Association of Retarded

Citizens would be the heroes and heroines and

the parents, professionals and attorneys who pushed issues into federal courts that led to the PARC and Mills decisions would be the people receiving the trophy. It was a national wake-up call that supported civil rights legislation on behalf of individuals with disabilities. Special education professionals in Iowa and other states lobbied side by side with parents and associations in supporting the passage of legislative mandates. These laws include *The Rehabilitation Act* in 1973, specifically section 504, and the *Education for All Handicapped Children Act*, PL 94-142 in 1975. The American society was increasingly recognizing the responsibility to educate all children in this nation. Everyone has a right to an education. The days of excluding children from school because they had special needs had come to an end. Disability awareness was strengthened. The expanding sense of social responsibility is reflected in the music of the day. Consider the song, *He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother*, made popular by Neil Diamond, and an English group, The Hollies. There was an inclination to take care of your "brother" who may have special needs. There is James Taylor's song, *You've Got A Friend*, with its compelling lyrics promising to come to the aid of another in times of need. The popular movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* evoked a sense of wonder when an alien craft lands on Earth. The encounter was not met with military might designed to destroy, rather the last scene shows actor Richard Dreyfuss joining them with a desire to learn from others who may be different. Songs and movies may not change the culture, but they do reflect the sentiment that resonates with people at that time.

Decade of the 1980s

The 1980s included Sandra Day O'Connor proudly becoming the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court. Sally Ride was the first woman astronaut to go into space. The expanding role of women in leadership positions was beginning to shift in America, another act of social justice. In the entertainment field ET was a popular silver screen experience, movie ratings were introduced and appeared alongside movie ads, including PG-13 to help parents make decisions about their children's welfare. The U.S. amateur ice hockey players defeated the Soviet Union's professional all-star team in the Olympics, which was called the "miracle on ice," an accomplishment that created significant national pride. Steve Jobs introduced the first Macintosh, Nike released the Air Jordan 1, the Rubik's Cube debuts at the International Toy Fair, and Michael Jackson releases *Thriller*.



Sandra Day O'Connor joins
The US Supreme Court

Likewise, science was making dramatic improvements that had implications for the criminal justice system. DNA findings were first used to convict criminals and to be evidence of innocence. In the political realm the Berlin Wall fell uniting East and West Germany. Americans experienced the agony of the Iranian hostage crisis, students were massacred in China's Tiananmen Square when seeking greater freedom, the Iran-Contra scandal was in the headlines, and President Reagan was reelected to his second term. It was a time of tension as well as forward strides on behalf of human issues.

Iowa suffered through a farm crisis that resulted in many family farms being repossessed by Iowa banks. School budgets were limited. State workers received no raise. Austerity measures were in effect.

In special education, Iowa energetically explored alternative approaches for identifying and serving students with disabilities. New categories were added to the listing of disabilities covered under federal and state laws. Medical advances extended the lives of children who were medically fragile and subsequently received educational services in Iowa schools. Additionally, Iowans experimented with the reform of fundamental structures in order to improve educational services for students. General and special education systems were

continuing to learn how to work together for the benefit of all children, specifically focusing on mainstreaming and full integration. As the reader will see, this was a time of growth, experimentation and expansion in Iowa's special education system.

Organizing the Educational Service Delivery System

Team Efforts. Cyclones, Hawkeyes, Panthers and Bulldogs are university sport icons for some Iowans. It is all about the team, their accomplishments and group effort. In the late 1970s and early 1980s another form of teaming was going on in Iowa schools. This team involved special and general education teachers. This may appear as an easy blending of two talents, like ordering a twist ice cream cone at a Dairy Queen, but that was not always the case. Special education came with a legal mandate to serve, but there was no requirement for cooperation. Collaboration is a negotiated arrangement. The critical question was how to ensure students with disabilities are supported throughout their school day and not just when they were with their special education teacher. This was often in the form of making accommodations, adjustments or adaptations in the instruction in a general education classroom.

- ▶ Jeananne Hagen Schild had taught social studies and English for several years in a junior high school in Grinnell when an opportunity arose to assist the district as a special education resource teacher. In this role she supported students with direct instruction, team-teaching in general education classrooms, and by negotiating accommodations for students with IEPs. Perhaps understandably, general education teachers with large classroom rosters were often reluctant to make many adjustments in a busy classroom schedule. In team teaching, Jeananne focused on demonstrating how modification could be accomplished and how they could be effectively carried out with a reasonable amount of effort. Modeling makes a difference. It was her contribution to the team, somewhat like a relay where a baton is passed to the next runner and they keep going.
- ▶ Jeananne indicated that general education teachers, librarians and coaches were all receptive to making accommodations for students with disabilities when incentives were attached. In one situation, special education funding helped purchase a wrestling mat and that act resulted in the support of district coaches for students with special needs, who also benefited from this equipment. The special education budget allowed for the purchase of materials to support activities for students with disabilities. Others, of course, could use these materials, but it was a way to open the door to working together. Teamwork comes in many shapes. What matters most is that the team works together towards a common goal to help individuals with special needs. This type of incentive might not be possible in today's special education financial climate, but it is illustrative of the early efforts made by creative special educators to engage general education personnel in including students with disabilities in school activities.

Just as teachers worked together within a district, the same spirit of collaboration occurs between special education personnel in AEAs and local districts. This relationship makes unique skills available to support students.

- ▶ Denny Sinclair worked as a school psychologist at a middle school where there was a concern about school absences. Denny worked closely with two guidance counselors who knew the culture of the community. It was their shared opinion that the parents were unconcerned about the students' truancy. The school psychologist and counselors went as a team to the homes and met with the parents of these students. This personalized intervention heightened the parents' awareness of the importance of school attendance for their children. This strategy was successful. The key was effective collaboration. The parents' perspective was that the school cared about their family. Everyone wins.

Another form of teaming happens as AEA staff members and teachers coordinate their work with parents. Rather than having the assistance of service providers working in a fragmented way that may result in confusion for families, a better process is needed. The solution is the development of an IEP and the identification of schedules that work for schools, families and AEA professionals. This takes a modicum of effort. Typically the Iowa education community has coordinated their efforts for the benefit of all.

At the time of the NCAA basketball finals and Olympic events you are likely to hear the musical group Queen singing *We Are The Champions*. In Iowa schools, the "we" takes on life in team arrangements including modeling, team-teaching, incentives and interagency collaboration of educators and families. It is important to work smart because time, energy and money are finite resources.

Accountability and Indicators of Professional Effort

In the 1980s Iowa experienced a devastating farm crisis reflected in the shifting of appraised value of farmland used to leverage bank loans. The consequence was that many family farms fell to bank foreclosures. The Iowa economy struggled with its economic downturn. State politicians were vigilant and looked for ways to streamline budgets. Education was one of many areas where efficiencies were sought. A general attitude of accountability was present in Iowa in the early 1980s. Accountability will be seen in three ways: identifying students with learning disabilities, a method of judging professionals activities, and teachers use of the IEP.



Painting of an Iowa Farm by Maxine Stumme

Special Education System Expansion. When the AEAs were created by Iowa legislation and the weighted system was established as the funding mechanism, it was with an understanding that growth in special education would likely continue to expand for five years, from 1975 to 1980, and the number of identified students would then plateau. The assumption was that by 1980 the state would be at full service, meaning there would be a relative balance between the number of students who exited programs and the numbers of new students identified. However, in 1980, AEA directors were unsupportive of the proposition that Iowa had reached full service because if a student was determined to have a disability then they must be served. This perspective had merit. The category with the highest level of identification for instructional programs was students with learning disabilities. There were questions about rigor and appropriateness of the identification procedures applied to students considered to have a learning disability.

A potential solution to enhance the integrity of the diagnostic decision-making process for students considered to have a learning disability was proposed by two Iowa school psychologists from Mississippi Bend AEA, Tom Cone and Lonny Wilson. They developed a procedure that utilized the discrepancy analysis method using intelligence test results and assessment of achievement that took into account statistical considerations of regression to the mean contributing to measurement error. With the IQ-achievement discrepancy approach it was asserted that this procedure could standardize identification of LD students. For some practitioners, this procedure had a certain appeal because it would reduce the use of professional judgment and seemingly increased objectivity in the approach to assessment. One could argue that this would refine LD diagnosis in a way that yields predictable results given certain tests. For others this was a mechanical procedure that did not provide any information about the instructional needs of students or inform parents about a student's needs or aid educators' judgments about what instructional practices, material or methods were necessary to enhance students' learning in either the general education classroom or special education program. The IQ-achievement procedure received considerable attention in the early 1980s. However, the practice was later discontinued in Iowa because it seemed to be a wait-to-fail approach. The procedure was emulated across the country because it systematized the determination of Learning Disabilities. But, like many great ideas, today's solution may become tomorrow's difficulty. It was a cost effective process for identification, but it offered little else. The practice proved to be very difficult to extinguish in the years to follow when an outcome-based approach to special education became the primary focus. This sentiment is reflected in this story that illustrates a wait-to-fail idea.

- ▶ Parents had been worried about their child's marginal progress in reading in general education. They knew he was not on grade level and was experiencing considerable difficulty. At the school meeting they were hopeful that something could happen that would improve school success for their child. All of the professionals and the parents shared their perspectives on the student's learning. Towards the end one of the AEA staff said, "I'm sorry, your child does not score low enough to qualify as having a disability. Maybe next year we can re-evaluate and see if the reading difficulty gets worse. Then we can serve him in a resource room with a reading goal." That is what wait-to-fail sounds like

where the IQ-Achievement model is applied. This is not acceptable. Something more functional was needed.

Accountability in a “child find” system includes keeping track of how many students are identified for special education services. In this type of system, educational organizations can be tempted to look at the number of evaluations conducted as indicators of staff productivity.

Indicators of Progress. Another aspect of accountability is how professionals use their time and energy. In the world of stock trading the language of return-on-investment is abbreviated ROI.



Stock Market Display

Any well-run business, including special education, keeps an eye on return on the investment of professionals’ activities. A few examples: Principals ask teachers to develop lesson plans and to implement those in alignment with the curriculum or grade level goals to enhance student achievement. Special education teachers have IEPs that define expectations and provide instruction focused on these areas of need. High school coaches have win-

loss records. School districts maintain information on dropouts.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, an AEA supervisor used what many would consider to be an inappropriate indicator of professional performance, the number of intelligence tests given or the number of students tested as a measure of productivity for school psychologists. It’s something that can be counted, but is not the correct indicator for professionals. Such an ill-conceived measure could pose a problem for professionals who were interventionists as shown in this story.

- ▶ Greg Robinson, in his first year as a school psychologist, implemented a pre-referral process in his buildings. This was an informal procedure where teachers could request assistance with situations of concern in their classroom, often for circumstances where students were not functioning within educational expectations. In this approach a behavioral consultation model was utilized to determine how to be of assistance to the teachers and then evaluate improved student classroom performance. Testing was often unneeded in this approach. Pre-referrals were not part of the referral-test-report mechanism. Using that index, the ROI would appear low for Greg. In contrast, if they were using a student outcome index as the ROI then the output would be high. Counting tests is about being busy giving tests. Providing interventions that improved students’ educational performance was not considered and valued by this procedure in that agency. The 1980s were a time of change. In such a climate it is important to measure what matters most as was evidenced in Greg’s practice.

We have considered accountability in terms of diagnostic assessment for identification and professional use of time. Now we will examine accountability to IEPs. In a similar vein of logic to the above, local school districts were expected to make improvement with students IEPs. The process of verification in Iowa was school improvement reviews. IEPs were reviewed and revised annually. Perhaps that is similar to when President Ronald Reagan met with General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987 to discuss nuclear disarmament. With regard to a treaty, Reagan famously said that the United States should “trust but verify.”

The Individualized Educational Program (IEP) has gone through its own evolution. In the 1960s there were no IEPs and the hope that small class sizes would permit instruction to be focused on learners’ unique needs. With the passage of PL 94-142 in 1975 a change in practice was necessary with the requirement of IEPs for every child.

- ▶ Jan Campbell and Bonnie Green reflected on the changes they experienced as special education teachers. In the early 1970s there were no written documents and no requirements to have formal discussions with parents and no teams to help design plans for children receiving special education services. When the federal law was passed, districts made IEP forms that focused on brief statements and general outcomes. It would be common for the target of instruction to be “improve in reading.” In the 80s, measurable goals and objectives were required. A goal might be “(Student name) will learn 100 of the 220 Dolch sight words by the end of the second semester.” Evidence-based accountability was moving forward. At this time IEPs were handwritten, a major task for teachers. In the 90s some districts developed computer-assisted banks of goals and objectives. This had the advantage of allowing teachers to create IEPs without individually writing out every IEP, which was certainly a relief and allowed more time for instruction. Accountability was best when seen as improvement in student’s IEP goals, something that Jan Campbell and Bonnie Green tried to achieve.

There is, and should be, an oversight with checks and balances in all agencies. The bottomline in accountability is whether students improve and can live with greater independence.

Assisting Students with Behavioral and Mental Health Issues

John Lennon was once asked if fans could look forward to another performance by the Beatles. John replied that the Beatles would perform again, but he wasn’t sure people should look forward to it. His keen sense of self-debasing humor heightened the humanness to his stardom.

Beatles star John Lennon was shot and killed by Mark Chapman in 1981, and in that same year John Hinckley, Jr. shot President Ronald Reagan. In both cases it was judged to be the actions of individuals with serious mental health concerns. In Iowa, an individual with mental health issues killed football coach, Ed Thomas, from Applington-Parkersburg, in 2009. And, of course, there was the horrific

incident at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012, another circumstance with a mental health link. Children and youth experience behavioral and mental health challenges. Assistance and support are needed during the school years. Although there is a wide range of behavior issues, which may not involve violence, these high profile circumstances illustrate the need



John Lennon Remembered

to support youth before there are serious consequences for all.

Intervening with Individual Student Behavioral Issues. There have always been students whose behavior challenged the demands of the school setting. Prior to PL 94-142, these students were often subjected to various forms of progressive punishment, and failing to change their behavior, would frequently be excluded from school and left to flounder on their own. During the interviews for this publication the authors heard the story about an Iowa school superintendent who had a harsh perspective on how to manage students with behavior challenges. The superintendent's attitude was certainly not the norm for Iowa school, but such attitudes did exist.

- ▶ The superintendent explained, "A school is like a tree, in order for it to be healthy one has to prune out the bad branches. The pruning allows the rest to flourish. Some students cause trouble and cutting them free is the best action. Hopefully they do not remain in the community."

Public policy shifted with the passage of PL 94-142, when public schools were required to develop programs to assist students with the category identified as serious emotional disabilities (SED). This was discussed earlier in this text in the second half of the 70s. In addition, the discussion portrayed how, in Iowa during the late 1970s and 80s, a creative initiative subdivided SED into the categories of emotional disabilities (ED) and chronically disruptive (CD), to distinguish those students with emotional difficulties who could benefit from short-term counseling or long-term therapy vs. those students who exhibited maladaptive behavior requiring a behavioral based program.

These two categories were later combined into one, behavioral disorders (BD), which actually required a specific bill passed by the Iowa legislature. Carl Smith, working as a consultant in the DE, was an enduring champion for youth with behavioral challenges of BD and Autism. He helped define identification practices and promoted programs to care for children and youth with all intensities of behavioral concern. Later in his career Carl taught at Buena Vista College, Drake University, and Iowa State University, always advancing services for children with disabilities. Iowa has benefited from his continuing efforts and enduring passion for justice.

For educators, identifying students with behavior difficulties and addressing their specific needs through an IEP has been the course of action since PL 94-142. IEPs have continued to evolve and students with BD are served through an IEP that contains a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). These IEPs can become long and detailed, but highly effective when implemented with integrity to the specificity of the plan.

The Language of Empowerment. *The Breakfast Club* was a popular movie in the mid 1980s. That film focused on five students from different Chicago high schools who were to serve a Saturday in detention together. This was intended to be a punitive action for these school "misfits." The group spent their time in a mostly unsupervised environment since the assistant principal who was suppose to oversee the day's activity was largely absent. As the movie unfolds each individual's personal story is revealed. There is a backstory in everyone's life and there is much more to each person than what his or her surface behavior presents.

In Iowa there were programs for students who were at odds with others and their environment, but in the best of circumstances these individuals were not given an extra dose of punishment, rather an abundance of caring corrective interactions. The Waterloo community, in AEA 7, had a program led by Darrell Dierks for chronically disruptive youth. The treatment was not to ignore, punish or shame these adolescents; rather they were caringly challenged to grow their lives in new ways and to explore behaviors that were alternatives to their current patterns. In the teen years it is easy for youth to be rebels and fight a system that is trying to suppress their identity, to restrict their movement and constrain their actions. These strategies do not lead to long-term improvement any more than jail time it does for adults. The task is to use a youth's life force in ways that leads to fresh perspectives of a role in the world. Darrell Dierks and his staff worked to empower youth in a transformative process that used their energy and experience to create new learning as noted in this story. Darrell, like John Lennon, asked others to imagine a better future.

- ▶ A youth had explosive behaviors and was easily set off by events. Following such an event Darrell asked the student to give his perspective of what happened. The purpose was to help the student dissect the events that occurred and discover what antecedents triggered an outburst. This is not one-trial learning. This discovery-oriented process is more like a scientific experiment intended to determine the cause and effect relationship. This is taking the mystery out of the chaos of a pattern of disruptive behaviors. The practice was to respect the experience of the individual and empower them to see the connections between life events that cause difficulty for them. When a student understands the precursors of their behavior, they can consider alternative responses when triggering events occur. That may be as straightforward as asking questions such as, "What would you want to do differently in this situation if it happened again?" thus, considering options to the current pattern.

Engaging students in a process of rethinking their behavior and taking ownership for the solutions is beneficial. It is a process of constructing new strategies for living.

- ▶ An example was when a youth we will call Jeremy was riding on a public bus and could be provoked by incidents of others. His solution was an agreement to not fuss with others by putting on earphones and listen to his music. Additionally, in school whenever he recognized



City Bus

circumstances that led to his disruptive behavior he was given permission to leave the classroom. This often led to a conversation with Darrell about what was happening and what Jeremy thought he could do differently. Empowerment and respect are central to this transformative process.

The goal of special education is to improve students' performance, in this case, individuals with behavioral difficulties. What happens when improvement occurs? Students with a history of disruptive behavior may experience difficulties when reintegrating back into the district they left. A student may have changed, but educators' expectations and behavior may not have. Students like Jeremy may still be considered by some to be permanent members of the Breakfast Club and therefore do not belong in the larger school community. Darrell managed that by developing an explicit contract with district leaders at the point where a student became involved in special education programs. The contract specified when the student's behavior improved the student would be returned to the district. This empowered district leaders to shape the expectations, to think positively about the student's improvement, and their role in the future re-engagement process.

In a similar manner, parents need empowerment. Parents who have children whose behavior has been disruptive to others often have unique interactions with educators. The parents can feel blame, shame, and anger with what is happening to their child and to them.

- ▶ Darrell Dierks' approach was to meet with parents before a school meeting, ask them what they wanted from the school, their child and themselves. He sat next to them in school meetings to provide support to ensure that their voice would be a valued part of the process. Ongoing contact with parents showed a high regard for their opinions, interest in their solutions and respect for their experiences. When this happens parents and school personnel are on the same side and share a common goal.

When students, school leaders and parents have the power to help shape expectations there is a convergence in perspective. Empowering others to become engaged in this process is part of the science and art of special education. Darrell Dierks demonstrated this compassionate approach with considerable success.

Advancements in Autism Spectrum Services

It is not the authors' intent to repeatedly walk down a historical timeline. That said, at times it serves a greater purpose to do just that. This review of milestones on the autism journey will be more of a dash than a walk.

The awareness of autism in America grew at a slow pace but eventually attained widespread public recognition. A brief history. The earliest reference to the term is in the early 1900s where the condition was considered to be a type of schizophrenia. In the 1940s Leo Kanner, a physician, wrote about children with autism describing their behavioral characteristics. A German professional, Hans Asperger, recognized children with high intelligence and their unique behaviors. From that work came the designation of Asperger's Syndrome. In the 1960s Bruno Bettelheim, connected autism with the presumed causation of what he, unfortunately and inaccurately, called Refrigerator Mothers. The beginning of the National Society for Children began in 1965. In 1980 the term autism disorder became a distinct category in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) used by mental health professionals. Ivar Lovaas, a psychologist, developed a treatment protocol in the 1980s and conducted extensive research on the practice. Also in the 1980s the Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH) approach developed at the University of North Carolina, was gaining acceptance.

The broad base of the American population became introduced to autism through the movie *Rain Man* starring Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise. That film won eight Academy Awards, including best picture in 1988. When the IDEA legislation was reauthorized in early 1990s autism was added as a special education category thereby ensuring educational programs and protections for these individuals. Also in that decade the DSM recognized infantile autism as a diagnosis. In the early 2000s, there was a presumed connection between measles vaccinations and Autism, a link that was scientifically disproven. However some parents at that time did not have their children vaccinated for measles, which later proved detrimental in 2014 when a measles outbreak occurred at Disneyland in California. Currently autism is viewed as a spectrum disorder with the condition ranging from mild to severe.



Viewing of Rainman

The above information spans a hundred years. What is untold across these years is the human drama of what happened to many children and adults with autism whose circumstances were misunderstood, when there was an absence of educational opportunities, and when families lived in communities without adequate support for individuals with autism. That story has changed because of concerted efforts in Iowa and nationally. There are autism teams in every AEA, IDEA includes protection for a free appropriate education for children with autism, and the Autism Society—Iowa chapter, and Parent Education Connection

provide support for families. The Autism Society of Iowa's website states their mission: "We provide advocacy, support and information to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders, their families, professionals, and communities throughout the state of Iowa." Consider the differences all of this would have made in the lives of people with autism in the 1930s-1940s-1950s to have such support. Likewise, consider the significant benefits for those who live in Iowa now and in the future. As you will see in the next section, leadership actions of people matter.

Iowa Champions. The advancements in special education have occurred because of focused advocacy, research and professional efforts to enhance services. It is people caring and acting on their passion and understanding. Our purpose is to recognize three key events and those whose energy contributed to the significant evolution of services for students with autism and their families and teachers in Iowa. The establishment of the Autism Society, training educators for serving children with autism, and Homestead residential facility for adults and children, all contributed to enhancing services for this population.

The Autism Society of Iowa has its origins in 1978 when 300 people came together for the first gathering. An early purpose was to gain recognition for autism and promote services. Connie Toland in the Quad City area, and Nicole Raaz from the Fort Dodge area, were instrumental in mobilizing passion and advocacy for educational programs for children with autism in Iowa. Parents found a strong ally in Carl Smith who began working in the Iowa DE beginning in 1975 as the consultant for behavior disorders. Carl, now a professor at Iowa State University, is still a restless soul and an enduring advocate for educational services for children and youth with behavioral needs. One of the early challenges in establishing education services for children with autism was to provide expanded awareness of this low incidence condition. Carl authored a variety of monographs and, through the Iowa DE, sponsored statewide symposiums and conferences about autism. Another task was to offer direct training and hands-on experiences for families and educators in appropriate educational methodologies for children and youth with autism. With the collective effort of parents and Carl Smith a summer camp experience occurred.

Camp Sunnyside was the site for an innovative hands-on experience for Iowa in 1980. The two-week camp provided professional development for multidisciplinary teams consisting of school psychologists, speech-language pathologists, special education consultants and special education teachers. The intent was to provide experience, knowledge and advocacy for appropriate programming for students with autism. Sixty professionals and twenty children participated in this activity. The effort was catalytic for later actions promoting services for students with autism. This is a shining example of the power of parents and professionals united with Carl Smith and Nicole Raaz at the forefront in a leadership effort.

While progress was being made in establishing educational programs for children in the public sector, there was a growing awareness that services were lacking for adults and children who may be in need of residential provisions. Sally Pederson saw the need and took decisive action by working collaboratively with other parents and community leaders. An early fundraising effort involved showing the movie *Rainman*. This movie raised awareness and funding for the Autism Society's work. In the late 1980s the Iowa Task Force on Autism

produced two reports, one about children and a second report on adults with autism. Recommendations resulted in a Regional Autism Resource Center at the University of Iowa focusing on educational services. Expanded options for living arrangements for individuals with autism were needed. This resulted in the creation of The Homestead.

The Homestead is a nonprofit organization that offers services for adults and children throughout Iowa. A primary champion in creating this program was



The Homestead
Innovative solutions for people with autism

Sally Pederson.

Homestead currently provides services in four areas: Youth Community Services, Adult Community

Services, Youth Home, and Campus Residential Programs. There are clinics in Altoona, Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Clive and Waterloo. Intermediate residential care facilities are in Altoona and Clive. The Homestead began operating in 1991 and continues to provide valued services to meet human needs of Iowa's population of individuals on the autism spectrum.

Instructional Methodologies. During the 1980s and 1990s, two methodologies, the Lovaas Method and TEACCH, were emerging as approaches to educating children with autism. A brief description of each will be considered regarding how Iowa has assimilated these methodologies.

In the past, individuals with autism were often misdiagnosed as mentally retarded or schizophrenic and provided with the prevailing treatments of the time, which were ineffective in enhancing living for those with autism. Ivar Lovaas' research showed promise for improving living through a method of discrete trial learning, beginning at an early age emphasizing the application of the behavioral principle of rewarding desired performance. Lovaas viewed autism as treatable with the application of appropriate behavioral methodologies. Discrete trial learning breaks tasks down into component parts, which become taught in a sequence of steps and systematically reinforced with food, attention or other age appropriate rewards. Some examples are daily living tasks such as brushing teeth, washing hands or eating. An action is composed of multiple movements to combine into an integrated whole. There are discrete instructional routines with prompts and feedback for the student on each element. The overall performance is systematically rebuilt into an integrated whole. Once the behaviors are established then reinforcements and prompts are faded out to enhance independence. Lovaas' research pointed to success when there was 40 hours of rigorous, scripted training per week, but no significant success with only 10 hours per week sessions. An incidental fact, Ivar Lovaas attended Luther College in Decorah on a music scholarship. He had Iowa roots of a sort.

The University of North Carolina is the site where Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH) originated. TEACCH strategies assess an individual's strengths, interests, needs and skills to structure their learning. Communication and structured interaction are used to enhance communication, academics, social interaction, play and leisure activities, vocational endeavors and coping strategies for day-to-day tasks. Understanding a child's strengths is considered important in tailoring instruction to match the learner's needs.

The issue of whether to focus on Lovaas or TEACCH practices was considered a bit like a preference for Pepsi or Coke. The simple fact was that teachers, parents and students all needed support. Iowa moved toward a hybrid approach where the centerpiece was individualized instruction with research-based practices where applied behavioral analysis was the common ground. What was needed was a mechanism for supporting comprehensive delivery of services. Sue Baker, in a position funded by the Iowa DE and located at the University of Iowa, was instrumental in establishing a statewide network of autism teams in every AEA. The team consists of professionals with diverse experiences, typically a school psychologist, school social worker, speech-language pathologist, early childhood educator, special education consultant, and perhaps others. The AEA teams received additional training to expand their expertise and knowledge in effective practices in promoting progress for students with autism. The AEA autism team was a significant support to the professionals assigned to local school districts. Networking professionals enhanced the capacity of the education system statewide.

Professionals in Iowa received training with TEACCH, Lovaas, and other methodologies. The centerpiece of the Iowa approach utilizes applied behavioral analysis to tailor specially designed instruction for individuals. Two specific examples provided by Dave Wood, a school psychologist who was on an AEA Autism Team, illustrates the benefit from interventions that enhanced a child's life experiences.

- ▶ A 5-year old boy, Tristian, would not make eye contact with his mother or with his teacher when his name was called to engage or follow a direction. Dave taught the parent and the teacher an instructional routine with the command "Tristian, look" using a variety of highly reinforcing items and a high rate of reinforcement when Tristian looked by responding to his name. The strategy was effective.
- ▶ A 9-year old girl, Abby, was nonverbal and became physically aggressive at school and home when she was asked to transition from one preferred activity to another and when she wanted more of something but could not communicate. She was taught in a variety of settings how to use a communication system to request "more". Abby was also taught how to receptively understand, "All done". These practices became a part of how Abby learned to communicate her preferences.

These two situations from Dave Wood illustrate the educational practice of providing information, demonstration teaching, ongoing support for implementation of an intervention by monitoring the results, assessing success, and staying with those implementing the intervention until success is clearly established. Those are elements of a scientific methodology and compassion at its best. Sustained effort benefits from the presence of both.

A dramatic change in Iowa has taken place in services for individuals on the autism spectrum disorder, not by accident, but rather through focused, deliberate and passionate collaborative advocacy by parents and professionals. In a 1980 survey by Carl Smith with responses from the AEA special education

directors, it was determined that 163 children with autism were receiving educational programs in Iowa. In contrast, 30 years later, the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention website, in 2010, states the prevalence rate is 1:68. Thus, the number of students with autism at this time were under identified and under served. Currently Iowa has an autism team in every AEA providing support to local schools. There is an Iowa chapter of the National Autism Society. Further, medical and education research is ongoing. Residential facilities such as The Homestead provide services for all ages. Advancement continues and Iowa will embrace the progress. However, for progress to continue to occur it requires people who care and take action. Iowa's history has the spirit of innovation, compassion and action, all of which bodes well for the future.

Children with Health Challenges

Health challenges come in a wide variety of forms and intensity. The Polio epidemic in the 1950s had devastating consequences' for many people until the Salk vaccine was perfected, which led to widespread health prevention efforts through the application of solid scientific practices.

Other areas of medicine showed advancements from science. Children with medically fragile conditions are living longer. Great strides were made in cardiac care in the early 1980s. The first artificial heart transplant occurred for a 61 year-old man, Barney Clark, who lived for 112 days afterwards. Three years later the world's first heart and liver transplant was accomplished, this time with a six-year old child. Pediatric heart surgery was occurring in Iowa too, a remarkable development that preserved life. Medical advancements were extending life for Iowans as revealed in this story.

- ▶ In 1983 Mark and Mary Watkins became parents and soon learned their daughter, Lindsey, had Down Syndrome and a congenital heart defect that included a hole in each of the four chambers of her heart. Lindsey was not taking nourishment, losing weight, and was described as Failure to Thrive. There were clearly multiple challenges. Heart surgery was required at 3 months old. Lindsey was in intensive care for over two months, arrested seven times and her other body systems were shutting down. The parents were told to make funeral arrangements. They did, but Lindsey was a fighter and she survived. Hospital bills exceeded \$400,000, which far exceeded the families \$30,000 insurance coverage. A social worker suggested the parents could divorce in order to qualify for financial aide, and a physician suggested they could institutionalize their child with Down Syndrome and tell people that the child had passed away. However, he hoped they wouldn't. The parents



Heart Monitor Display

never considered either suggestion. Due to Lindsey's health care needs Mary resigned her teaching position and cashed in her IPERS to pay down the debt. Then Mary and her husband, Mark agreed to pay \$25 per week to attempt to pay off the rest of the debt. By now the family owed \$800,000. Lindsey's doctors heard of the financial situation and wrote off their fees, but the amount owed was still staggering. Mary contacted Senator Harkin's office for help and guidance. President Reagan, with encouragement from Senator Harkin, hand wrote a letter allowing Lindsey to receive an Exception to Policy to receive the Mental Retardation Waiver to provide needed financial assistance for Lindsey.

Lindsey's verbal language skills were very slow in developing and ambulation was difficult for her. What lay ahead was not an easy road for either the parents or child. Their pediatric physician was a strong support, as was the early childhood (EC) team that provided helping hands. Mary reports that Kathy Symonaitis, early childhood speech-language pathologist; Lori Hokscho, physical therapist; and Martha Raney, early childhood consultant were a huge support team for her and Lindsey. The educational community made dramatic advancements, just as occurred in the medical treatment. The EC teams bring skills, scientific practices and wisdom that helps enrich learning and living for families.

Mary Watkins had taught at the elementary level, with an assignment in Chapter 1/Title 1 and Gifted & Talented before resigning to care for her daughter. Adding to her breadth of educational experiences she learned to negotiate medical and social agencies along with educational entities. Mary's deep knowledge and experience with a child who was medically fragile, had physical disabilities, and an intellectual disability, prepared her well for serving as a special education advocate. We will discuss Mary and other parents' advocacy in the section on the 1990s regarding Connecting Parents and Educators. We will also further discuss Lindsey's school progress in the 1990s in the section addressing accommodations for students with disabilities.

All eligible children with disabilities are covered under IDEA and entitled to an appropriate education. Accessing educational opportunities for some students brings nursing services into team planning and service delivery. Individual Health Plans (IHP) are required as a part of the IEP when health needs impinge on a student's access to learning. Execution of the plan allows individuals with disabilities to have the opportunity to benefit from their school experience. Without effective health care services some students would be unable to participate in classroom activities.



School Nurse

IHPs do not have components specifically prescribed in IDEA. MaryAnn Strawhacker, a special education school nurse consultant at an AEA, advocates for the IHP to be linked to an IEP for students. The IHP format includes five elements: assessment, nursing diagnosis, outcomes, interventions, and evaluation. MaryAnn provides instruction to school nurses to teach them how to write IHPs and include health services in a student's IEP. Additionally, MaryAnn developed a website and later a Google site to make prototype IHPs that are intended to be modified by school nurses across Iowa. This is an outstanding example of how AEA assistance supports local personnel in providing quality services in their community school districts and, in turn, assists individuals with disabilities and their families. The benefits of an IHP are highlighted in a situation with a child who was cognitively normal but physically challenged.

- ▶ Bart was home schooled because his parent's thought the school would be unable to meet his persistent health care needs. He had a muscular disease that caused progressive weakness. Bart was unable to travel any distance and had a tracheotomy that required frequent suctioning to keep the airway open to allow breathing and speech. These conditions necessitated ongoing attention.

The demands of the child's health activities precluded the parent from working, restricted normal peer experiences. The parents asked that their child be enrolled in the community school district. Bart was accepted, and an IEP with a health care plan developed with 1:1 nursing services and instruction was provided in a general education classroom. As he grew older, Bart acquired the skills needed for self-care of his tracheostomy through an IEP goal co-taught by his school nurse and special education teacher. Bart completed his education and received a regular high school diploma. He went on to a university in Iowa and graduated with a career path ahead.

In this situation an Individual Health Plan was implemented with school nursing services significantly contributing to making a free and appropriate education in the local school district a reality and allowed typical peer relationships to occur. This success would not have occurred without a strong supporting cast of school nurses, parents, general and special education teachers, school administrators, school social workers, and school psychologists. It takes a village. He had one.

Another health development in the 1980s was the onset of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) first discovered by French scientist Dr. Luc Montagnier. A related term was Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). In these situations the immune system was unable to fight a virus and pharmaceutical treatment had not been refined. Early HIV and AIDS were conditions that caused fear for many people because there were so many unknowns including a full understanding of all the conditions under which the virus was transmitted. This might have posed a difficulty for some Iowa professionals, but not everyone, as is shown in this story.

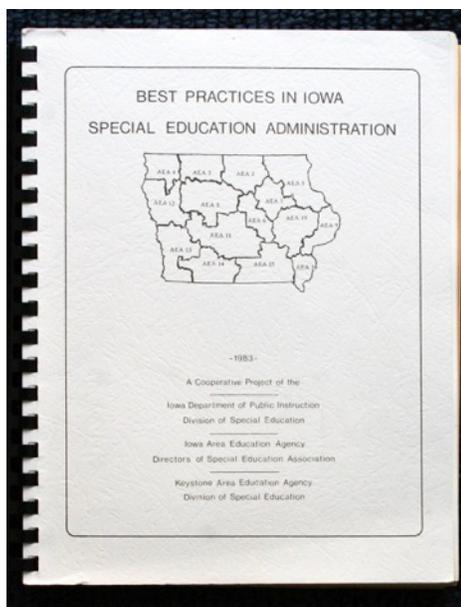
- ▶ Many years after Vic Zike retired he returned to the workforce to serve as a part time school psychologist. The AEA he was working in received their first referral of a child with HIV. Very little was known about HIV in those days and how it was spread. At this

time confidentiality about disease and handicapping conditions was not clearly defined. The school psychologist assigned to the school district did not want to be involved in the assessment. Nor did several other educational professionals. Without being asked Vic stopped by the AEA school psychology supervisor's office and stated that he would be pleased to evaluate the child with HIV. Vic knew no more than anybody else about HIV/AIDS, but he knew he wanted to help. Vic was truly one of the pioneers and professional heroes who demonstrated his commitment to the education of children with special needs.

From the stories in this section it is clear that the health community has made significant progress. Iowa's special educators and the special education community also are making changes, adjustments, and adaptations to ensure the quality of services to meet the rising challenges. This was true in the 1980s and the quest for excellence continues in all aspects, including administration and leadership activities.

Improving the Special Education Administrative System

AEA Special Education Directors were faced with significant issues on many fronts in 1975. As the AEA system grew with an increasing number of staff, the need to strengthen relationships with local districts, increasing numbers of due process issues, resource allocation concerns all combined to support a need for a stronger administrative decision-making process. At this time there was insufficient professional literature adapted specifically for special education leaders and little for the unique responsibilities in Iowa. In 1983, with the encouragement of Dr. Cliff Howe at the University of Iowa, who led the doctoral program that qualified individuals for licensure as special education directors in Iowa, a project was undertaken to address this need. The product was an extensive publication entitled *Best Practices in Iowa Special Education Administration*. The project leader was AEA 1 director, Eugene Pratt. It was a collaborative publication, with many of the AEA special education directors contributing to the content. The publication addressed leadership processes of decision making, planning, coordinating, communicating, and evaluating. Additionally, finance and authority for action was considered, as well as administrative communication about such topics that are crucial for building interagency relationships and understanding how others successfully function in leadership roles. This project provided a forum and focus for Iowa's special education directors to enhance their shared understanding. The document was distributed statewide and used in university administrative programs.



Special Education
Administrative Guide, 1983

Another vehicle for ongoing administrative coordination was the AEA Special Education Directors Association monthly meetings to discuss issues of

importance. These meetings were held to coordinate decisions with the Iowa DE regarding finance, regulation, state and national issues and options for Iowa response. In a similar way, the school district leaders from the eight largest districts met periodically to focus on issues specific to their operation.

In recent years the Iowa Council for Administrators of Special Education (I-CASE) has been an association that provides a point of connection that was inclusive of concerns of leaders of all size and types of organizations in Iowa. The Iowa organization reflects the national organization, Council for Administrators of Special Education (CASE), and international professional groups affiliated with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Collectively these groups are dedicated to the enhancement of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of each individual in society. Sometimes it takes a collective effort of many to influence social change; sometimes it is accomplished one district at a time.



Enhancement of Services within Districts. Educators and other human service providers are committed to ensuring that students receive an education. Expelling individuals from school does not enhance students' learning or align with any school districts' expressed purpose. Despite this understanding, serious legal infractions in school often followed a three-step scenario consisting of an arrest by the police, discontinuation of schooling by school board action, and the assignment of a juvenile probation officer. When this happened a small proportion of youth in such circumstances returned to continue their education after being separated from the district. School personnel in Iowa needed better options. Some districts undertook decisive corrective action.

- ▶ Tom Jeschke, Director of Student Services in Des Moines said that in the 1980s the Des Moines Independent School District was concerned about the growing rate of expulsions because of serious behaviors. These behaviors were often a function of mental health challenges and difficult family situations. These students needed more help, not less as would occur with expulsions. Rather than proceeding with isolated actions by separate community agencies, the Des Moines district partnered with others in a unified effort to support students' success and connect with families to provide essential services. During Tom's tenure in Des Moines, 90 students became a part of the PACE Day Treatment program, 78 of whom returned to the school to continue their education. These were not students with disabilities, but they were individuals in need of support.

There was an ongoing need to continually rethink how services were provided for students with special needs. Doing so required reconsidering program structures and the staff development focus for professionals.

Services by Disability Categories or Instructional Need. Juliet asks, "What's in a name? that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." Shakespeare's character's question was referring to the Capulets and Montagues and whether the distinction of one's name was sufficient grounds for action. With a different circumstance, the same question arose in Iowa. The subject was categorical designations. In the early 1980s there was a concerted effort to have teacher certification, special education instruction and classroom support all based on pure categorical structures. Children with learning disabilities (LD) would have an LD certified teacher who had only students with LD designations. The same was true for students with behavioral challenges, and those with mild mental disabilities. The prevailing thought was that the categorical diagnosis or designation was related to the educational intervention for specific categories of disabilities. That premise was repeatedly called into question. There were also concerns about the legal responsibility for providing a free and appropriate program for individuals with special needs and the role of general education in that process. The courts were helpful in resolving this issue.

Court Opinions and Special Education

Court decisions have defined how laws are implemented and limits of laws. Consider a few examples of the influence of courts on nationwide experiences. The 1954 Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Board of Education*, struck down the authority for segregated educational systems and opened school doors for a single, inclusive school system. In 1966, as a result of the *Miranda* case, the *Miranda* Rights now have to be read prior to interrogation by police. The *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973 ruled it was unconstitutional to prohibit a woman from having an abortion if she chose to do so. In 1974 President Richard Nixon refused a subpoena requiring the release of audiotapes of White House conversations as requested by the special prosecutor. The Court ruled that the president was not above the law.



United States Supreme Court, 2009

In 1998 the Supreme Court found in the case of *Cedar Rapids Community School District v. Garret F.*, in order to provide a free and appropriate education, the district must provide related services, regardless of cost, to ensure access to an education and ensure the student was integrated into the public school with peers.

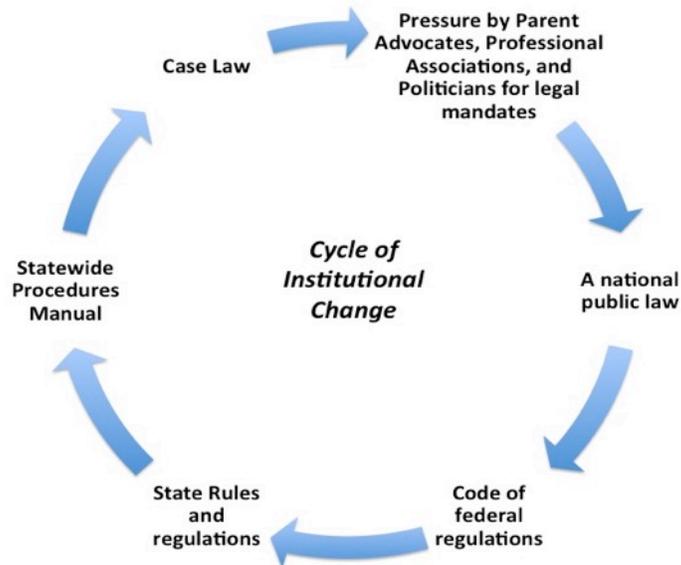
Two more examples from Iowa illustrate how the legal system was reinterpreted to allow contemporary perspectives on the needs of its citizens. Iowa had a compulsory attendance law in 1965 requiring that all students attend school. The Amish community refused to send children to school, preferring to provide educational experiences for their children in schools run by their community leaders. The Iowa Legislature granted a religious exemption to the compulsory attendance rule for the Amish in 1967. In 2009 the *Varnum v. Brien*, Iowa

Supreme Court decision allowed same sex marriage stating that prohibiting marriage to opposite sex couples was inconsistent with the principles of equality in the state's constitution. The legal system refines societal understanding of how freedom and respect occurs in Iowa.

Special education programs and services in Iowa have been shaped by judicial actions interpreting federal laws, especially IDEA, Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Because the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) was federal legislation it had implications for special education programs and services across the nation. EHA, renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), called for schools to become inclusive. In the 1980s the exact meaning of being inclusive was clarified through court decisions.

Judicial Decisions for Children with Disabilities. In the introduction of this text the Cycle of Institutional Change was presented with a brief discussion of each step in the process. The step labeled Case Law will be highlighted in this section with particular focus on three court decisions that were game changers for clarifying least restrictive environment (LRE) and a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Once case law decisions are made public they become precedence and change practices. These court decisions influence the subsequent development and reauthorization of national public laws. Much of the substance for the public law and code of federal regulations is a result of case law interpretations and clarifications. Following the authorization of a public law, the Code of Federal Regulations is written and disseminated, and State Rules and Regulations are promulgated.



The three case law illustrations are the Roncker, the Rowley, and the Oberti Decisions.

Roncker Decision. In 1979 a school district in southern Ohio determined a nine year-old boy, Neill Roncker who had mild mental retardation, should be educated in a segregated school. The parents resisted this proposition. A district court supported the school district's position. This ruling was appealed. In 1983 the 6th Circuit Court ruled in favor of the parents and child asserting, "It is not enough for a district to simply claim that a segregated program is superior. In a case where the segregated facility is considered superior, the court should determine whether the services which make the placement superior could be feasibly provided in a non-segregated setting (i.e. a regular class). If they can,

the placement in the segregated school would be inappropriate under the IDEA act." (Roncker v. Walter). Thus, removal would only occur if education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. The emphasis is now on bringing the services to the child rather than automatically bringing the child to the services, that is, the court's decision also requires all placement decisions be made individually. Consequently, automatically placing all children with a particular disability in a specific program would not be permitted if the services could be provided in an environment with general education peers who are nondisabled.

Rowley Decision. The Rowley case refined the understanding of a Free Appropriate Education. Amy Rowley, a child with a hearing loss, attended school in Peekskill, New York. In kindergarten, Amy's IEP called for an FM wireless hearing aid, speech therapy services, and a sign-language interpreter. After a two-week trial period, the sign-language interpreter told the parents and school district that the services were unnecessary because Amy was functioning well in the classroom with the existing supports. When Amy's IEP was developed in first grade Amy's parents, who were deaf, again wanted the district to provide a sign-language interpreter. The Hendrick Hudson Central School District denied the request because the service was determined to be unnecessary. Amy's parents asked for a due process review by the New York commissioner of education. The decision favored the parent's position. Next the case was heard by the district court that supported the parent's claim. This was appealed by the school district and the case was reviewed by the 2nd Circuit Court and again supported the parent's request for the interpreter. The case then went to the Supreme Court that found in favor of the district's position and reversed the two previous judicial decisions. In 1982, the Supreme Court stated that the IEP did not require that the special instruction and supportive services provided under the law by state governments to disabled students be designed to help them achieve their full potential as learners. Instead, it was sufficient that the instruction and services be such as "to permit the child to benefit educationally from that instruction." Rowley is one of the most often cited legal precedents in dispute resolution. It is sometimes referred to as the Chevy v. Cadillac, meaning the IEP need not require the very best program, but must be reasonably calculated to confer benefit.

Oberti Decision. Rafael, a five-year old child with Down Syndrome, was a student in a New Jersey school in a developmental kindergarten class and a special education program in 1989-90. Behavior difficulties were reported in kindergarten. There was no behavior plan in the IEP. Rafael was then placed in a segregated program in a neighboring district at the beginning of the next school year. The parents wanted Rafael in a regular classroom in the home district and filed for due process. The Administrative Law Judge rendered an opinion to have the child placed out of district in a segregated program. The parents pursued due process in the circuit court. The judgment was that the district had not demonstrated that Rafael could not be educated with peers if supported by related service providers. Thus, to the maximum extent appropriate, a child should be educated in the mainstream. This may involve instruction in general education classrooms. However, if Rafael was not prepared for involvement in a general education classroom then opportunities for involvement in school programs with nondisabled students, such as art, music, lunch and recess would be thwarted.

Inclusive Education. IDEA's emphasis is on a free and appropriate education (FAPE). This emphasis does not require that all children be in general education classrooms, nor that children are automatically excluded. It is an individualized decision. Implementation of FAPE is strengthened when there is a choice along a continuum of instructional options including supplementary aids and services. The degree of inclusion in general education activities is how the principle of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and FAPE are implemented. The courts decisions have clearly supported this position. General education teachers are likely to need ongoing assistance and training to ensure effective instruction, which may include modifications of curriculum objectives to fit the needs of students with IEPs. Sometimes the purchase of special equipment is necessary to facilitate the provision of educational experiences in the LRE.

School communities respond to the idea of inclusive education in different ways. Some school personnel push back with arguments about why this idea is inappropriate, whereas others welcome the opportunity and embrace the possibilities. Here is one Iowa story told by a parent, Maureen Schletzbaum.

- ▶ Marissa Schletzbaum was born with Down Syndrome. When Marissa was preschool age the parents were pleased to learn that the elementary school principal had taken the initiative to write a grant to fund an integrated preschool program that would include their daughter. This Iowa community embraced the opportunity, which was beneficial for all students. The school doors were open, and the welcome mat rolled out. The district had no previous preschool program. It is a fine example of administrative leadership and commitment where the well-being of all students was central to this action. Everyone benefited.

In a nation of laws it is the legal system that refines our collective understanding of rights, responsibilities and opportunities. That has been true for children with disabilities leveraging the principles of FAPE and LRE to access a quality education with peers in inclusive classrooms. The benefits from decisions represented in the cases of Neill Roncker, Amy Rowley, Rafael Oberti and other legal actions, have created precedence that impacted the education of children in Iowa. Likewise, within Iowa, the Amish prevailed in their quest for maintaining a lifestyle based on religious convictions as a means of preserving their unique culture. In each situation, it was the legal system that provided guidance and Iowans were the benefactors. Due process procedures provide the opportunity for the consideration of justice for all parties.



Amish Community

Least Restrictive Environment

PL 94-142 (later called IDEA) and court cases supported the idea of providing educational services in the least restrictive environment (LRE). In the 1970s the emphasis was on a cascade or continuum of services. In the 1980s LRE took on a different look with a wider range of practices for interventions in general education classrooms. These efforts were intended to remediate mild difficulties experienced by students before considering placement. In addition, these efforts were intended to include more students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Inclusion could be part-time special education or full inclusion with all services in general education. In all cases it was a step towards minimizing automatic exclusion of students from their age level peers because of an individual's disability.

General Education Emphasis. LRE practices were in harmony with the concepts being advanced by Assistant Secretary of Education, Madeleine Will, who had direct responsibility for special education programs at the federal level in the mid 1980s. Secretary Will was a parent of a child with disabilities. The concept was called the Regular Education Initiative (REI). REI proposed that the general education community take a shared responsibility for the education of students with special needs. For this to succeed different skills and attitudes were needed by both general and special education professionals.

In the mid 1980s, Iowa implemented a training project that brought together three professions for statewide staff development purposes: school psychologists, school social workers and special education consultants. The initiative was called RE-AIM (Relevant Educational Assessment and Intervention Methods). The name was a metaphor describing the need to reconceive the purposes of assessment to focus on interventions rather than automatic placement of students in special education programs outside of the general education environment. Jeff Grimes, at the Iowa DE and Dan Reschly, at ISU collaborated to lead the RE-AIM project, a multi-year training and research effort. There were three interrelated modules relevant to the professional responsibilities as a team: behavioral consultation, curriculum-based assessment, and referral-question-assessment model of practice. To strengthen LRE options it was necessary to move away from the test-and-place practices that had become prominent in the past. The emphasis was on expanding the functionality of assessment and utility of educational interventions. The clear intent of this training was to support each of the professional disciplines in a common set of innovative practices intended to improve services for Iowa children and their families. A secondary benefit was to create greater collaboration between professional disciplines serving children with disabilities and their families.

School districts were often faced with an array of students with diverse special education needs. While the principle of the LRE is the guiding concept in programmatic decision-making, it is recognized that all students' needs cannot be met in a narrow range of alternatives or exclusively in the general education classroom. Instead, a continuum of special education programs and services are required to support students and their families. When thinking about LRE it was imperative to have a perspective that viewed general and special education services in a new way, where the boundaries were not rigid. Rather, based on student needs and with support for teachers there could be flexibility in how a student with disabilities was served as shown in the following story.

- ▶ Tom Jeschke, Director of Student Services in Des Moines, told the staff to take parents' opinions into greater account, and listen carefully to parents because their requests may be exactly what was needed for their child. This was highlighted by a situation when a parent with a child on the autism spectrum made a proposal that the child would begin the day in general education then go out for special education instruction when needed. The school team explained the district did not have this option. The parent asked, "Why can't you?" Tom Jeschke's response to the district's staff was, "Yes, why can't we?" Such an open-minded approach helped the school system grow and become better able to meet students' needs. By adopting this perspective the educator-parent relationship was strengthened and everyone benefited, especially students. In this situation the cascade of service expanded because of parents' and educators' shared advocacy. Further, the staff was encouraged to challenge current boundaries for the right reasons. Anything less limits the framework of special education to past models. That is stagnation. All children and families deserve the best that can be offered. That means being open to new ideas and approaches. In a reflective mood Tom said that he saw his work as "facilitating others' dreams." That is a desirable attitude for a special education administrator.

Parent Perspectives and Choices. Beginning in 1975, parents have been increasingly empowered to participate in the decision-making process for their children with disabilities. The key is parents' have voice in the decision. Parents frequently want their child to be in a classroom with same age peers and have the curriculum adapted to meet IEPs instructional goals. Some parents prefer to have their child in a segregated facility with a concentration of services for individuals with disabilities. This preference is more likely in urban settings where programs serve students with significant disabilities, often those who are medically fragile, and have a concentration of specially trained staff to provide assistance. Jerry Caster, the former principal at Ruby Van Meter School offered this perspective.

- ▶ Ruby Van Meter School, in the 1990s, served a student population of about 250 students from adolescence to young adulthood. Students were, and continue to be level III, in terms of needs. These are students with the greatest educational need for specially designed instruction and require a staff of special education teachers, physical therapy, school nurse, occupational therapy, social work, vocational assistance and other staff with a dedicated assignment to that school and student population. This means more ongoing services can be provided to students without losing travel time. Parents appreciate the fact there is a large swimming pool, gym and emphasis on students' physical well-being in addition to social, academic and vocational skills for life. The community is used for developing social, communication and vocational skills. Schools like Ruby Van Meter offer school dances, athletic venues, open houses, and other events throughout the school year. The parents, families and students often have shared

activities outside of school. It is a community that parents may choose in some districts.

Over time, IDEA and courts have ruled in favor of integrated programs in general education settings as a preferred option, the concept of the Least Restrictive Environment. Some parents choose a more restrictive environment because of the advantages it offers. For some students with significant disabilities, parents may view the general education classroom as unduly restrictive because the student cannot engage in the academic nor social environment in any meaningful way. For these students, a separate facility designed specifically for them may provide more opportunities than an integrated program. On the other hand, inclusion can have benefits for students. The parent perspective is crucial in this decision making process. The concept of a Free and Appropriate Public Education includes the expectation of *appropriate*. For some families, the appropriate program is one with a dedicated facility for individuals with disabilities and for other families decisions lead in the direction of integration and inclusion in a general education environment. The key is the parents' perspective and advocacy for their child's best interest. That is based on unique circumstances. LRE is not fixed and is influenced by student age and the options available.

Case law interpretations and new developments in best practices for assessment and interventions inspired Iowa educators to consider how they might make services for individuals with disabilities better. This led to a process of inquiry that would call for reforming Iowa's approach to determining eligibility and provision of services for students with disabilities.

Reform of Special Education in the 1980s

Need for Systemic Educational Reform. A decade after passage of PL 94-142, there was a growing awareness that the Iowa educational system had made significant progress since 1973 when 10,000 students were receiving special education instruction. Accomplishments by 1985 included identifying and serving 55,000 students with IEPs statewide. Further, all school districts in Iowa had support services available from AEAs, most general education administrators had a working knowledge of the law and procedural practices pertaining to special education, the finance system was supporting the provision of programs for students with disabilities, parents were routinely participating in meaningful decision-making processes for their children, and mediations were occurring to resolve differences when needed. These are crucial improvements compared with life in 1974. However, important challenges remained. The overall system was functioning primarily in a "child find" mode to identify students with disabilities, develop IEPs and provide services. In twelve years, 1973 to 1985, 45,000 additional students were receiving special education assistance. What was underemphasized was the focus on program outcomes, assessment to inform instruction, prevention, and early intervention in general education.



Other trends during this decade included federal court rulings favoring inclusion of students with IEPs in general education classrooms. Additionally there was an emphasis by Madeleine Will to increase the level of responsibility of general education teachers for all students, including individuals with have special needs. These ideas supported system level change.

Past statewide efforts laid a solid foundation supporting the notion that voluntary reform had good potential. Some examples occurring in the early 1980s: AEA Special Education Directors had formed an association and met monthly to share concerns, promote promising practices and discuss issues related to special education policies. AEA supervisors of speech-language pathology collaborated with J.J. Freilinger (Iowa DE) to develop Iowa's Severity Rating Scale as a method to determine students in need of speech-language services. In addition, with the leadership of Carl Smith (Iowa DE) and program leaders across Iowa, a statewide initiative provided the opportunity for educators to learn about identification procedures for autism and engage in a week-long summer camp for students. At the same time Jeff Grimes (Iowa DE) and Dan Reschly (ISU) secured an 18-month federal grant to provide staff development for school psychologists, school social workers and special education consultants. These examples illustrate how Iowans successfully collaborated statewide to improved services for students with disabilities. Although cooperation was clearly present there appeared some other aspects of the structure of the educational system needed to be reconsidered.

Review of the System. In the 1980s, the priorities in the special education system appeared to be shifting, raising the question about whether a change in focus was needed. Some administrators, educators and parents were seeking system improvements while others voiced the phrase, *If it ain't broke, don't fix it*. Important decisions require reflection and thoughtful study. In a democracy it is critical for state and local leaders to consider opinions about how government should function. Consequently Frank Vance, Chief of the Iowa DE Bureau of Special Education, worked with AEA and LEA special education directors and the DE staff to consider areas where system level improvements were warranted. Frank established two groups to move the process of exploration forward. A Core Committee was established with four DE staff members to advance the process of considering statewide reform: Greg Robinson (Consultant for Mental Disabilities), Jim Clark (Consultant School Social Work), Jim Reese (Consultant for Learning Disabilities), and Jeff Grimes (Consultant for School Psychology). This Core Committee had the responsibility to work statewide with all constituents to support the process of determining systemic needs and potential directions for improvement. Additionally, a statewide committee of stakeholders was formed to consider areas of need in special education and determine the principles that could address the identified needs. The stakeholder group allowed issues to be considered from varied perspectives. This committee was composed of a cross section of personnel with responsibilities that represented important parts of the system. The group included university researchers, school principals, special and general education teachers, school psychologists, parents of children with disabilities, Iowa DE staff, and AEA special education directors.

Systemic problems were identified in the current system. These included:

- Separation of special education from general education in delivering services to students requiring special education.

- Heavy reliance on pull-out programs as the primary delivery method in special education.
- Overemphasis on standardized assessment techniques utilized primarily to determine whether a given student had characteristics aligned with disability definitions and thereby eligible for special education programs and services.
- Evaluation of special education activities based upon procedure rather than student outcomes.

There was general support by the stakeholder group, state advisory committee, and special education directors for addressing the challenges identified. Leaders in special education were taking a close look at what was, what could be, and how to move thoughtfully to enhance practices to serve children with disabilities and their families. George Bernard Shaw's statement, "Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself," reflects an attitude of yearning, a willingness to take risks and exertion of self-determination to make the system better. Iowa's AEAs and local school districts reflected this attitude as they developed plans to create improvements in special education. This called for organizational flexibility and experimentation with new, promising, research-based approaches. Iowa's AEAs wrote plans that were submitted to the DE for review to ensure they were addressing the areas of need and adhered to the principles listed below. Across five years, from 1989 to 1994, AEAs and their local districts were phased into the reform experimentation process.

The overall initiative was called the Renewed Service Delivery System (RSDS), with a set of principles to guide the development of AEA plans and implement professional practices at all levels of the system. It is noteworthy that RSDS focused on principles that could be implemented in alternative ways. This was an experimental approach that expanded possibilities rather than a prescriptive approach that limited what could be done. The principles, shown below, were organized into two clusters, one focused on the infrastructure to support reform efforts of educational units and the second on professional practices. These two sets of principles will be described in more detail later.

A. Infrastructure to support reform.

- *Plans*. Develop local plans to implement reform.
- *Staff Development*. Provide professional development to increase skills and knowledge of those who serve special education students.
- *Transition*. Assist students in transition between environments.

B. Utilization of professionals' time when providing services.

- *Assessment*. Directly measure student performance to assess student functioning.
- *Intervention*. Link assessment to behavioral and academic interventions to improve student performance.
- *Progress monitoring*. Monitor student progress to determine the effects of the interventions.
- *Assess outcomes*. Determine student benefit using an outcome criterion.

Next, we provide a closer review of the two sets of principles that were pivotal in the RSDS reform effort. One represents a change in structure, the other changes in practices.

Changes in Structure

For new practices to be incorporated into daily activities they needed to be done in a thoughtful manner and involve the school staff in the planning process. School buildings, school districts and AEAs formulated complementary plans to be implemented across time. New practices and procedures required staff development for all personnel to acquire and master new skills and an understanding of new approaches. Lastly, as students with special needs moved between elementary, middle, high school and on into adulthood, a focus on transition was emphasized.

Changing a system is disruptive to living patterns. When you move to a new home or community there is commonly a period of adjustment to new routines. Not everyone embraces this opportunity with equal vigor. A perspective on implementing educational reform was addressed by Bruce Jensen.

- ▶ Bruce Jensen said, "When you're the young person doing reform it's fun! But when you're older and people are reforming your reform it's not so much fun".

The above sentiment rings true. Every cow is sacred to its mother. When making substantial changes to an established system, there are people who will be highly invested in the current way of doing things. Some people worked very hard to build the established system and dedicated many years of their professional lives in perfecting their skills for that way of practice. More often than not, the practices were built on the best research and learning for those times. They are not bad practices. Change is not easy, and proposed changes are most likely to succeed if done in a manner that is respectful of the work that went before. Dignity is provided when changes are portrayed as building on the good work of others and incorporates new developments and research in educational practices. Continuous improvement is about innovation and making the system better.

Another perspective on change was offered by Marvin Lewis, an AEA director of Special Education.

- ▶ We can fight changes or we can become a leader over the changes, then we control our own destiny. There are choices in life. Special education is our life's work and we want it to be the best it can be. Sometime that calls for reform, rethinking and revising. That all happened in Iowa in the 1980s.

Through staff development, Iowans were providing a connection between research and practice. The focus was on enhancing assessment and instruction for students with special needs. Iowans benefited significantly from the effort at of the Institute for Learning Disabilities Research. The work of Stan Deno, Phyllis Merkin, Doug Marston, and Mark Shinn at the University of Minnesota produced new technologies for monitoring student progress and determining the efficacy of academic interventions with Curriculum-based Measurement (CBM) procedures. Ken Howell, at Western Washington University, was refining practices known as Curriculum-based Evaluation (CBE) and at University of Maryland, Sylvia Rosenfield was part of the development of Curriculum-based

Assessment (CBA) methodologies linking pragmatic assessment to classroom instruction. Each of these practices was intended to enhance student learning.

Most AEAs formed professional development teams that had a designated responsibility to conduct training and support implementation of new practices. The number and depth of innovations emerging during the RSDS experimentation was significant and required systematic skill training with follow-up to ensure the integrity of implementation. The AEA staff and personnel in local schools were engaged in professional development.

Fran Long, Lana Michelson, Linda Miller, Toni Van Cleve, Kathy Symonaitis and Julie Schendel were members of an AEA team that was involved in staff development related to the reform principles. For example, extensive effort was focused on the technology of CBM, CBE, CBA, behavioral consultation, progress monitoring, Building Assistance Teams and the change process. AEA staff would provide teacher training and then follow up to support teacher implementation.

Changes in Practices

The changes in professional practices became “what is done” differently. This involved four major practices of assessment, intervention, monitoring student progress, and outcomes measures of student results.

Assessment. In the 1970s and 1980s assessment of students for special education services was often intended to determine whether the student’s characteristics matched a disability category. This was typically related to decisions about students’ categorical eligibility for mental, emotional, and learning disabilities services. The prevailing assessments were often intelligence tests and achievement tests that were normed on national samples that may not be representative comparisons for Iowa students. In addition, in many parts of Iowa personality tests, which called for a high degree of inference about the meaning of the results, were utilized on a regular basis. Generally speaking, the test results were not useful for designing instruction on an IEP.

When one goes to their physician and learns that a health problem exists, it is a fair question to ask what is the basis of such a judgment and how can the situation be improved? Certain judgments have high stakes implications. One of the most important considerations in education is the answer to the question “What instructional interventions are most likely to enhance student performance?” That question is distinctly different from “What is the student’s level of performance?” or “What is the student’s disability?”

The results of global assessments were minimally useful in designing an IEP, setting goals, or informing instruction. Direct measures of student behavior was considered to be of greater use in understanding students’ specific needs related to academic and social expectations. Practices changed regarding how students’ performance was judged in relationship to curriculum expectations. Curriculum-based Evaluation and Curriculum-based Assessment practices yielded information that was useful in the design of interventions to improve student performance. Bruce Jensen, in Mason City, told about the decision tree he used to decide if an IQ test was warranted in the RSDS years.

- ▶ The decision tree was comprised of four sequential questions. (1) Is the concept of IQ a useful construct? YES. (2) Is IQ something important? YES. (3) Do people vary in that construct? YES. (4) Is knowledge of a student's IQ something we need to know to help educate the child? NO. Based on this determination, very few IQ tests were administered when a functional approach was implemented because intelligence test data alone would not be useful in focusing instruction or yielding improved outcomes for students.

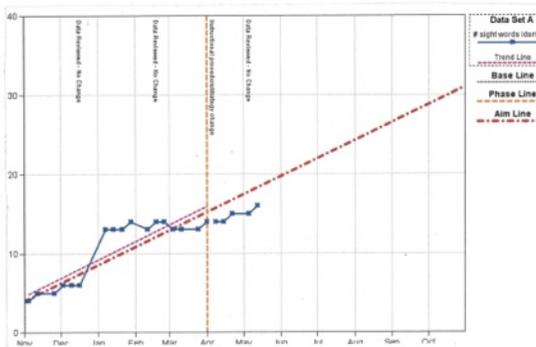
Direct measures of specific behaviors related to learning were preferred to general measurement techniques. Assessment should help understand the student's learning needs and thereby be useful in designing interventions to improve school results.

Intervention. In the past, some educators considered placement in special education classes to be the intervention, rather than what happens within the program. That would be similar to the logic of a person who is ill going to a pharmacy to get any kind of medication, rather than a specific prescription designed to improve the individual's health condition. Educational interventions should be focused on specially designed instruction

Under RSDS more interventions occurred in general education classrooms to support students with diverse needs. The practice of general education teachers helping fellow teachers cope with challenges in the classroom was successful in many Iowa schools. The process had different names, Building Assistance Teams, Intervention Cadre, or other designations. While the names may differ the process was similar as illustrated by the example offered by Mary Covey, a general education teacher.

- ▶ When a teacher had a student with learning or behavioral needs and improvement was not occurring, the teacher could meet with a school team where other general education teachers could help think through what was happening and consider intervention possibilities. In Mary's district this was called an intervention cadre. The process took 30-45 minutes for each case. The referring teacher described the problem, what had been done and current results. The group helped consider other options for improving a student classroom experience. If the problem behavior persisted then a referral for a special education evaluation would be considered.

Progress Monitoring. Professionals are involved in a connected sequence of judgments. The assessment indicates a problem that needs attention. An intervention is determined. A judgment needs to be made about how to monitor the progress of interventions and how to evaluate the benefit of the educational effort. All four steps of this process are interrelated. The idea of progress monitoring can be seen in the work of physicians when providing a prescription for medication treatment. The assumption is that



Example of a Progress Monitoring

the pharmaceutical intervention will correct the condition. If a child with an infection has a high temperature the expectation is that the temp will begin to improve. The thermometer provides precise information about temperature, which indicates progress in this situation. Likewise changes in student learning can be measured systematically as well.

Progress monitoring is usually graphed to aid parents, students and educators in determining when benefits are or are not occurring. A goal line is drawn to indicate the expected trajectory, then student results are plotted on the graph to show actual results. If the educational gain is not as expected then the intervention can be changed. The focus is always on demonstrating educational improvement. Brooke Gassman, a parent and PEC representative said, "The IEP length can be overwhelming for parents, but the graphs are useful because they bring data to life and add meaning to the process."

Outcome Measures of Learner Benefits. In the 1970s and early 1980s, IEP goals were often vague statements indicating a general desire for improvement that often said something as simple as, "to improve in reading." There was scant indication of what objective criterion would constitute improvement. Measurable goals and objectives were later required in IDEA. With measurable goals it would be possible to both monitor progress towards a specified goal and determine whether it was attained as a result of instruction. Parents, teachers and team members had better information to judge progress. Parents would be informed about progress in more objective terms.

Supporting Innovation

During the years with RSDS, it was clear that Iowa AEAs and their local schools would need flexibility and support to implement new practices. That support came in three forms: legal issues, additional funding and rule exceptions.

Legal Authority for Alternative Practices. For some professionals in Iowa there was a concern with RSDS regarding whether variation in past practice would be out of compliance with rules and regulations. It is true that great strides had been made in Iowa since 1975. The issue was whether any variation in practice, as proposed in the RSDS plans from AEAs that supported RSDS principles, was legal, professionally ethical, and responsible given the current federal law.

- ▶ These are important questions that were taken seriously and addressed in a forthright manner with two steps by the Iowa DE. First, the concerns were collected from Iowans who asked specific questions and expressed concerns. Secondly, a panel was assembled to respond to the identified issues. The expert panel consisted of Judy Schrag, former Director of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs to consider RSDS's alignment with federal statutes; David Prasse, professor at Loyola University responded from the perspective of professional ethics and standards; and Reid Martin, an attorney with a practice centered on special education law viewed issues from a legal perspective. All of the questions were addressed at an open meeting and considered under the three lenses. The questions and answers were compiled into a publication. The panel was

supportive of purposes and the practice approaches used in RSDS as being in appropriate harmony with law, federal regulations and professional standards.

In a democracy, reform and innovation are not without challenge or scrutiny. It is a distinctive strength of the American system for citizens to express opinions, be heard, respected, and to consider issues from multiple viewpoints and then act in a judicious manner. In doing so, in this case, it supported further consideration of better ways to meet the needs of Iowa's children with disabilities and their families.

Funding. Additional funding assisted AEAs in providing professional development for their staff and local schools, purchasing needed equipment, and other expenditures directly related to implementing new practices aligned with the RSDS principles. The funding was spread out over a three-year period and was tailored to the AEA's RSDS plan for supporting districts, teachers and parents. Statewide, approximately five million dollars were spent on this effort across five years.

Rule Exceptions. When AEAs submitted RSDS plans to the Iowa DE there was a provision for requesting, what was termed, rule exceptions. Iowa, like every other state was operating under the federal law governing the provision of special education. Iowa did not have the authority to waive the application of federal rules; however, the state could, on a planned basis, make exceptions to state rules. This provided AEA leaders with confidence that they were functioning with appropriate authority and the state could defend the scope of practice. This procedure allowed innovation to flourish. The requirement was that the practices would be evaluated to determine the benefits of having professional staff use alternative approaches.

The idea of an exception meant that, with approval and on a time-limited basis, an alternative practice could be applied. It was only by implementing and evaluating alternatives that better practices could be established and perhaps new rules developed in the future. Three examples will illustrate the use of rule exceptions during RSDS: noncategorical identification, the team representative model, and the problem-solving approach.

Noncategorical Identification. In the 1970s all students with IEPs had specific categorical designations. The highest incidence disability categories were LD, BD and MD. Students with IEPs often had both learning and behavior challenges, yet the categorical procedure required primary classification of a single categorical designation. As stated earlier, the diagnostic information collected was primarily to make a determination of a student's categorical designation. AEAs requested the use of a non-categorical identification, so the student could be identified as an eligible individual (EI) as the category and then the IEP could focus on instructional improvements.

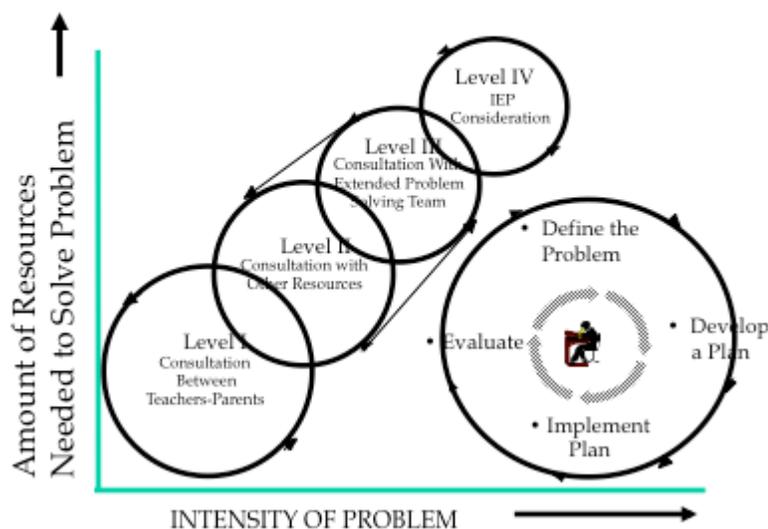
The Team Representative Model. In the 1980s it was typical for school psychologists, consultants and social workers to function as a team assigned to the same school buildings. Under the leadership of Marvin Lewis, AEA 6 in Marshalltown implemented an innovation called the Team Representative Model. This practice assigned one professional to specific schools with the expectation that others team members would be brought in on a case when their expertise

was needed. The emphasis was on a team being available for every building, for every child. This process was built on the premise that it would develop a stronger identity of the AEA within the local schools while guaranteeing team support as needed.

The Problem-Solving Process.

The scientific method can be shown as having four steps, beginning by defining a performance problem in objective terms, developing an intervention plan (instruction) intended to improve performance, evaluating the results and adjusting intervention activities when student growth is not progressing towards the goal at a desired rate. The intent is to deploy educational resources necessary to support educational

A Problem Solving Approach



growth. This can be considered as four levels, as shown in the following graphic. Level I is consultation with teachers and parents, which may result in student change. Level II brings in other consultative resources such as speech-language pathologists, social workers, school psychologists or others with specialized knowledge and skills. Level III is consultation with a problem-solving team that collaboratively work together to understand and plan for interventions. Lastly, when needed, an IEP is considered and special education services are provided. The key to this approach is to match the level of resources with the intensity of students' need so that children will benefit from their educational experience.

Jim Stumme led the reform efforts at one AEA and said that the very act of engaging staff in an experimental process built a strong sense of unity around a shared goal of improving the system of support for individuals with disabilities. There are skillful and creative staff in every organization, and they need to be listened to and involved in system improvement. Innovative ideas can, and do, come from all levels in an organization as long as there is an invitational atmosphere for experimentation and gratitude for staff input. Staff would not try new practices if they thought they would be penalized for mistakes. So staff was strongly encouraged to practice out of their comfort area and mistakes were accepted as efforts of merit and learning opportunities. The process of changing these practices was not easy. But the excitement of trying something that better helped children learn and engage families brought new meaning to the professional life of educators as reflected in this story.

- Before changing practices agency wide at Heartland AEA, several AEA teams of special education consultants and school

psychologists were asked to experiment with functional assessment, interventions, monitoring student progress, and graphing student progress. They were requested to do this in their respective schools in addition to collecting IQ scores and academic achievement scores, as was the standard of the times to make disability determination decisions. Running a dual system was not easy, but necessary when changing from one paradigm to another. Sharon Kurns, consultant, and David Tilly, psychologist, were an exemplary team who demonstrated the merits of a functional approach in assessing how students responded to well designed and monitored interventions. Their combined talents helped shape the system. This applied research garnered substantial data to demonstrate the effectiveness of the new approach. With considerable staff development and encouragement, even veteran staff saw the advantages of the problem solving approach, and were amenable to make the necessary shifts in practice to embrace the new way of thinking and working.

Iowa was engaged in an extensive process of experimentation for five years (1989-1994). Eventually, practices that demonstrated benefit were included in the state rules governing special education, thus, changing the system. The child find process became focused on the effectiveness of educational interventions and student outcomes.

An Ongoing Life Experience: 1980s

In the 1970s we portrayed Rick Samson's educational experiences in elementary school and junior high. We pick up that story with Rick in high school and the process of planning for transition to early adulthood. The information conveyed earlier in the 1970s was told exclusively through the voice and experiences of his mother, Deb Samson. Here both Deb and Rick contribute to the story. As in all families, life during the high school years is a shared experience with parents and youth on both parallel and intersecting paths.

- ▶ Deb related that at age 14 she was asked by Amy Garrett, a physical disabilities consultant for an AEA, what Deb's thoughts were for Rick once he graduated. Like most parents of a child with significant disabilities, Deb was fully involved in the day-to-day demands and to think that far into the future was a stretch. Most parents of 14 year olds report that transition planning at that age seems far too early at the time, but in retrospect they wish they had been able to see the value of the planning at that time. Deb reports the same feeling. Amy Garrett kept prompting Deb to start thinking about transition in a gentle and encouraging manner. Finally Deb came to the realization that if Amy thought it was important, then it must be important. Finally, Deb stated that she viewed Rick living his life with his parents at home with much care from the family. Amy told Deb that "The world's a much different place and other options need to be explored". Other options were explored and Rick received a regular diploma and graduated from high school in 1988.

- ▶ Rick stated that he was the only person in his high school of approximately 400 students who had a physical disability. Being in a wheelchair presented obstacles that others didn't experience, but also benefits. He said he had gone to school with many of the other students for many years and they were fine to get along with. Like everyone else his age and grade, he wondered, "what's next?" when thinking about graduation and life after high school. Like everyone else, he knew what to expect in high school and was comfortable where he was. It's a transition that everyone faces, but more complicated with a physical disability because there are far fewer options.

Easter Seals was sponsoring a program entitled Project Uplift, in which individuals with disabilities attended a day program and engaged in independent living (apartment building) for a nine month period of time. The individuals received physical therapy, instructions on nutrition by a dietician, along with self-advocacy and assertiveness training by a social worker. Ongoing evaluation ensured that students received the support they required to be successful. Rick took part in this program and flourished.

- ▶ Rick said that the program emphasized training in how to maintain an apartment and bank account, and other daily living skills like preparing food and cleaning. The Easter Seals program was nuts and bolts training for life unlike anything he had experienced in high school. Part of that experience included Rick living in an apartment that was in a building adjacent to the Easter Seals building.

Upon graduation, Rick moved into an apartment to live independently with support through dependent care in the mornings and night. Rick started taking classes at the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) and continues to take classes. This planning for independence was all made possible because of the future vision of the IEP team, the transition planning process, and particularly the gentle prompting and encouragement of Amy Garrett. The actual, day-to-day challenge of living independently was faced by Rick with the unwavering resolve necessary to make it work. We will continue Rick Samson's story in future decades.

Disability Awareness – Decade of the 1980s

Stephen Hawking's ALS condition did not dim his brilliant contributions as a physicist and scholar. While he has published many scientific reports in prestigious journals, the very popular book, *A Brief History of Time*, was on the NY Times best seller list. In some ways, it appears that persons outside the cultural stereotype of "typical" were becoming increasingly accepted in mainstream society. In public schools efforts supporting mainstreaming and full integration were gaining momentum and were supported by the court's interpretation of legislative intent of IDEA as inclusive. Schools were becoming increasingly integrated and the understanding of school administrators and general education teachers were expanding. A movement



Stephen Hawking

was underway in Iowa and nationwide to bring services to the individual within the community. The focus away from institutionalization of persons with disabilities was advancing and being replaced with community-based services.

While attitudes toward inclusiveness were shifting in schools and some communities, this was not a universal truth for everyone that did not fit a cultural stereotype. When the first incidences of AIDS were reported, curiously the Rev. Jerry Falwell, founder of a movement known as the Moral Majority, announced that HIV was considered divine retribution for homosexuals. President Ronald Reagan, who was influenced by the positions of the Christian Right, did not swiftly mobilize efforts to protect Americans and assist the world combat the growing AIDS crisis. In contrast with the political scene, successful movies are an indication of growing public acceptance of persons with disabilities. Films in this time period included *Children of a Lesser God*, with Marlee Matlin, an Academy Award winning actress who is deaf, *The Elephant Man*, *Rain Man*, and *Born on the Fourth of July*. Nationwide there is growing awareness and embrace of persons with disabilities. At the close of the 1980s it can be seen that evolution has taken another turn forward. There is a dual recognition that improvements are occurring and there is so much more to be done. In the 1990s additional progress occurs in large part to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act and increased attention to transition from school to post high school life.

Decade of the 1990s

The events of the 1990s were a curious mix that gave both hope for humanity and challenged reasons for hope. Consider these optimistic signs from this decade. The Hubble telescope was put into orbit, which yielded images of deep space and expanded our collective understanding of the earth's place in the cosmos. There were millions of galaxies discovered. In an earlier time, in his I Have a Dream speech, Martin Luther King used the words from a slave song "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, we're free at last." That statement certainly applied to Nelson Mandela who was freed in 1990 after being a political prisoner for 27 years in South Africa. This was the end of the apartheid form of government and oppression of blacks in South Africa. Mandela was elected president of South Africa. The Soviet Union collapsed ending communist rule, and a form of democracy emerged in Russia with



Nelson Mandela

Boris Yeltsin elected as the first president of the Russian Federation. This was the end of the Cold War between the two world superpowers. Seems like events are leaning towards the positive, but that is not the whole picture of the era.

At the same time, there are also ample events of concern. Islamic radicals, acting on their anti-American sentiment, bombed the World Trade Center in NYC in 1993. The first Iraq War occurred under General Colin Powell's military leadership and George H. W. Bush's political leadership. The bombing of an Oklahoma federal building in 1993 by Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols reflected an anti-government sentiment. President Bill Clinton was confronted with the Monica Lewinsky scandal and possible impeachment. NATO attacked Serbia because of practices of ethnic cleansing. In Israel, Yitzhak Rabin made peace gestures towards the Palestinians suggesting the possibility of a two-state solution. Hope of such a proposition ended when Rabin was assassinated by an Israeli extremist. The struggle continues.

On the sports scene, the 1990s included Tiger Woods wearing the green coat, the unique victor's symbol at the Master Golf tournament in Augusta, Georgia. The epic movie, *The Titanic*, captures best picture and Leonardo DeCaprio is further elevated in stardom. The music scene features Michael Jackson in his fourth decade as a performer, Madonna maintains a presence on bestseller charts, The Spice Girls, and rappers such as Eminem are making their rhythms known on the airwaves.

In technology and science there were numerous inventions, such as the Palmaz-Schatz balloon expandable stent for use with heart patients, medical use of focused light lasers to remove tissue, and the cloning of sheep.

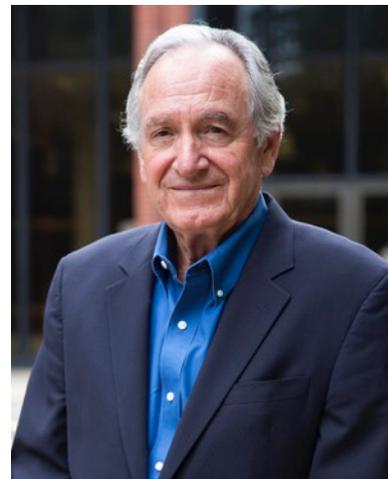
In Iowa, special education continues its forward movement in this swirling societal atmosphere. In this section we will view the landmark legislation the Americans with Disabilities Act, codification of Iowa special education rules resulting from 5 years of experimentation with RSDS, advancements for students with hearing loss, the rise of new assistive technology, expanded use of accommodations to create learning opportunities for students with disabilities, and the continued work of the Parent Education Connection.

Legislative Leadership

The opening sentence in Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* is, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." That statement captures the sentiment of what was occurring in America for students with disabilities in the 1980s. The best includes the tremendous strides made with civil rights legislation and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975. This meant children with disabilities had the right to an education. Further, court rulings clearly favored mainstreaming with same-age peers, a decisive move away from past patterns of segregation and isolation of students with disabilities during their school years. Education is commonly thought of as opening doors to the future. The reference to the "worst of times" is a bit melodramatic, but the fact was that many adults with disabilities were encountering significant barriers that were obstacles to employment, obstacles to their future. The doorways were literally not accessible when it came to employment and in some cases even access to public buildings was limited, including universities and colleges where higher education was provided. There was a need for a new perspective on access.

Support for Employment of Workers with Disabilities. In 1990, barriers to employment were addressed with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Iowa's Senator Tom Harkin championed the ADA. It was a bipartisan effort focused on enhancing work opportunities by addressing various barriers to employment including transportation, communication, and living.

A look back shows a picture of people with disabilities who were denied opportunities for living in their community with the basic rights generally assumed to be present for all citizens. In the 1970s and 1980s, individuals in wheelchairs often encountered insurmountable challenges when attempting to go to movies, plays, sporting events, public libraries or university buildings because these structures may not have physical access to restrooms and elevators. Similarly, public transportation on buses, trains and elevators did not facilitate travel for individuals with disabilities. Further, persons who were deaf had no way of enjoying a community performance because signing was not commonly provided. A person with a hearing loss may well have been an effective employee but



Senator Tom Harkin

there were no ITT phone options to support communication. For these potential employees communication was thwarted. Other examples included limited access to buildings for education, shopping, or entertainment, no parking places near buildings, and few curb cuts.

The ADA had a target population, persons with disabilities. The process was to provide for structural modifications and adaptations to benefit all Americans. Today, in most cities and towns the street corners have slopes at crossing points rather than a curb. For those in wheelchairs, this makes mobility a possibility. Those same pathways benefit small children, elderly, cyclists and other citizens. More importantly, the workplace has become more inclusive, diverse and productive.

In the late 1980s Congress held hearings to gather input from multiple constituencies who would be affected by the proposed legislation. One of the people testifying before a congressional subcommittee in Washington DC was Dan Piper, an Ankeny resident. Both Senator Harkin and Sylvia Piper, Dan's mother contributed this story.

Senator Harkin speculated that Dan was likely the first person with Down Syndrome to ever testify before a congressional committee. The process was structured in a Q&A format with Sylvia Piper asking questions and Dan responding. Testimony before a congressional committee to improve the quality of life for Americans with disabilities was monumental for the country, and monumental for Dan. We will step back in time to provide perspective on this pivotal legislation and to give life to Dan Piper's testimony.



Senator Harkin, Dan Piper and Bobby Silverstein

- ▶ Dan was born in 1972 with Down Syndrome and his parents were told that he should probably be sent to an institution. Dan's mother, Sylvia, was advised against breastfeeding him for fear she'd get too attached. She was told Dan's life span would be compromised because of his syndrome and the pneumonia that was predicted to be imminent. When Dan was taken for medical appointments he was often put on display for other doctors to view. This added insult to the mental anguish the parents were already suffering. It's difficult to understand this callous approach to dealing with individuals with disabilities, but it was the norm for the day in medicine and education. Sylvia related that the experience prepared her to do battle at all times on Dan's behalf.

In 1975 early childhood staff came to Dan's home as a result of the creation of the AEAs and the passage of PL 94-142. Dan and his parents received services in his home until he was able to attend preschool. Soon Dan was able to take a school bus to Ruby Van Meter, a segregated school in Des Moines, even though his

residence was in Ankeny. The practice of the day was for schools surrounding the Des Moines School District to bus their students with disabilities to Des Moines. It was common practice in Iowa for larger districts to provide special education programs and smaller districts to send their students with disabilities to the larger attendance centers. Most districts did not have programs for students with disabilities and saw no reason to include these students in their local neighborhood school district.

With the release of the Federal Regulations to clarify EHA, school districts were encouraged by the Iowa Department of Education to integrate students with disabilities into the general education classroom when appropriate. Dan met the criteria to move to a regular school for his education in Des Moines. When Dan moved to a regular elementary school he grew dramatically in maturity and achievement in academic areas. It was a great success. Seeing how successful this integration was, Sylvia asked why Dan couldn't be educated in his home school district in a similar manner. Her pleas were left unanswered. Sylvia eventually filed for Due Process against the Des Moines and Ankeny School Districts to educate Dan in his neighborhood school. The Ankeny District changed their practices and began a special education delivery system that was exemplary. Ankeny invited parents of children with disabilities to provide presentations to school staff regarding disabilities, involved parents in the hiring process of special education teachers, and set up a peer buddy program.

When Dan went to Ankeny High School the district hired Roxanne Cumings as a new special education teacher for the district. Roxanne did whatever she could to help Dan learn and grow. Sylvia stated that Roxanne was amazing. Sylvia went on to add that when you have a good relationship with educators big things are taken care of and do not become an issue. An important component to Dan's education was career exploration. Dan was hired to work at Walmart. Sylvia Piper, Dan's parent, and Roxanne Cumings, Dan's teacher, met with a Walmart manager to discuss Dan's vocational experience. Dan required close mentoring so Sylvia requested that Walmart provide a job coach to complement the efforts of the job coach provided by the Ankeny School District. The Walmart manager said that wasn't possible. Sylvia responded that she would sit in his office for the remainder of her natural life until Walmart granted Dan a job coach. The manager said "No you won't". Knowing Sylvia's goal-directed tenacity, Roxanne replied, "Oh yes she will". Dan got a job coach. As part of his experience at Walmart, Senator Tom Harkin job shadowed Dan. Many people contributed to opening doors for Dan, but Dan's perseverance and personality opened doors for many people as well, including those that helped him.

Now back to the legislative testimony for the ADA. Senator Harkin was a chief architect of the ADA and the moving force on Capitol Hill. Senator Harkin's advocacy for individuals with disabilities came from his first hand knowledge of having a brother with significant hearing loss, a nephew who became

quadriplegic due to being sucked into a jet engine on an aircraft carrier, and having Dan Piper coming into his life. In his congressional testimony Dan Piper said he would be turning 21 soon and wanted to be a contributing member of society, but would need the ADA to make this possible. He discussed how much he gained from the educational system, but this support ended upon graduation. Dan testified that he wanted to join the adult world, get a job and pay taxes, and get an apartment. In short Dan requested that individuals with disabilities have the same opportunities to life as nondisabled individuals.

Although the ADA had bipartisan support, passage of this landmark legislation took a concerted effort on many fronts. There was resistance to change and concern expressed about potential costs for businesses that would need to make accommodations in work areas and access to buildings. Political leaders worked through rewrites of the bill to achieve agreement. Additionally, disability advocates formed coalitions to support passage of ADA. Eventually support for the bill was garnered from citizens, disability groups and congressional leaders. The disability community was instrumental in helping legislators and citizens understand how barriers limited access. Letters, that some called discrimination diaries, were sent to members of congress to illustrate life situations that constituted barriers to work, education, recreation and communication. As the bill approached a time for voting there was increased lobbying and demonstrations. Senator Harkin related two stories that addressed other actions taken by the disability community. One of the key leaders from the disability community was Robert Kafka who helped orchestrate these events.

- ▶ Two events that occurred prior to the ADA vote in Congress will be highlighted here. One was a protest where persons in wheelchairs chained themselves together in the middle of Constitution Avenue. This caused a significant traffic jam. It took several hours to disentangle all who participated and to get Washington DC's traffic flowing again. It brought some public attention, both positive and negative, to the pending vote for the ADA.
- ▶ The second event was later dubbed the Capitol Crawl. Americans in wheelchairs, some with crutches, and other with canes all abandoned these mobility aids and began physically crawling up the 100+ steps of the capitol building. National media was present and captured the unpleasant scene that appeared on the nightly news. The point dramatically conveyed that there were physical barriers to accessing public facilities, to employment, and life experiences. The injustice of such obstacles was clear. Equally important was the message that the disability community was adamant in its support for protections from discrimination and proactive steps to enable employment of persons with disabilities.

ADA was eventually passed with a combination of supports that included a nation wide letter-writing campaign, lobbying, political agreements, protest demonstrations, and common sense and compassion of elected officials. The nation is deeply indebted to Iowa's Senator Tom Harkin for his enduring advocacy and leadership on behalf of the disability community. America is stronger because of his good work and the ADA is a shining legacy to his long-lasting commitment to this important cause.

President George H. W. Bush signed the ADA into law on July 25, 1990. It is a civil rights law that bans discrimination for persons with disabilities and provides access to public buildings. The ADA has four major components: employment, access to public services and transportation, public accommodations, including commercial facilities, and telecommunications. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was named as the agency to interpret the ADA law's meaning; when discrimination in employment issues were identified the commission would step in.



President George W. Bush Signing ADA, 1990

Accommodations and Employment. The ADA opened the door to employment with accommodations to support individuals with disabilities. An excellent example of a large corporation actively engaging individuals with disabilities is highlighted below.

Walgreens Corporation is a spectacular example of inclusion. ABC national news reported on the Walgreens distribution center in Anderson, South Carolina where 40% of the employees had disabilities. The company's Vice President Randy Lewis, who was a parent of a child with a disability, spearheaded the effort. Every business has to be results oriented so the question is whether this makes positive business sense. The answer is a resounding yes because this distribution center was 20% more efficient than any other center in the corporation. That is a good bottom line for the company and employees. In harmony with ADA accommodations such as elevators, adjustments in workstations, a team support approach was put in place to ensure success and productivity. All workers receive the same pay for the same work, hence equity in the workplace.

What is known about the costs of employing the disabled? The University of Virginia's Work Support website provides facts about accommodations for employment of workers with disabilities.

- Employees with disabilities have the same absentee and sick rates as non-disabled employees. Industry reports consistently rate workers with disabilities as average or above average in performance, quality and quantity of work, flexibility to demands, attendance and safety.
- The Office of Disability Employment Policy Job Accommodation Network reported that 15% of accommodations cost nothing, 51% cost less than \$500, 12% cost between \$501 and \$1,000, and 22% cost more than \$1,000.
- The majority of employers who had made accommodations found that the cost of the accommodation was only \$500 or less. The vast majority (73%)

of employers report that their employees with disabilities did not require accommodations.

Employment for individuals with disabilities not only provides for economic self-sufficiency, it is linked to one's feeling of contributing to the community and independence. Individuals with disabilities, as wage earners, are also paying taxes and helping provide services for others.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 2014 that 17% of persons with disabilities were currently employed. Further, unemployment rates are higher for individuals with disabilities even when comparing different educational levels. Those who are employed are most likely to be self-employed. Progress has been made with ADA and actions of employers such as Walgreens, HyVee and Walmart stand out. However, continued emphasis is needed for higher rates of employment of individuals with disabilities. As a retrospective in 2015, we see evidence of the ADA when any new school or building is erected. Pull up in front of Casey's General Store, Target or Cosco, or any other commercial building in Iowa and there is a place designated for handicapped parking. Perhaps we have been lulled into a mindset that this is the way life has always been in the United States. In 2015 ADA celebrated its 25-year milestone, a milestone that has greatly helped all Americans.



IDEA (1990) Reauthorized. There is a saying that is something like: "If I knew then what I know now everything would be different." The simple truth is that we all are constantly learning. This is true in life and also with federal legislation designed to support the disability community. As new understandings emerge then legislative language shifts. A quick thumbnail sketch may be useful in seeing the reauthorization process across time. As stated earlier, in 1975 The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) was passed. The bill was reauthorized in 1986 and again in 1990. In 1990, the EHA was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, thus the abbreviation IDEA. It is also noteworthy that the IDEA legislation was introduced by Iowa's Tom Harkin in 1989.

The following identifies several major areas of emphasis in IDEA 1990. The intent is to highlight major changes and not details.

IDEA 1990 refocused the language from the term handicapped to individuals with disabilities. Additionally, there was a shift in philosophy. In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a focus on what was called "child find." Child find meant identifying students so they could receive special education services. An unintended consequence for students was the overemphasis on identification and placement rather than the instruction, educational interventions, and outcomes of the services. IDEA moved from a focus of special education as a place to viewing special education as a service with intended results.

Research and court cases in the 1980s developed an understanding that inclusion in general education was important, thus affirming emphasis on integrated services. Consider the wording in IDEA, 1990:

“to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.”

The mandate supporting early childhood services also shifted. The EHA in 1975 legislation required special education for children ages six to twenty-one. IDEA Reauthorization in 1986 extended the mandate to birth through age six. To its credit, Iowa’s mandate included early childhood special education services from birth on in its legislation in 1974. Thus Iowa was ahead of the curve, which benefited many preschool age children with disabilities. IDEA 1990 provides continuing support for early childhood services for toddlers and children with disabilities.

The scope of those with disabling conditions who could receive special education services was enlarged. Eligibility included traumatic brain injury, autism and a definition of attention deficit disorders. In this action the nation’s circle of caring compassion expanded.

There was a heightened awareness of the need for systematic planning for transition from school to post high school experiences. Consequently, IDEA called for preparation and planning for individuals with disabilities depending on circumstances, for continuing education, work or independent living or a combination of all of these factors.

The efforts with RSDS were certainly supportive of the legislative changes in IDEA 1990. Iowa was well served by its years of experimentation and developing a solid base of experience to move forward in the 1990s with a change in Iowa rules governing and guiding special education statewide services.

Iowa’s SE Rules Revisions

Microsoft and Apple corporations renumber the operating system when a new version is released. The auto industry does the same with revisions in cars and trucks designated by year. Similarly, Iowa’s state rules of special education were revised as part of an overhaul occurring in 1994 when RSDS concepts became institutionalized in regulation. For five years Iowans experimented with flexibility in practice. The conclusion supported ideas such as functional assessment, problem-solving identification, noncategorical designation, educational intervention focus and emphasis on transition planning. Iowa’s special education rules were revised, much like American software companies where the operating system changes to incorporate new ideas following a period of innovation.



Promulgating state rules of any kind generally takes a considerable amount of collaborative work and attention to detail. In 1994, leaders in special education

addressed shortcomings in the current rules, capitalized on the innovative practices that Iowa had experimented with during the late 1980s and early 1990s, and aligned with concepts in IDEA 1990. Leaders in special education needed to work with those constituents that supported needed changes and those that resisted change. Some resisters were reluctant to revise the rules of special education for fear that important protections would be potentially diminished. Other resisters offered arguments that in effect said, "If it's not broke, don't fix it". There is always reluctance to change systems for a variety of reasons. These reasons can include inertia and the energy necessary to learn new skills, people who ascended to their position of prominence through their facility to do things in the old way might feel less valued, not thoroughly understanding what the new changes represent and the positive impact they can convey, and for some, a propensity to resist for the purpose of resisting.

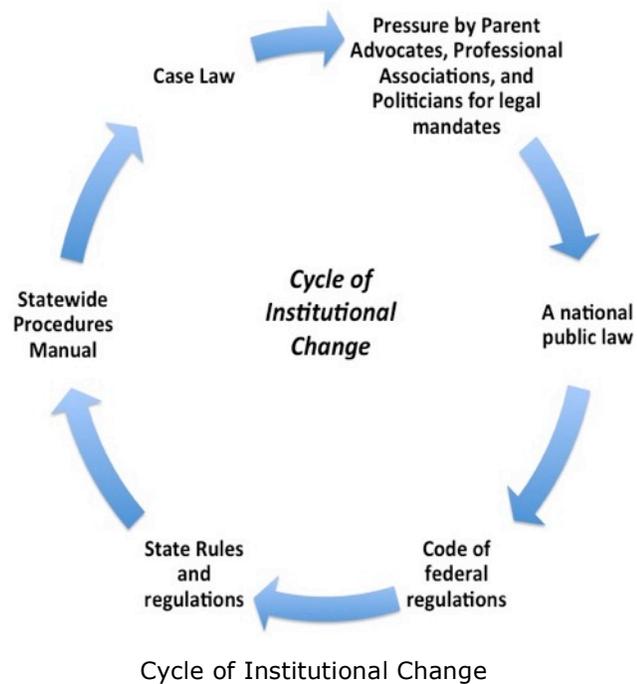
Jeananne Hagen Schild was the State Director of Special Education at the time and relays the following story.

- ▶ Ted Stilwill was the Director of the Iowa Department of Education. He advocated for the staff to meet with opponents of rule changes, to sincerely listen to their concerns. Rather than argue point-counterpoint with them, Ted suggested addressing issues in a different way. He said to call each person and ask for a personal face-to-face meeting at their office at their convenience. When possible, Ted Stilwill participated in these interactions. The primary question for those who were resisting the rule changes was, "What would it take for you to support what we are trying to do?" This was a highly personalized approach rather than a large group meeting. Examples of concerns to be addressed included: advocacy groups for LD and MD were worried that the protections and identity they had worked so hard for could be lost; advocacy attorneys were adamant that there must be a trigger to initiate special education evaluation and services so that interventions would not unduly delay special education; and some were fearful that certification changes could follow that would have a negative effect on job security.

There were more resister groups' concerns to be addressed, but the point is that through Ted Stilwill's leadership, people were listened to and substantial changes were made because of their input. At the same time, some people who opposed reform practices simply did not believe the changes would obtain the results being projected by those doing the research and developing the implementation practices.

The process of system change is clearly not an easy road to travel, however, forward motion and improvement of service requires action. As Marvin Lewis said, "The external forces such as the work of attorneys like Curt Sytsma and organizations representing the disability community, such as Protection and Advocacy helped highlight the need for change."

The Cycle of Institutional Change has been used throughout this text to show the ways that institutional change occurs. RSDS, in contrast, was a voluntary approach engaging educators statewide in an experimental and experiential process. RSDS was seeking quality educational reform similar to what happens in the justice system but taking a different route. Both ways can lead to changes in rules, policies and practices.



The illustration depicts the circle of institutional change that was presented in the introduction of this text. It is shown here to illustrate where the state rules and regulations are in the cycle. In this case, the innovative practices that Iowa experimented with during the Renewed Service Delivery System (RSDS) had a substantial impact on the changes made during the State Rules revision of 1994.

Progress Monitoring and Instructional Decision-Making. On the nightly news there is often a report about a Dow Jones stock index, S&P 500 or NASDAQ fluctuations. Arrows are always going in one direction or another, seldom stable. Nowadays websites have hour-by-hour or minute-to-minute graphic displays that resemble a heart monitor of a patient in the ER. Perhaps if one's personal nest egg is in the market, it is a fiscal matter of cardiac considerations. These indicator reports are a form of progress monitoring America's stock market.

In the 1990s teachers and AEA support staff were setting IEP goals and graphing progress as an aid in decision-making about intervention benefits based on students' performance. At this point in time most of the effort was paper graphs and pencil lines. This too was a matter of the heart since the well-being of children's education was the focus of the activity. Special education professionals who had recently completed their university training usually came to work with skills and knowledge of scientific progress monitoring. This technology was a difficult shift for many veterans who had been working for decades. The skills in understanding data collection and data displays were increasingly considered a means of understanding the results of individual students interventions.

In this time period it was common to hear two viewpoints about progress monitoring activities. Some teachers said data were objective, comforting to see progress, motivating for students and allowed them to make adjustment in classroom instruction when progress slowed. Other teachers said it was an unnecessary burden because they had a personal fund of knowledge and they

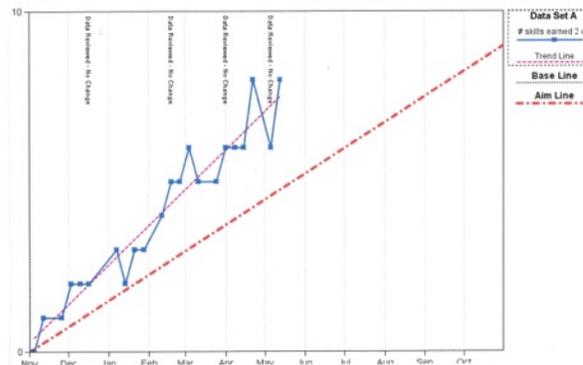
could make judgments without this type of data. Many special education reading and math goals were monitored with curriculum-based measurement (CBM) indicators. Individual data could be collected in one-minute samples and often involved the students in plotting their data points. A CBM measure of oral reading was collected by having a student read grade level texts and determining words read correctly in one minute.

What was unclear was how to set individual goals using CBM data. That required objective information about what was the typical performance at every grade level. This story is about where an AEA and university partnership was established that benefited everyone. Barry Wilson, chair of the UNI Department of Educational Measurement and Foundations, explained this activity.

- ▶ An AEA served over 20 school districts and wanted to develop normative data for general education students to understand typical achievement levels. Reading material was selected for grades one through six. Don Schmidts, a professor at UNI, coordinated activities with leaders in that AEA. A representative sample was determined and the school psychology students at UNI assisted with data collection. Everyone benefited and the work serves as a shining example of interagency collaboration. This effort allowed teachers in general and special education to understand expectations across grade levels in these Iowa school districts. From that foundation, special education reading goals were written with a clear perspective of the level of educational growth that would be required for catching up with peers.

Monitoring progress of specific educational interventions is easier when behaviors are clearly defined and stated as the desired level of improvement in the student’s performance. Progress monitoring results help teachers, parents, and support team members make decisions by having objective evidence of the results of the interventions. Progress monitoring charts, in the form of graphs, were, and are, frequently used to display student performance across time. CBM measures, such as oral reading fluency, became useful to many teachers working with reading goals. Progress monitoring data provided clear evidence to determine if the educational intervention had a positive effect on the student’s school success or if additional adjustments were required. The story below was told by Marty Ikeda, which occurred in his first year as a school psychologist In Iowa.

- ▶ A girl with an intellectual disability moved from California to an elementary school Marty was serving. The special education teacher was accustomed to serving students with mild learning disabilities and was concerned about her capability to teach a child with an intellectual disability. The teacher asked Marty “What will I do?” Marty assured the teacher that she was up to the



Progress Monitoring Goal

task and helped her write measureable goals with attainable progress monitoring strategies. The teacher provided instruction for both math and reading at the second grade level, even though the student was considered a sixth grader. With targeted instruction the girl's achievement, as demonstrated by progress monitoring, grew dramatically. She quickly went from a second grade level of academic ability to a fifth grade level. When asked the student responded that no one had really taught her before. At the end of sixth grade, teachers in this district consider transition issues for going to seventh grade, which is the middle school. When Marty encouraged the teacher to write goals and monitoring strategies for seventh grade, the teacher asked, "Can I do that?" Marty responded with "Why wouldn't you?"

Marty was well trained to assist teachers in writing specific goals for students with a well-articulated progress monitoring strategy to track and display student growth. His technical skills along with his positive and encouraging demeanor had a direct impact on developing the skill level of this special education teacher and an indirect impact of enhancing the academic growth of this student. Moreover, the success this student experienced had a profound positive effect on her self-concept.

Parents are vitally interested in their child's educational growth and the many issues and concerns beyond the scope of education. For the parent, everything about a child's development, health, learning, socialization and living is important. The link between parenting and schooling takes careful consideration.

Connecting Parents and Educators

To become a physician, attorney at law, teacher, or any number of professions a person would go to school for many years including practicums and internships. To learn a trade such as carpentry, heating and cooling, or car mechanics a novice would go to a trade school with on-hands practice with an experienced journeyman. To become a master chef you would seek out someone with rich knowledge in food preparation skills to mentor and learn from their guided instruction. You would want the most relevant information possible. A master chef would have your full attention because that person has the wisdom you need to be successful in this undertaking. But there is no training program to become a parent, and as a new parent to a child with a disability the learning curve is compounded exponentially. The stakes could not be higher. Enter the Parent-Educator Connection.

Iowa is fortunate to have the Parent-Educator Connection (PEC) project that supports educators and families in developing critical knowledge and perspectives to maximize educational and family experiences during a child's school years. The PEC provides opportunities for parent-to-parent communication, understanding the laws and regulations, the array of educational and community services, family responsibilities, perspectives, and compassion. Each staff member on the PEC is a veteran parent of an individual with a disability. They have each successfully gone through the experiences of raising a child with a disability and interacting with educators, medical practitioners, and social services agencies. Parent-to-parent communication

allows sharing perspectives on life, living, and learning that is essential. No one knows better.

Parent-to-parent mentoring is a valued interaction. PEC members exude compassion and caring. Having the opportunity to speak with another parent of a child with a disability who knows first hand the challenges, victories, frustrations and hopefulness is priceless. Consider this situation described by Pam Megill, a PEC member.

- ▶ When there is a parent whose child has a behavior problem that parent may feel like other people are judging them. The PEC helps parents know they have a team supporting them and understands the family's perspective. It is a comfort for a parent to be able to express concern and not be judged.

Mary Watkin's entry into being a parent of a special needs child was portrayed in the 1980s under the topic of Children with Health Challenges. We will pick up that story in the 1990s. Mary is a PEC member and said that parents don't usually have an established support network with other parents of children with disabilities. PEC members help build networks, provide much needed information of disability resources, and spend considerable time listening to the concerns of new parents. Mary reports that at first parents are shy, but soon open up about their needs and questions. PEC members help parents know that life will be okay and things will work out. They console and counsel parents that there will be tough times ahead, but their life will be joyous.

Mary explained that there is often an OMG moment when the parent of a child with a disability realizes that the PEC representative, another parent, understands the experience from a family's perspective. There is a shared journey. At that point, the conversations widen to embrace an expanded array of topics. Three stories will illustrate some aspects of the assistance from a PEC representative.

- ▶ A family moved from another AEA due to an employment change in Iowa. The parents with a child with a disability wanted to buy a home in a community with schools that offer suitable educational programs and services and contacted the PEC. Mary contacted schools in various districts and made arrangements for the parents to visit the schools, which included meeting teachers and administrators. Special education services were an important part of the decision and the PEC facilitated the family's decision-making process.
- ▶ Another family was approaching the time of transition. There are medical, financial, legal, and work considerations based on services for young adults. Mary helped the family sort through the process of applying for appropriate waivers and for the parents to gain a perspective on the available community opportunities and supports.
- ▶ In a third story, a family was at odds with the school district. It appeared that trust had been broken between school personnel and parents. The parents made contact with the PEC. Mary spoke

with the father and mother of the child to understand their viewpoint. She asked if she could talk with the school. The answer was yes. Mary heard the school's viewpoint. Mary then attended the IEP meeting with the parents and helped clarify what was being requested on both sides. An IEP was written that was acceptable to all parties, which was in the best interest of the child. Mary explained that a majority of the concerns she has dealt with are communication problems between home and school.

The PEC began in the mid 1980s and continues today to be a highly valued component of the Iowa special education system. As reflected in the logo of one AEA, the PEC statewide initiative brings parents and educators into a shared partnership. Iowa has benefited from Deb Samson's leadership role with the PEC, working at the Iowa DE for 30+ years. Every AEA currently has designated personnel in both parent and educator roles to work collaboratively with the PEC. This is a statewide network supporting parents, school professionals and community members.



An AEA's PEC logo

One way to view Iowa's PEC network and local school districts is to consider their mission statements. This could represent a solid foundation for building a unified effort for educational progress. Iowa's PEC mission is:

The Parent-Educator Connection works to develop and sustain effective partnerships between families, educators, and community providers to promote success for all children and youth with disabilities.

Similar to the PEC's mission, most Iowa school districts have a mission statement reflecting their purpose. These statements typically express the intent to educate each and every child. Consider selected examples from across Iowa:

The Sioux City Community School District exists *to educate students* to believe in their talents and skills, achieve academic excellence, and succeed in reaching their potential.

The mission of the Davenport Community School District is to *enhance each student's abilities* by providing a quality education enriched by our diverse community.

In the Mason City Community Schools *every student* will excel and develop into a responsible and productive citizen. Our staff, parents and community will support and nurture students to reach their highest potential.

A quality education *for each and every child*. (Ottumwa Community School District)

In harmony with school district mission statements, every parent wants their child to have a successful educational experience. Since 1975 parents of children with disabilities have had the benefit of a comprehensive law that is committed to the education of all children. Understanding the law, the details of an IEP, the

array of community resources and the opportunity in school districts may be a daunting task for families. Likewise working effectively with schools can be a rewarding or problematic situation. The PEC is intended to help parents cope with these situations.



Statewide PEC Members, December 2015

Turning the rhetoric of mission statements into reality is a challenge when viewing the wide-ranging diversity of America's classrooms. It is not the tube sock mentality of one-size-fits-all. Adjustments are often required to support the needs of learners. Curriculum, classroom rules, instructional materials, and services may need to be altered to ensure all children receive an education. Likewise, building and structural designs need to consider accessibility of classrooms for children in unique situations. Making such modifications calls for flexibility in thinking, planning and carrying out daily activities. This may be a shared effort for both educators and school planners. Again, the PEC representative can support this process.

Dispute Resolution and Parent Advocacy

Life most assuredly has its puzzles. They are naturally occurring events. Any parent with a teenager can attest to that. Zits cartoon humorously demonstrates this topic in many daily papers in Iowa. One of the popular self-inflicted quandaries in the 1980s and 1990s was the Rubik's Cube. Ernő Rubik, a Hungarian architect, invented this mechanical puzzle and it became a cultural craze in America and elsewhere. People wanted to see if they could twist the 3-D devise in various directions in order to arrive at a successful conclusion, which was to have all the same colored squares on the same side. It was not an easy task. The cube is still available for those who want a challenge. In special education we have faced many challenges equally vexing in the collective efforts to educate children



Rubik's Cube

with special needs. Sometimes finding the acceptable solution is as perplexing as the Rubik's Cube.

Resolving Differences of Opinion. Part of the challenge is arranging for specialized support personnel, goals, curriculum approaches, programs and service plans to be provided to meet students needs. The balancing act is how to make this happen in a manner that is acceptable for all parties. Parents, school district and AEA personnel may have different opinions, preferences and possibilities. Typically these varied perspectives are reconciled at IEP meetings where all parties come together to plan a child's IEP on an annual basis. When agreement cannot be met there are provisions in Iowa for dispute resolution.

Iowa is a wonderful place to raise children and work in education. Iowans tend to assume good intent and have a basic mental set of trusting each other. That is not to say that differences in opinion do not happen, they do. But it is how those differences of opinion are handled that separates Iowa from many other places.

Licensed professionals in special education can, and do, get involved with differences of opinion between school districts, Area Education Agencies, and parents around services for children with disabilities. Dealing effectively with differences of opinion is a critical skill in working with others and special educators have historically exhibited very good interpersonal skills.

Fortunately, educators in Iowa have enjoyed strong leadership and support from the Department of Education in dispute resolution. A prime example of this comes from the work of Dee Ann Wilson. Dee Ann was tireless in her work to resolve disputes at the lowest level possible. Dee Ann developed a dispute resolution process that was nationally recognized by the Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE) in 2010. Iowa was one of only four states to receive this honor from CADRE. This honor was bestowed on Iowa for many reasons including a very effective resolution process—thank you Dee Ann—and a state record of some of the lowest number of cases going to due process in the nation. Next we will consider alternatives for resolving differences of opinions.

Resolution Facilitation. In order to assist families and support school districts, Iowa has a resolution facilitator in each AEA. Examples include Denny Sinclair AEA 267, Jabari Woods Mississippi Bend AEA; Paul Kiburz, Grant Wood AEA; Steve Iverson, Heartland AEA; and Linda Appleby, Northwest AEA. The role of the resolution facilitator is to assist resolving difficulties. Sometimes parents and/or their advocate prefer to engage the services of a State of Iowa contracted mediator for resolution facilitation or for a mediation meeting. Mediations can be conducted when a Due Process has been filed or conducted when parents have requested a mediation without filing for Due Process.

Mediation. The intent of the mediation is to find areas of agreement, seek middle ground, and focus on the future, not reliving the past. Mediators know that the relationship between parents, school districts and AEAs can be long-term. It is important to work towards enhancing the relationship during mediation. One mediator served as a special education director and as the chief negotiator for his agency during contract negotiations. After serving on management's negotiations team for many years he understood the importance

of taking a long-term view of the process. Winning big for the agency one year meant losing big the next. So it is when assisting parents and schooling in finding reasonable solutions to issues. In many cases parents have other children in the district, and in the case of young children the relationship between parties can last ten to twelve years. Mediating a win-win problem-solving meeting is in everyone's interest. The process of mediation begins with understanding the various viewpoints of all parties.

- ▶ An example of a win-win solution is demonstrated through the analogy of two cooks quarreling over one remaining orange. Each argues for the entire orange to fulfill the requirements for the recipe they are following. It would be tempting to just cut the orange in half. Although it is a quick solution, it may not serve the needs of either party. Another potential solution would be to appear before a judge to argue the merits of who gets the orange. In this situation one cook would prevail and the other would lose. The third option would be interest-based and win-win. In this option the mediator would meet with each party to understand their particular interest in the orange. In this scenario the mediator discovers that one of the cooks needs all of the interior fruit for their recipe, while the other cook needs the zest of the entire rind for a tart dessert. By focusing on parties' interests the mediator can forge a win-win solution to problems that might appear to be insurmountable. So it is with working to resolve much more important issues – those around children with special needs.



Orange Zest Outside and juice Inside

Special educators, school staff and AEA staff can be thankful that there is a strong track record and system of support in Iowa to resolve disputes at the lowest level possible. This is beneficial to parents, families and school personnel.

Due Process. Despite good intentions to reach accord, there are times when mediations reach impasse and due process hearings are necessary. At these times an impartial third party must be called upon to render an opinion on a dispute between parties in the educational environment. Enter the Administrative Law Judge. The original four Administrative Law Judges (ALJs) appointed by the Iowa Department of Education were Larry Bartlett, University of Iowa; Susan Etscheidt, University of Northern Iowa; Dan Reschly, Iowa State University; and Carl Smith, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center at Drake University. As educators, the ALJs were trained to make sound educational decisions in accordance with special education law. Dan Reschly ruled on over 20 cases and provided the following example of the kinds of rulings that might take place.

- ▶ As an ALJ Dan heard the case of a young man who, among many other disabilities, had the propensity to bang his head against any hard surface. After oral arguments, presentation of exhibits, and summaries, Dan ruled that the district had not provided adequate related services. Dan's judgment included that the district remedy the educational program for the future with the appropriate related services and provide compensatory programming to make up for the learning the student had missed.

This is a very brief synopsis of this case, but does demonstrate how parents can engage the Due Process System to level the playing field to gain educational assistance for their child.

A source of conflict may occur when children and youth with IEPs transgress the school's discipline code. The issue is to what extent did one's disability impact their behavior. That question is addressed in a process known as manifestation determination.

Manifestation Determination. *Law and Order* was a popular television series in the early 2000s. The first half of a program focused on a situation where someone was arrested for breaking a law. The second half addressed the adjudication process of the case, where principles of justice came into play. The same issues are at hand when determining if a child's disability is a component in explaining incidents of school behavior that may violate laws, school rules or the school's code of conduct. There are generally consequences in schools when there is an infraction of social expectations. That part is relatively straightforward and is defined in a school code of conduct or laws. In general conversation it is like the phrase, "If you did the crime you do the time." Thus, if you break a rule then it follows that you automatically earned the consequences. However, social justice would require that cases be considered by viewing all relevant information that has a bearing on the situation. So, there are practices, as in the TV program *Law and Order*, to ascertain what constitutes justice.

A manifestation determination is a meeting to determine if the behavior exhibited by an individual is a manifestation of their disability. For example, if a student demonstrates an impulse control behavior and has an IEP goal to address impulse difficulty, they have protection under IDEA to due process rights, which are different than those provided for general education students. Consider an example.

- ▶ A high school basketball conference experienced an incident where student safety was an issue. At a regional basketball tournament game there was an announcement on the public speaker that, "No one, absolutely no one, was to go onto the court at the end of the game. Police would ensure there was public safety." When the winning basket was made, the time on the game clock showed 0 seconds, Jason bolted onto the court. Following his example, other students rushed to greet their team and a jubilant celebration began. A police officer at the game said the student who began the disruption, Jason, would be arrested for inciting a riot and putting the public at risk. After the arrest, the decision was ultimately reversed when it was determined that Jason was deaf and could not have heard the announcement. In essence, it was

concluded that the student's disability had a bearing on the behavioral infraction therefore a different perspective prevailed on this incident.

Some examples of situations where a manifestation determination may be warranted:

- A child with a disability brought a BB gun to school. The school has a Zero Tolerance Policy.
- A child with a disability was involved in a pushing incident that escalated into a fight. The child had behavioral goals in the area of impulse control and social skills training.
- A child with seizure disorder kicked and bit a classmate.
- A child with an intellectual disability took money from the teacher's desk.
- A child with autism brings prescription drugs (not the child's Rx) to school. Code of conduct indicates this is a serious violation with set consequences.

None of these situations can be judged from the scant information provided. It is not automatic that the child's disability was or was not a factor. It takes careful consideration and evaluation of factors to arrived at just conclusions.

Manifestation Determinations were first introduced into IDEA with the 1997 amendments. The process was revised again by Congress in IDEA 2004. But the topic of manifestation determination was litigated through case law before it was added to the federal law in 1997. Here is an Iowa story that brought awareness of the ramification of conducting manifestation determinations.

- ▶ In 1996 a school district asked an AEA special education director in Iowa to clarify the manifestation determination process when an IEP team could not reach agreement about whether a student's behavior was a manifestation of his behavior. The director sought legal counsel and wrote a memorandum to the district administration to provide written documentation for their records. The memo said in effect: In cases in which a staffing team cannot reach consensus in determining whether a particular student's disability is related to his or her disability, assume the disability is related and proceed accordingly. This conservative approach gives the student the benefit of the doubt, provides them with specific due process rights, and is more legally defensible for the school district than to assume the disability is not related. This memo resolved the question at hand, but resulted in a number of interesting comments and communications.

This memo found its way to Washington DC and was published in a bi-monthly journal that studies money in politics. Later an article ran on the opinion page of an Iowa newspaper using words like bureaucratic jabberwocky. This was followed by a letter to the editor from an attorney for Iowa Protection and Advocacy Services stating that the memo was accurate and concise and reflects sound public policy. Another letter to the director from a law professor from the University of Iowa stated that the position expressed was excellent.

The above discussion on Manifestation Determination is included here to illustrate how new concepts in special education case law and public law can cause confusion for someone who does not thoroughly understand special education law.

Another resource in addressing issues in special education is through parent advocacy. Parents often rely on the advice, knowledge and wisdom of attorneys who specialize in legal issues pertaining to the education of children with disabilities.

Special Education Parents' Attorneys. It has taken many dedicated parents, advocates, educators, and legislators to improve services for children with special needs. Significant changes in federal laws and State Administrative Rules have made services accessible, equitable, and outcome oriented. One of the critical players in promoting expanded and accountable services for children with disabilities and their families is the special education attorney. Parents have options for advocacy which includes organizations like ASK Resource Center, Disability Rights Iowa, etc. Parents can also choose to engage a private special education attorney. An Iowa attorney who is well respected for his child and parent advocacy is Curt Sytsma.

Curt is a special education attorney whose advocacy has made a significant difference in special education services in Iowa. His work in special education started in 1994 when autism issues were emerging in the field of special education. Children were increasingly being identified as being on the Autism Spectrum and educational institutions considered discrete-trial-training as excessive and expensive. Curt pushed the system to increase appropriate training for educational service providers and to expand services for children on the Autism Spectrum. The manner that educators provide services for children on the Autism spectrum now is dramatically more sophisticated than it was in the mid-1990s. Now every AEA has an Autism/ Challenging Behavior Team.

These kinds of fundamental change are not easy. To make systemic changes requires changing inertia, which requires getting peoples' attention. Only then can the change become part of the system. Once integrated into the system it becomes much more difficult to revert back to past practice. Curt is a strong special education advocate because of his skill and tenacity to improve services at the system and individual child level.

Curt is held in high esteem because he listens well and focuses on attainable solutions. He works to find middle ground, but never compromises what is right. Curt has effectively pushed the envelope so children can receive the services they require to access the general education curriculum. The personal impact and lasting value of such advocacy is reflected in the following story.

- ▶ This example includes a young girl whose allergies needed specific accommodations. With legal representation by Curt, appropriate accommodations were put in place and significantly benefited the student. She later said she wanted to go to Harvard to be a special education attorney just like Curt Sytsma. It's hard to get a better affirmation than that.

In the course of interviewing for this text, educators representing school districts and AEA administrative staff commented that Curt made them better. He did this by calling attention to practices that needed additional attention and change. Making these educational leaders better translated into making the system better for individuals with disabilities. There are still considerable challenges of course. Curt talks about the great strides that have been made with functional assessment and ongoing progress monitoring. At the same time, unfortunately, some AEAs have not only stopped talking about IQ scores; they have gotten rid of the whole concept of mental ability. There should be a balance here. It is not an all or nothing thing. There are times when knowing a child's mental ability is an important ingredient to adequately understand and intervene in an effective manner. There's still a considerable amount of important advocacy work to do.

Parent Advocacy Organizations in Iowa. Some parent advocacy organizations are established at the federal level, such as Protection and Advocacy, now called Disability Rights Iowa. Others are initiated at the grass roots level by parents of children with special needs. Such was the case with the ASK Resource Center which was started through the combined efforts of Paula Connolly and Mary Watkins in 1991. Both Paula and Mary were parents of children with disabilities. Both Paula and Mary learned the power of advocacy when representing their children in the medical world and the educational community. They knew how to help others sort through the maze of acronyms and complicated hierarchies. Paula and Mary co-founded ASK to help families access services for special needs children. Some of these children were not individuals with disabilities, but required considerable support. One of the biggest hurdles for parents new to having a child with special needs is they don't know what they don't know. Paula Connolly is currently the Family to Family Iowa Project Coordinator for ASK Resource Center and works to assist family-to-family communication. ASK provides support groups for families, works to eliminate barriers that keep parents from attending meetings, and empowers families through social networking. ASK uses a train-the trainer model of education. They hope that by training parents to advocate for their child, those parents will then be equipped to help educate and inform other parents. There is a multiplier effect.

Paula describes how Senator Harkin was concerned about supports to parents and how to provide even more assistance to parents through federal supports. One of Senator Harkin's staffers asked Paula and Mary to develop what was to become the Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) with funding made available through the reauthorization of IDEA 1997. Paula and Mary hired Jule Reynolds to write the PTI grant for Iowa, which was approved. Once the grant was approved and funding was secured Paula and Mary hired Jule Reynolds to serve as the executive director and provide administrative oversight to the program. Originally the ASK Resource Center was the umbrella for PTI and other such services, but that is not the case now. PTI now has a distinguished track record of education advocacy and support for parents across Iowa.

In the process of dispute resolution there is the need for persistence, listening, understanding and respect. Like seeking the solution in a Rubik's Cube, it requires changing perspectives and shifting positions to see that there are other possibilities. Thankfully Iowa has personnel with the Parent-Educator Connection, ASK Resource Center, Parent Training and Information Center,

attorneys like Curt Sytsma, AEA resolution facilitators, State contracted mediators, AEA and district personnel, and parents who are all willing to work together for the common good. It is the kind of grit that makes Iowa successful.

Evolution of the Individualized Education Program and the Statewide Procedures Manual



Long Winding Road

During the 1960s the Beatles were wildly successful with dozens of Gold Records. Stardom continues today as their songs are replayed and re-recorded by other artists. Towards the end of their career, as the group was preparing to disband, they wrote a song entitled *The Long and Winding Road*. That title is a fitting description for the many changes and improvements in the individualized educational program document, which has clearly evolved across time to reflect enhancements in special education services. The IEP is the centerpiece that insures that children and youth receive services that are individualized to their unique needs. What follows is a perspective on the IEP's ongoing journey through 2015.

The IEP is now, and has been, the bedrock concept for ensuring individualized services. The IEP has a long history beginning in 1975. It is useful at this point to look back on the evolution and progress in the sustained commitment to individualize services to meet the needs of each child with a disability.

Prior to the passage of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) in 1975 there were few requirements or written plans for serving children with disabilities. Students were evaluated with an intellectual assessment instrument and an academic assessment for reading and/or math and placed in a specialized program, often without parental written consent. Sometimes no meeting was held prior to the placement and parents were not notified of the placement. Everything changed in 1975 as states sought to adhere to PL 94-142.

In Iowa the newly created Area Education Agencies were busy hiring staff, working to understand the requirements of PL 94-142, and creating child find procedures. School districts were busy hiring special education teachers and waiting for the Iowa DE and AEAs to provide program procedures for them. The regulations would not be available for about four years and across the country the focus was on child find, not on outcome measures. Public Law 94-142 required that each identified child have a written Individualized Educational Program (IEP), although the requirements for this plan were yet to be developed. Each state developed their own requirements and, in Iowa, each AEA developed their program manual. With this early effort Iowans began their important journey on the "long and winding road".

The first IEPs contained a cover page listing the student's name, grade level, and age; the parents' name, address, and telephone number; and other relevant demographic information. The second page asked for goals that were often written in vague terms with several on the same page. This was followed by the services that would be provided. The early IEPs varied considerably from one AEA to another, as did the process of completing them. A few of the larger districts developed their own procedures and IEPs. In some AEAs staff were asked to handwrite IEPs that were turned in to a secretary to type and Xerox, while in other AEAs the IEPs were handwritten on NCR paper. IEPs were more often perfunctory than individualized. They were considered a requirement to be completed and filed rather than a functional guide to providing targeted services. IEPs continued to be inconsistent and considerably different across Iowa until the late 1980s when a compliance visit from the Feds resulted in a recommendation that Iowa have a Statewide IEP.

In 1990 the Iowa DE formed a State IEP task force. The committee developed a State model IEP that 12 of the 15 AEAs adapted. It was a recommended IEP format, not required, and each of the AEAs that did implement it tweaked it in some manner.

In late 1990s the Iowa DE and the committee published a document entitled *Their Future Our Guidance* and *At a Glance* to assist educators and parents to better understand Iowa

special education procedures and the IEP process. Lana Michelson recognized the need for supporting teachers, parents and others in understanding the IEP. A brief reflection on this state leader's work follows.



Published 1998

- ▶ Lana Michelson started as a self-contained severe and profound special education teacher in 1972. Over the years she served in various roles: as a special education consultant for an AEA, a special education staff development specialist at an AEA, and Chief of the State Bureau of Children, Families & Community Services. One of her great gifts was the ability to bring people together with various roles and viewpoints and build consensus. A testament to her people skills and facilitation expertise is the document *Their Future...Our Guidance*. This manual was a guide to the development of IEPs for students with disabilities in Iowa, which was of great help to parents and educators alike. In reflecting on her work across time, Lana states that relationships are absolutely critical no matter where in the educational system you work. Lana exemplified that it is not just *What* you do, but *How* you do it. Lana was effective at helping students with disabilities, from her days as a teacher throughout her career as a DE Bureau Chief, because of her people skills and ability to bring people together over shared beliefs and values. Once strong trusting relationships

are built it is amazing what can be accomplished. Lana showed us that.

In 2002 all AEAs agreed to use the same IEP format. One AEA began building and experimenting with a computer-based IEP, which they offered to share with other AEAs. The Iowa DE offered to support this effort with Toni Van Cleve serving as the DE contact and facilitator. The outcome was a computer disc format that staff could use to write IEPs. Toni continued to provide leadership in electronic IEP development and coordinated the AEA Special Education Directors and Grant Wood AEA to develop and launch a statewide web-based IEP. Interestingly, between 2004 and 2005 some AEAs were using NCR IEPs, others were utilizing computer based IEPs, and still others were piloting web-based IEPs. There was no standard practice until 2006, at which time all AEAs were fully utilizing the statewide web-based IEP.

Over time, IEP requirements have evolved to become much more sophisticated. IEPs in Iowa are, as of this writing, web-based and require the IEP team to specify the present level of educational functioning, goals with explicit detail for monitoring, the specific services to be provided, and other relevant information such as specialized transportation, access to statewide assessment, extended school year services, etc. The inclusion of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) can add considerably more detail and length to the IEP. The absolute minimum length of an IEP is six pages if there is only one goal and no behavior concerns. IEPs with FBAs and BIPs can easily exceed sixty pages. The web-based format requires that all fields on the IEP are to be populated, which has the effect of making the document appear highly legalistic. Due process procedural safeguards are required and can make the IEP feel compliance driven to parents and educators alike. To put this in perspective, Sylvia Piper, speaking as a parent, commented that reading the detail in the IEP feels similar to the process of agreeing to the terms and conditions of a new software application program on a home computer or iPhone—you just sign the thing to keep the process moving. This parent’s comment underscores the degree of legalistic and educational jargon that can interfere with straightforward communication between parents and educators.



Working on an IEP

Roxanne Cumings served as the Executive Director of Student Services for one of the largest growing districts in Iowa and a special education teacher before that. Her perspective on the evolution of the IEP is illuminating.

- ▶ In the early years when IEPs were merely two to three pages, Roxanne said it was the relationship with the parents that was of critical importance, rather than perseverating on the IEP document. Frequently IEPs were written and filed and seldom referred to until it was time to update them. Now, the IEPs serve as an important instructional tool to guide services, but they’ve grown to be very long. The present IEPs tend to be very detailed which can make it

difficult for parents to fully comprehend the document. Trust continues to be central to a strong working relationship between the school and parents. Trust works both ways and must be nurtured over a long period of time.

From 1975 on, each AEA developed their individual procedures and program manual, which required considerable duplicative independent work. In 2007 the AEA Directors of Special Education committed to creating statewide procedures. The Department of Education contracted David Happe, AEA Special Education Director, to coordinate this work, while Jim Gorman, AEA Special Education Director, was charged with leading the work on Child Find Procedures. During the 2008-2009 year, Jeananne Hagen Schild was contracted to continue development work. A Statewide Procedures Manual was disseminated and utilized by every AEA on August 1, 2009.

Prior to a statewide procedures manual, each AEA spent countless hours every spring and summer refining their procedures and manual. When the statewide Procedures Manual was released, one AEA director of special education told David Happe how much he appreciated the effort as it saved him from an entire summer of committee work debating and discussing AEA procedures. He gave David a case of beer in appreciation. Not all directors celebrated the statewide effort with a case of beer, but all were thankful. A statewide Procedural Manual was a huge step to standardizing best practices across Iowa and substantially reducing the discrepancies and confusion when children moved from one AEA to another.

Following the release of the statewide procedures manual, the Procedures Coordinating Council was formed with David Happe as Chair. The Procedures Coordinating Council continues to address changes and clarifications as needed. Changes are made to statewide procedures due to IDEA reauthorization changes, case law clarifications, or questions from the field. The Child Find Leadership group has formally ended with its responsibilities folded into the Procedures Coordinating Council. David Happe continues to chair this important council and works with the AEA directors and DE staff to facilitate clarifications and communication.

Great strides have been made to develop clear and concise procedural standards to serve individuals with disabilities. These procedures must adhere to all state and federal requirements, which themselves, can be a moving target. The current procedures manual labeled *Area Education Agency Special Education Procedures*, July 1, 2015 is almost 600 pages long. It is well written and keyword searchable, but can be intimidating to those not conversant with special education laws and practices.

Iowans can look back on the road they have traveled to write meaningful IEPs. It is important to remember that an Individualized Education Program is a written agreement of what is to happen. It is not a guarantee of outcomes, but rather reasonably calculated to confer educational benefit. The story is not about how to write a perfect IEP, but about the thought that goes into the assessment, the goals and monitoring of the goals, and the services that will bring about the desired outcome for children with disabilities.

Assistive Technology and Living Accommodations



Wizardry of Harry Potter

J. K. Rowling mesmerized the world with a seven-book series featuring Harry Potter's adventures at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Just as Harry Potter, Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger had to cope with life challenges in their unique education, so do children with disabilities. Iowa schools work their magic when making accommodations and adaptations that are thoughtfully applied to the educational experiences of children with disabilities. Perhaps the wizards were the elected officials who in the past made accommodations a part of IDEA and the provisions of Section 504 of the civil rights law. Perhaps the wizards are the teachers who implement accommodations or teams that work with assistive

technology that enable technology to function in classrooms. Perhaps the wizards are the parents who help students practice with technology and accommodations to make it a part of everyday life rather than just a school activity. In truth they all deserve acknowledgment when the process is successful for students.

In this section we will consider the legal foundation supporting assistive technology (AT) and how AT is used to enhance the learning and living of students with disabilities as reflected in stories where the application of AT improves life situations.

The Legal Foundation for Accommodations. There is both a moral and legal foundation for supporting educational efforts that expand learning opportunities for children with special needs. As we have seen, it is the educational system's responsibility to educate every child. That, however, does not mean everyone is taught in the same way because learners have different strengths. There is a saying— If the child doesn't learn the way you are teaching her, then teach the way she learns. The goal of education is to educate. For individuals with disabilities there may be adjustments required in the classroom to accomplish this goal.

On the legal side, IDEA requires that an individual with a disability receive a free and appropriate education (FAPE). The word "appropriate" calls for adjustments to meet the learner's needs, which is defined as specially designed instruction. IDEA provides this definition of that term.

Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction—(i) To address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and (ii) To ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children. [§300.39(b)(3)]

Additionally, for FAPE to be fully addressed there should be consideration of supplementary aids and services that will support an individual's learning. We will take a closer look at how assistive technology enhances learning.

Applications of Assistive Technology. Everyday life has been enhanced by the application of technology. Currently flight simulators provide practice for pilots to develop flying skills necessary for emergency landings, and navigating in blizzards, fog and night conditions while being safely on the ground; satellite images of earth reveal terrain variations and visual images of a site that allows for hikers to plan safe travel routes; Garmin, Google maps and other navigation devices are used to aid drivers looking for locations in an unfamiliar city; Amazon is considering using drones to deliver packages by air without a person being present; a farmer in a tractor can plant a field or harvest corn without touching the steering wheel, and you can ask a question on a smart phone and get an answer. These are technological applications that have made living easier. The world has changed.

Advancements in technology are also extending educational opportunities for children and youth with special needs that were impossible in earlier years. Computer word processors receive dictation and create text for an individual without the ability to use their hands. Wheelchairs can be accurately guided by voice or puffs of air to provide directional commands. Prosthetic devices with movement capability can replace a leg or arm that is dysfunctional. Technology is nifty. But it is the application of these devices that make the difference and the teachers and parents that help individuals with disabilities learn the skills to become independent in using technology. It is the work of people, not simply the functionality of technology and machinery that make it work. It is a people process. Technology certainly enhances living, but it cannot exceed the value of people. As Helen Keller wisely said, "Walking with a friend in darkness is better than walking alone in the light."

Iowa's AEA system provides assistive technology (AT) services for children. The authors talked with three professionals working with AT: Sue Young, Joy Lyons, and Amy Garrett. Technology for students with special needs comes at a cost of both purchase price of equipment and the time to train students, teachers and parents. Iowa's AEAs are often in a position to help to ensure the right devices are available to students. The AEA may have a Lending Library that allows for a trial period to experience specialized equipment for weeks to see if it is an asset to learning. Then, based on this experience, decisions can be made regarding future assistive technology hardware, software, and training.

Classroom applications of assistive technology have changed dramatically over the past twenty years. Computers and micro switches changed the possibilities for how children are served. In the early years a technology device was programmed for dedicated functions and was often designed for one student. Now it is possible for devices to be tailored to an individual's specific needs without returning the equipment to the factory. As a child learns new vocabulary, assistive technology can be updated locally by teachers, parents, or AEA staff. Sue Young, an AT team member, told this story.

- ▶ An eight-year-old child had good receptive language but very limited expressive language. Sue had recommended a device, similar to an iPad, with the capability of producing sounds by touching written words and word combinations. This allowed the child to request something such as a drink, or desire to play, or to engage in various activities. The device has nouns, verbs, and

pronouns. This makes social interaction possible. This equipment also aids in the communication of emotions. Additionally, it makes it possible to express words to the parent, "I love you". This is priceless communication for any parent.

Another technological classroom application occurs when a student is homebound, perhaps because of medical circumstances and is unable to attend school. A readily accessible method of home-school connection is the use of computers with Skype or FaceTime. Further, some AEAs are starting to use robots like those from Double Robotics to "bring the student to school." All of these options allow a student to be engaged in instruction from afar, continue to have interaction with their teacher, and stay connected with classmates. The process is not perfect but better than missing school or having a visiting teacher who may have limited time and may be unfamiliar with how lessons fit within a scope and sequence of instruction for a student.

AEAs are a resource for districts with children who are blind or visually impaired. An AEA service is translating school texts into braille, or when needed, large print books. Additionally AEAs have itinerant services for children with visual impairments, including instruction in braille. Is that wizardry? Yes, if you are blind and someone can teach you to read by passing your fingers over raised braille letters, it is magical. It is the same experience as sight, which allows a reader to access meaning from the text, both are avenues for learning.

Accommodations. Accommodations are not new. The idea is simply to level the playing field to compensate for the effects of a disability. This practice requires making necessary adjustments so people with special needs can fully participate in life experiences. This is seen almost every day. For example no car may park in certain locations unless one has a handicapped-parking permit. In churches and some auditoriums there are T-loops for people with hearing loss and who wear hearing aids to make use of the technology. A sign may be posted indicating no animals are allowed in a building unless it is a service animal for a person with a disability. These are all accommodations to allow access to community activities.

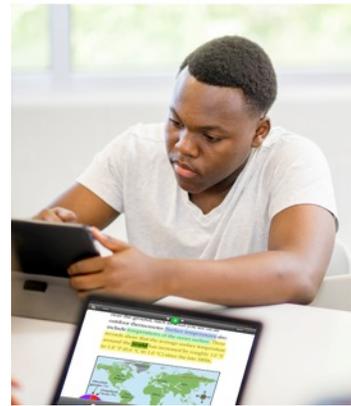


T-Loop Symbol

For educational purposes there may be accommodations or modifications. These two concepts need clarification. Accommodations are adjustments in how an individual responds to a task but not a change in the educational expectation or standard. An illustration is when a person needs to use assistive technology to write answers but the classroom assignments are the same for all students. A modification is when the educational expectation is changed in the degree of rigor in the school assignment or activity. An example of modifying the assignment could be asking a student to complete 10 questions in a given time period rather than 20 as the rest of the class would be doing. A student may need modifications or accommodations with classroom learning, at physical education, in an art or music program, or work place. In all cases, the important consideration is to level the playing field to allow equitable participation for everyone in school and in life activities.

- ▶ Rhea Wright is an AEA consultant who has a breadth of experience with providing accommodations to students. Rhea tells the story of a high school student who had cerebral palsy, with concomitant low vision, speech difficulty, and a physical disability. When Rhea began her work with this student, we will call Mike, he was totally reliant on his paraprofessional and was not using any assistive technology. Mike was in a wheelchair. The reevaluation examined his vision, mobility, and adaptive behavior, among other aspects of his disability. Although Mike was receiving vision services, no one had contacted the Department of the Blind. Rhea engaged the services of the Department of the Blind, which brought with it incredible resources. In addition to itinerant teachers, the Department of the Blind has their own rehabilitation counselors who focus specifically on transition services.

Rhea also brought in Assistive Technology specialist Sue Young. Sue experimented with a variety of computer applications to transcribe Mike's speech to text, but none of the apps recognized his difficult speech. But Kurzweil software did, and it opened up a new world to Mike. Although in high school, Mike's reading and writing level was at a third grade level. Reading fluency and comprehension were very low. The Kurzweil program allowed text to be scanned, placed in a file, and read to Mike. The Kurzweil program allows the user to choose the voice and speed of reading that best works for them. It also provides highlighting capabilities. In addition, the Kurzweil enhances individuals' writing by using word prediction and pop up choices for completing sentences. Individuals can also leave voice notes directly on documents, click and drag text directly on documents (i.e. from a word bank), or type directly onto scanned documents. The utilization of the Kurzweil program served as an incredible accommodation for Mike to read and write and allowed him to excel in ways he had never experienced before. Rhea also made contact with Easter Seals that resulted in expanded services for Mike. Rhea stated that the greatest predictor of post high school success is the ability to self-advocate. In this case, Mike was able to become much more self-sufficient and self-confident because of his new capabilities. Mike's quality of life was greatly enhanced through the initiative, tenaciousness, and teamwork of Rhea Wright and Sue Young.



Kurzweil Software

Rhea closed this story by saying that the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) provides Kurzweil to any of their students who need the accommodation free of charge. The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) has a similar program that is also provided free to any student who needs it.

Another application of accommodations is in classroom testing or testing on high stakes tests such as the Iowa Assessments. An example. It may be that a blind student needs to have a modification in a test so the material is presented in braille or for the partially-sighted in a large print. An accommodation might be that a student requires additional time to complete their work. Without such accommodations inaccurate conclusions about an individual's skills or knowledge might result from the testing process.

Accommodations are written into the IEP and are part of the expectations for ensuring a free and appropriate education. Accommodations are critical to ensuring that educational experiences are appropriate. The same is true when assessing a student's learning or level of achievement. If a student uses classroom accommodations to aid in their day-to-day learning then it follows that the same practice would be applicable when giving classroom tests or large scale, high stakes tests. Additionally, if an individual were taking an Iowa Driver's License exam the accommodations may be appropriate in that circumstance. An example is having large print to allow reading or have an audio reading of the test items if a person lacked reading skills but wanted to secure a driver's license.

- ▶ Teachers, parents and classmates generally recognized that Anthony had a remarkable memory. Once he heard information, he was capable of understanding and applying the information. What he could not do anywhere near as well as classmates was to read text. That was a challenge. His IEP called for accommodations for grade level material to be provided in the form of audio versions of the textbook in chemistry, history and physics. He took tests with questions being presented orally by his teachers or tape recorded. He responded with oral or audio-recorded answers. Anthony was a successful student when accommodations were provided. He could learn and master the school's curriculum. It was a matter of how material was presented. It could be argued that Anthony wasn't so much *disabled*, as he was *enabled* with the right accommodations.

Accommodations can be provided in higher education for individuals with a documented disability. The following discusses the process to engage accommodations in higher education. When it is determined that attending a community or four-year college is an option the student or parent should contact the campus office for disabilities. The coordinator can assist young adults in considering their needs and how the higher education institution can be supportive. Documentation of the disability is necessary. For accommodations to be considered in Iowa, one must complete a Support for Accommodation Request (SAR) form. Accommodations may be provided for individuals with IEPs or Section 504 plans. The SAR allows the institution to review background information such as eligibility, diagnostic history, functional impact of the disability in the past, and history of the response to accommodations. When accommodations are granted the office of special needs in the college helps coordinate activities with instructors.

Similarly, for those individuals who go to work there may be the need for accommodations. The ADA provides for reasonable accommodation if the employment is an agency covered by this act, such as state and local

government, private business with 15 or more employees. A qualified employee is one determined to have the job skills needed to carry out the work, the education and the experience for the job, and can do the work with reasonable accommodations. The term disability means physical or mental disability that substantially limits life activities. Accommodations are determined on an individualized basis as it pertains to the specific duties of a work assignment.

British scientist, inventor, and fiction writer Sir Arthur C. Clark, said, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is equivalent to magic." Surely Harry Potter would agree that AEA professionals such as Sue Young, Joy Lyons and Amy Garrett who work with assistive technology are making the magic of learning possible for children with disabilities in Iowa. This service happens in every AEA. The names of the wizards change but the magic is just as marvelous.

Audiological Services

The Verizon Corporation promoted their cellphones in 2004 with a catchy advertisement asking, "Can you hear me now?" The intent was to contrast their cell phones with other vendors who were represented as dropping calls; presumably their product did not have this same fate.

In Iowa classrooms the answer to the question, "Can you hear me now?" has dramatic implications for learning. It may well be the difference between school success and failure for students with a hearing loss. Iowa is fortunate to have a comprehensive system of school audiological services that includes identification, support for medical treatment, follow-up and education of students with hearing difficulties. While audiology services have been part of special education for decades, we will view the advances that were occurring in the 1990s.

In this section there are facts about hearing loss, a reflection on how audiological services have improved over time, consideration of screening procedures, types of supports for children and adults with hearing loss and a parent's perspective on cochlear implants.

Audiology Background Information. A perspective on hearing loss in America is provided by the National Institute of Health. Some facts.

- About 2 to 3 out of every 1,000 children in the United States are born with a detectable level of hearing loss in one or both ears.
- More than 90 percent of deaf children are born to hearing parents.
- Among adults aged 70 and older with hearing loss who could benefit from hearing aids, fewer than one in three (30 percent) has ever used them. Even fewer adults aged 20 to 69 (approximately 16 percent) who could benefit from wearing hearing aids have ever used them.
- About 20 percent of adults in the United States, 48 million, report some degree of hearing loss.
- At age 65, one out of three people has a hearing loss.
- Hearing loss is a major public health issue that is the third most common physical condition after arthritis and heart disease.

Indeed, Iowa is fortunate to have an advanced system of audiological services provided for school children. Those services include screening.

Screening for Hearing Loss. The above information indicates that hearing loss is a major public health issue with significance at all ages in America. Identification of the presence of a hearing loss for children typically begins with screening.

Professional services in audiology have changed significantly over the past 50 years. Gene Pratt graduated from the University of Northern Iowa, called Iowa State Teachers College at the time, and began working as an audiologist in 1959. He said the professional training at UNI was state of the art for audiologists and speech pathologists who would be practicing in the schools, but there have been significant advancements.

- ▶ Gene described the early audiological equipment as primitive when compared to today's standards. He said that hearing screening involved a whole bunch of headphones connected to a record player, with students marking what they heard on a piece of paper. Of course they could all see each other. Those students who didn't pass were referred for an individual assessment with an audiometer, which was nowhere near as sensitive as the equipment utilized today.

Fast forward to 1975. Jim Doyle, an AEA supervisor for hearing services, said these were very exciting times for building the hearing profession's services in the public sector because of available funding in IDEA. Adequate funding allowed AEAs to recruit audiologists into education. There was a strong push to make greater connections around audiology in the educational context.

- ▶ It was a big change to discuss hearing acuity out of the medical community and into the educational environment. Prior to this, audiologists were practicing in the schools, but primarily in a medical way. Each AEA worked with local hospitals and doctors to lower the age of identification of detecting hearing loss. One AEA entitled their program REACH (Resource Education Audiology for Children) that was initiated so parents could call one number to schedule a hearing evaluation for their child. The early AEA programs utilized a questionnaire voluntarily completed by hospital staff and parents on each newborn, to identify infants at risk for developing hearing loss. The AEAs administered the programs, followed up with parents, and offered free hearing tests. This model changed when technology was developed to screen newborn hearing, and newborn hearing screening became state law in 2003. REACH disseminated outreach material to doctors' offices and clinics to inform parents of the free services available from AEAs. The program is now under the umbrella of Early ACCESS, which is a clearinghouse for many early childhood services.

Iowa laws and regulations do not require school-age hearing screenings. However, the Iowa practice of AEA audiologists is to screen all children early on, although the exact grades screened varied over the years. Students with a suspected hearing loss can always be evaluated by an AEA audiologist through a referral from either teachers or parents. Some students have fluctuating conductive hearing losses resulting from otitis media or other circumstances so referrals from teachers, nurses or parents are always important.

An extraordinary advance in Iowa's medical community is neonatal screening for hearing loss. Through the combined efforts of the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Department of Health, there is now a direct connection between hospitals and the AEA Audiology departments. As stated earlier, beginning in 2003, newborns are screened for potential hearing loss in hospital settings with a referral to an audiologist for follow-up. This program helps ensure that there are not gaps in services for children with suspected hearing difficulties in Iowa.



Iowa Supports Infant Hearing Screening

Deb Moon Davis and Deb Mountsier, AEA audiologists explained that Iowa hospitals typically use Automated Auditory Brainstem Response (AABR) and Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) protocols at birth. Before the parents and infant leave the hospital the parents are informed about the screening results so that additional assessment can occur when needed. The screening process creates no discomfort for the infant.

A screening procedure is intended to cast a wide net and include any infant that may have a hearing loss. Any infant that did not pass the screening is given a rescreening and if they do not pass, they are scheduled for a more intensive audiological exam in a few weeks to determine if an actual hearing loss is confirmed.

Clearly the comprehensive screening, beginning at birth and continuing through the elementary school years, is an amazing accomplishment that benefits Iowans. This is a strength of the AEAs, local school districts, and the community system. Now we can consider these services as they apply to individuals.

Services for Students with Impaired Hearing. Before iPhones, iTunes, and Amazon music, America's youth kept tabs on the latest popular music trends by tuning into Dick Clark's American Bandstand on TV or following Casey Kasem's Top 40 on the radio. Being in the know assumes one can hear. That is not always the case. Children and youth with hearing impairments receive audiological and educational services from AEA professionals. They can keep up with the latest and greatest in the world of teen music.

Iowa embraced early literacy intervention and hearing services as a part of that effort. Audiologists in some AEAs have made connections between Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and children with potential conductive hearing loss. They have gone from a service model of *test-diagnose-next* to a model that is much more hands-on. Now audiologists work directly with teachers and principals. This can involve DIBELS awareness, and can include how to make the data relevant to the student with a hearing loss.

AEA audiologists are instrumental in obtaining assistive listening technology. Audiologists recommend which equipment should be purchased by the local district for each individual student. Audiologists then monitor use of the equipment, in-service school staff and students on how to use the equipment,

and assist the district in repair and maintenance. This involves working to ensure that a particular child's hearing aid or implant interfaces with the assistive listening technology and in making recommendations to the classroom setting so there is a clear signal path for the child.

An array of services are provided by AEAs to support instructional success. These include sign language interpreters and itinerant teachers for hearing impaired. Some children and youth also attend the Iowa School for the Deaf, a residential facility near Council Bluffs, Iowa. There are choices.

Jim Doyle stated that the improvements in educational audiology services over the past fifty years are pretty amazing. The students that were once housed in the segregated school for the deaf are now primarily served successfully in their home community. With cochlear implants and other medical marvels the next fifty years promise even more services to those with hearing loss.

Cochlear Implants. Some children are born with congenital deafness. Does that always mean being denied sounds that other youth can hear? That depends.

One cause of deafness is damage to the cochlea, which are sensory hair cells in the ear. A cochlear implant is a device surgically embedded into the ear. The device allows an individual to receive speech and music sounds. According to the National Institute of Health, in 2012 in the United States roughly 58,000 devices have been implanted in adults and 38,000 in children. For those who can benefit from cochlear implant sounds and music are possibilities. Karson Wetzel was the first child who received bilateral cochlear implants in Iowa. His mother, Cheryl Wetzel told this story.

- ▶ Karson was a normal healthy boy hitting all the developmental milestones such as walking and expressing words including "Mama", "Dada", and "bye-bye". At 18-months Karson became ill. The family doctor said it looked like the flu. Two days later paralysis appeared. Cheryl described what followed as a rollercoaster experience of emotional highs, lows, highs, lows. The subsequent diagnosis was meningitis. Medical staff at the Pediatric Intensive Care unit told the parents that one in five children die and one in three become deaf. Karson improved then relapses occurred. There was a mystery fever that kept reappearing. He was deaf.

Iowa City hospitals provided consultation for the family. They recommended bi-lateral cochlear implants, a procedure that had never been done in Iowa. The decision was to have a cochlear implant, a definite high, then seizures appeared as the rollercoaster plunged down. The neurosurgeon successfully reduced the pressure with surgery. The implants were successful, another high. The AEA early childhood team provided assistance and so did professionals at Child Services in the early years.

Karson is now age 12. He is in a regular classroom. Iowa Assessment shows reading skills within the expected range. He has an FM unit called My-Link that teachers use and it allows

Karson to hear and benefit from classroom instruction. He is in the choir and plays the saxophone. The answer to the Verizon question is "Yes," Karson can hear you now.

Audiology and special education has come a long way from the time when a hearing device was called an ear trumpet. Clearly there are educational implications that co-exist with a hearing loss. Iowa's AEAs are an essential part of the service supporting the educational community.

And It Was Said

The Voice is currently a popular TV reality show where contestants vie for recognition by singing. This assumes one has a voice and is able to exert control over the process with excellence. Some children and youth experience extraordinary challenges in verbal interactions to such a degree that they have a disability and are eligible for special education assistance. Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) work with these individuals to bring to education their knowledge of the science of language, linguistics, sound production and human physiology.



The Voice

The American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) describes the work of SLPs in five broad areas: (a) Speech disorders that include sound production, fluency and voice resonance, (b) language disorders that may be receptive or expressive, (c) language disorders are difficulties in putting thoughts into words in a coherent manner and communicating in a socially appropriate way, (d) social communication disorders that include verbal and nonverbal communication that may take the form of story-telling conversation and interpersonal interactions, and (e) cognitive communication disorders that encompass the organization of thoughts, planning and expression that could be disrupted by conditions such as traumatic brain injury, seizures, and autism.

Some high profile cultural figures that have experienced some form of speech difficulty, include actors Samuel L. Jackson, Nicole Kidman, Marilyn Monroe, Bruce Willis, James Earl Jones, Jimmy Stewart; singers Carly Simon, Mel Tillis, and Robert Merrill; Politicians Joe Biden and Winston Churchill; and sports stars like Bill Walton, Adrian Peterson, Shaquille O'Neal and Ken Venturi. The point here is not the who's who, rather with assistance improvement is possible.

The highest number of professionals in special education are teachers, second are SLPs. In this section the evolution of the SLP profession will be briefly discussed. Following that, the services in areas of stuttering, language development related to reading proficiency, and early childhood interventions will be highlighted.

Professional Transformation. SLP professionals have been a valued part of special education for an extended period of time. The professional standards and training have changed across the years. Wendy Robinson explained some of the variations in the profession over the past 50 years.

- ▶ In the early days of special education SLP professionals were commonly called speech teachers, then as the profession advanced with more extensive training they were known as speech clinicians, then speech pathologists—especially in hospital settings—and then speech-language pathologists. The earliest service model was direct instruction to help students improve their ability to produce sound with the most common areas being articulation difficulties. The latter with an emphasis on syntax and language as it relates to reading.

A problem with direct instruction was that it pulled students out of their classroom, thus students were missing instruction in core curricular areas and that posed a difficulty. SLPs have moved into teacher and parent consultation practice to provide a broader benefit to more students. This transition has been called, “out of the broom closet and into the classroom”. As this practice was beginning it was not always met with acceptance. Wendy said a principal stated, “If you’re not working one-to-one with students, then you’re not doing the job.” That perspective has now changed with a broader understanding and acceptance of SLP consultative services.

SLPs work with a wide variety of disability conditions because the issues related to speech and language are pervasive. SLPs provide crucial assistance to students with autism, intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, brain injury, physical difficulties such as cleft palates, cerebral palsy as well as early childhood language development, and others where receptive and expressive language is affecting their well-being.

Stuttering. *The King’s Speech* received the Academy Award as best picture in 2014. This film brought public awareness to the topic of stuttering. This movie highlights the struggles of King George VI, the English monarch who was called on to make public addresses and his deep personal challenge with that task. Stuttering is a condition that can seriously disrupt effective communication and can complicate social relationships.

Iowa has a long and proud history of advocacy for the treatment of stuttering. Dr. Wendell Johnson, was a respected professor and proponent of therapy for individuals who experienced stuttering. The Wendell Johnson Speech and Hearing Center at the University of Iowa is a living legacy of the contribution he made to the work of professionals in speech-language pathology and psychology. Johnson was part the founding of the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA), a prolific author and effective proponent for speech services in public schools and hospitals, including those serving veterans. The University of Iowa has trained many SLP professionals and is renowned for its research and service to the state and the profession.



Wendell Johnson

Alyson Halley is a speech-language pathologist who has worked in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, day care settings, and schools. She currently serves as

an early childhood SLP with an AEA, but has worked with people in their 90s who suffered strokes and were relearning how to swallow. Alyson has a great deal of experience working with individuals who stutter and stuttering support groups. She provided this perspective on working with individuals with disfluency.

- ▶ Stuttering is a motor neurological disorder, which is why it cannot be cured, but can be improved with therapy. A speech-language pathologist can help a person learn strategies to minimize and decrease the disability, and cognitively accept it, but not cure it. Many kinds of disfluency are within normal development until the age of four or five. After this age there are wide variations in the severity of the disability and the underlying causes. To determine causality, pathologists examine motor systems: normal disfluency such as Whole Word Repetition, and Interjection, and abnormal disfluency such as Part Word, Blocking, and Prolongation. SLPs examine cognition: how aware the person is of their disfluency, how do they feel about it, and how they think other people feel about it. In addition, SLPs examine the associative movements the person has learned that accompany the disfluency (i.e. moving head forward, body posture and positioning). All of this assessment takes a considerable amount of problem solving, training and experience. Speech-language pathologists also know that stuttering is often variable and can be exacerbated during big life events. These can include highs such as when a person is happy (birthdays/Christmas) or lows when a person is sad (loss of a loved one/divorce). Strategies include changing speech patterns, speaking with a slower rate, decreasing tension in articulatory postures, or examining self-talk. Success stories are most often associated with people who have a moderate disfluency, such as King George.

Sounds in Reading. Educational success is closely linked with students' progress in the school district's reading curriculum. There are many professions, including SLPs, who are invested in assisting Iowa districts in helping students become proficient readers. Alyson Halley discussed the connection between reading development and the professional skills Iowa SLPs have to offer.

In 1997, congress asked the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to form the National Reading Panel to review the research on how children learn to read. The panel researched more than 100,000 reading studies and came up with the five BIG IDEAS of early literacy. The BIG IDEAS are phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency with text, vocabulary, and comprehension. Precursors to reading include language and comprehension, and speech-language pathologists have a great deal of expertise in these areas. SLPs help build listening comprehension by assisting children to draw inferences, organize material in a thoughtful fashion, develop a mental map, expand and provide information about what they heard, answer questions about what they heard, and summarize information. If they are not able to do the above when they listen, they won't be able to do it when they read. Building the listening comprehension of language is a necessary precursor to the beginning steps of reading.

Wendy Robinson has had a distinguished career in Speech-Language Pathology and is currently the Director of Instructional Services in an AEA. Her knowledge base with sounds, syntax, and phonemic awareness is crucial in understanding how reading becomes the manifestation of sounds from visual symbols. A SLP's background has many applications in education.

Early Childhood. Delayed language development is a frequent indicator of special needs. Language development impacts the capability of children to express their needs and wants, as well as understanding communication from others. In the early years services are provided in the home, which allows for modeling communication procedures between the child and others. The parents and other family members can expand their communication with the child.

The following success story demonstrates the power of early SLP intervention.

- ▶ Alyson Halley, Speech-Language Pathologist, evaluated a two-year-old child we will call Brian. Brian had no verbal communication and considerable behavioral issues. During a 60-day evaluation he went from ten signed words (no verbal words) to three word sentences and the ability to answer questions verbally. Because of his rapid verbal growth he did not qualify for special education eligibility. Moreover, Alyson reports that observing this child's rapid changes altered the way she talks with parents of children with minimal verbal communication.

Speech-language pathologists are the largest group of professionals employed by Area Education Agencies. Their contribution to serving individuals with communication and language disabilities is immense. They are strong team members who work with parents, teachers, and AEA staff to assist children with speech and language difficulties. A large proportion of the students served by SLPs are successfully exited from special education speech services.

Solution Focused Services

Innovation was not limited to a time period or an initiative like RSDS. Innovation is an attitude of seeking continuous improvement. The Mississippi Bend AEA took a leadership role in the 1990s in implementing an orientation known as Solution Focused Services. The procedures were derived from a clinical practice called solution focused therapy or brief therapy. This approach utilizes an individual's strengths and past history in coping effectively with life challenges. The practice can have applications with parents, students and teachers. David Quinn, AEA 9's director of special education, saw this as a way to utilize educators' and families' experiences to achieve improved outcomes for students with disabilities by paying particular attention to behaviors, strategies and patterns of performance that had been successful in the past. There is a strong appeal to this logic. A strength-based approach gives increased attention to experimenting with existing and new behaviors using successful patterns from the individual's past coping skills. Solution focused practices are goal-oriented and clarify a desired result and seek a pathway to that end.

Solution focused practice makes the student and parent a crucial part of the process by fostering an understanding of the strategies of past successes for future improvement. In the consultation process, open-ended questions are

often used as the springboard for unlocking possibilities for designing educational interventions. An example: "If a miracle happened and you no longer were experiencing this (specific) behavior, what would you see?" The quest of this inquiry is to identify a valued outcome, something to work toward. Then the attention shifts to coping strategies in the past that have led to improved outcomes and the supports that made that possible. Another illustration is the exception question, "When doesn't this action [behavior] occur?" The intention of these two examples is to give a flavor of the solution focused approach to inquiry. It is a rich, engaging, and collaborative process that is designed to mobilize the energy of a student, teacher and family to support student accomplishments in learning, social living or family life. This approach builds on existing strengths.

It is a credit to the Iowa special education system that, in the 1990s, innovations were vigorously explored as a means of responsibly enhancing outcomes for students with disabilities. For some professionals, Solution Focused Services was viewed as a viable approach that emphasizes the use of current skills and strategies with an individual who is seeking improvements.

An Ongoing Life Experience: 1990s

In the 1970s we reported on Rick Samson's educational experiences in elementary and junior high school and in the 1980s we discussed his high school, transition process at Easter Seals, and beginning course work at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC). We resume Rick's life story in the 1990s with Rick being in early adulthood, taking classes at DMACC and involved in many meaningful activities in Des Moines. He became an activist in the disability community as a member of the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services Board of Directors. Rick became an advocate using his own voice, experience and understanding to call for improvements for the disability community. He is doing for others what his parents had done for him in their advocacy. To get to meetings and community college, Rick used, and continues to use, Paratransit, a public transportation company as his main mode of transportation. Paratransit is a service provided for persons with disabilities and senior citizens living in Polk County who are functionally unable to independently use regular bus service. Paratransit is wheelchair accessible and provides door-to-door service. Rick does not let his physical disability impair his advocacy.

Disability Awareness — Decade of the 1990s

A popular TV show "Life Goes On" featured the Thatcher family with Corky, a young man with Down Syndrome who, like all youth, encounters challenges as a teen and then as a young adult, and strives to succeed as everyone of this age does and lives life with gusto. The show is a symbol of acceptance, inclusion, and courage. The show ran for five years in a prime time slot. Americans had come a long way from the time of institutionalization, sterilization and denial of educational opportunities for student with special needs. Community-based living facilities were becoming more prevalent in Iowa, including The Homestead. Passage of



Young Man with
Down Syndrome

the Americans with Disabilities Act opened doors for employment through the construction of ramps, installation of phone equipment for deaf individuals and the provision of essential work accommodations for a variety of circumstances and employment practices that were receptive to skilled workers with disabilities. The Braun Corporation produced the first wheelchair accessible minivan that provided another form of freedom and independence for individuals with physical challenges. On the silver screen *My Left Foot*, *The Other Sister*, and *Lorenzo's Oil* portrayed life challenges when a disability is present in a family. One could say these entertainment offerings are simply a commercially savvy investment. But, the truth is that its appeal to the public is that they educated and touched the inner compass for justice that we share in common. That is the success. Dollars, yes, and sense of it all. Yes again.

What does this all mean? Societal awareness of disabilities and possibilities for community engagement continues to expand. Iowa can be grateful for the day to day efforts of organizations such as the ASK Resource Center, the Parent-Educator Connection and Disability Rights Iowa that have a continued presence and enduring outreach to parents, families and persons with disabilities. Likewise there is a rose for those in the professional community who are relentless in their quest for improving services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities and their families. The greatest strength is in the combined efforts. Iowa enters the next millennium standing on a solid footing with the clear intention of continuing the progress.

Decade of the 2000s

As clocks and calendars turned to begin the new millennium there was widespread concern that computers could shut down resulting in railroad, airline, and power plant services interrupted because the Internet could collapse. All of this was a source of anxiety in America's high tech society. The threat was called Y2K. Although this situation proved to be uneventful, the decade of the 2000s was anything but uneventful. There were real crisis situations. On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center had two airplanes crash into it, the Pentagon in Washington DC was hit, and a fourth plane went down in Pennsylvania.



Twin Towers in New York City Skyline Before 9/11

Tense times. Subsequently, the Iraq War began because of presumed weapons of mass destruction under Saddam Hussein's control, which was later determined to be unfounded, but by that time the war was underway. A further significant crisis was the financial meltdown of 2007 that resulted in a fiscal bailout by the U.S. Government because banks were said to be too big to fail. Stock and bond values plunged to low levels and the housing crisis began with widespread foreclosures due to homes being greatly overvalued compared to the amount of bank loans. In 2007 a bridge carrying I-35 traffic in Minneapolis collapsed signaling that American infrastructure needed attention and investment. In 2009 the United States Government rescued both General Motors and Chrysler Motor Company. President Obama was both praised and criticized for supporting the bailout. The automakers repaid their loans to the government.

Technology continued to advance with Apple introducing the iPod and iPad, iTunes and iMovies. Fitbits' fitness gadgets monitor steps, heartbeats, and calories for those who wanted to track their level of physical activity. High tech

innovation included movies that could be downloaded on the Internet and viewed on portable devices. Amazon was offering Americans anything they wanted from A to Z and they would deliver the products to your doorstep. The United States in general, and Iowa in particular, was becoming more diverse with increasing numbers of students who were English Language Learners, racial and ethnic minorities. In the music world, rap was advancing its popular beat, Taylor Swift was a rising star, and Paul McCartney was knighted by the Queen of England. The hit movies were *The Dark Knight*, *The Departed*, *The Borne Ultimatum*, and *No Country for Old Men*. The themes were a dark reflection of the calamities of world events.

In the world of politics, George W. Bush became the 43rd president in 2000 and was re-elected in 2004. Barrack Obama, America's first black president, was elected in 2008 and re-elected in 2012.

In special education, IDEA was reauthorized in 2004. Increased emphasis on transition to post high school and accountability measures were strengthened, and the No Child Left Behind legislation required assessment and reporting of achievement, graduation and transition outcomes for all students. This time, all meant all. Students with disabilities had to be included in the results of all school district data sets and the information was required to be reported to the public and to the federal government. There was heightened emphasis on inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education curriculum. Teacher quality was a new topic of emphasis. To enhance the educational focus on results the state implemented the Iowa Core to guide instruction and define grade level outcomes.

Legislative Educational Reform

In this decade, the topic of reform is certainly on the American landscape in many forms. Like Baskin-Robbins ice cream, reform comes in different flavors. There are periodic calls for reform in the systems for social welfare, prisons, healthcare and agriculture. Here our interest is, of course, educational reform.



President Obama

The quest for accountability is not new. Political and educational leaders have long professed their intention of supporting students' learning to achieve high-level skills in reading, math and other curricular areas. While the intention is admirable, this has proven to be an elusive promise to keep. Some leaders' concerns are about accountability to ensure the best return on the investment of tax dollars, other leaders see education as supporting the nation's future workforce in a global economy. Whatever the motive, education is a sizable part of the federal and state budget and significant to the American Dream of upward mobility from a social perspective.

In this section we will focus on two significant legislative efforts occurring in the first decade of 2000: No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the reauthorization of the Individuals with Education Disability Act (IDEA). One major shift created in the legislative reform was the requirement of standardized assessment across all schools.

No Child Left Behind. The *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* of 2001 was the reauthorization of the federal aid for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which provides substantial funding for Title I services to disadvantaged students in America's schools. NCLB, legislation proposed by President George W. Bush, had significant bipartisan support with the bill being co-authored by two Democrats, Ted Kennedy (MA) and George Miller (CA) and two Republicans, John Boehner (OH) and Judd Gregg (NH).

NCLB required each state to establish a framework for educational accountability to be applied by the state to all districts and their schools that received federal monies. The national goal was that all children would be proficient in reading and math by the 2013-14 school year. This timeframe was established so that children entering school for the first time in 2002 would be graduating in 2014. This timeline provided the educational enterprise some element of control over the efforts to increase achievement for all students. If no child is left behind in terms of school success then there must be close attention to the performance of all students.



President George W. Bush Signing NCLB, 2002

NCLB had many features and extensive details. For purposes of this writing four aspects of this law will be considered as it pertains to the education of students with disabilities: assessment and accountability, high content standards, highly qualified teachers, and the consequences of determining insubstantial educational progress.

Assessment and Accountability. The statement that all students will be successful in their schooling is a very ambitious expectation. The emphasis on *all* children was a unique feature. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was initially put into law in 1965 as part of President Johnson's War on Poverty. The funding was to support educational efforts to enhance learning opportunities for children from low-income homes. NCLB's goal also included the original purpose of ESEA.

NCLB requires test data to be collected as objective evidence of learning achievement. The accountability framework was not aimed at only the average achievement of all students, but also other groupings within the school setting. In addition to the total achievement data, disaggregated data were required to

allow for systematic inspection of the results for specific subgroups: Five ethnic groups—American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Black, and White—and students identified as Limited English Proficient, Special Education, Migrant Status, and Economically Disadvantaged, which meant those eligible for Free and Reduced Priced Lunch. The results for each subgroup were to be held to the expectation of closing the gap and becoming proficient learners.

Four terms took on prominence because of NCLB: Annual Yearly Progress, closing the gap, Schools in Need of Assistance, and proficiency. It will be helpful in understanding educators' challenge by explaining this terminology.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) was determined by a judgment of the trajectory of improvement on a year-to-year basis, beginning in the 2002-2003 school year. Each state department of education established a line of growth to be applied to all districts and schools. Students would be tested each year in grades 3 through 8 and at least once in grades 10-12.

Closing the gap refers to the expected gains in subgroups to become more like the achievement of high performing (average) students in a school or district using the AYP data. This intention is congruent with the original intent of ESEA in 1965, which was intended to improve educational opportunities for low-income children.

School in Need of Assistance (SINA) is a term applied when the annual achievement results for an individual school did not reflect appropriate progress toward the goal for two consecutive years as shown in their AYP data. When a school was considered to be a SINA then additional technical assistance and resources were directed to support efforts to improve students' achievement. If, after several additional years, a school could not demonstrate that they were closing the achievement gap, then personnel changes could be required, including school leadership.

Proficiency. Three levels of achievement results are established in NCLB: basic, proficient, and advanced. States specified the achievement for each level.

The focus on closing the gap between the achievement level of the whole group and the subgroups achievement gave meaning to the title, No Child Left Behind.

NCLB established accountability and consequences for inadequate progress. Accountability took the form of requiring states to review student progress data and determine that each district and school building was making substantial progress towards proficiency. If the results did not indicate progress in closing the gap then the school or district was to be provided support for improvement. This was not business as usual in America's schools.



Emphasis on Achievement Results

It was required that 95 percent of all students and subgroups be included in assessment activities. This was a safeguard to ensure that students who may have low performance would not be excluded and thereby manipulate results to make conclusions appear favorable.

Why would it be necessary for a federal law to require high percentages of students be engaged in the accountability tests? The reason is revealed in the story told by a psychologist who explained how one Iowa district tried to ensure favorable test results by attempting to influence who participated in the assessment process. The story conveys how a district could engineer the appearance of better achievement when the district-wide data was reported to the community.

Prior to the administration of the Iowa Tests, the assessment procedure used in Iowa schools at this time, a district sent home letters to parents of students with disabilities and perhaps other groups saying it was parental choice whether their child would participate in the four-day assessment procedure. The idea of parent choice meant the student could stay home without penalty or judgment. The result of this practice is that the overall district results might look higher if those students with achievement challenges were not included in the assessment process.

Consider the implications of NCLB's goal, especially in light of the fact that assessment of all students would be included in the results. The practice of selective participation would be totally unacceptable. The goal, from the law:

Each State shall establish a timeline for adequate yearly progress. The timeline shall ensure that not later than 12 years after the end of the 2001-2002 school year, all students will meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievements on the State assessments.

For students with disabilities there were three possibilities in taking the high stakes annual tests: First, taking the tests without any adjustment; second, use accommodations in how the tests were taken; and lastly taking an alternate assessment. Most students with IEPs could take the tests. Most students with IEPs do not have classroom accommodations and would not need any adjustment in how they participate in the assessment process. Some students with disabilities who have accommodations established as part of their IEP that are routinely used when engaging in classroom assessments would also have that practice with the annual test. Some individuals with significant intellectual disabilities take an alternate assessment to show what they know and are able to do.

The result of the assessments data analysis serves as a Report Card for the state, district and school. Parents also receive a report on their child's performance. Teachers have a wealth of assessment information from classroom activities that also informs their opinion about a student's mastery of school expectations.

There is an issue for some students who may have an intellectual disability and their learning trajectory is different from grade level peers. These students could be included in the district's results using the alternate assessment tests.

Students with disabilities could take an alternate assessment if this was determined by the IEP team and written into the IEP. Iowa students who take the alternate assessment would be using the Essential Elements rather than the Iowa Core. More about this topic later in this chapter.

Standards for High Expectations. Sam Walton, founder of Walmart, is known for saying, "High expectations are the key to everything." Perhaps it was just such optimism and reaching beyond the comfort zone of his store in Arkansas that led to the commercial success of Walmart and Sam's Club. High expectations were set for all students to be proficient by 2014. The framework for leveraging this ambitious accomplishment was for states to set content and instructional standards.

Content Standards. All states accepting federal Title I funds were required to develop their own challenging content standards in reading/language arts and math. These standards would be aligned with the state assessments that would be used to determine AYP. The standards were considered to be applicable for all students, including individuals with disabilities. In doing so, this set high expectations for all students. The logic is that high standards and goals would yield positive outcomes for America's students. It is noteworthy that no national standards were set, so an element of self-determination was present for decision makers in each state.

Standards were expected to drive classroom instruction in the areas of reading/language arts and math content. A standard would indicate what students were expected to know and be able to do. These standards were intended to direct classroom instruction toward more advanced skills. With the annual assessments it could be determined the extent of proficiency: basic, proficient or advanced.

With a clear and unwavering expectation of academic progress for individuals within each subgroup the school districts would be held accountable for the progress of students with IEPs and those students without IEPs. The implications are important. This compelled school leaders to focus on the results in special education programs and programs for English Language Learners. Attention to teaching and learning took on new significance. If the school were a boat taking on water, what would matter most would be to make repairs, which would mean providing more instruction to struggling learners.

Instructional Practices. In addition to the content standards, NCLB stated that schools would use programs and instructional methods with a foundation of scientifically based research. The expectation is that the research would indicate that the results could be replicated. Therefore there was reason for confidence in the program or practice. NCLB states that a foundation of research supporting instruction is defined as:

"research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs."

Clearly, this definition of scientifically based research rules out approaches and products promoted based primarily on qualitative research such as case studies, hearsay, teacher opinion or preference, and simple action research.

Teacher Qualifications. NCLB required states to set standards that defined highly qualified teachers. This was a comprehensive expectation for all teachers, including those who were working with students with disabilities and English Language Learners. Researchers associated with the Rand Corporation and the American Institutes for Research inspected how well this requirement was



Qualified Teacher with Students

being met using data through 2004-05. This revealed that special education and ELL teachers, and those teaching minority students, were more likely to be

unqualified compared with grade level teachers. Also, high poverty schools have more teachers who did not meet the standard. NCLB required schools to inform parents if teachers did not meet the highly qualified requirements. Funds were available in NCLB for states to recruit and train teachers.

Collectively, high expectations for learners in the content areas of the general education curriculum, and highly qualified teachers, were expected to yield enhanced achievement results.

Consequences of Insubstantial Educational Progress. Districts and individual schools were required to annually report information about the achievement of the total group and the subgroups to the State Department of Education and their community. Student learning is judged in relationship to the expectation established by each state department of education. The performance measures are the increased level of gain called the annual yearly progress (AYP). The performance measures were statewide tests. In Iowa, this was the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and Iowa Test of Educational Development. The achievement results are used across time to make judgments about students' progress. The results are intended to be informative about student learning and guide changes in instruction when subgroups need additional help. The practice is considered as the school's report card, which must be reported to the public annually.

If improvement did not occur on an annual basis, there was a series of consequences for those educational entities. Substantially low scores, meaning failure to meet AYP, indicated the school was not closing the gap. The consequences called for specific changes to improve students' educational outcomes. The changes gave parents' options of school choice and educators options of various actions to improve teaching and learning. Across time the severity of the actions become progressively more intrusive.

After two consecutive years with low rates of progress: Schools were designated as a School in Need of Assistance (SINA) by the state DE. The school must develop and implement an improvement plan in areas of low achievement and notify parents of the schools status.

After three consecutive years with low rates of progress: Continue to implement the improvement plan. Notify parents of school choice option,

which meant students could change schools within the district. The school was to be provided with technical assistance such as staff development and skills in data analysis.

After four consecutive years with low rates of progress: Notify parents and continue school choice. Further, schools must offer supplemental education and tutoring for groups of students who were low achievers. Providers must have demonstrated a record of success. These services are paid out the school's Title I funding.

After five consecutive years with low rates of progress: Technical assistance, supplemental services and parent choice continues. These schools were required to take corrective actions in at least one area such as replace staff, new curriculum, or secure outside expertise as an advisor.

After six consecutive years with low rates of progress: Technical assistance, supplemental services and parent choice continues. Implement a corrective action plan with at least one option— close the school and transform it into a charter school, replace staff and the administrator, or let the state run the operation.

The accountability practices in NCLB had mixed reactions in the educational community. Proponents for rigorous expectations and performance assessment viewed the framework of multi-year sanctions as necessary to ensure all students were making progress. For the creators of the legislation, this was considered an incentive that would unify the system to inspection and improve the linkages between the curriculum sequence, teaching practices, student outcomes, staff developments and administrative support. Opponents of the accountability practices held that statewide tests were not the best mechanism for judging student learning, sanctions were punitive and divisive within the school community.

IDEA 2004

The general pattern is that IDEA had been on a five-year cycle for reauthorization. As stated earlier, The Education of All Handicapped Act (EHA) was passed in 1975, then amended in 1983, and 1986. The legislation was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) when it was reauthorized in 1990. Reauthorization occurred again in 1997 and 2004. When IDEA was reauthorized in 2004 it was aligned with the concepts in NCLB. The administrative rules for IDEA were finalized in 2006. When a law is reauthorized it is an opportunity to make improvement in the legal framework. In this section four enhancements in IDEA 2004 will be briefly considered: methods of identifying children with learning disabilities, changes in IEP practices, transition, and teacher quality expectations.

In preparation for the reauthorization of IDEA, George W. Bush established the President's Commission for Excellence in 2002. The Commission was chaired by Iowa's Governor Terry Branstad. Hearings were held across the nation to receive input about how services for children with disabilities and their families could be improved. The effort resulted in 33 recommendations. Our purpose is not to detail the Commission's findings, rather to identify major themes that were subsequently amplified in the reauthorization process. Three overall concepts

emerged. First, there needed to be a shift from process to results occurring from special education assistance. Next, there needed to be heightened effort aimed at prevention rather than a model of failure as the entry point into special education services. Lastly, there is an emphasis on children with disabilities as being a general education student first. Iowans can be proud of Terry Branstad's responsibility with the Commission, his efforts on behalf of children with disabilities and the Commission's contribution to reframing of IDEA 2004.



Gov. Terry Branstad

Other enhancements in the legislation included the addition of Tourette Syndrome in the category of other health impaired, interpretative services and nursing were added to the related services, changes in the manifestation determination for student with behavior challenges, and an initial comprehensive evaluation must occur within 60 days of a signed parental request. Additionally, IDEA and NCLB assessment and reporting requirements were aligned by design.

Identifying Learning Disabilities. Nationally, and in Iowa, learning disabilities (LD) is the largest single category of students with disabilities, accounting for approximately half of students with IEPs. Historically, one central aspect in the identification process was the IQ-Achievement Discrepancy comparison. The past assumption was that a significant discrepancy between the individual's achievement, measured by achievement tests, and the individual's potential, measured by an intelligence test, was crucial evidence for the identification of LD when the discrepancy was significant. The difficulty with this approach is that many children with low achievement performance may be victims of an inadequate curriculum, poor instruction, or a lack of any focused effort to improve their learning. Additionally, when school districts used the IQ-achievement discrepancy procedure, individuals who did not qualify for special education services usually did not receive enhanced classroom instruction. This became known as the wait-to-fail practice, meaning that the student would probably qualify later when one's achievement continued to decline. A change was needed. Congress offered school districts flexibility in the diagnostic determination by saying, explicitly in the IDEA 2004 (Section 1414, subsection b(6), [cited as 20 USC 1414(b)(6)]):

(6) Specific Learning Disabilities.

(A) In General . . . When determining whether a child has a specific learning disability as defined in Section 1401 of this title, a local educational agency shall not be required to take into consideration whether a child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability in oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skill, reading comprehension, mathematical calculation, or mathematical reasoning.

(B) Additional Authority. In determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, a local educational agency may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures described in paragraphs (2) and (3).

Iowa professionals had a long history with a pragmatic approach beginning with RSDS in the 1980s and 90s. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a broad base effort to support the instruction of all children and determine those who need additional support to achieve in school.

Early Intervening Services (EIS) was emphasized as a way to support learners who needed additional assistance to benefit from schooling. This is prevention and focused primarily on grades K through 3. EIS is an alternative to the wait-to-fail approach of the past when a struggling learner did not qualify for special education support, until failure became chronic and harder to remediate. The early intervening provisions allow up to 15% of a district's IDEA funds to be directed to EIS.

IEP Practices. In 2004, flexibility was added to the IEP process so that team members would not be required to attend IEP meetings when their services were not part of the IEP plan being modified. Written information would be shared prior to the meeting to aid in this determination. The excusal from the IEP planning activities would require agreement by parents and school officials. Additionally, provisions were made for not holding a formal IEP meeting if the parents and school agreed on changes in an IEP. The IEP team members would be informed of changes made if a formal meeting was not held.

The IEP is based on the child's strengths, parental concerns, and evaluation of the child's progress in the general education curriculum. IEP content includes annual goals, a statement of educational progress, plans for instructional and related services, accommodations and whether an individual would take an alternate assessment, and transition plans for those individuals starting at age 16. In Iowa the age was determined to be age 14 to allow adequate time to focus on transition planning and preparation.

When students transfer to another district either in or out of state, the IEP is to be part of the transfer process. A receiving district could develop a new IEP or work with the existing plan.

Transition Requirements. Transition planning was required to occur by the time the student reached 16, age 14 in Iowa. Further, interagency resources would be identified that aligned with the student's aspirations after completing the high school program. Vocational Rehabilitation was expected to become involved in the IEP planning process and the consideration of post high school activities if necessary.

Teacher Quality Requirements. New qualifications were established for special education teachers to meet the state's standards for being highly qualified in core academic areas when providing instruction unless team teaching with a general education teacher. The provisions in NCLB were re-emphasized in IDEA 2004.

- ▶ Roxanne Cumings, Executive Director of Student Services in a suburban district, said the teacher quality requirements were a positive step to ensuring highly qualified teachers were working with some of the most needy students in Iowa schools. In special education this legislation made sure that teachers had the certification and training to work with the children on their roster. Licensure requirements helped administrators hold teachers accountable for appropriate professional development and training. The licensure changes provided needed quality control, but did present difficulty for some districts to attract and maintain appropriately licensed staff.

The highly qualified teacher standards were proposed as a vehicle for improving outcomes for students receiving special education assistance.

Outcome Focus of Special Education

Two major sources of federal legislation with reporting requirements that impact Iowa's special education program are NCLB and IDEA. There are two dimensions of special education outcomes, those at the systems level and individual student level.

Special Education: System Outcomes. In some ways it could be said that it is an unnatural division to cleave up education into parts such as general and special education although there are certainly clear advantages. The upside of a distinctive special education effort is it allows an emphasis on unique expectations for learners with disabilities that are distinctive from those in general education. The downside is that people with disabilities may be perceived as separate, as apart from the whole, rather than included in the whole. It is a fine line. Iowans have been on this tightrope for decades, balancing the weight and importance when emphasizing the individuals' uniqueness or when to emphasize the wholeness of humanity.

As we have seen, NCLB mandated a significant shift in focus and accountability requirements on all levels of the nation's schools. Achievement was assessed annually for all students with an expectation of everyone being proficient in reading and math achievement by 2014. IDEA followed this pattern of articulating federal expectations. While there is merit in having high expectations, there is also the need for a modicum of realism. There is reason for seeing humor in Garrison Keillor's description of the fictitious town of Lake Wobegon, "Where all the women are strong, all men are good looking, and all children are above average." There would likely be agreement that when one sets expectations low that will be met and that is unacceptable. It is desirable, however, to have expectations that extend every learners' competence, maximize their capabilities and provide a foundation for living and learning.

When IDEA passed in 1975 (then called the Education For All Handicapped Children Act) the initial priority was to identify children with disabilities, the provision of services, and ensuring due process rights and safeguards. Later, in the reauthorization of IDEA in 1994, 1997 and 2004, the expectations shifted the focus to include determining individual outcomes and system level accountability resulting from providing special education assistance.

IDEA 2004 Reporting Requirements. The federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has a common set of indicators for all state education agencies. The indicators allow comparison across states. Each state is required to develop policies and data collected as evidence of their effectiveness in implementing IDEA. By and large that is a worthy expectation. The purpose is to make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth with disabilities. Ensuring that these outcomes are happening is important.



Iowa Reports Annually to OSEP

Annual reports are developed and sent to OSEP and made available to the public. Current and past reports are on the Iowa DE website, thus accessible by the public on the Internet.

The point is to show what information is collected and can help every state improve its system of service.

Consider this illustration of LRE results. The following data is an index of students' experience to the extent to which individuals with IEPs are educated in general education classrooms with peers. The Iowa DE systematically collects information about the level of LRE for all students with IEPs, as shown in the following table, which provides a comparison for Iowa students and United States as a whole.

IDEA LRE Placement Categories and Common Names (U.S. DOE Report to Congress on Implementation of IDEA (2015, 37th Annual Report))

Common Name	IDEA Description of Placement Options	Iowa % in Placement	US % in Placement
General Education	Participation in the General Education Classroom for $\geq 80\%$ of the School Day	64.5%	62.1%
Resource Teaching Program	Participation in the General Education Classroom for 40% to 79% of the School Day	23.8%	19.2%
Special Class	Participation in the General Education Classroom $< 40\%$ of the School Day	8.4%	13.7%
Separate Programs*	Programs located in separate settings involving very little or no involvement with general education classrooms or nondisabled peers	3.3%	5.1%

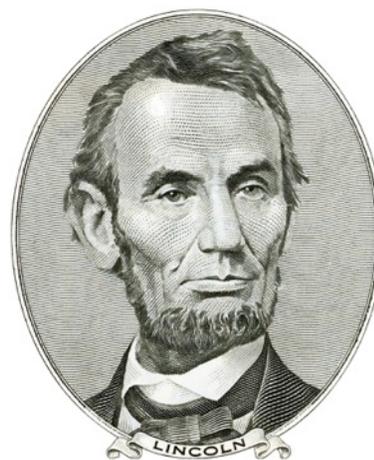
- Note: The LRE category of separate programs includes several OSEP categories involving separate settings within a school district, out-of-district placements, parentally placed students in private schools and homebound programs.

All states are required to submit a state plan that is reviewed by the federal Office of Special Education to ensure it meets expectations. This is intended to ensure the state's policy adherence to the expectations of IDEA when provided to children with disabilities and their families. The state plan includes the following 23 indicators.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 01. Free Appropriate Public Education | 14. Performance Goals and Indicators |
| 02. Full Educational Opportunity Goal | 15. Participation in Assessments |
| 03. Child Find | 16. Prohibition Against Commingling |
| 04. Individual Education Program | 17. Maintenance of State Financial Support |
| 05. Least Restrictive Environment | 18. Public Participation |
| 06. Procedural Safeguards | 19. State-Level Nonsupplanting |
| 07. Evaluation | 20. State Advisory Panel |
| 08. Confidentiality | 21. Suspension and Expulsion Rates |
| 09. Transition From Part C to Part B | 22. Access to Instructional Materials |
| 10. Private Schools | 23. Prohibition Against Mandatory Medication |
| 11. Methods of Ensuring Services | |
| 12. Local Education Agency Eligibility | |
| 13. Personnel Qualifications | |

The results are used by OSEP as an indicator of attaining the LRE goals of IDEA. These data show that Iowa students with disabilities are involved in general education classrooms, with the provision of supplementary aids and services, with peers at a higher rate than the national average. Further, when combining services that are provided for students with disabilities in separate settings within a school district or separate schools, residential setting, correctional facilities, and homebound programs outside the district, Iowa has a favorable rate compared to the national average. Thus, overall, the findings indicate that Iowa, as a whole, is providing special education in a manner supportive of the LRE concept. The federal, state and local school systems were becoming more data driven.

The Special Education Advisory Panel. For some people, hearing opinions or perspectives that are inconsistent with the way they view life can be uncomfortable and unwelcomed. That is not always the case. In fact, diversity of perspectives can be an asset. That was the position of Abraham Lincoln when he was elected president in 1860. The book, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*, by Doris Kearns Goodwin, describes how the newly elected president formed his cabinet with individuals whose opinions represented diverse viewpoints. Some of these cabinet members had been opponents during his election. When a leader is strong and can maximize the benefits of considering options and alternatives to established thinking then the process of governance is significantly enhanced. Lana Michelson applied this same strength of character and political savvy in her work with the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP).



President Lincoln

In brief, the SEAP is a required component for states receiving federal dollars designated for special education services. The SEAP is intended to ensure that each state receives adequate input from constituents regarding special education. The SEAP has functions and duties specified in IDEA. The responsibilities include offering advice, consultation, and recommendations to the Iowa DE regarding matters concerning special education services. Membership of the Panel is required to consist of representatives from public and private sectors who by virtue of their position, interest, and training can contribute to the education of children with disabilities. A

majority (51%) of the members of the Panel must be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities. Iowa has a rich tradition of including members who each have a circle of influence in the special education community. Members included representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation, Parent Educator Connection, ASK Resource, Disabilities Rights Iowa, Department of Corrections, and others.

IDEA was reauthorized in 2004, and with it came a substantial change from a focus on identification, to accountability and transparency. Lana Michelson as the State director of special education took this important change seriously. She both appreciated and capitalized on the diverse backgrounds and perspectives on the SEAP and brought indicator data to the panel and asked them to help think through realistic goals the state should consider. Some leaders might be hesitant to present both positive and negative data sets to advisory groups, but not Lana. She understood the value in having fully informed constituents, and just as importantly, she knew to listen to their input. It is easy to justify or make excuses why unflattering data should not be taken seriously. But that approach helps no one. Lana is disarmingly straightforward and transparent. She proudly states that we have nothing to hide. Lana believes in tacking problems head on, not wasting time appreciating how difficult the problem is. It's one thing to talk about data, and quite a different discussion to talk about really providing enhanced benefits to individuals with disability by using the data to direct and change services.

- ▶ Lana described how refreshing it is to have members who have a business background or some other quite different perspectives to offer. There were parents of individuals with disabilities on the panel that would state that this specific piece of data was important, but this piece was not. This perspective could be different than what educators thought, and that was good to know. Lana discussed how having members from the Iowa Department of Corrections and Homestead (a treatment facility for individuals with autism) helped coordinate services between those institutions and educational agencies. She also discussed how having a member from a faith-based educational entity brought information to SEAP and back to the faith-based schools. By engaging the SEAP in meaningful data-based discussions the panel became empowered to question and make thoughtful recommendations. Lana said if you ask for input, you better be prepared to listen. Even DE staff took notice of the higher level of input provided by SEAP. Lana said that some of the most enjoyable times in SEAP were when a panel member would be energized to lead a conversation. Lana gave great credit to Eric Neessen for his efforts in facilitating SEAP membership diversity and managing meeting logistics.

Dennis Dykstra, an administrative consultant, assisted Lana with helping SEAP members understand what the data represented and what the federal government wanted in terms of data driven goal setting. With the input of SEAP, Lana and Dennis would take the recommendations back to the Iowa DE. The information would go to the SEAP prior to submitting it to the federal authorities responsible for monitoring IDEA.

- ▶ Dennis conveyed how effective Lana Michelson was in engaging SEAP members in an informed conversation. He talked of the great discourse SEAP was able to have because of the team building Lana had generated. Getting everyone on the same team, appreciating and

celebrating differences of opinion, is no small accomplishment and a real tribute to Lana's leadership style. Dennis said meetings were very interactive and members did not want to miss a meeting because they were that productive.

Lana Michelson and Abraham Lincoln may not look alike, but they share a common perspective about diversity being strength, not a weakness. The important point is that Iowa leaders are serious about asking, securing, and using the input of the membership of the SEAP in important goal setting for future special education services. The check-and-balance that SEAP represents is highly valued in Iowa.

Special Education: Individual Outcomes. One of the purposes of IDEA 2004 states, "To assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities." The meaning and methods of assessing effectiveness of effort has been systematically strengthened across the years. Ending special education services can be viewed in two ways: by exiting students with IEPs from special education services during their school years and exiting at the time of graduation.

Exiting with IEP Completion. Rio de Janeiro is the site of the summer Olympics in 2016 and in 2012 the Olympics were in London. Gold medals are the symbols of success for the world's best. In special education exiting is a culminating event. While there are no gold medals in special education, except in the Special Olympics, there are existing celebrations. Exiting special education occurs when students have made significant improvements and no longer require specially designed instruction. Goal completion is generally a function of highly competent instruction with a well-designed IEP, student effort, and family support. Exiting special education is a mark of distinction and indicators of success for both students and professionals.



Olympic Flame

In the first five years after the passage of PL 94-142 the primary focus of system activity was on access to services by finding the underserved students and establishing instructional programs. This practice was commonly called "Child Find." There was little attention to the concept of exiting. Nationally there were many children who had been denied educational services and in 1975 the guaranteed opportunity of a public school education was a reality. The emphasis was on the entrance door rather than the exit door. In Iowa the number of children identified with disabilities in special education instructional programs increased dramatically from 1975 to 2000.

There are provisions for exiting special education services, either in a single goal area or concluding all programs and services. Speech-language pathologists are most familiar with the practice of exiting students. For example, if a student has difficulty with the articulation of R's or the Wh sounds, and learns to adequately articulate these sounds through effective SLP services, services can be terminated. It is a time of celebration for students, parents and professionals.

- ▶ Alyson Halley, Speech-Language Pathologist, evaluated a boy we will call Brad who was under three years of age and exhibited a speaking

vocabulary of zero words, yet appeared to have no intellectual disability. He would cry, point, grunt and display a temper tantrum that would meet all his wants and needs. Brad had been evaluated by a Speech-Language Pathologist outside the school system and diagnosed with Childhood Apraxia of Speech. There is no cure for real apraxia of speech, but with many years of therapy a person can make some slow and steady improvements. This disorder is often highly overdiagnosed, but is actually a disability of very low incidence in the population. After Alyson worked with Brad in his home he had accumulated about 40 signs before age three, but zero verbal words. At age three he was evaluated and encouraged to come to preschool. Within six months of school he was age appropriate in all areas of language and communication. He was verbally expressing himself in clear 3-4 word sentences and communicating all his wants and needs verbally, and was dismissed from communication services. Brad's behavior also got remarkably better. He was dismissed from all special education services in his first year of school. This was a great success story and a reason to celebrate.

Students may improve significantly in one goal area but still continue to receive instructional interventions in other goal areas. There may come a time when the question is, when are such programs and services unnecessary? The provision of a 45-day trial out was established in Iowa to ensure exiting decisions would be made with confidence.

Throughout life the decision-making process is naturally used. Consider this situation. When children are learning to ride bicycles a child commonly begins with training wheels for safety's sake. After practice, growth and the acquisition of balancing skills there comes a time when those supports are not required, and in fact the continued use of training wheels may limit independence. The same holds true with the IEP assistance. The time may come to withdraw supports to enhance and autonomy.



Learning to be Independent

There are several steps in the process of determining if a student can successfully function in the general education environment without special education assistance. An IEP team may plan a 45-day trial out period where the student's performance is monitored to determine if he or she can function in the general education program with supports normally provided by teachers and other school staff. This is tantamount to taking off the training wheels. Below is another story about exiting special education services.

- ▶ Nicole Ryan, a physical therapist, was working with a young man we will call Earl who had the medical condition of osteogenesis imperfecta, commonly called brittle bone disease. To alleviate concerns about any potential accidents at school, a full-time special education associate had been assigned to Earl for his protection and safety. Although the associate kept Earl safe from falling or any incidence of bone infractions, this also significantly limited social interactions with peers. In late elementary school years it was considered to be time for the associate to disengage and maximize Earl's independent functioning. A

45-day trial was used to gather information about the effects of such a move. The findings were: increased social interactions with peers, he arrived at all classes and for the bus on time, and there were no falls or broken bones. In short, it was a success. Increased independence was achieved and friendships flourished without the presence of the special education aide. Consequently the IEP team's decision was affirmed and the services of the associate were discontinued. A 504 Plan was established and Earl formally exited special education. An Olympic medal could be given to everyone involved.

As in this example, IEP teams are thoughtful in adding and deleting special education programs and services. These are important decisions.

Preparation for Post-High School Opportunities. Some Iowa students have IEPs and do not need assistance after high school; others require support throughout their post-high school academic and working career. These individuals may graduate from high school with a diploma or certificate based on completion of their IEP. There is a full section about transition in this document, the focus here is on graduation.

Depending on a family's location and student's need, various alternatives may occur during the school year when preparing for post-high school life. The purpose is to provide practical learning that advances the individual's career expectations and prepare one for maximum independence. Program choices include (a) vocational education programs, (b) community-based instruction, (c) work study programs and (c) college bound preparation. The appropriateness of choices are determined by an IEP team including the family in the decision-making process.

Vocational education courses may be provided within the scope of a high school's curriculum with content such as industrial technology (carpentry and metal working, auto care, etc.), family consumer science (food preparation, clothing, etc.) as well as academics and for others, a rigorous college preparation. Such experiences are foundational to functioning in an occupation where trade skills are needed.

Typically, school staff supervise students when they are working in a community based program. Learning on the job is a bridge between the classrooms and the work environment. Some essential job related experiences, such as teamwork, are not accessible by books alone. Student learning in the classroom can enhance general skill development, such as math skills. However, applied work experiences are specific applications of those skills in tasks such as making change.

A community work site provides valuable experience with hands-on learning. There is no substitute for applied practice. Sometimes worksites are in existing businesses in the community, sometimes worksites are a matter of imagination and creativity. Sue Hoss and Melinda Collins provided the following story.



- ▶ The Plymouth Grounds Coffee Shop is the site where some students with significant intellectual disabilities have the opportunity to be a barista. A definition of this term is: *a person whose job involves preparing and serving different types of coffee*. The students experience this work, and so much more. Each semester 3 or 4 individuals with disabilities work in the coffee shop. The Coffee Shop's sign says, "We're brewing more than just coffee!" How true. It is an applied learning experience where individuals acquire skills and attitudes necessary for success as adults in other work sites. The students learn social skills (serving the public), operating machinery (proper procedures, sequence of activities and safety), cooking (reading recipes and measuring ingredients for preparing food), running a cash register and making change (applied math), and the responsibility for carrying out their tasks with significant degrees of independence, and in a teamwork situation.

Melinda Collins saw that Plymouth Church had a facility with equipment, and the church was willing to provide opportunities for young people. Melinda knew about the importance of work experience and transition from her career of 30+ years in special education at Ruby Van Meter School. Sue Hoss had an extraordinary skill set in the science and preparation of foods and management of personnel. These two professionals combined their energy, imagination and compassion to provide learning opportunities for young people with disabilities. The Coffee Shop uses 6 to 9 adult volunteers each week. Melinda said, over the past 4 years, the individuals who worked as baristas in the Plymouth Coffee Shop have a 60-70% record of securing jobs with pay after leaving school. That is a remarkable record.

College experience offers a range of supports for individuals with disabilities. Iowa's community colleges and universities commonly have a person with a designated responsibility for coordination of activities for students with disabilities. These duties involve admission, screening, and arrangements for accommodations. Mary Watkins told this story about Lindsey's job exploration.

- ▶ Mary said that having the opportunities to explore different kinds of jobs in High School was one of the most important aspects of her daughter, Lindsey's education. Mary reported that Lindsey had two remarkable teachers who worked to get Lindsey out in the community to experience a variety of jobs so she could discover what she liked and didn't like to do. Lindsey didn't really enjoy the academic aspect of school but did like structured and repetitive work tasks.

Lindsey worked at Bishop Drum Retirement Center folding towels in the beauty parlor. She really liked folding, and then worked at a Micro Hotel laundry also folding towels. They explored having Lindsey stationed in the fitness area to fold towels and clean equipment, but Lindsey did not enjoy cleaning. Part of education for everyone is learning what you like, and what you don't like.

At home, Mary enjoyed gardening so she included Lindsey in her work. She and Lindsey would plant flowers and then Lindsey would go back later and pull them up. They successfully discovered Lindsey didn't like

gardening. Lindsey also worked at a bank to experience an office environment where she folded bank statements. She then worked at an AEA as a PEC volunteer to put packets together and assemble folders. Mary credits Wendy Robinson with discovering that, although Lindsey cannot read, she can appropriately read labels and re-file DVDs in the proper place even without the picture. On a reading assessment Lindsey cannot read, but when she can do a task that requires structure and repetition she can do it well.

The important point here is that Lindsey had a variety of work experiences while in high school to help winnow down what she was good at and liked to do. Everyone needs to find his or her niche in life, and that's what Lindsey was able to do.

After graduation the process of education and job exploration continues. Ongoing guidance and support is important for young adults, as reflected in this story by Mary Watkins.

- ▶ After graduating from high school Lindsey had a couple of enclave experiences. The first was sorting bills for Medicaid. Mary said this type of work environment is so good for people with a disability. In this office setting there were around 20 people like Lindsey with a supervisor. They sit four to a table with nondisabled workers nearby. The nondisabled workers were not at the same tables, but were in the same work area. Lindsey's workmates did eat in the same lunchroom, etc. This was an inclusive environment, which was unusual for that time. The people in the enclave were invited to office parties and shared in celebrations. Lindsey's second enclave experience was less positive because it was organized like a sheltered workshop without nondisabled workers to interact with. The enclave format has largely diminished in Iowa because workers were paid so little it was seen as exploitation and discrimination.

Lindsey currently has two jobs that she has held for seven years. She works at McAninch where she tri-folds paychecks to insert into envelopes and shreds documents. She has a job coach. Lindsey's other job is with a small company that makes magnetic pet doors. Lindsey stuffs parts bags with the small pieces that are used to assemble the doors. She has a job coach for this work as well.

Lindsey loves her work, and the structure of her day. She comes home proud of the contribution she is making.

Special education may result in students exiting in a goal area during the school years, as in the example of speech-language service, or students may receive assistance throughout their school career and prepare for work after completing high school. Both outcomes are valued. These are shining illustrations of what the special education system was intended to do for Iowa children.

Physical Well-Being

America seemingly has an affection for measuring fitness. Sport watches, pedometers and devices that translate activity into calories burned and heartbeats per minute have a growing popularity. Apple introduced a new watch that can monitor heart rate, assess calories expended and even tells the time. Garmin, Samsung and Fitbits also have their devices for assessing activity levels. Once tennis shoes were worn when people played tennis and gym shoes were for the gym class. No more. They are commonly seen as footwear for all ages in the warm months. The jogging craze that began in the 1970s is still going strong. First Lady Michelle Obama is a strong advocate for fitness and healthy living and launched the "Let's Move!" initiative to address childhood obesity. It all adds up to an appreciation of movement in America.



Fitness and Exercise

Most children and youth are blessed with the ability to move freely, unencumbered by physical limitations. What if that were not the case for you? The process of navigating between classes in school and getting around in the community would be thwarted. Likewise, participating in physical education classes and school sporting activities would be a challenge for individuals with sensory loss, physical disabilities or health challenges unless there was a focus on inclusion in education.

IDEA, in its first legislative form the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, required consideration of physical education and adaptations that would allow participation in school activities. It is, simply, a major part of one's physical well-being. Just as audiologists and speech-language pathologists have a unique skillset and knowledge base, likewise adaptive physical education professionals are needed to assist students with disabilities in benefiting from physical activity in schools.

Adapted Physical Education. Adapted Physical Education (APE) professionals are dedicated to enhancing the involvement of individuals with disabilities in physical activities. This includes engagement of all children in PE and recess to enhance social and physical benefits. Excluding children from such activities denies these benefits. Children can be included with supplementary aids and services or through adapted physical education.

IDEA identifies physical education in section §300.39 as a part of defining the term "individual special education". This clearly gives importance to physical education, which includes provision for adapted physical education.

Individual special education terms defined. The terms in this definition are defined as follows:

(1) *At no cost* means that all specially-designed instruction is provided without charge, but does not preclude incidental fees that are normally charged to nondisabled students or their parents as a part of the regular education program.

(2) *Physical education* means—

(i) The development of—

(A) Physical and motor fitness;

(B) Fundamental motor skills and patterns; and

- (C) Skills in aquatics, dance, and individual and group games and sports (including intramural and lifetime sports); and
- (ii) Includes special physical education, adapted physical education, movement education, and motor development.

In writing an IEP, consideration is focused on a child's unique needs in the least restrictive environment for participation. The numbers of APE professionals in Iowa have declined over the years. Robin Olberding is an Adapted PE consultant employed by an AEA. She consults with PE teachers across the AEA to provide assistance on: adapted physical education plans for individuals and groups, modified physical education equipment to permit individuals to participate in activities, and promoting events such as Hot Shot Basketball events, Peer Partners, and track and field events for special needs children and youth.

For over 25 years an AEA has co-sponsored the Track and Field Day at Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa. Typically 500 special needs students participate in this event annually.

- ▶ Robin Olberding noted that the benefits from Track and Field Day are many. Special education teachers see their students with colleagues from other districts. Teachers can see their students' strengths and challenges in a totally different way outside the classroom. The students and faculty from the college also benefit by supporting youth engaged in these activities. There is an overwhelming joy expressed by the young people participating in sporting events. There is equal enthusiasm from their parents.

Specialized Sporting Activities. Shoeless Joe Jackson asked a question, "Is this Heaven?" The answer, "No, this is Iowa." Those are memorable lines from the iconic film, *Field of Dreams*. The movie features a farm home near Dyersville, Iowa and a cornfield transformed into a baseball diamond. Participating in sports is part of the dream many parents have for their children, with and without disabilities. At one time it would have been a dream denied for many persons with disabilities to be engaged in sporting events. Those times have changed through the remarkable efforts of many who have worked to provide options in sporting activities for individuals with disabilities.



Iowa Baseball—Field of Dream

Eunice Shriver is the founder of the Special Olympics. It began in the 1960s with a day camp to provide physical activities for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The effort morphed into Special Olympics and provides opportunities for special needs populations in 170 countries and over 4.4 million athletes worldwide.

The Iowa Special Olympics is an annual event. Many youth with disabilities from across the state participate in this experience. Jerry Caster, who was principal at Ruby Van Meter School, told this story.

- ▶ The school district sends a bus of youth to Ames to be a part of the Iowa Special Olympics. It is a amazing experience for these young athletes when they compete on the field and exert their best effort. This is an activity many have witnessed in their family where brothers and sisters may have been part of a team in high school. This time they are on the field and their family is cheering for them. A proud moment for everyone. Smiles abound. Additionally, this group stays overnight in a hotel with classmates. Another first for many. It is part of the process of extending boundaries and discovering the freedom of taking responsibility. The school staff and volunteer parent group provide supervision to ensure safety while affording the opportunity for individuals to experience the self-sufficiency of the moment. This is a time of personal growth, which is the point of schooling as one moves towards the competencies needed in adulthood.

There are a variety of ways to be actively engaged in sports that enhance one’s physical well-being. Of course watching sports on TV is one method of involvement but that would not improve anyone’s cardiovascular system. Being active calls for movement. Mary Watkins conveyed the excitement and benefits of specialize sports for her daughter.

- ▶ Lindsey was in Special Olympics one year as a cheerleader. Lindsey was a cheerleader for the Special Olympics team in high school and also participated in a local cheering squad in competitions after high school. The joy of participation was abundant for athletes on the stage, cheerleaders on the sidelines and fans in the stands. There is a place for everyone to enjoy various roles. As a parent, Mary said, you could see smiles on the faces of everyone. That matters.

There are multiple sporting venues across Iowa. These include opportunities for children and youth to be involved in activities at different times in the year. These are a sample of organized activities in Iowa for special needs children: Courage League Sports, Ballet—dance without limits, Challenger League, Easter Seals Camp Sunnyside, Kiwanis Miracle Leagues, Camp High Hopes and Adaptive Sports Iowa. While the focus here is about special education, some of these venues offer activities for adults with disabilities as well. The point is to get moving.



The important work of APE professionals like Robin Olberding in the AEAs, physical education teachers in local school districts, and community members supporting organizations that engage youth with special needs is commendable. Parents and coaches foster skill development and attitudes necessary for success. Life lessons can be learned from sports. Sports and physical activities allow for the cultivation of an understanding of teamwork, resilience to keep going after the inevitable errors

occur, persistence in pushing limits and, most importantly, enjoying the happiness that is inherent in physical activities and team sports. These attributes transfer to adulthood. These are lifelong skills. As parents, teachers, employers and community members we want this for all of our children and youth and eventually for our employees in the Iowa workforce.

Defining Student Learning Expectations Across All Grade Levels

There is often tension between, on one hand, ensuring that special education services are uniquely tailored to individuals' needs and, on the other hand, making the experience consistent with the overall direction of the educational expectations for all children in a school district. The Iowa Core is a way to bring both hands together in working towards a shared purpose with a common direction.

Brad Niebling and Sarah Brown, at the Iowa DE, said the Iowa Core standards defines what Kindergarten through 12th grade students are expected to know and be able to do as a result of their educational experience in Iowa schools in five subject areas: Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and 21st Century Skills. The words "standards" and "expectations" are used interchangeably to mean the expected performance or knowledge of an individual throughout one's schooling. The Iowa Core provides three major benefits: First, the articulation of expectations provides a consistent framework for teaching a progression of skills. Next, the standards provide a consistent frame of reference for identifying skill deficits and focus instruction for struggling learners. Finally, when students move to another Iowa school district the educational expectations are shared and student learning can continue on the same trajectory. The standards are intended to be rigorous and contribute to the student's preparation for post high school learning or pursuing work. That long-range outcome is applicable to all Iowa students. A brief background on the development of the Iowa Core Standards will be provided, followed by consideration of standards-based education for students with disabilities.



The History of Iowa Core Standards. The journey of the Iowa Core Standards has been one of continuous improvement, while at the same time one met with increased scrutiny. A brief review of this evolution, from both an Iowa and national perspective, helps us understand the role these standards play for all students, including students with disabilities. Given this societal circumstance, a thumbnail sketch of the timeline and rationale for developing state standards will position the Iowa Core Standards in a broader perspective.

In 2006 every state in America had a different set of expectations defining when students were proficient and ready for advancement for the next grade. The following brief chronology for addressing this issue reveals a sustained effort by two very influential national organizations. In 2007 there was general agreement by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) that there could be a better educational outcome nationally by setting common expectations. By 2008 the National Governors Association (NGA) and the CCSSO released a report on benchmarking success for students. In 2009, using a collaborative process, a set of educational standards were developed in the area of English language arts and math. With the support of NGA and CCSSO the standards were completed in 2010 and

called the Common Core State Standards. This was clearly a thoughtful undertaking with substantial agreement across states. However, the Common Core State Standards are a political hot button for some who view government action as encroaching on individual or community rights of self-determination.

The history of the Iowa Core Standards, although it intersects with the history of the Common Core State Standards, actually pre-dates the beginning of the Common Core. The initial development of the Iowa Core Standards began during the 2005-06 school year. Since then, they have been updated multiple times. They started receiving increased attention from the public after the Common Core State Standards in Literacy and Mathematics were incorporated into the Iowa Core Standards. Specifically the Iowa Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in 2010, with some additional standards developed specifically by Iowans for Iowans. Generally speaking, Iowa school districts have seen a benefit in having statewide standards.

Iowa districts began conversations with teachers about how curriculum and instruction would be aligned with the Iowa Core Standards. The Iowa Department of Education established an array of supportive information and websites to assist Iowa educators in this alignment process. The Iowa Core was implemented in high schools during the 2012-13 school year and Kindergarten through 8th grade in 2014-15. The Iowa Core is now applied statewide in all grades.

Iowa Standards in Special Education. Special education includes students with a wide range of skills and abilities.

Brad Niebling explained that early on in the process of implementing the Iowa Core, in 2012, it was stated by the Iowa DE that a single set of standards would be uniformly applied to all Iowa students. This was soon determined to be a decision that required further consideration. Specifically students with significant intellectual disabilities with IEPs are not held accountable to the Iowa Core Standards as written. To aid in the process of developing Iowa Core Standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities, the Iowa DE worked with a national consortium on the development of Dynamic Learning Maps called Essential Elements, a project based at the University of Kansas. The states involved in this undertaking were Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Consider an illustration of the Essential Elements drawn from a second grade reading standard in the Iowa Core and the Essential Elements adaptation of the standard, when applicable, for a student with disabilities.

Second Grade English Language Arts Standards: Reading (Literature)

Iowa Core Grade-Level Standards	Iowa Core Essential Element
Key Ideas and Details	
RL.2.1 Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.	EE.RL.2.1 Answer who and where questions to demonstrate understanding of details in a familiar text.
RL.2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.	EE.RL.2.2 Using details from the text, recount events from familiar stories from diverse cultures.
RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.	EE.RL.2.3 Identify the actions of the characters in a story.
IA.1. Employ the full range of research-based comprehension strategies, including making connections, determining importance, questioning, visualizing, making inferences, summarizing, and monitoring for comprehension.	Not applicable.

The Essential Elements (EE) support the work of special education teachers and the learning of children with significant cognitive disabilities. Decisions about whether or not students with disabilities would focus on the Iowa Core Standards, or the Iowa Core Essential Elements, are made by the IEP teams, ensuring that tailoring individualized instruction is done in a manner that takes into account the learner’s needs. Providing a free and appropriate education requires thoughtful consideration of applicable standards and then tailoring specially designed instruction to ensure benefit for students with a disability.

Changing a statewide educational system to adopt the Iowa Core Standards is a daunting task. Change of this magnitude does not happen quickly. There is the need for professional development for educators, information for parents, curriculum adjustments within districts, political support for funding implementation and informing the public. All of that is underway across Iowa. The detail about the Iowa Core Standards is not as important as the fact that students with disabilities are meaningfully a part of this process. The standards are inclusive and ensure, with the Essential Elements, that specially designed instruction for individuals with significant cognitive disabilities is provided in alignment with the district’s curriculum.

Just as it was determined that adjustments were needed in the standards, in another way, it was judged to be necessary to reduce the number of AEAs and increase the size of AEAs to ensure equitable, economic and efficient delivery of services.

Economy of Scale: AEAs and LEAs

Iowa has evolved from a plethora of one-room schoolhouses and small districts or counties and joint county arrangements to AEAs and local districts of various sizes. This map reveals the latest iteration with nine AEAs. This provides a larger

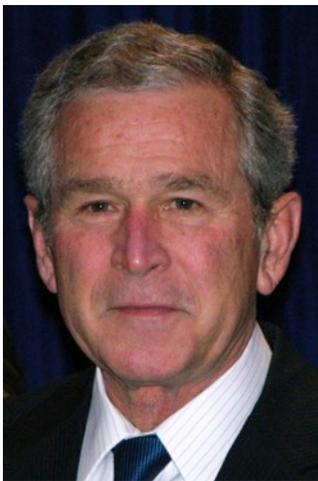
geographic base and presumable economy of scale. With larger territories the structure of governance is regionalized with sectors.



Iowa is a microcosm of the nation in regard to population migration, diversity, and multicultural changes. There has been a dramatic population shift from rural areas to urban and suburban districts. This has created an even greater disparity between the resource rich and resource poor in terms of high school course offerings, technology, social service and medical services and has created a higher demand for AEA services. This has forced many rural school districts with decreasing enrollment to merge with others in similar circumstance, while some suburban school district populations are growing at an ever-increasing rate.

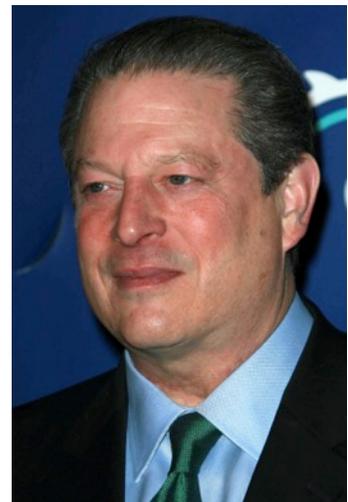
Current Practices of Resolving Disputes

In the Presidential election of 2000 there was uncertainty whether George W. Bush or Al Gore had a majority of Electoral College votes. In the close election, the dispute focused the awarding of votes from Florida. The counts in several Florida counties were contested and litigation calling for a recount was advanced. The concern was



Candidate Bush

whether the voting machines tabulated and reported the findings accurately. The Democratic candidate, Al Gore, called for a manual recount of the votes. The legal system was required to resolve this dispute with a United States Supreme Court opinion on December 12, 2000, which terminated the litigation and recount efforts, thus, in effect, awarding the presidency to George W. Bush. In America there is a concerted effort to provide justice through an orderly process where differences of opinions can be considered and



Candidate Gore

conclusions drawn. Due process is a valued component at all levels of the American system and can be applied to determination about the presidency and special education.

The topic of dispute Resolution and Parent Advocacy was addressed in the Decade of the 1990s. We pick up that discussion again in 2015. Thomas Mayes is an attorney for the Iowa DE with special education as one of his major responsibilities. Thomas is involved with all aspects of ensuring that Iowa special education practices are in alignment with federal law and regulations, and he provides administrative oversight for resolving disputes at the state level. This includes administration of the state contracted special education mediators, administrative law judges, state complaints, and the practices associated with resolving conflicts at the lowest level possible. Thomas states that many of the issues that may have gone to mediation in the past are now successfully resolved at a much earlier stage due to the high level skills of special education and general education teachers. In addition, attorneys representing parents with special education concerns and attorneys representing LEAs and AEA's are good at working through disputes and reaching satisfactory accord without going through the formal mediation process. Consequently, the differences of opinion that reach mediation now are more complex. The special education issues are multifaceted because society and culture have become increasingly more multidimensional. One reflection of complexity is the amount of time required to resolve disputes. Where mediations in the past could be settled successfully in two to three hours, they can now take an entire day or multiple days to negotiate. Many of the issues are in areas that have not been specifically or fully addressed in the past. This includes evolving topics like secondary transition, autism and intellectual giftedness, special education eligibility for English Language Learners, and parents wanting special education labels to access services outside the school setting.

Disability Rights IOWA (DRI) works to defend and promote the human and legal rights of Iowans who have disabilities and mental illness. Nathan Kirstein is an attorney with DRI and said that a great deal of DRI's work is leveling the playing field for parent and students, and ensuring that organizations and institutions adhere to all applicable laws and regulations. Current and emerging issues include a preponderance of issues around challenging behavior and mental health, and how these are addressed for successful transitions to adult life. Challenging behavior and mental illness are often disguised as discipline problems and handled through suspension, expulsion, and other push-out practices. Substantial effort is exerted by DRI to help parents and educators address behavior concerns in a manner that will keep students in school with a thorough FBA and well-designed BIP within the IEP. Beth Rydberg is an advocate and investigator with DRI and stated that many of the concerns she sees focus on IEP's written for a specific program, not specially designed instruction for an individual student. In addition, she talked about the continued need for coordinated wraparound services. Beth provided an example of how help from different agencies had an unintended effect on the behavior of a student.

- ▶ Beth described how important it is to have all relevant parties at the IEP meeting to make good decisions about student's needs and programing. The district and AEA had done a careful job of conducting a functional behavioral assessment to direct the behavior intervention plan. It was determined that the function of the student's behavior was escape so the BIP was designed to accommodate and extinguish that behavior. The plan was not working. At the IEP meeting the Child

Welfare Emergency Services Worker stated that she had advised the student to go home when stressed—therefore reinforcing the escape behavior. By having the right people at the table they were able to examine and adjust strategies so all parties could be following the same plan.

Resolving differences of opinion is not something that is done once and concluded forever. Changing culture, demographics, and emerging issues will continue to offer opportunities to advocate for making life better for individuals with disabilities.

Whether the concerns are about the nation's president or matters of individuals' education for children with disabilities, the challenges are thoughtfully addressed in a way that maximizes justice.

Iowa continues to have low numbers of cases going to mediation and due process compared with other states. This is a strong tribute to the constructive approach and positive attitude of the Iowa DE, AEAs, local districts, parents and advocates that are willing to listen and work together for children with special needs.

Diversity

Iowa schools have diversity in many dimensions: youth's cultural backgrounds, creed, color, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical and mental disabilities. It is this multiplicity of experiences in the school and community that prepares children and youth for a deep appreciation and respect of others in adulthood.

An iconic picture by Norman Rockwell entitled *The Golden Rule* eloquently depicts America and the world as an inclusive society embracing diversity. Indeed, except for the Native Americans, all American citizens have a history of immigration to this land. When there is discrimination of some members of society it opens the door to more of the same. Fairness and social justice are principles of merit for all. This topic is about individuals with disabilities and individuals with unique characteristics other than disabilities.



Diversity Around the World

The intent here is to look at Iowa and our nation as it copes with the concept of diversity that may include individuals with disabilities, and those with multicultural backgrounds. In this section we will consider examples of global, state, national, and international advocacy for justices and information about the student population in Iowa schools.

We Are the World. Concern for others was the moving force for people in the music world when they came together to perform a fundraiser known as USA for Africa. There was widespread famine in Africa, especially Ethiopia in 1985. The title song in the album was *We Are the World*, which sold 10 million copies worldwide. The funds were entirely for humanitarian aid to benefit those struggling in Africa. A list of

performers illustrates the breadth of social concern extended to people in crisis in another continent, by other citizens of the world.

Performers

Lionel Richie
Stevie Wonder
Paul Simon
Kenny Rogers
James Ingram
Tina Turner
Billy Joel

Michael Jackson
Diana Warwick
Willie Nelson
Al Jarreau
Bruce Springsteen
Kenny Loggins
Steve Perry
Daryl Hall

Huey Lewis
Cyndi Lauper
Kim Carnes
Bob Dylan
Ray Charles

This type of humanitarian outreach also occurred in response to an earthquake with a 7.0 magnitude that devastated Haiti in 2010. At that time there was a resurrection of a mega music extravaganza, a humanitarian effort called *We Are the World 25 for Haiti*. Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton teamed up to raise money for long-term reconstruction and economic redevelopment in Haiti. Other events triggering an outpouring of concern would include the 2005 Katrina hurricane in New Orleans, 2004 tsunami in Thailand, 2011 earthquake in Japan, African Ebola outbreak in 2014, and an earthquake in Nepal in 2015. When the world is viewed through the lens of humanity then everyone in crisis is important. The artificial “us” versus “them” concept pales into nothingness. This writing is about individuals with disabilities, but the circle of compassion clearly includes that group and more, much more. Iowa is no stranger to caring efforts, which we will look at next.

Iowa’s Humanitarian Backbone. There is reason for state pride in actions by Iowa leaders. Two examples. First, in 1975 Governor Robert Ray saw the plight of people from Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam who became refugees at the conclusion of the Vietnam War. Governor Ray extended a hand of welcome to Southeast Asians who immigrated to Iowa, especially the Tai Dam and the “boat people”. There were those at the time who claimed that jobs would be taken away from Iowans. Governor Ray did what he saw as right and needed to be done. He had a world view. Additionally, in 2015 Governor Terry Branstad promoted anti-bullying legislation to reduce harassment in Iowa schools. The Iowa Civil Rights Act covers protection of citizens from discrimination in five areas: education, employment, public accommodations, housing, and credit. It is part of Iowa’s law and the way society is governed in our state. Next, the overall concept of diversity is emphasized within schools by employing teachers to work with English Language Learners. Every AEA has a person or persons responsible for championing the cause of diversity education.



Iowa Governor Robert Ray

Education for English Language Learners. Language diversity came face to face with public education in 1974 when an individual in San Francisco asserted that Chinese American students were being denied educational opportunities because of their lack of proficiency in the English language and no educational services were provided to help with that preparation. The case was taken to the courts: *Lau v. Nichols*. The legal foundation was based on the 1964 Civil Rights Act that prohibits discrimination based on language and ethnicity. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the students. This revolutionized educational services in American schools and took another step forward in being inclusive. This had implications for all Iowa schools and students.

Linda Johnson began working in a program called at that time, English as a Second Language (ESL), which later was renamed English Language Learners (ELL). The students in her charge were middle school age. She told this story.

- ▶ In the 1970s Iowa had an influx of Southeast Asian students from Laos and Cambodia. The parents often had limited English proficiency and their native language was used at home. Despite the challenges of mastering the curriculum of Iowa schools, the ELL students had yet another hurdle, to master the English language. A student of Linda's eventually went on to Drake, became a pharmacist and this certainly is a success story. Linda said, when parents really value learning they encourage and support children in completing their homework. Children learn what is important. In this example, this student did that.

Language diversity poses a challenge for parents of children with disabilities who are not fluent in reading and speaking English. The IEP due process



Parental Safeguard Manual is available in: English, Spanish, Bosnian, Serbo-Croatian, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Laotian. Translation of the Parental Safeguard Manual is based on a criterion of when a population reaches .5% according to David Happe, consultant with the DE. Likewise, in circumstances where parents' understanding of spoken English language is a challenge interpreters are hired by the AEA or school district to support parents' understanding of the IEP planning process. Stephaney Jones-Vo, ESL/Diversity Consultant in an AEA, notes that Title III requires that linguistically diverse parents

receive communication from the schools in the language best understood. This means that districts are responsible to arrange interpreters for conferences and school meetings, such as IEP meetings, and to provide parents with essential translated documents to the extent practicable.

Stephaney's work as an AEA professional involves helping teachers, administrators, supports staff and community members in understanding and supporting diverse children and families, including those who are not native to

America. This important work involves supporting educators in expanding their attitudes of acceptance and understanding of diversity, as well as applying such learning to the school setting. The following story conveyed by Steponey illustrates how cultural backgrounds can lead to different interpretations of actions.

- ▶ Several refugee families resettled in Iowa having lived multiple years in a refugee camp in Kenya. The camp environment was a relief after experiencing a long and painful history of violence, yet was far from a safe home. Daily life was seriously disrupted, normal acts of commerce such as growing crops and selling produce at a market place were nonexistent. In addition, life events in the camp were unpredictable. All items, including food, were considered community property, which was a necessity and shared cultural understanding. Flash forward to the time when several refugee families from this camp moved to Iowa, now living in an Iowa suburb. The children are walking to school one morning, notice beautiful apples on the ground, and climb a fence to pick them up and eat them. The angry homeowner accused the elementary school children of stealing and called the police who arrived on the scene to reprimand the "criminals." Certainly understanding individual student backgrounds through a cultural lens can make a critical difference in how such an act by a child might be perceived. Knowing the facts that such a practice in their previous camp environment would have been entirely acceptable, understanding that the children had not eaten anything since the previous day and depended on the school for most of their nutrition, and realizing that no one had informed the children that climbing a fence signifies an invasion of personal property in their new homeland. Such an incident is one of countless others that signify an essential need to develop a lens informed by cultural sensitivity.

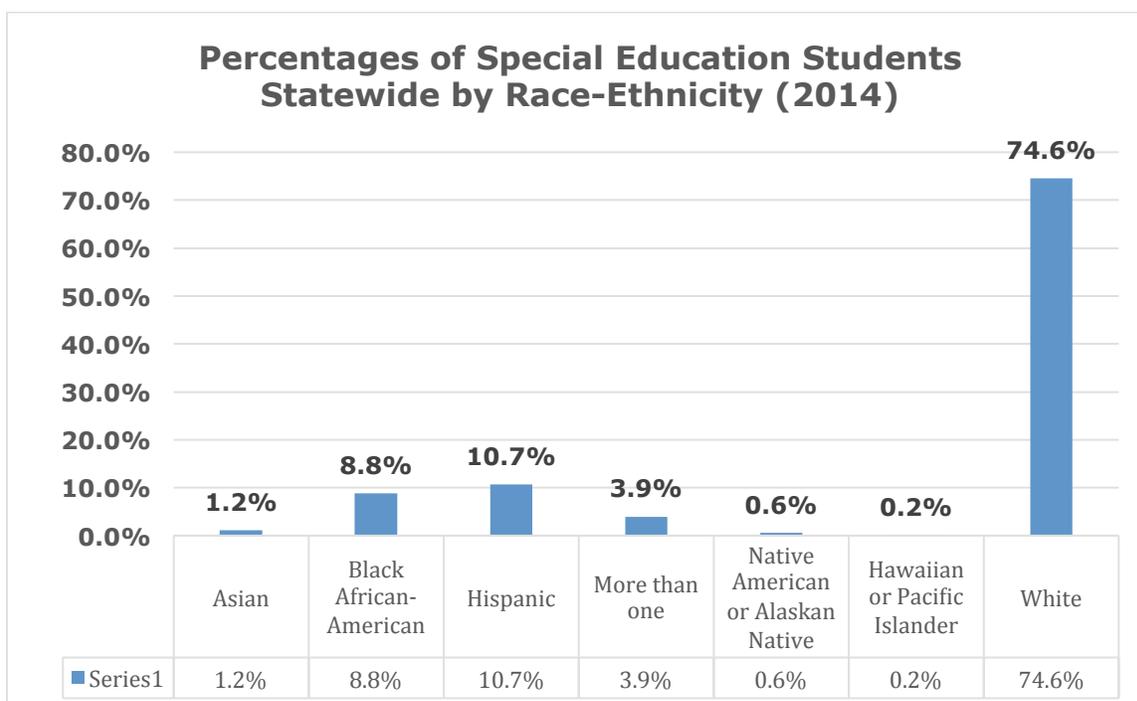
Iowa's Diversity. Iowa's total student population is changing as shown in the following table. In the 2000-01 school year, 9.7% of the total statewide student population was in a minority category. Fourteen years later, in 2014-15, Iowa had 21.8% minority students statewide. Thus, the total number of all minority students in public school in Iowa has more than doubled between 2000 and 2015. Further, from 2011-12 to 2014-15 the total percent increase was about two and one half percent. In addition, the student population growth of minorities has not been evenly distributed across all Iowa schools. A surge in minority growth in some communities occurs because of new business enterprises such as meat packing plants or other commercial endeavors being established. Whatever the reason, the expanding diversity of Iowa's student population is a strength for preparing students for life in a multicultural world.

Iowa's Public School K-12 Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity 2000-01, 2011-12, and 2014-15

Race/Ethnicity	2000-01		2011-12		2014-15	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Minority	46,250	9.7	90,673	19.3	104,052	21.8
African American	18,510	3.9	24,189	5.2	26,275	5.5
American Indian	2,447	0.5	2,155	.5	1,896	0.4
Asian	8,274	1.7	9,817	2.1	11,080	2.3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-	-	725	.2	927	0.2
Two or More Races	-	-	12,206	2.6	16,143	3.4
Hispanic	17,019	3.6	41,581	8.9	47,731	10.0
White	430,677	90.3	378,426	80.7	373,370	78.2
Total	476,927	100.0	469,099	100.0	477,422	100.0

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Information and Analysis, Basic Educational Data Survey and Student Reporting in Iowa, 2014

Special Education and Race/Ethnicity Data. The minority population within special education is shown in the following data provided by John Lee of the Iowa DE and included in Iowa's IDEA report to the federal government. In 2014 Iowa student population is 75% white and 25% varied minority.



Iowa's statewide diversity (data from the Iowa DE's Annual Report, 2014)

Being in a minority group may present unique challenges when coping with a due process situation. The following experience was related by Dee Ann Wilson.

- ▶ A mother was at odds with the school district over the proposed actions for a child in special education. The details are unimportant to the point of this story. The mother was alone at the due process proceeding and facing a room full of men representing the other side of the issue. The mother was Native American. It was not the custom of the tribe to be confrontational. The simple fact of engaging in a due process was somewhat of a breach of that standard. Nevertheless, this mother was compelled to act on what she considered to be the best interest of her child. This was not an easy task for cultural and gender balance reasons, yet it had to be done. The conclusion favored the parent's position.

It is helpful for special education personnel to be mindful of circumstances that would support parents in advocating for their children. Sometimes it is a matter of ensuring they are not alone at the table, or conveying that you are supporting them in the process of seeking clarity, even if you are not supporting the parent's perspective.

This writing is focused on the evolution of special education in Iowa so, perhaps at first blush, it might seem like a disconnect by giving attention to language, culture and other forms of diversity. But by now you may see the connection is solid. What happens for students with diverse experiences or characteristics is a part of the acceptable response pattern for anyone and everyone that is unique. The narrative is about civil rights for all. The truth is that diversity is the rule and not the exception when considering students in poverty, sexual orientation, religion, cultural and linguistic background, race, medical needs and those with disabilities. Variation in human characteristics is a remarkable strength and when embraced as such is a step toward inclusivity and social justice. In the past, Iowans have always taken actions in this direction. Those in the future can continue this legacy. No one deserves to be marginalized because of her or his differences. Conversely, everyone deserves respect. Iowa can be part of this process.

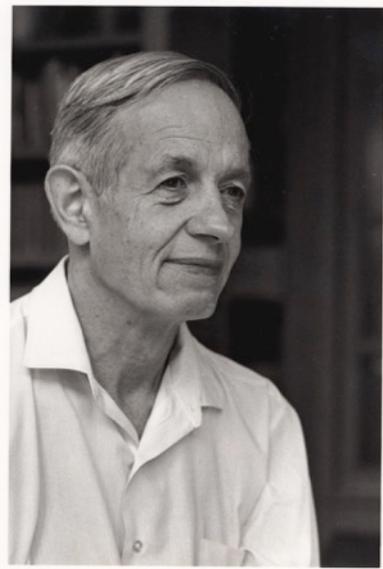
An Ongoing Life Experience: 2000s

We continue the life story of Rick Sampson. As a reminder, Rick was diagnosed as having cerebral palsy before the age of one. Handwriting was difficult for him and even expressing himself through speech became problematic when he became stressed. Rick had always been an enthusiastic Mac user and when speech-to-text software became available in the 2000s it had a profound positive effect on his ability to effectively express thoughts and ideas. He began expressing thoughts and feelings that had never been conveyed before because of difficulty in typing. The speech-to-text software made it easier for Rick to advocate for himself and communicate with others in an effective manner. Rick's advocacy for those with a disability is exemplified through his service on the Advisory Board of Directors for Central Iowa Center for Independent Living and the Governor's Disability Council, Iowa, which has 22 board members. This council is a federally funded state board with a mandate to influence change in the system of services and supports in Iowa to increase the independence,

productivity, and community integration of people with developmental disabilities. Rick's strong conviction to serve others is impressive.

Disability Awareness – Decade of the 2000s

The nation again had an up close and personal look at mental health challenges in the movie, *A Beautiful Mind* (2001). That film portrays the life and challenges of John Forbes Nash, Jr., the Nobel Laureate in economics who developed game theory, and who struggled as a paranoid schizophrenic. There were also soldiers scarred by their years of service in Afghanistan and Iraq. The mental health and family issues were depicted in the film, *Hurt Locker*, which won the Oscar for best picture in 2008. In America, movies, books and newspaper articles attest to a growing understanding of life with a disability. Lisa Genova's 2007 book, *Still Alice*, provides a poignant picture of the onset of Alzheimer's disease in a fifty-year old woman who is a distinguished university professor. People of all income groups, education levels and regions of America are living longer and dementia is a more common occurrence in American families. Awareness of disabilities is more extensive.



John Forbes Nash, Jr.

Indication of disabilities awareness is expanding in America's culture and, consequently, paving the way for widespread acceptance for all. Casey's General Store, Younkers, Target, Walgreens, CVS stores, and virtually every other commercial enterprise have clearly designated spots near the entrance for individuals with disabilities who have parking permits. Major live entertainment events often have an individual using American Sign Language. Ramps and elevators provide access to schools and public buildings. Most towns have transformed their curbs to have slopes that provide safe transit for persons with physical disabilities and everyone else. These are reverberations from the Americans with Disabilities Act and illustrate the impact on society and our citizens.

IDEA revised terminology from mental disabilities to intellectual disabilities. The evolution of language is also reflected in the description of ARC, which once stood for the Association of Retarded Children. Now the association's description reads "for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities." Likewise there has been a language change from referring to handicapped students to students with disabilities, as noted in the 1975 federal legislation, Education for All Handicapped Children Act, to the terminology of disabilities in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Similarly, Down Syndrome replaced the reference to the derogatory term of mongoloids used in an earlier time. Some might say all of this is an effort to be politically correct but there is a more enlightened way to see this. In the same way that medicine, music and technology advances over time, so too does our use of a nation's language. It represents sensitivity and respect of its citizens. The No Child Left Behind

legislation assessed the educational progress of all students and gave special attention to six subgroups of students, including individuals with disabilities. The purpose was to assure all students make appropriate gains every year. This was intended to assure that the educational growth of all students was valued.

On the sports scene there are leagues and events for children with disabilities. Iowa's Special Olympics provide year round events for all seasons. There are baseball leagues, summer camps and many avenues for full engagement in physical activities. Iowa's youth, with and without disabilities, have outdoor choices. Iowa and American society have changed. Maintaining awareness, respect, shared acceptance and community values for all is an ongoing challenge. Nothing is to be taken for granted—not now, not in the future.

Decade of the 2010-15

This decade is not over. It is like opening a Cracker Jack box to find the prize but you have not reached the bottom of the box. At the point of this writing, half of this decade has yet to breathe itself into history. Yet much has happened. The Affordable Health Care Act became law providing the opportunity for a larger proportion of the nation's citizens to have health insurance, a symbol of compassion. President Obama was re-elected in 2012, beginning his second term. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality suggesting a societal shift from a conservative position on the issue of Gay Rights. Similarly, Pope Francis said, when asked about his position on gays, "Who am I to judge", which seemingly was an embrace of inclusiveness within the mainline church structure. The circle of inclusion expanded.

In the 2010 election Republicans, powered by the Tea Party movement, took control of the House of Representatives and gridlock set in. Inertia remained for years as partisan politics significantly obstructed actions. A mass killing

occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, which resulted in congressional proposals to enact gun control.

These proposals were thwarted by pressure from the National Rifle Association, who asserted that the second amendment rights were under attack and needed to be defended. Gun control laws remained unchanged.

Michael Jackson and Whitney Houston died of drug complications, and Janet Jackson had a memorable "wardrobe malfunction" at a Super Bowl half-time performance. Sports also had its malfunctions with the New England Patriots winning the Super Bowl in 2015 followed by the "deflate-gate" accusation, charging that the Patriots had intentionally used under-inflated footballs in the prior playoff game. Accountability is becoming prominent in sports. For example, Donald Sterling was forced to sell the LA Clippers—a National Basketball team—because of his racist remarks. The court of public opinion and big league sports



Holding Box with a Prize

leadership seemed to be in motion on behalf of justice, which has larger implications for how individuals with disabilities are regarded.

During these years, significant events occurred abroad. U.S troops were withdrawn from Afghanistan. The Mideast remained a region of ongoing turmoil. The Arab Spring was a term referring to an emergence of activities where citizens in the Mideast were seeking changes in governance beginning with Tunisia, then spreading to other countries including Egypt, Yemen, Libya and elsewhere in the region. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) grew in prominence occupying territory in Syria and Iraq. In Syria the struggle escalated with President Bashar Assad refusing to step down and the Syrian government began bombing citizens who resisted. Syrian families in harm's way migrated to Europe in search of a safe haven. The European Union made monumental efforts to accept the immigrants. In West Africa an Ebola crisis erupted triggering a worldwide response to contain the epidemic and provide needed treatment for those afflicted. Ebola was eventually controlled with the aid of medical science and concerted effort from healthcare workers. The attention shifted from treatment of Ebola to preventative efforts. The Ebola crisis is a shining example of compassion for the health of others. The U.S. helped resolve the crisis with care and consideration for one world and all humanity.

In this section we turn our attention to Iowa's educational scene and the progress in service for students with disabilities. Topics to be reviewed here are best perceived as an upward spiral from the beginning in 1975 and continuing to the present. These included efforts to support schools with crisis response teams, progress in early childhood services, transition planning, and ongoing efforts for broad-based reform with attention to a multi-tier support system. In addition, Iowa engaged in broad-based practices of enhancing how instruction is provided to all children. A statewide reading initiative was designed to raise performance of all students including minorities and children with disabilities.

Teams

The community is aware of potential dangers for school children. School zone crossing signs alert drivers that they need to slow down and be alert for children. Despite all precautions, crisis situations can arise. School personnel are positioned to support our youngest in these circumstances. There is another form of crisis, one where an injustice is discovered after a protracted period. Both topics will be explored. There is value in using the diverse skills of team members to effectively address challenges in Iowa schools.

School Crisis Team. The *Des Moines Register*, *Sioux City Journal*, *Cedar Rapids Gazette* or *Davenport Quad-City Times* may have a headline about a situation in the public school when a crisis occurs. Unfortunately troubled times come with many masks. Although Iowa has not experienced a horrific event like the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut, or Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, there have been other situations with significant school-wide disruption. A crisis can be the death of a teacher or student suicide, an angry adult boyfriend walking into a school to assault a teacher,



School Zone Crossing

a train wreck with a chemical spill, a tornado that displaces families from their homes, or a bomb threat at a school. Crisis situations can create emotional turmoil for children and school staff. This is a quandary at an emotional and personal level, which significantly detracts from students' growth and learning. To support local schools in such circumstances, most AEAs have crisis teams, often engaging the school psychologist, school social worker and guidance counselors in activities to assist children in coping with stress producing situations.

A fair question is whether this is the special education staff's responsibility. That could be addressed with another question: "If there was a home on fire and you could save a child's life would it be appropriate to do that or wait for fire fighters who are not yet on the scene?" A crisis is a crisis. This does not seem like the time to make artificial delineations of responsibilities. Special education staff are a valued part of the overall education system and when the system is experiencing crisis it takes everyone working together to protect all of the members of that community. As the saying goes, "it takes a village..." and special education personnel are a part of the overall system.

A school-based crisis team frequently blends professionals from the AEA, school and community to help children and families. An example of school-based intervention.

- ▶ Chad Pinkston, an AEA school psychologist, told about circumstances where a crisis team may be called upon to provide support for students. Two examples are where a teacher died of cancer and when a car hit a classmate. It is important for all students to know that others care about them as they work through a process of grieving and adjustment, which can take several days or much longer. Those who require longer treatment are typically referred to mental health community providers. When students in school have a chance to express their thoughts and feelings they are better able to return to their focus on school activities and learning. A teacher saved a piece of artwork that a child had made for Chad during a crisis team activity. The child wanted Chad to have the picture because he was so helpful and the student was grateful for the assistance.

When a crisis strikes it is almost always unexpected and always unwelcomed. It is beyond direct control of the school or community. What can be controlled is whether they are adequately prepared. The development of crisis teams in Iowa provides the preparation needed when such resources are necessary. The AEA, community, school district and private sector collaborate in a relationship of shared responsibility to assist all citizens in a time of need. This is part of the evolution of services in Iowa and special education providers can be a part of that effort.

Local school districts in Iowa often have contingency plans in place for when circumstances put members of the school community at risk, as shown in the following story.

- ▶ The high school administrative staff at Waukee CSD assigned each student with significant disabilities a buddy who is a

nondisabled student. The buddies are a great pairing to assist with school activities. The relationships are rewarding for both the disabled and the nondisabled peers. At the beginning of the 2015-16 academic year, the high school received bomb threats, resulting in all students immediately being evacuated from the school building. Without being asked the nondisabled mentor buddies sought out their disabled peer to ensure they were safely exited from the potential threat. In Waukee this is how care is demonstrated for all students. It is business as usual for this district, where care and compassion are ingrained into the culture. In this case, potential crisis situations are mitigated because of thoughtful work done before the fact.

Helping hands in Iowa are present in abundance. Sometimes these involve AEA staff, those in local school districts and members of community agencies. When crisis situations occur cooperation emerges.

A Crisis Uncovered. In contrast with the work of the crisis intervention teams that help the school and community cope with acute crisis situations or a buddy system in a local district, the next topic looks at the type of circumstance that is chronic and was not evident for an extended period of time. That means that life goes on as usual until a long-standing offense is uncovered. The reader may wonder, "How could this happen in Iowa?"

The typical nature of Iowa can be seen through the lenses of the Registers Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) visitors. RAGBRAI has a 40-year+ history with thousands of cyclists making the trek from the Missouri to the Mississippi River. It is the longest running and largest attended group bike ride in the country. Newspapers and television stations give extensive coverage to this classic annual Iowa event. It is commonplace in this media



RAGBRAI scene in Iowa

coverage to include the astonishment with the friendliness of small town Iowa. It is true that many Iowans roll out the welcome mat and allow their home to be a rest site for weary cyclists. Iowa has a reputation of being genuinely friendly folks who are civic minded and respectful of others. Of course, it fits the expectations for a state whose motto is, "Our Liberties We Prize And Our Rights We Will Maintain." Because of this, it was shocking when circumstances in Iowa were discovered that attracted national attention where rights and liberties were not honored. In fact the details of the story shocked the consciousness of all Iowans. The topic is about what was discovered in Atalissa, Iowa. It is a difficult story to read and difficult to forget because of the loathsome treatment of fragile individuals. The point is that the story should not be forgotten. This is about decades of injustice to individuals with disabilities and it happened in a small town in Iowa.

Sylvia Piper, who was the director of the office of Protection and Advocacy, now Disability Rights Iowa, and Clark Kauffman, investigative reporter for the Des Moines Register related this story about the events in 2009. This is not about special education per se, but it is about advocacy and fairness for individuals with disabilities. There are three time periods in this sad tale.

- ▶ *Part one.* In the late 1960s Kenneth Henry, co-owner of Henry Turkey Service, implemented a program to take men from Texas state institutions for the mentally disabled and provide them with employment. On the surface that idea had merit. The problem was in the implementation. Men went to work in turkey processing plants in Iowa, Illinois and other states under the guise of satisfactory working and living conditions. Mr. Henry promised to build a farm in Goldthwaite, Texas where these men could retire in comfort after their many years of toil. Mr. Henry was reported to say that over the years he had "helped" 1,500 individuals get out of institutions and work in his plants.

Part two. Clark Kauffman received a telephone call from the sister of one of the men housed at Atalissa regarding the treatment and compensation of her intellectually disabled brother. The brother was sent away from Atalissa and she called to inquire how her sibling could have worked for so many decades and have so little to show for it. Clark immediately investigated her concerns by driving to the unlicensed group home and work site the following day. What he found was appalling. The unlicensed group home was a dilapidated school building with boarded up windows and referred to as the bunkhouse. The commercial meat-processing plant where the turkeys were gutted had horrific working conditions. Clark was instrumental in telling the grim tale of 21 men who wound up in what some would consider indentured servitude. There were actually 31 men, but a week before the story hit the press ten men were transported out of state.

All of these men came from Texas and were transported to Iowa where they worked for Henry Turkey Service. These men were mistreated and exploited for over 30 years. Among other work, they eviscerated turkeys, which has to do with removing the innards as part of the turkey processing business. Eviscerating turkeys amounts to reaching inside the turkey with bare hands and jerking out the insides. The results of doing hundreds of these a day left many men with deformed and painful fingers. These men were paid what is termed a "handicapped wage", which is allowed by law, called The Fair Labor Standards Act. This law allows businesses to pay a wage that adjusts for the presumed reduced level of productivity because of a disability. Their housing and food was deducted from their pay, which left about \$60 a month - thus, \$2.00 a day. When questioned, the 300 residents of the town of Atalissa said they were entirely unaware of the conditions in the old school house where the men lived. They stated that the outside appeared in good repair. However, when examined the inside was a stark contrast with

cockroach infestation, mice droppings, heat provided by a series of dangerous individual gas heaters and so much more creating an intolerable picture of deplorable living conditions. Despite the need for treatment, the men did not receive medical, dental or little other health care, legal or social services or any protections or rights guaranteed by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In 2009, after the situation became public, the Fire Marshall shut down the facility in Atalissa. The Iowa Department of Social Services, Iowa Protection and Advocacy, and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) all collaborated to ensure justice was provided. The closing of the facility and abrupt absence of a living arrangement presented a quandary. The men went to Muscatine and lived in a motel for a week. Sylvia Piper said one of the men thought it was a castle since none of them had experienced such luxury as clean linen, individual showers, and personal restrooms with soap and towels. Indeed, they were seemingly treated like kings and this was a castle compared to their decades of experience with Henry Turkey Service. Denise Gonzales made arrangements for these men to be transported to Waterloo where Exceptional Persons Inc. provided for housing, care and educational experiences. These services were geared towards allowing maximum independence for their living arrangements in the community. Working with the courts, individual hearings were held to determine the status of each person as a dependent adult so that Medicaid and Social Security benefits could be provided. In Washington D.C., Iowa Senators Tom Harkin and Chuck Grassley held hearings to ensure the Department of Labor would be vigilant to the type of exploitation that occurred in Atalissa so that this appalling abuse would not occur elsewhere.

Part three. In 2014 a federal court judgment of \$240 million was awarded to the men who were exploited and abused by Henry Turkey Service. Robert Camino was the lead attorney representing these men. It appeared that justice prevailed, at least until the judgment was appealed and reduced to \$50,000 per individual because of a cap on such financial awards. With this substantial modification, the scales of justice tilted inequitably in the direction of business interests. The men have yet to see the full amount of money awarded them, even the reduced amount.

The Atalissa situation, the \$240 million judgment, and the horrendous abuse of these vulnerable men received nationwide attention. There were newspaper articles in many Iowa papers, the New York Times, Cleveland, and many other cities. Likewise CBS, NPR and other news organizations had coverage. Iowa was in the limelight, but this time it was not because of a political caucus, a winning football team, or some other positive distinction.

Consider the crucial role of newspapers and their professional staff. At this point the reader may wonder why the focus is on investigative reporting in general, and Clark Kauffman in particular. The answer is easy. It is a big deal. Journalism is a leverage point in an open society. Many of the dramatic changes

in governmental policy and civil rights have come from public awareness, outrage, and support for transformation. Public opinion is a game changer. It has been said that the best disinfectant is bright sunlight, in other words, making that which is private, public. That is what highly competent investigative reporting does. Whether it is Watergate or uncovering the cruelty at Atalissa, the result is similar, to champion the cause of justice by making the public, and officials who have authority to make corrective actions, aware of the situation. Clark Kauffman took action to ensure the conditions were made public. Great indignation and consternation from the public followed.

At a meeting of the National Disability Rights Network, with all states represented, a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission extolled praise and gratitude for Sylvia Piper's role in the quest for justice in Atalissa. It was a fitting tribute for an enduring Iowa advocate for disability rights. Of course nothing of this magnitude is without many partnerships. Clark Kauffman was a champion for truth and did the investigative work to ensure all Iowans would bear witness to the human mistreatment in Atalissa. Robert Camino was the voice for the voiceless and argued in court for fairness and won. Denise Gonzales represented Exceptional Persons Inc., whose agency provided extensive support as the men adjusted to their new freedom and opened the doors of the Waterloo community to welcome these men. Senators Tom Harkin and Chuck Grassley pushed for federal awareness and accountability for any business that might engage in such wrongdoing.

Were those RAGBRAI visitors wrong about Iowans? No, absolutely not. Iowa is a terrific state to raise children and enjoy genuinely friendly people. What happened in Atalissa was not a situation created by Iowa citizens preying on the vulnerable. In fact, when all of this was uncovered Iowans stepped up and acted with distinction. We could only wish that this whole mess had been thoroughly examined and exposed much earlier so corrective action could have occurred.

Many of these men are currently in their 60s. They are making lives for themselves, learning to live in a wider community where they can make independent decisions about their actions, entertainment, work and transportation. That is how life should be lived with freedom in America by anyone and everyone. Times have changed for individuals with disabilities. These improvements are directly linked to the efforts of those who effectively advocate for those in need.

Quiet Heroes on the Team. Some life experiences are enhanced by a creative combination: wine & cheese, peanut butter & chocolate, movies & popcorn, Ginger Rogers & Fred Astaire, Mike & Molly, to name a few. These are combinations where both parts are strengthened by what the other offers. This is a story about a quiet hero who never sought attention, always gave credit for accomplishment to others, helped committees and workgroups function effectively as well as creating meaningful one-to-one conversations that enhanced the social well-being of others. There is an atmosphere of a learning community in these interactions. The names and faces of the quiet heroes with these cherished characteristics would change in various locations in Iowa, but these people would be there, and your life would be enriched by the encounter.

This story is about Sharon Kurns, an AEA Special Education Consultant and administrator, who had a rich background in general and special education instruction. She had a deep understanding of teaching methodologies, respect for the roles and responsibilities of other professionals, an appreciation for how schools functioned, and an unrelenting passion to help children succeed in school while supporting families in being an equal partner in the process whenever possible.

- ▶ Sharon had an extraordinary capacity to listen to teachers, principals and parents as they shared their personal experiences and educational challenges with children in the classroom or home. She brought what some call the “soft skills” of genuine caring, compassion, empathy and ability to embrace the pains and joys of others working with children. Consider these talents applied in two arenas: with individual students and group professional settings. With an individual student focus, there were countless cases of struggling readers, students unable to make connections with math calculations and concepts, youngsters who were too shy to ask for help and thereby falling behind in their learning, and some who were disruptive and acting out in school, youth working on the arduous tasks of developing skills to succeed in their transition from school to work. Parents, teachers, and sometimes colleagues, were all looking for ways to create better learning opportunities. Sharon helped by forming partnerships that magnified what others brought and what she could add. In the same way it was true when the focus was widened to system level circumstances such as schoolwide reading and math curriculum, or strategies for workable solutions on the playground, at home or in the community. Sharon was a part of workgroups focused on educational issues at the school, district, AEA level and state committees. She was always willing to stay with the situation until positive results occurred. This required a certain attitude of dedication and the commitment of energy, combined with knowledge and skill to work effectively with a wide range of people. Sometimes this help led to special education services, sometimes solutions in the general education environment, but the goal was always questing for a sustainable solution.



Sharon Kurns

There was a 2004 book entitled *Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn*. The title reflects an unrelenting attitude to stay present in a relationship until the educational challenges are successfully addressed. That is what great educators do. That is what Sharon Kurns did. Unfortunately, Sharon passed away in 2012, but clearly her legacy is alive. It is likely the reader knows a person who is a quiet hero. It is a contemporary relationship to be cultivated and maintained. This is how personal

interactions become the creative combinations that contribute to the ongoing evolution of education in Iowa.

Traumatic Brain Injury. Actor Will Smith portrayed Dr. Bennet Omalu, the remarkable physician working as a forensic pathologist in the Boston area who discovered and documented the relationship between the devastating impact of collision from playing professional football and the occurrence of brain injury. The 2016 movie was *Concussion*. The National Football League (NFL), Commissioner Paul Taglibue and later Roger Goodell, as its chief spokes persons, initially deflected any link between football concussions and Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE). Later, under a rising tide of public opinion, pressure from the NFL Player Association, and congressional inquiry, the NFL established a fund of \$756 million for ex-players in the NFL who suffer from early onset of dementia-related symptoms to head trauma. While the difficulties from football seem to require multiple occurrences to produce the negative effects of CTE, there can be an abrupt onset of head trauma from a motorcycle accident, auto collision and other events causing head trauma for youth during their school years. The educational implications may be far-reaching.

IDEA includes the category of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) so the condition qualifies to receive special education services. There are two patterns for delivering services for students with TBI. Some AEAs have a dedicated team that supports individuals who experience a TBI, other AEAs use the teams assigned to each district who support individuals, families and schools when such circumstances arise. Depending on the needs in a particular situation, team members may include all or some composition of school psychologist, school social worker, special education consultant, speech-language pathologist, school nurse, physical therapist, occupational therapist, special and general education teachers. The team works with the family, school and community personnel, such as physicians, to support the student's educational growth and personal adjustment.

It takes a team to adequately serve those with TBI. In this section we will focus on the services of the occupational therapist (OT). When people hear the title of occupational therapist they can think this refers to someone who helps others build the employment skills of finding a job, when in reality the profession works with strengthening fine-motor manipulative skills like handwriting, learning or relearning to use buttons and zippers, tying shoes, using utensils for independent eating, and other self-help daily living skills such as toileting. Adults recovering from stroke or accident can require job skill training. For children and youth in school, their occupation is learning, play, and recreation. For children, occupational therapists concentrate on fine motor skills needed for engaging in academic activities and daily living skills. Like all professionals working with children with disabilities in the school setting, the services provided by occupational therapists are directed through the IEP or IFSP for children below the age of three. Services in the educational setting or home are much different than in a clinical or hospital setting. In a clinic the individual is taken to a separate room with the occupational therapist while caregivers remain in the waiting room. In the school setting or home, caregivers are part of the therapy so they can be taught and coached on how they can help the individual continue to learn. When presented strategies for working with their children by the OT, parents frequently comment, "I never would have thought of that". But for the seasoned OT it is second nature.

Heidi Webber is an occupational therapist whose experiences have ranged from working in a neonatal unit of a hospital to working with adults who have suffered traumatic brain injury from stroke, vehicle accident, and bull riding—yes, bull riding in Iowa results in a large number of brain injuries. She’s worked in a variety of settings from acute care to outpatient services, and has an extensive background in working with TBI. Heidi currently works for an AEA with an assignment that serves a population from early childhood to high school seniors. Heidi says that working with TBI is emotionally and physically difficult for both the student and the student’s parents, whether it’s from birth trauma asphyxia, paralysis from a dirt bike accident, or a terrible fall from surfing on the hood of a speeding car. Heidi talks about the disturbance to the normal pathways in the brain with TBI and the need to work toward reprogramming the pathways. The younger the child, the better the plasticity of the brain. Heidi stated that it’s amazing how children can adapt and learn. Heidi views her job as giving those she serves the best possible life. A worthy goal indeed. Heidi provided the following story of an eight-month-old child with TBI.

- ▶ The child’s mother had entrusted her daughter to a caregiver who delivered the child to a day care center the following morning. Within ten minutes of being at the day care the girl experienced grand mal seizures and was sent to emergency room where she was stabilized and diagnosed with shaken baby syndrome. The hospital contacted DHS and legal proceedings began. Heidi and the early childhood team received the referral shortly afterwards and began their assessments and interventions. The child had lost vision and the ability to control one side of her body. Heidi wrote IEP goals to work on bilateral activities and fine motor coordination. The child is now in 5th grade and Heidi is actively providing direct support as well as indirect consultation to ensure a variety of accommodations and adaptations are incorporated into the girl’s academic instruction and other life skill areas. Heidi states that as the girl advances to middle school and high school she and the team will serve in consultative roles as part of the transition from each grade level and to adult life up through graduation from high school. Heidi said that she can’t change the occurrence of TBI, but can facilitate accommodations and adaptations to help the child learn and grow.

Dedicated professionals such as Heidi are invaluable to the healing process and provide nurturing support to the parents of those children with TBI. Heidi is quick to give credit to her entire team.

Brain injury can be traumatic or nontraumatic. Traumatic brain injury occurs from an external impact on the brain that causes unconsciousness. The result may be mild, moderate or severe. The insult may manifest as an impact on human functions such as memory, speaking, writing, logic and ability to do mathematical calculations, interpret and express emotion, the ability to walk, balance and move effectively. Non-traumatic brain injuries may occur because of a stroke, brain infection, toxic poisoning, or tumors that disrupt oxygen reaching the brain. With brain injury there is often a disruption in cognitive, emotional, and behavioral functioning. When an IEP is required then specially designed instruction is provided with the intention of moving the individual

towards increased independence and regaining, as much as possible, life as it was.

TBI is likely to have a distinct impact on the family. Supporting the family in their efforts to cope with the difficulties is important to the well-being of the child. The parents are both a part of the decision-making team in determining special education services and a means of helping a child learn and adapt at home and in the community. There are far-reaching implications for medical, financial, social and emotional factors in a family with a child that has TBI. Referrals to appropriate community providers can be helpful to the family when assistance is needed beyond what can be offered by school personnel alone.

A brain injury has a significant impact on learning and living. Sometimes a crisis cannot be avoided, sometimes it can. The use of seat belts in cars can significantly mitigate the impact of an accident. Further, the issue of concussions became vivid to Iowans in 2015 when an outstanding athlete from Ottumwa, Tyler Sash, who played in the NFL for the NY Giants, died at age 27. It was determined that he had CTE. UNI and Iowa Barnstormer star quarterback Kurt Warner left the NFL at the top of his career because he considered the rewards were not worth the risk. Apparently he made a wise decision. Some brain trauma is avoidable. The movie *Concussion* raises public awareness of this issue.

Early Childhood Across the Decades

In 1975 the Education for All Handicapped Children Act mandated a continuum of services for children with disabilities and, at the same time in Iowa, the Area Education Agencies came into effect. Iowa was considered a birth mandate state requiring services for children with disabilities from birth through high school graduation. As discussed earlier in this text, under the category of The Second Half of the 70s, Joan Turner Clary became the consultant for early childhood at the Iowa Department of Education and began what was to become one of the finest early



childhood intervention programs in the nation.

We will pick up that conversation and discuss early childhood services through the voices of those providing early childhood interventions in 2015. This illustration focuses on one team, but a similar pattern would be present in all AEAs. Jennifer Downs is an early childhood school social worker serving children birth to age five and Jessica Holley is an early childhood consultant serving children age three to five. Jennifer and Jessica are a strong and effective team, along with Alyson Haley, a speech-language pathologist, and others including a physical therapist, occupational therapist, and other low incidence specialists (e.g. hearing and vision teachers) as needed.

Children from birth to age three are served in their natural environment, usually the child's home, by an AEA team. Early childhood teams are tight

functioning units that work closely together to provide comprehensive services. For parents with special needs children this home-based approach is very much appreciated. AEA services providers work directly with children and provide information, instruction, support, and sometimes counseling to the parents of the child. The denial, regrets, and tears of parents are well understood by the AEA service providers and a deep sense of bonding often occurs. Often the work with the parent is to help them overcome their fear that their child is not perfect. With a team approach, one practitioner can be working directly with the child while another works with the parents to talk through what techniques are being employed to help their child grow and learn. An example of early childhood teaming follows.



- ▶ While Alyson Haley works with the child on communication, Jennifer Downs explains the importance of the parent working with their child in a similar way between AEA service provider visits. In this manner parents learn to enhance their own child's skill set. Jennifer explains that a strong bond is built between families and the AEA staff that visit them in their homes. Families that receive home-based services are more likely to trust school-based services than families who do not experience the relationship building aspects of service providers early on. Jennifer continues to receive calls and emails from parents she worked with many years after the children have advanced into K-12 education. Trusting relationships developed early continue throughout a child's academic career. When parents call, Jennifer coaches them on how to positively prepare for meetings rather than going in with a negative mind-set.

The team approach does not end with AEA staff. Interagency cooperation is key to young children with disabilities receiving the services they need to get a good start in life. From initiating contacts with the Department of Human Services to assisting parents achieve an Intellectual Disability Waiver for their child, securing Title 19, or getting respite care, AEA staff help parents better understand the resources available to them. Making contacts with the medical field is an important component to whole child services. The following example illustrates how critical a collaborative relationship between professionals can be.

- ▶ Jennifer Downs was providing services to a two-year-old child who exhibited violent behavior with significant head banging. Jennifer contacted Dr. Nathan Noble, a Developmental Pediatrician. Because of their positive working relationship Dr. Noble got the child in the next day despite his clinic's nine-month wait list. An MRI revealed the child had a brain aneurism. Within a month after brain surgery the child demonstrated major improvements. There are three heroes that saved this child's life: the early childhood school social worker, Jennifer Downs, the Developmental Pediatrician, Dr. Noble, and the parents who trusted the service providers. Not all teaming efforts have this

profound effect, but the teaming efforts of the early childhood teams certainly have huge effects on the subsequent lives of the children they see.

The source for the quote: "You may be only one person in the world, but you may be the world to one person" may be in dispute, but there's no question that those serving the early childhood special education population live by that sentiment.

Securing competent language interpreters is another component to working effectively with parents and children in their home. In central Iowa about 25% of the birth-to-three population receiving ECSE services do not live in English-speaking homes. Difficulties in interpreters include a different interpreter showing up each time at a home visit, miscommunications because of dialect differences, and the beliefs of the interpreter being in conflict with the families or service providers. Even sign language can be misinterpreted leading to incorrect information shared and conflicts. Early childhood teams have learned that English-speaking siblings can be very helpful in visiting with parents.

The transition from the birth-to-three to the three-to-five population can be a culture shock for some parents. Prior to the child turning age three, services are provided in the home. The early childhood consultants, social workers, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, etc. come to the home to provide services and become trusted friends and confidants. Once the child turns three they transition from an IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) to an IEP (Individualized Education Program) and services are all provided in the preschool program. For some parents trusting strangers in the school with their precious child can be a very scary proposition. This transition has been handled in a variety of positive ways. Jessica Holly is an early childhood consultant who has vast experiences with helping parents through this difficult transition. She has arranged for parents to assist in training school staff in such things as feeding tubes and sensitivity to oncoming seizures. In one example Jessica had the parent present information about their child's magic ears, the cochlear implants, to other students in the class to help with a smooth transition.

One big advantage of having children with special needs attend a preschool is the structure that can be facilitated to deal with shaping behavior and integrating the children with other students. There is a myriad of social aspects that can be addressed in the school system that would not be possible in the home setting. It also takes administrative support to unite the efforts of personnel from multiple agencies.

- ▶ Roxanne Cumings served as the Executive Director of Student Services for one of the largest growing districts in Iowa. Roxanne was at this district for twenty years and responsible for building an incredibly effective special education program for students age-three to graduation. In regard to the preschool program, Roxanne ensured that the district special education teachers, and the AEA staff that serve them, are a strong interdisciplinary team. Emphasis in the preschool program is on improving student outcomes, frequent communication with parents, and reverse integration practices for positive modeling purposes. In building

class rosters, care was taken that there would be more children on each roster without IEPs than with IEPs.

From the inception of early childhood services by Frank Vance, state director of special education at the Iowa DE, and Joan Turner Clary, consultant for early childhood services at the Iowa DE in the mid-1970s, services have substantially grown and flourished. Dr. Noble stated that the State of Iowa has two feet of topsoil— you can grow anything. But first you need to plant the seeds. Much like the process of little acorns becoming large sturdy oak trees, Frank Vance and Joan Turner Clary planted the seeds, and pushed Iowa into the forefront of serving children from birth on. Iowa continues to provide exemplary early childhood education services.

There is the transition of children from home to school, a big step in any family. There is an equally challenging adjustment when a student completes his or her high school program and encounters the next aspect of their life.

Transition from School

Schooling is important but most parents would be quick to acknowledge it is part of the process of preparation for adult life. The topic of transition preparation, planning, and examining options is a crucial step for youth with disabilities.

The Transition Emphasis. This is personal. Picture this: You move forward, move backward, turn and turn again, hold on, then let go of your partner, then rock back. Dance steps? Maybe, perhaps the moves of a tango, gyrations of a flamingo dancer or it could be the dance of transition for every parent as a young adult leaves high school. Lots of moves occurring simultaneously in the physical and emotional realms. It is the parents' transition as well as the students. This is a human story whether the child is going to college, or to supported employment, or some other endeavor. The role of the parent shifts and so does the experience of a young adult. Everyone is entering a new phase of life, which can be challenging, exciting, worrisome and joyful all at once. Ask any parent of a recent graduate. It's life.

What facts are known about life after high school for Iowa youth with disabilities? The source of this information is the Iowa DE's Annual Progress Report provided to the federal government as a part of the IDEA accountability requirements. The report is comprehensive. This information is specific to the transition topic. The data reported here is collected statewide and representative of all students with IEPs who were no longer in secondary school.

Iowa graduation rates from high schools with a regular diploma for students with and without disabilities in the 2012-13 school year:

- 72.7% of Iowa students with disabilities graduated from high school in four years. When viewed as five years of high school Iowa students with disabilities had an 80.7% graduation rate with a regular diploma.
- 87% of Iowa students without disabilities graduated from high school in four years with a regular diploma.

School dropouts of Iowa students with disabilities in 2012-13 school year was 21.4%. In the three previous years the percent was roughly between 5% and 7%. The increase is a matter of how the federal government required calculation of the dropout rates.

Post high school activities one year after graduation for students with disabilities in 2012-13 school year:

- 40.0% were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
- 63.3% were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school
- 93.2 % were enrolled in higher education or in some other post secondary education or training program; or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.

These data are from 2012-13. Information will change. What is important is to attend to the data, trends and how efforts are organized and applied in local schools across Iowa to support positive results in Iowa. This matters.

Future Plans. Everyday high volumes of traffic crossed the I-35W bridge over the St. Anthony's Falls in Minneapolis, MN. This is the second busiest bridge in Minneapolis. There was no reason for concern about safety since this had been a reliable route for decades. On August 2, 2007 during rush hour that story changed radically when the bridge collapsed. Thirteen people died and 145 were injured. That incident



City Bridges

triggered a nationwide concern about the safety of other U.S. bridges including those in Iowa. Catastrophic incidents are a hard way to learn a lesson. Yet that is what happened in Minneapolis. Perhaps this bridge incident could have been avoided with better oversight. The same can be said of transition planning as youth move from one environment to another.

Transition planning is embedded in the IEP process and begins prior to the student becoming age 18. In Iowa the process begins for students with an IEP at age 14. The process involves numerous components and decisions including:

- Development of appropriate measurable postsecondary goals;
- Goals are updated annually based upon an age appropriate transition assessment and transition services;
- As appropriate, the plan includes courses of study that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals;

- Annual IEP goals are related to the student’s transition service needs;
- The student is invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and;
- If appropriate, a representative of any participating agency is invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

As a part of the compliance review process a sample of students’ IEPs are reviewed each year to determine whether the expectations in IDEA and federal rules are being met. When a sample of IEPs was checked in Iowa during the 2012-13 school year, 68.2% met the expected standard of having *all* of these components for students age 14 and above. Arguably, missing some elements in the transition planning process could contribute to a “bridge collapse.” There were follow-up activities for the individuals whose IEPs did not meet expectations. One hundred percent of those IEPs were corrected to ensure that transition components were addressed.

Transition Process. Author Vivian Greene said, "Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning to dance in the rain." Barb Guy, Director of Special Education at the Iowa DE, noted this is the essence of transition planning. The purpose of the transition planning and implementation process is to provide for meaningful future activities following the K-12 years of schooling. With careful planning there can be better outcomes for young adults with disabilities entering adult life. When IDEA was reauthorized in the 1990s, the legislative language was strengthened to place greater emphasis on the role of parents, youth and IEP team’s engagement in the transition planning process.

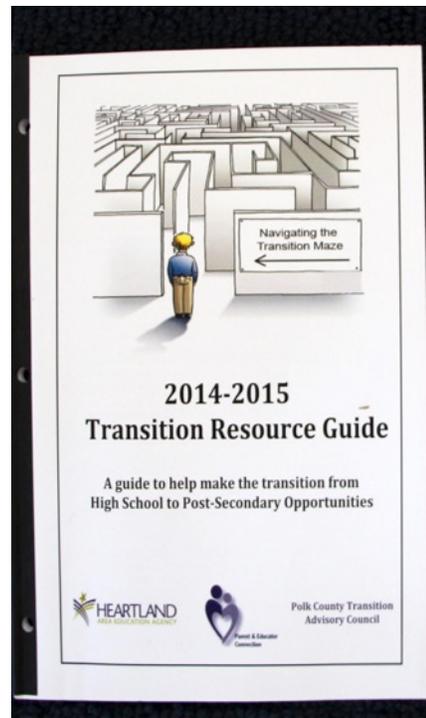
For parents and youth there are four broad considerations when engaged in preparation for life after high school: self-determination skills, living, learning, and working. A set of questions illustrates the thought processes behind the planning practices. These questions, stated in language directed to the youth, were accessed from a PEC document entitled *Transition Planning Tool*, developed by Heartland AEA 11 and the Des Moines Schools in 2015.

Living arrangements

- Where will I live and what supports will I need?
- What independent living skills do I have or need to develop?
- What social and recreational activities do I enjoy?

Learning

- What kind of work am I interested in?
- What work skills do I have or need to develop?
- Am I going to college, vocational school or other training?



Working

- What kind of job would I like?
- What work skills do I have or need to develop?
- What supports do I need?

Self-determination

- How do I make decisions and use community resources?
- How do I talk about my disability and what I need for support?
- What are my goals and what is my plan to reach them?

Self-determination, also known as self-advocacy in the common vernacular, simply means standing up for yourself and thereby helping others understand what you need and how it will help. By asking for what you want, letting your needs be known. Without this skill set an individual can become a victim of circumstances. Of course there is a social dimension of saying things in a way so others are receptive. It is a part of being effective when advocating for one's self. Although these self-determination skills could be learned at any point in life, it should be a part of the consideration during the school years. In the long run, self-determination skills can be as important as academic and work skills.

Having accommodations in high school is, more or less, something that just happens at the annual review. It is, of course, a function of an IEP team's decision, but the school is responsible for ensuring accommodations are implemented as a part of the individual's educational program. What about in the world of work or college? There is no comparable structure. It requires self-advocacy or is likely to be neglected.

- ▶ Dave Wood, an AEA regional director, recalled a high school student on the autism spectrum who was academically capable and likely to be successful in college with the rights supports. Beginning in middle school the IEP emphasized the development and coaching of self-advocacy skills. This began with prompts and guidance that were faded out when the youth could accurately express his needs in a clear, respectful and forthright manner. Then, when going to college, social anxiety could be a challenge so a private room was sought. Preferential scheduling of classes permitted a preparation for the day that would most likely lead to success. The college granted the request for using a computer for taking tests because this youth was an effective self-advocate. The IEP included an emphasis on fostering self-determination skills. It was instruction and support that lasted well beyond high school.

Transition begins with parent oversight in structuring IEPs and is carried through with students building skills and acquiring valuable experiences that can support them for decades in the world of work.

Implementing Transition Plans. Implementation of plans for an individual's life after K-12 education, has hundreds of faces appearing in hundreds of places. There is no single picture or story that can tell the tale. However, two stories are conveyed here to shine light on the reality of the transition process. Consider the four domains of transition: living, learning, working and self-determination.

Young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities can benefit from a structured support system on a college campus. Such a program is available at the University of Iowa called the REACH program. REACH stands for Realizing Educational and Career Hopes. The typical program is two years for individuals 18-25 years old, and is located in Iowa City and includes living in a college dormitory. The program is intended to help individuals enhance their independence and self-sufficiency. As in all college experiences, there is learning in classrooms providing skills and understandings applicable to a work environment. Outside of the classroom there is learning to function in a social network, learning to provide for self-care in hygiene, managing medications, engaging in recreation and effectively using technology. All of this happens with available supports. The REACH program began in 2007, but the inspiration for the program was outside of Iowa.



- ▶ Ronald Autry graduated from high school in the 1990s. His parents, Sally Pederson and Jim Autry, knew that continued learning would be beneficial for Ronald who is on the autism spectrum. The parents found the PACE (Professional Assistance Center for Education) program at the National Louis University in Chicago, Illinois where Ronald was later enrolled. PACE began in 1986. It is a residential-based program for young adults with multiple learning disabilities on a university campus. The program provides career skills and social experiences in an environment that supports the transition to independent living. Over 80% of the students completing the two-year certificate program are employed. Ronald was on campus and a part of the PACE program. He is now employed, living independently in an apartment, has a circle of friends, and is increasingly self-sufficient.

The learning was not limited to this student's experience. Sally Pederson took the initiative and began conversations at the University of Iowa to develop a similar program in Iowa. Now the REACH program is available to students with disabilities.

Some young adults with disabilities work in established businesses such as HyVee, Wells Fargo and community coffee shops. Another option is to start one's own business. Maureen Schletzbaum, Marissa's mother, conveyed the following story about her 20-year-old daughter who has Down Syndrome.

- ▶ Marissa is now the owner and manager of a greenhouse that sells plants and vegetables in Pleasantville, Iowa. The business is named the Straw Hat Farms. Marissa was active in Future Farmers Association in the Pleasantville high school, had the people skills to work well with others, and the work ethic to make

the business successful. The Schletzbaum family purchased land across from their home and built a greenhouse. The family plants gardens that produce a bounty of produce that is sold at farmers' markets, and at the greenhouse. Marissa is the owner of this busy and productive operation. As with all entrepreneurs, Marissa is a lifelong learner who continues to acquire skills and knowledge to sustain a profitable business.

These two stories reflect the individuality of each person. That is the essence of transition planning: helping individuals have the personal skills for success in work and life situations that matches their interest. As youngsters reach the age of adulthood it is also important to consider preparation for life in a world with appropriate legal and financial safeguards.

Financial and Legal Considerations in Adulthood.

Getting a child through the school years from birth to 18 is a tremendous accomplishment. For parents of a child with a disability that limits decision-making, the days of oversight may not end by reaching adulthood. For these families careful planning is needed to manage future financial and legal issues. When ongoing support is needed for decision-making a legal framework must be addressed to allow others to make decisions and take action on behalf of an adult with a disability. A brief review of these provisions:



Conservatorships are court appointed so that financial matters can be managed and decisions made on behalf of individuals with a disability. One example would be how to manage an estate.

Guardianships are appointed by the court to allow actions with nonfinancial matters such as granting permission for medical decisions for surgery, anesthetics, or other procedures.

Power of attorney is an arrangement designating someone with the authority, called attorney-in-fact, to do the actual management of someone's finances.

Representative Payee is a term describing an agency or person who ensures that financial matters are managed in a responsible manner on behalf of another person. This arrangement allows for cashing checks, paying bills, filing taxes, selling property or other matters of a fiscal nature.

This is an important part of the transition planning process for families where decision-making support is needed for the individual with a disability. As with other transition concepts, this process should be in place before the child reaches the age of majority and becomes an adult at age 18. An attorney can be of help to a family to ensure the right paperwork is filed and authority is established on behalf of an individual in need.

Supports for Families Engaged in Transition Planning. Perspectives on how to develop a robust and meaningful IEP for a child can be the focus of a conversation with other parents who have gone through the process. Other parents are a valued resource because they have experienced the process. The Parent-Educator Connection (PEC) is available in each AEA. A PEC representative can help with information, advice and perspectives on the transition planning process. Often special education teachers can be a resource. Also, community agencies working with special needs populations may be of assistance to parents. For example, Vocational Rehabilitation has counselors working with school populations and most colleges and universities have a disability coordinator who could be of assistance.

Another form of support is the transition fair. Such a program was arranged by an AEA in 2015. Learning about the transition process is seldom something parents grasp in a single event, reading or an IEP conversation. It is a process. The transition fair is yet another avenue for expanding knowledge for parents, special education teachers, community leaders, and AEA support staff.

- ▶ For Rhea Wright, an AEA special education consultant, transition is one of many responsibilities she deals with. She knows the importance of transition in the lives of families with youth with disabilities. A Transition Team of AEA and community professionals worked collaboratively on the transition fair in 2015, an event for parents and educators with choices of 12 presentations and 24 information tables about community services. The transition fair is a yearly event with the purpose of building transition capacity in each of the participating districts and assisting parents in the process. The truth is there is a plethora of services available, but navigating the system is not easy. Things like Medicaid and vocational rehabilitation continue to change and some services are created or dropped periodically. For example Workforce Development/Iowa Works is a site to assist students over the age of sixteen find summer employment opportunities, learn soft skills (like how to dress or interview for a job), and coordinate employment resources. ASKJAN.org/SOAR is a searchable online accommodations resource. It is a job accommodations network by disability that portrays what the government considers to be reasonable accommodations in the work environment. These resources, and many more are discussed at the job fair to assist parents of individuals with disabilities to successfully traverse the transition process.

The good news is there is often an array of services available for adults with disabilities in many communities. The bad news is that it can be a confusing maze that is difficult to navigate. The intent of transition planning is to reduce the number of twists and turns for everyone and pave the way for, hopefully, easier travel to the next adventure in living.

Continued Advocacy. Iowa Senator Chuck Grassley introduced a bill in 2015 entitled, *The Transition to Independence Act*, to initiate a demonstration project in ten states using Medicaid funding to support transition to employment. Senator Grassley's website states:

A key public policy goal is giving individuals with disabilities every chance to live and work as fully in the community as possible. Medicaid is one of the biggest programs that provides support for the disabled, and it doesn't do enough to achieve the policy goal. States have financial disincentives to do more under the current system. This bill would try something different. For participating states, it would change the incentives and help states do what they'd really like to do to better serve individuals with disabilities.



Senator Charles Grassley

As noted earlier, Senator Tom Harkin was instrumental in passing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the 1990s. Senator Grassley's legislation also is supportive of employment of individuals with disabilities. There is the need for continued legislative advocacy.

One way to develop a deep appreciation of what you have is to experience life without one of your senses. Consider what it would be like if you lost your sight? You would likely long to see the face of a loved one. What if you lost your hearing? You might yearn for the sounds of favorite music, not coming from memory but in life. We may not fully appreciate what we have until it is lost or diminished. Bill Hedlund told a story of, seemingly, stepping back in time, in a situation that did not have the societal benefits of the ADA. This story focuses on Bill's adult son, Dan.

- ▶ Dan Hedlund was struck with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in his 20s. MS is a progressive and debilitating condition. Dan remained active with work as long as he could. Despite being in a wheelchair he was a member of the adult church choir. When the choir planned a tour to Australia, Dan was a part of that adventure. Both of Dan's parents accompanied him on the tour. Bill and Rosemary Hedlund, were surprised to visit a nation where there was no thumbprint of the ADA. They often found restrooms in public facilities that did not accommodate wheelchairs. Street curbs were of traditional design and unfriendly to wheelchair travel. Bill Hedlund said, "We take it for granted but the rest of the world is not friendly to those with disabilities. It is extraordinary how the ADA has enhanced life."

Sometimes one has to step away from the advantages in life to recognize how remarkable our laws are for American citizens. Although much has been accomplished, there is more to be done with our collective advocacy. The quest for justice and fairness in the workplace takes ongoing political effort. Iowa's Senators, Harkin and Grassley, have been voices for this cause. Your voice also needs to be heard.

Whether a family has a child with a disability or without, it is not easy being a parent of a child completing high school, but no one ever said it would be. It does not matter if a child is off to Harvard, at the community college, employed or at home, the transition dance is underway. It is a time of life that is a mix of excitement and anxiety for everyone. The current reality show, *Dancing with the Stars*, is a cultural touchstone and an apt analogy for the transition process. Parent and young adults are the stars and the dance is underway.

The topic of transition can be consider from a totally different perspective, that of the professionals, our next topic.

Keeping the Faith. The phrase “Keeping the Faith” took on meaning during the civil rights movement in the 1960s. It referred to maintaining a focus on one’s values and priorities in difficult times. The topic at hand is job mobility for individuals in the professional community. They too are engaged in a process of transition. In special education “keeping the faith” is about serving others and not forgetting the roots of deep convictions for those in need.

There are a large number of selfless people included in this text who have spent their lives advocating and serving individuals with disabilities. There are others, equally dedicated, who have kept the faith by serving those in need but in a different capacity. We will look at three individuals who had worked as a part of Iowa’s special education system and then changed their titles and place of service but maintained a clear focus on service to others in need. Thus they remained consistent with their values while engaged in job mobility.

Phyllis Hansell began her career in special education as a school psychologist in the Des Moines CSD in the 1970s where she maintained a field-based assignment and provided teacher training and parent consultation as a means supporting student interventions to improve school success. Coming from a strong behaviorist program, Drake University, Phyllis was a pioneer and crusader for working with children with behavioral difficulties. Many years later applied behavior analysis would be the practice of the profession with Behavior Intervention Plans and the Response-to-Intervention model that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. After completing her doctoral program Phyllis took her high-level skills into private practice serving youth and adults with a wide range of needs. She also worked with Drs. W. Scott Wood and Phil Duncan as part of the Psychological Resources for Organizations that assisted businesses in enhancing their services. The Board of Psychology Examiners licensed her as a psychologist. Phyllis’ private practice was a logical step in continuing to help people. Professional skills have a wide applicability including work on community boards. Phyllis Hansell served on the Des Moines Human Rights Commission, Orchard Place Board of Directors, Orchard Place Foundation Board of Directors, Visiting Nurses Association Board, and the Youth Emergency Shelter Services Board. She is currently a member of the Iowa Psychological Foundation, a member of the Council for the Department of Human Services for the State of Iowa, a member of the Task Force for the Design of Mental Health Services for the Children of Iowa and a volunteer for Children and Family Urban Movement. Phyllis Hansell’s professional preparation allows her compassion to contribute to the community in many ways.

Deb Thomas’ work in schools began as a special education teacher with students with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities. Deb was also a teacher for students with behavior disorders. Her interest led her to a focus on broader systems of service. She was a consultant at Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center working at the inception of the Parent-Educator Connection (PEC) in 1985. The PEC was like no

other program in the United States and still performs in a unique and exemplary fashion. Deb was also at the forefront of the Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center working toward building practices for parents and educators to work together. She was also part of the work at Iowa Protection and Advocacy in the early stages of developing autism service in Iowa. Currently, and for the past thirty-five years, Deb has taught a course on Families, Educators and Disabilities for Drake University and is one of the State of Iowa's contracted mediators in resolving special education disputes. Although far from the K-12 classroom, Deb's determination to help parents of individuals with disability has never wavered. The location of where she works may have changed over time, but never her deep desire to help others.

Dan Reschly began his career as a school psychologist in rural Iowa in the late 1960s, before PL 94-142 when there were no mandates, no standards for good evaluations for those considered to be mentally retarded, a time when there was limited services for individuals with disabilities, and little funding for new programs. After receiving his doctorate he became a professor in the psychology department at Iowa State University (ISU). Dan's high energy and drive never retreated from ensuring that individuals with disabilities were given an opportunity for a level playing field in life. As a college professor at ISU a great deal of his work was devoted to nonbiased assessments, adaptive behavior assessments, behavioral consultation, and concern about overrepresentation of African Americans in special education programs. He promoted a paradigm shift from a focus on the *process* of special education to attending to student *outcomes*. He was an advocate for Iowa's educational reform (RSDS) and Response-to-Intervention practices. He also served as an Administrative Law Judge rendering opinions on 23 Iowa cases. Dan left Iowa to become the Chair of the Department of Special Education at Vanderbilt University. Dan is still in the game, but has refocused to another often-discriminated population. He is now using his expertise in evaluating and testifying for convicts on death row. Dan is sought out as an expert to determine the competence of individuals with intellectual disabilities on death row who, if intellectually disabled, are spared from the death penalty. Certainly this is a transformation in practice from serving as a school psychologist, but not a shift in keeping the faith to help those in need.

Some might think that those who worked in the Iowa special education system and then left that work are outliers. A perspective on that notion may be informative. In Malcolm Gladwell's book *Outliers* he states, "Once a musician has enough ability to get into a top music school, the thing that distinguishes one performer from another is how hard he or she works. That's it. And what's more, the people at the very top don't work just harder or even much harder than everyone else. They work much, much harder." Phyllis, Deb, and Dan demonstrated this continuous effort to increase skills through determined, sustained study, and thousands of hours of working with those in need. This is what high-end practitioners do to help individuals with disabilities and those with mental health issues. This reinforces Malcolm Gladwell's message, which

says, "Practice isn't the thing you do once you're good. It's the thing you do that makes you good."

As we have seen in these three examples, the skills and attitude that make a professional successful in one position can be the skills and attitude that make a professional successful in other positions. Intensity, compassion, and caring for others carries across work settings, job descriptions and titles, and years of dedicated service. The gratitude for their selfless service will never end.

Broad-Based Educational Reform

In the mid 1950s the process to modernize the way that commerce and citizens traveled would occur across America. This innovation was the U.S. interstate highway system. The enabling federal legislation was conceived as enhancing the nation's capacity to move armaments in a time of crisis. The bill was entitled *National Interstate and Defense Highways Act of 1956*. In the early days the popular name was The Eisenhower Highway, a nod to the leadership of the popular president who supported this reform. Iowa is at the crossroads of I-35 and I-80, intersecting in the Des Moines area. Is this related to education in general and special education in particular? Yes, in one way. The Interstate system is an example of large-scale transformation, which is comparable to reforming the statewide educational system.



Interstate Signs at an Iowa Intersection

It is worthwhile to consider the resolve required for this massive restructuring of a national highway system to occur. For this moment of reflection, a contrast of two approaches will be advanced then focus on the implications of education in Iowa. Decision-makers had to make plans for the route, north-south and east-west or some other arrangement. What is the timetable of construction? Who will do the work? Are the projected expenses reasonable? All of these are questions of merit.

It takes a certain level of political resolve to stay constant with decisions across time. I-80 spans the nation, coast-to-coast from New York to California. I-35 connects Minnesota and Texas. As you might imagine, most Chambers of Commerce wanted their towns and cities to be on the path and vigorously lobbied for redirecting the decisions to favor their location. It would be a long-term economic boom for those cities and towns along the interstate. It takes political resolve to stay constant with the point-to-point decisions and not waiver when there is political pressure to modify the initiative in a new direction. Large-scale projects almost always suffer from shifting direction resulting from politics. The people of the nation have ultimately benefited from the interstate system and the consistency that was required to stay the course. With the same sense of resolve, improving Iowa's statewide educational system requires an unwavering sense of purpose, clear vision, and concerted effort across time.

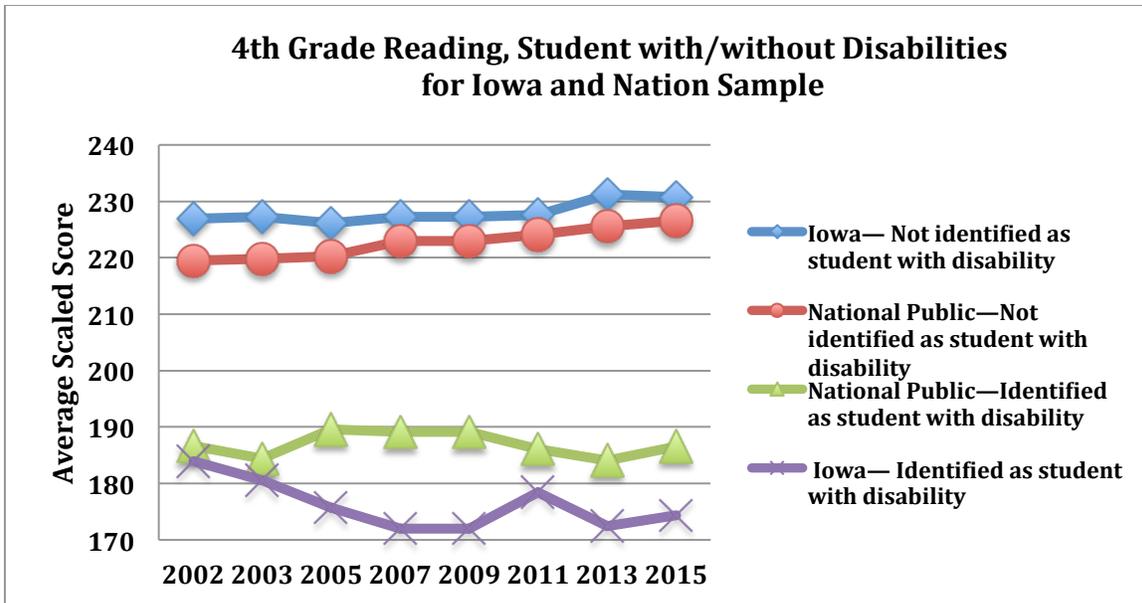
In this section there will be a brief review of current elements of educational reforms in Iowa: (a) accountability for student learning, (b) multi-tiered system of supports, (c) building capacity for behavior and mental health, (d) making sense of data, (e) teacher coaching, and (f) Collaboration For Kids. Lastly we will consider implications for services to students with disabilities.

Accountability for Student Outcomes. Accountability calls for evidence to inform judgments. There are two kinds of assessments, large scale and formative. Large-scale assessment would be the Iowa Assessments or Smarter Balance given annually to all students. The purpose is to determine if the entire student population is on target by demonstrating mastery of essential grade level objectives. Typically, most students will be making the desired progress. For those who are not on the path of meeting grade level expectations, they need some adjustment in the supports to ensure academic gains and they will need ongoing assessment to determine if the special help is effective in accelerating achievement. The second type is known as formative assessment. It is used to measure a student's growth to determine whether improvement is occurring as a result of personal instruction. The goal for all students is to make continuous progress through the district's curriculum. Formative assessment of a student's progress provides feedback about the individual's performance related to their educational goals. This information is commonly graphed to provide a clear picture of the effects of educational intervention for each individual.

How does Iowa stack up when compared to student achievement of other states? How is the achievement of Iowa students with disabilities compared with peers with and without disabilities? These are worthy questions. Academic achievement is, of course, only one indicator of success in educating students with disabilities, but it is an important consideration.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), in part, provides an answer. NAEP is referred to as the educational system's report card. The same assessment material and procedures are used in every state so this creates a compare and contrast situation. Education in America is multifaceted. The NAEP testing mirrors much of that subject matter including reading, math, science, writing, history, geography, economics, the arts and more. The sample size is carefully determined to be representative of the urban and rural makeup of each state and samples are large enough that there can be confidence in the findings and inferences about the implications. Further, NAEP includes students with disabilities and English Language Learners to ensure the results are representative of the entire student population. The group, students identified with disabilities, includes individuals with a 504 plan and those with an IEP, but does not include students whose IEP team determine they should have an alternate assessment.

In the following chart we see the comparison of two assessment groups: Iowa students and a national sample. Iowa student performance is consistently above the national average for students not identified with a disability. However, Iowa students are repeatedly below the national average for students identified with a disability. This pattern was consistent for all NAEP assessments between 2002 and 2015.



Data Provided By Iowa Department of Education

In a document by the Iowa DE entitled, *Rising to Greatness: An Imperative for Improving Iowa's Schools* (2011), data on Iowa's national standing is contrasted with other states. While Iowa's overall standing is reasonably positive, results for students with IEPs were among the smallest statewide gains in the nation. A comparison is made between the achievement gap of students with IEPs and those without IEPs. What is important is the discrepancy between the two groups. The discrepancy was calculated at two different times, five years apart, 2004 and 2009. Iowa had the nation's lowest level of bridging the gap between 2004 and 2009. In other words, every other state had been more successful in helping students with IEPs improve compared to grade level peers. Jason Glass, the state director of Iowa DE stated, "The persistence and size of the achievement gap for students with disabilities in Iowa is not just embarrassing—it is intolerable." This was a call to action. In part, the Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) was viewed as a way to help boost students' learning with an IEP. To enhance a statewide system takes considerable resolve, political will and cooperation in working out implementation practices. This is akin to the nation's work to transform the highway system into a network of interstate highways.

A component of the Iowa accountability system recently supported by the Iowa legislature is the requirement that students meet grade level expectations by third grade. This will take effect in May, 2018. If that level of mastery does not occur a student must be retained or they must attend summer school in an effort to improve reading skills prior to fourth grade. This may be an appealing logic to some during the elementary years, however educational research shows students who are retained, hence older than classmates, are likely to dropout of high school prior to graduation. While this may be viewed as accountability there may be potential long-term negative consequences that are undesirable. What is clear is that Iowa needs to improve students' academic results, which would require a different approach.

Multi-Tiered System Supports. In 2010 the Iowa DE undertook a massive challenge to use the best science known in education to enhance students' educational outcomes. This was a statewide reform. The process became known as the Multi-Tiered System Supports (MTSS). The purpose is to put in place a structure to support student learning with varied levels of assistance. One way to look at the scientific underpinning of the MTSS process is through an illustration from agriculture.

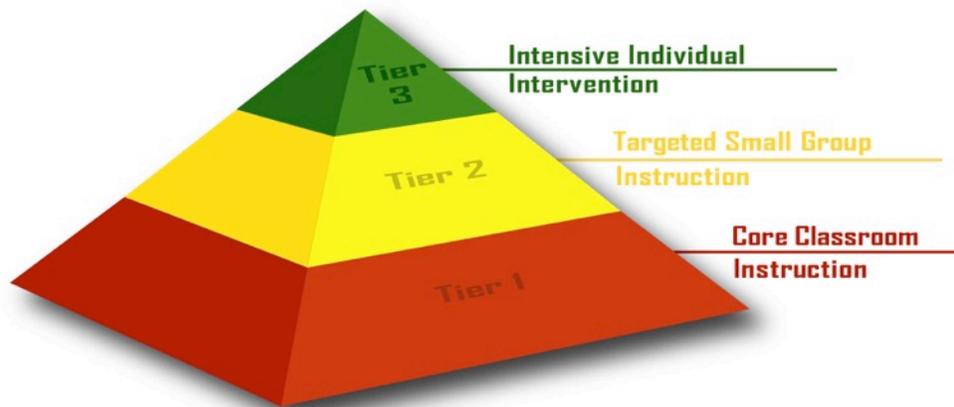
The work of Norman Borlaug, an Iowan, helped feed the world. He is credited with starting the Green Revolution in the 1970s. His production methods have been used in Mexico, India, Pakistan, Asia and Africa to increase crop yields and feed millions. Without these science-based practices, starvation would have been the fate of many in those countries. Borlaug was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his significant accomplishments. Currently the World Food Prize is given to individuals internationally who advance food production quality, quantity and accessibility. The headquarters for the World Food Prize is located in Des Moines, Iowa.



Dr. Norman Borlaug

Dr. Borlaug, as a biologist, applied systematic research methods to carefully determine the appropriate combinations of plant characteristics that would be disease resistant, high-yield, and semi-dwarf plants that could thrive in varied challenging weather conditions. It is an extraordinary example of applied science where thoughtful data analysis was applied to support valued results. The same scientific methodology has proven useful in education for improving student learning.

MTSS uses a three-tier framework for delivering educational services in Iowa. Services are matched with students' needs. The concept of a multi-tiered support system has a long history in society. It is based on the parsimonious proposition of providing as much help as is needed for success but no more. Iowa's healthcare system has a long established and successful tertiary system of care. Consider a patient with a cardiac condition. A family's first contact typically begins with the local physician who reviews one's health data and makes decisions. If additional assistance is needed, then the staff at a local hospital becomes involved, thus level two, and if beneficial results are not occurring because of that treatment then a third level of support occurs where even more specialized service occurs at the University of Iowa Hospitals, Mayo Clinic or other specialized resources. The purpose is always to determine and provide the level of support required for positive results. This same pattern applies in education with a comparable emphasis on solid scientific practices and evidence of need.



Three-Tier Model Used in MTSS

With MTSS, education has three levels of services. General education, Tier 1, is where the core curriculum is provided and is intended to benefit all students. When assessments indicate progress is not meeting expectations for a particular student then additional support is provided. Tier 2, the targeted level, provides additional assistance in the areas of educational need. Students with similar needs may be in small group instruction. When a student's learning requires even more assistance for educational progress, then intensive individualized supports are provided representing Tier 3. In some cases this may be in the form of an IEP with specially designed instruction or Tier 3 may be an array of other supports that do not involve special education because the individual does not have a disability. Some individuals may need intensive educational supports because of ELL, behavioral or social circumstances but no disability is present.

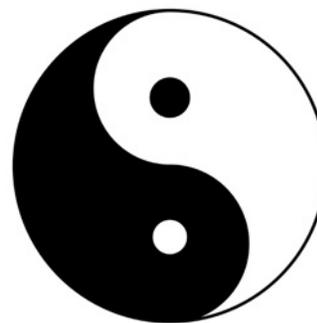
The movement between tiers one, two and three is determined by assessment results, both large scale assessment and formative assessment data, classroom information, and other relevant data so a team can make judgments about a student's need. Parents are an important part of the process in all three tiers.

MTSS involves screening of all students in early grades. Students are assessed three times a year to ensure each student is progressing. If the result indicated more support is needed it is provided in Tier 2. Formative assessment is used for students in Tier 2 and Tier 3. This allows parents and educators to have evidence that the educational assistance is beneficial and make intervention changes if progress is not occurring as expected. The educational interventions applied in Tiers 1-2-3 are to be based on proven curriculum and scientific evidence supporting that expectation.

Building Systemic Capacity for Behavioral and Mental Health Support

In Chinese philosophy yin yang portrays how apparent opposite or contrary forces are in reality complementary parts of a whole. The two parts are essentially interrelated and interconnected and part of one system, not opposites. The yin yang symbol is often depicted as a black and white swirl intertwined in a circular shape. Just as each 24-hour period has night and day, a time with darkness and brightness, it is understood to be on one continuum of light, a nondualistic perspective in which forces interact to form a whole.

In terms of educational experiences, a dichotomy of schooling may be artificially divided into two realms, academics and behavior, as though they were separate. The emphasis of the No Child Left Behind Act placed an extraordinary priority on student's attainment of academic skills and significant consequences if students did not demonstrate proficiency in the 3 Rs. In addition, Iowa has implemented a series of academic initiatives (Chapter 62-early childhood, Iowa Assessments, FAST assessment, MTSS, and a new definition of Dyslexia) that focus services toward primarily student achievement and not social/emotional well-being. With reduced LEA and AEA financial resources and school improvement academic targets measured by accreditation visits and metrics, schools and AEAs have put their resources where they can have the greatest academic achievement gain. But education is more than academics alone. Ideally, schooling is preparation for life in a community and thriving in a work environment. That calls for both academic and social skills for all students.



Yin Yang Symbol

In this section we will review how student behavior and mental health are an important focus within the Iowa education experience. This topic was addressed earlier in this text in the Decade of the 1980s. We pick up that conversation again with an examination of several practices occurring in the 1990s and then discuss current issues in behavior and mental health in the 2000s. One way to conceive of the work of schools is by inspecting broad-based initiatives that have been advanced to support Iowa students' growth and school success.

In the mid-1990s there was a strong push to expand the continuum of special education services that included a conceptual shift from a primary focus on individual students, to viewing the process within a larger systemic context of the school and community. This idea is expressed as a shift in understanding that special education was not a place, the special education classroom, but rather an array of services. Those services may originate within the school or community. This concept was supported by IDEA's priority to serve children with IEPs in the general education environment to the fullest extent possible. Iowa rules governing special education also amplified this perspective. This change acknowledged that general and special education teachers had a great deal to offer students with special needs and they were one system. Thus, the yin yang idea with complementary parts within a single purpose: the education of all Iowa children.

Jim Clark, a school social worker, talked about important changes in education in the way that pro-social behavior was addressed in Iowa schools.

- ▶ Behavioral issues should not have to compete with academic achievement concerns. Assistance to students in these areas should be complementary as help in one area can enhance the other. Focus on academics and pro-social behavioral issue can, and should, co-exist in a unified manner.

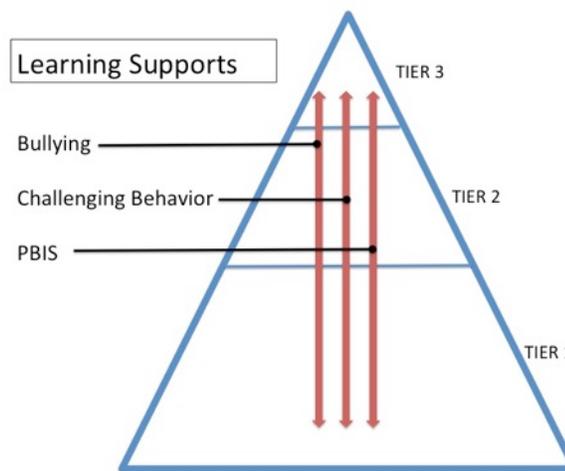
Using the collective energy of the Iowa DE, AEAs and local school districts, a series of initiatives was developed to supports schools at the systems level and

the whole child, rather than just one or two aspects of a learner’s life, academics and behavior. There was a strong commitment across many years to help build the capacity of Iowa schools, families, and communities to support the social, emotional, behavioral, and intellectual development of children. That commitment is exemplified in the Iowa Behavioral Initiative (1993-1998), Success4 (1998-2004), and Learning Supports (2002-present). While there were other programs occurring in Iowa schools, for example Character Counts, the writing in this section will be directed to three undertakings to illustrate the work to develop students’ social competence.

Iowa Behavioral Initiative (IBI) was a staff development course of action to help educators working with increasingly complex student behaviors, which challenged former intervention practices. The IBI provided general and special educators with practical, validated strategies for dealing with student behavior problems. IBI was largely a special education initiative based on sound research practices.

Success4 was a concerted effort to bring the strength of both general and special education together to support a system-wide effort for enhancing student well-being in four areas: social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs. Linda Miller was a champion in bringing community and state agencies together to work collaboratively for students. She was a tireless, creative, and visionary leader in advocating for building collaborative working relationships at the state and local levels. Linda had an amazing ability to engage services in a unified circle of influence with many community and state agencies skillfully brought together.

Learning Supports. In Iowa, Linda Miller’s ideas-to-action gained traction in Learning Supports, as did her push to include relevant community services in providing support for struggling students. Linda often called the interconnectedness of agencies working in concert “braiding.” Braiding services together allowed for resource allocation to occur in a collective manner, stronger than the individual components. Learning Supports is an umbrella term for a number of behavioral initiatives that includes Bullying, Challenging Behavior, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Mental Health, and others. In the 2000s these efforts are all connected to MTSS. Each of these initiatives can be depicted in the three-tier model used in MTSS. Each of these components can be found on Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3. For purposes of discussion we will highlight the components of Bullying, PBIS, Challenging Behavior, and Mental Health.



Learning Support Example Across Tiers

Bullying. The presence of bullying is unacceptable in Iowa schools. It epitomizes the notion of demeaning others, exerting power and disrespect for others. It

creates a culture of intimidation and threat. The result is a social climate lacking in a feeling of safety and where disregard for differences flourishes. Bullying is not just what happens in the schoolyard. A modern version includes cyber bullying where threats and derogatory statements about classmates are made. The content may relate to one's social status, sexual orientation, national origin, race, physical or mental disability, age, socio-economic status or other personal variables. In short, bullying is harassment. Just as harassment is intolerable in a work environment, the same is true for children and youth in Iowa schools.

Governor Terry Branstad signed Executive Order 86 that established a new office entitled The University of Northern Iowa Center for Violence Prevention and a policy regarding safe schools in Iowa. The focus of the Center is on bullying prevention for Iowa schools. Additionally, for two consecutive years there has been the Governor's Bullying Prevention Summit for Iowans to focus on this issue. Further support is noted by the inclusion of funding for bullying prevention in Governor Branstad's 2016 budget.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. PBIS originated from the pioneering work of George Sugai and Rob Horner at the University of Oregon. PBIS is a multi-tiered continuum of supports for all students in the school environment. PBIS is supported by the Iowa DE, AEAs and in many local schools. PBIS provides schools with the framework and organizational plan to promote and maximize academic achievement and behavioral competence for all students. According to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, there are over 21,000 schools implementing PBIS in the United States and other countries including Australia, Iceland, New Zealand, and Canada. At this date in Iowa, there are more than 550 schools implementing PBIS in 107 districts. In Iowa the work of PBIS is integrated into MTSS.

One of the key essential components of PBIS is the importance of implementing wraparound services. Lucille Eber is the Statewide Director of the Illinois PBIS Network and partner in the national PBIS Center that provides technical assistance and training across America. Lucille advocates for the wraparound process to ensure success for student with complex needs in the home, school, and community setting. Wraparound is an approach to bring multiple service providers together to plan, and be meaningfully engaged in student success. Teams can be composed of parents/caretakers, educators, and a variety of pertinent agencies such as juvenile justice, mental health, spiritual support personnel, and medical professionals. The central idea of wraparound is that all of us are smarter than any one of us. Capitalizing on the synergistic nature of people working together will enhance the probability of success over complex individual and family issues.

In the course of conducting interviews for this text the authors heard the following story, which highlights wraparound support to an adolescent girl.

- ▶ A seventh grade girl we will call Becky, was referred to the AEA team for presenting a painfully shy demeanor and difficulty in academic subject areas. Becky was reported to have poor self-care skills and few friends. The school counselor had great empathy for Becky and spent considerable time coordinating

support for her through her teachers. After a formal referral, the school psychologist was the first member of the team to work with Becky. She displayed little eye contact and fell asleep during a structured assessment. She was awoken only to nod off shortly afterwards. The psychologist and school social worker visited with Becky's mother and learned that she often fell asleep even during highly stimulating activities, like swinging in the swing in her backyard. Becky was referred and soon seen by a neurologist and determined to have narcolepsy. Medication for her condition resulted in rapid improvement in her attention and academic skill growth. It's difficult to retain friends and stay up with coursework when sleep is overwhelming, and now that didn't happen. Becky's mother had few financial resources and no support system. The school social worker had many contacts in the community and was able to secure volunteer treatment of Becky's acne from a highly skilled dermatologist, who provided the consultation free of charge. With treatment, Becky's complexion improved radically. The social worker also made arrangements to have Becky's hair professionally cut as her mother's financial situation had not allowed that luxury. Meanwhile, the special education consultant provided pre and post evaluation of Becky's academic progress from the beginning to the end of the school year. Becky had been placed on an IEP at the beginning of the year but quickly demonstrated she could catch up with targeted instruction. She was staffed out of special education within one year. The combination of medical treatment for Becky's narcolepsy and skin condition, services of a cosmetologist to help Becky with her hair and make-up, and academic assistance, resulted in a dramatic change in Becky's life. Other students discovered she was fun to be around now that she was alert and engaged in her surroundings, and Becky's popularity surged. The school counselor maintained close contact with Becky, all of her teachers, and her mother to ensure strong support continued. Stories of this level of pronounced success can occur and are celebrated. Many skilled hands working together can change a life for the better and forever. They did just that in this situation. This illustrates how wraparound services can be coordinated to the benefit of a child, school and family.

School districts willingly welcome all students into their doors with no reject policy based on specific behavioral parameters. A vast majority of students exhibit little appropriate behavior other than the normal growth pains of maturing and learning how to fit into the world. But that is not to say there are not students who need help. There are students that are distressingly shy that need compassionate support, like the example above. And on the other end of the continuum there are students who demonstrate outright disruptive behavior that requires intensive assistance. Next we will address those students who have significant challenging behavior.

Challenging Behavior. Challenging behavior was addressed earlier in this text in the Decade of the 1980s in the section on Assisting Students with Behavioral and Mental Health Issues, and in the Decade of the 1990s in the section on Building Systemic Capacity for Behavioral Support. In the 2000s challenging

behavior supports are connected to MTSS. Early efforts to coordinate challenging behavior for Iowa was lead by Sue Baker, with an exemplary clinic and training site lead by David Wacker at the University of Iowa, and DE coordination by Barb Rankin. These leaders provided support for professionals statewide in AEAs and local school districts to enhance their important efforts with children and schools. Sean Casey currently coordinates challenging behavior efforts for the Iowa DE and consults and trains educators across the state. Sean is creating capacity and sustainability by taking challenging behavior training to the professional staff in the field. He has trained teams in all nine AEAs and trained teams in nine of the largest districts in Iowa, for a total of 18 teams and 95 individuals. Collectively the nine districts hold 23% of the student population in the state. In addition to discussing the challenging behavior and intervention possibilities at all three tiers of MTSS, Sean is targeting those students requiring the most intensive support at the very top of the tiered system of support. Sean calls this area of intense need the Tippy Top.

The most frequent challenging behaviors at the tip of the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) are aggression in the school setting, disruption in the classroom, and self-injurious behavior such as head banging. These three behavior categories are problematic to be sure, but there are other concerns that rise to the top of the pyramid that are just as serious and can be life threatening or life altering if not ameliorated at an early age. Feeding disorders are just such an example. Let's take a look at a case illustration of a child with a feeding disorder.

- ▶ Sean described a two-year-old male child, we will call Cedric, who was not eating and whose body weight was below the first percentile. The boy took in 639 calories a day (60% of needs met) before the treatment plan. Prior to Sean establishing a behavior intervention plan the medical community ran numerous tests to be sure there were no medical reasons for Cedric's lack of feeding. These tests included checking for allergies, constipation, ability to safely swallow, and many others factors. Once it was established there where no ongoing medical complications, Sean met with the parents to outline the behavior plan. Sean then went to the child's home to eat dinner with the family every night for 15 consecutive days. This allowed Sean to model and run the protocol for shaping Cedric's eating behavior and directly collect data. At the conclusion of the 15-day treatment Cedric was eating 1021 calories a day, which was 100% of needs met. An incredible success story.



Feeding problems are not necessarily the first thing people might think about when talking about challenging behavior and the tip of MTSS, but it is a critical behavior that must be shaped without delay and with a high level of skill. The incredibly rapid brain growth during the early years of life make finding children and treating them especially important.

Challenging behavior at the “Tippy Top” is not something that is readily responsive to PBIS, nor is it a mental health issue. It requires a great deal of expertise. And building that level of expertise across Iowa is exactly what Sean Casey is doing. Iowa thanks you, Sean.

It can appear difficult to tell the difference between individuals who exhibit maladaptive behavior and those with serious mental illness. But it’s highly critical to understand the specific difficulty the individual is experiencing. Determining the difference between the maladaptive behavior and true mental illness makes a substantial difference in how the problem is addressed and who might be involved in providing assistance. When behavior issues rise to the point of being a disability, they are most appropriately addressed through the use of a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), based on a good Functional Behavioral Analysis (FBA) within the IEP. Mental health issues, by their very nature, are more difficult to diagnose and treat.

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Mental Health. In the movie, *As Good As It Gets*, Melvin Udall is a novelist with a sharp tongue and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). At first his bizarre antics and verbalizations are entertaining, but quickly become annoying. The viewer begins to cringe at his self-defeating rituals and feel sorry for the confined life he certainly leads. Over the course of the story he works to control his OCD, but acknowledges that it is a lifelong battle he must continually address. Some mental illness can be similar to a physical illness like diabetes, in that it never really goes away, but a person can learn skills to minimize the illness’s effect on their life. People with mental illness may require therapeutic support and medication to maintain a healthy life and acquire self-acceptance and self-advocacy. Because of its insidious nature, mental illness can go undetected and deeply hidden. In some cases the mental illness only becomes apparent when the individual strikes out with seemingly unpredictable violent acts.

In schools, shy and withdrawn students may be overlooked because they are quiet and don’t disturb others. Other students may exhibit outrageous attention gaining behavior as a way to mask the genuine mental illness they are suffering. In these cases, these individuals need help. School-based mental health practitioners such as school psychologists and school social workers can provide assistance with determining if the student will benefit from therapeutic intervention in the community. Some students can benefit from short-term counseling in the school setting, while others require more rigorous long-term therapy and pharmaceutical support from outside services. Working with students’ parents to determine appropriate courses of action is an important

aspect to assisting students with mental illness. Like most disabilities and illnesses, the earlier the intervention begins the better the odds for success.

As a component within Learning Supports, mental health issues are often successfully addressed through a wraparound approach of engaging relevant agencies in a team approach to help students struggling with social, emotional issues.

- ▶ Ally was born into generational poverty with concomitant low self-esteem and mild depression. By middle school she was acting out enough that her rural school worked to get her placed in a classroom for students with significant behavioral disorders in an urban setting. Ally had little parental support and it was rare that her mother would attend any school meeting, no matter how important. The school counselor did a great deal to coordinate support within the school setting. Along with significant behavioral concerns, Ally demonstrated a mild intellectual disability, and struggled in most academic areas. In addition to the specially designed instruction for her behavior and academic concerns, Ally received support through the school psychologist. The psychologist assisted Ally in sorting through choices she was making, and helped Ally learn self-advocacy skills. The psychologist also helped make contacts with outside agencies such as social services and a community mental health center to help Ally with her depression. Ally continued to contact the school psychologist throughout high school and early adulthood. The strong relationship bond kept Ally grounded for many years beyond public education and helped her adapt and assert herself when needed.

The three-tiered system of supports in Iowa has great promise for multidisciplinary and multiagency collaboration for student health and prosperity. Thanks to the tenacity and vision of pioneers like Carl Smith, Jim Clark, Linda Miller, and Sean Casey, the system continues to evolve. A key to interagency collaboration has been the strong knowledge base and practice skills of school social workers, who have historically come to work with a family systems approach to problem solving. Their work is greatly valued.

Futurists predict more mental illness – with fewer mental health services, more families in crisis – in rural and urban communities, and more cultural and language diversity in even the smallest of school districts. There is also a change in the kind of poverty children are experiencing. In the past people who grew up in poverty experienced generational poverty with the resiliency learned from ancestors. The new poverty is hitting families with little skill or experience to cope with their lack of resources. The combination of increasing mental illness and poverty paints a bleak picture for the children of these families and the concomitant behavior and learning issues in schools that can emerge from disheveled lives. Building systemic capacity for behavioral and mental health support will continue to be important work for educators and related community services. Just as in yin yang philosophy, it is the combined strength of schools and other parts of the community that is needed to support children’s collective academic and social success. It takes a village.

Making Sense of Student Data. Educators are reviewing student performance data based on instruction in Iowa’s three-tier model: district-wide, school-wide, classroom, and individual learners. Deriving meaning from these assessments in order to support student academic success is a challenging task.

Eddy Merckx had 525 cycling victories over his cycling career with eleven Grand Tour victories—a record that still stands. He was called “The Cannibal” because he rode flat out, even when far ahead of his competitors. He is commonly regarded as the greatest cyclist of all time. When asked about his training and bicycle components he is credited with saying: “Don’t buy upgrade, ride upgrade.” He needed no gauges to improve his performance; he just rode 100% from the beginning to the finish line.

There is only one Eddy Merckx, but even he might be tempted 40 years later by the wide array of instrumentation available today to monitor and improve cycling performance. Current integrated systems are feather light and easily installed on a bicycle. For example, one system is GPS-enabled, has cycling maps, shows heart rate, has bike speed/cadence detection, a barometric altimeter, and power meter that measures wattage of balance between the left and right leg to determine differentiation for training purposes. Highly refined measurements and monitoring performance is incredibly helpful in improving cycling endurance, as it is for increasing running speed, and enhancing student academic achievement.

Let’s take a look at making sense of the copious amount of data available to schools regarding student performance from such data sources as NCLB accountability, Iowa Assessments, and FAST. The importance of individual, school-wide and district-wide data has become a high priority. There is a balance between having the right information to make data-based decisions and having so much data that a person can get unwittingly caught up in analysis paralysis. Fortunately there are people at the Iowa DE, the AEAs, and local districts that can sort through what is critical and what is not. We will examine this from the macro level at the Iowa DE, and then the working partnership of the AEAs and districts. The intent of this section is to highlight the supports currently in place to assist with making good data decisions, not to discuss the specific intricacies of the different data sets.

Connor Hood is a consultant in school improvement at the Iowa DE. His work involves examining the extraordinary amount of data generated by various students’ assessments in Iowa and cross mapping that with the reporting requirements for the federal department of education and the Iowa legislature. Connor’s breadth of scientific training in psychometrics and statistics is a great asset to this task. Connor analyzes and sorts the data, provides professional development, and helps set up systems that communicate the information to AEAs and districts.

Jerry Gruba is a regional director in an AEA. Jerry’s responsibilities include assisting districts, and the AEA staff assigned to these districts, to understand and use data in meaningful ways to make decisions and improve student instruction. To facilitate data literacy Jerry works closely with AEA colleagues and district staff to pull data together and build reports for educators and the school board. Jerry and other AEA and district colleagues join in building “Data

Days” during which teachers examine and understand the data that is relevant to the instructional decisions they are making. Every effort is made to focus on how student data fits into the Multi-Tiered System of Supports for determining appropriate student assistance. It is clear that serving as a teacher in this day and age requires a great deal of data knowledge. It’s also clear that there are many supports available from district personnel, AEA staff, and the Iowa DE to help carry the load.



Connor and Jerry are two excellent examples of the resources ready and able to help others use data effectively.

Student performance data in the MTSS directs attention to where instruction is needed. Improving and refining educational practices is enhanced by teacher coaching.

Teacher Coaching. The Teacher Leadership Compensation (TLC) legislation that passed in 2013 focused on two improvements: raising teachers’ starting salaries and providing a mechanism for coaching teachers. The clever abbreviation, TLC, is a clear connotation of caring intentions. Raising the salary floor to \$33,500 helped Iowa become more competitive in recruiting excellent educators and enhancing retention of existing teachers. Coaching is intended to provide support for teachers who need assistance in improving student outcomes. Effective teaching, classroom management, motivation for learning and differentiated instruction are complex undertakings. Yet, every day in every school, teachers are asked to engage in that challenge. At times, teachers need support and coaching in the acquisition and refinement of skills and instructional strategies. The TLC process is Iowa’s answer to this need. It is a positive complement to MTSS.

Coaching is a process where skilled teachers help colleagues refine their knowledge, teaching strategies and ability to analyze data in order to improve instruction. The ultimate goal is to produce improved results.

The TLC coaching process has an important role in special education just as it does in any other part of the school system. An outstanding example of teacher coaching is provided by Roxanne Cumings, Executive Director of Student Services in a fast growing district with expanding programs for individuals with disabilities.

- ▶ The Waukee School district provided a teacher coach for special education several years prior to TLC legislation. The position was under the direction of the Executive Director for Student Services and was so successful that the Waukee CSD expanded to have four teacher coaches for their growing special education department starting in the 2015-16 academic year using TLC

monies. They call these highly qualified individuals Special Education Instructional Strategists, to separate them from the term Teacher Coaches, used in general



Coaching

education.

These

instructional

strategists work directly with special education teachers to model classroom instruction, structure classrooms for student success, demonstrate how to use specific materials, discuss techniques for managing several associates in a classroom, and engage in problem solving with special education teachers and teams. The strategists are considered peer mentors and do not have personnel evaluative responsibilities in their job descriptions. This is a real advantage. Teachers need not worry about confiding their misgivings or skill deficit areas because they know the strategists are to support them, not evaluate them. The strategists work closely with their school district teachers and AEA partners.

MTSS, data analysis and teacher coaches are all part of a reform effort to enhance instruction and student learning in Iowa. For a statewide effort to be truly effective it requires coordination across the multiple agencies working towards that end. Iowa is addressing this important need.

Iowa's Collaboration for Kids. A sure way to undermine a potential idea is to have competing interests between major parts within a system. An unfortunate example is the United States Congress in 2015 where political ideologies overrode more important purposes, such as cooperation to enhance services for the nation's citizens. In this circumstance the fight becomes the purpose rather than the service. This phenomena can happen within corporations, businesses, and sports teams when people vie to be the top dog. It can also happen in education where rivalry surpasses a larger purpose. This happens in education when state initiatives are given verbal support but no actual change happens in the AEAs or local schools. Conversely, when local schools advance ideas that receive no significant support by other parts of the overall educational system then success falters. The result is small improvements at best. The issue of effectively educating every child deserves full support. The concepts of MTSS, student achievement, and improving teaching and learning are critical to Iowa's long-term success and overall societal well-being. Those are causes worthy of collective effort.

An enduring strength of the Iowa educational system is a three-level structure of governance supporting students and educators: the Iowa DE, AEA and the Local Education Agencies (LEA). The AEA's have been working closely together to ensure that students in one area of Iowa have access to the same level of supports for their educational success as students in other areas of the state. This could not happen without involvement and support of the Iowa DE or the full participation of LEAs. It was recognized by leaders that significant statewide improvements in achievement would take a concerted coordinated effort by all parties. In the absence of this cooperation various entities within the system can become accidental adversaries by having competing priorities. This crucial awareness and dedication to enhancing student learning led to an initiative called Collaboration for Kids (C4K). The intention is to align the state, AEA and local leadership in a harmonious manner, not by legislative edict, but by volition. The process provides a forum to bring educational leaders together to set a common direction. A set of agreements were identified to provide the beginning point for Iowa's C4K work:



Collaboration For Kids

- Collective commitment across AEA's and the DE to work as a unified system;
- Agreement that the role of the DE is to set direction and lead, and the role of the AEA's is to implement;
- Agreement that LEAs are integral, and need to be included in C4K; and
- Commitment to focus efforts and resources on selected priorities.

The initial target for this collaborative effort is early literacy. Cindy Yelick, an Associate Administrator and executive director of special education for an AEA, is highly involved in the C4K. Cindy said that literacy was chosen as the first priority because it is so important to students' success, the knowledge base for enhancing reading is strong, and the AEA's have skillful staff to help this effort move forward. The potential for positive effects is high and school districts are clamoring for more support in this area. This initiative is also compelled by expectations in NCLB, IDEA, and the Iowa Legislature. The oversight group, made up of Iowa DE, AEA and local districts, reviewed relevant achievement data from the Iowa Assessment and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The focus for action involves four elements.

- Standards and Curriculum (the what)
- Educator Quality (the who)
- Multi-Tiered System of Support (the how)
- School Improvement (assessing quality and need for improvement)

There is, of course, more to this system-wide process than a sense of co-existence. Collaboration is an active process of working together. Paula Vincent, Chief Administrator of an AEA, and a member of the Oversight group, provided a perspective on C4K.

- ▶ What can happen when there is a new governor, director of the Iowa DE, a district superintendent or building principal? The priorities may shift in a dramatic fashion. This can be considered

political whiplash. As in a car, whiplash happens when a vehicle is abruptly stopped and one's head and neck may be forced in a different direction. It is not a situation conducive to good health in a car or an educational enterprise, but it happens too often. Iowa's educational leaders took action to avoid such a situation. It calls for interagency cooperation, collaboration and unwavering commitment. Consistency in effort matters to long-term success for students and for organizations. This is a long-term undertaking. That's how system-wide success is achieved.

Collectively there has been an array of educational reforms established in the past five years. With C4K there is an expressed willingness to remain focused on a common direction for a sustained period of time. Implementation of MTSS to support increased achievement is the focus for all students along a continuum of needs, including students with disabilities. Although literacy was selected to be the first target for support, math, and behavior will be address in the future. This will include universal screening and establishing a vetting process for early adopters.

Implications of Reforms for Students with Disabilities. MTSS is designed to determine students' needs, monitor individual progress and adjust the levels of support determined by student performance. That overall process aligns with the purpose and philosophy of special education. In addition to C4K's ongoing literacy and future work in the area of mathematics. Other areas of student need exist for some students including transition from school to employment, social skills, life skills and work skills. It is essential to ensure all students are included in the scope of reform. This is important for those providing coaching and leaders in C4K. It is critical to have ongoing assessment of the system's success. Math and reading are among the important indicators but not the only ones.

The coaching process, as part of MTSS or basic provision of special education, can be a viable way to assist teachers on a day-to-day basis in enhancing the skills needed to make sense of behavioral and academic data in a classroom and school. Iowa is constantly changing, seeking new ways to improve students learning and living. The challenge is to keep up with the changes occurring across Iowa.

Keeping Up

There was a time in rural Iowa when telephones had crank handles to ring the operator who would connect two parties via a centralized switchboard. In this same era, in some urban settings newsboys stood on corners with an arm full of newspapers for sale to provide citizens with information about breaking news. Those days are long gone. It is a digital world with instant updates on cell phones, e-mail, and Skype or FaceTime for long distance face-to-face conversations. Special educators in Iowa are fortunate that the Iowa DE made the commitment to establish a link for regular communication for personnel serving students with disabilities.

E-news. Jim Flansburg is the editor of *Each and Every Child*, a free e-newsletter with statewide readership. Jim works in the communication department at the Iowa DE. He has a solid background in journalism and he brings an insatiable curiosity to the task, a journalist's passion for sharing information, and an effective writing style that connects with Iowa readers on topics of interest for those concerned with special education.



Each and Every Child is a proud part of Iowa's evolution. This publication began in 2010 with the encouragement and support of Marty Ikeda, who was at that time the director of special education for the Iowa DE. The intent of the e-letter is to promote and disseminate information about educators who were providing effective services for children with disabilities. In essence, it highlights the people and places in Iowa that are closing the gap in academics and other issues of importance for children with disabilities. This is the fifth volume of the e-newsletter, which has nine issues per year. Recent topics include the role of fluency and comprehension in reading, the Iowa Core and Essential Elements, specially designed instruction, transition to work, and other matters of import to principals, teachers and parents.

The upside of the digital age, in this context, is the timely distribution of information. There are no telephone switchboard operators or delays in printing and distributing news. The message is always about assisting others in supporting educational outcomes for each and every child because that is our enduring goal in special education. Jim Flansburg expands our world by assisting Iowans in knowing about the good work of others in the statewide special education community.

Language Matters. The story of David and Goliath is one where inequality in size is overcome by faith, courage and determination. In this case the "David" was a nine-year-old girl named Rosa Marcellino with Down syndrome who did not like the designation "retarded". The category in federal and state law was mental retardation. Rosa and her family worked with their congressional representative from Maryland. The bill was introduced for Congressional action by Senators Barbara Mikulsk (D-MD) and Michael Enzi (R-WY) in 2009. This legislation required federal agencies in health, education and labor to use the term "intellectual disability" rather than "mental retardation." This legislation would impact IDEA, ADA, vocational rehabilitation and health care. President Obama signed the bill into law in 2010. Later, other federal agencies, such as Social Security Administration, shifted to the term intellectual disabilities in its listing of impairments. The pejorative label of retardation went down like Goliath. The legislation became known as the Rosa Law, a step towards social respect.

In the 1930s-40s-50s the language for describing persons with intellectual disabilities had a derogatory connotation. Terminology was based on ranges of

intelligence quotients (IQ) with three categories: idiot for IQs below 25, imbecile IQs 25-50, and moron for IQs 50-75. These terms became derogatory colloquial expressions. This schema for categorizing individuals was replaced with the term mental retardation and now intellectual disabilities.

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) uses the word intellectual disability. The designation is based on assessment of intelligence, adaptive behavior and age of onset. Further, instead of a deficit model to express the severity of the condition, the nomenclature of intellectual disabilities should describe the supports individuals need to enhance their capabilities and skills. This is a strength-based approach.

Rosa's Law is another illustration of the evolution of language and shared respect for citizens in Iowa and America.

An Ongoing Life Experience: 2010-15

Rick Samson, the individual we have followed in this text across decades, is 47 years old as of this writing in 2015 and has grown much as a person and disabilities rights advocate. The authors made a decision at the onset of interviewing people for writing this history of special education in Iowa, to tell the story through the voices of those who advocated for individuals with disability, and not to interview those who were the recipient of special education services. But Rick was unique and special. He received special accommodations and modifications throughout his schooling including college. However, he also consciously chose to become an advocate. Rick continues to take classes at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) and serves on the Board of Directors for Central Iowa Independent Living, the Governor's Council for Developmental Disabilities, and the Iowa Olmstead Consumer Taskforce. The Olmstead taskforce, with 21 members and an additional 21 agencies, works to expand integrated employment options for people with disabilities, builds community provider capacity, and works to reduce in-home supports and services waiver waiting lists. Rick is outgoing and everyone in his living environment knows his name and greets him with smiles and words of welcome. He continues to live independently in his own apartment, with the aid of personal care givers who currently come four times a day to help him with self-care activities. Rick says he really enjoys the solitude when alone and describes this as going into his "bubble" where he is comfortable. Rick's smile and perseverance have taken him a long way. His advocacy for others is a model for us all.

Disability Awareness — Decade of the 2010s

The mid 2010-decade includes extraordinary tales of advocacy arising with the cause Black Lives Matter, a social movement occurring because of a string of tragedies in sites including Missouri, New York City, Chicago and South Carolina. Each of these incidents called into question the use of power by law officers directed towards African Americans. After an incident at the University of Missouri the student body reacted to the perceived insensitivity of racial issues on campus with a hunger strike, boycott by the black members of the football team, and protests. This culminated in the resignation of the university's president and chancellor. The key idea here is the advocacy for

social justice in America. What happens to one oppressed group, in this case racial minorities, impacts other groups, including individuals with disabilities because it is all the same society.

In the entertainment industry, two recent blockbuster movies, both nominated for best picture, reflect the growing acceptance of persons with disabilities within the larger framework of human experience in America. *The Theory of Everything* (2015) is about Stephen Hawking's extraordinary life and work, and *The King's Speech* (2013) focused on King George VI who experienced severe stuttering blocks. Movies such as *American Sniper* reflect the mental health challenges of soldiers returning to America. The suicide rates for veterans was a concern and Congress called for the Veterans Administration to improve the availability of mental health services. Awareness of disabilities is also noted in the expansion of adults with dementia receiving long-term care in America's health system. While this is not specific to special education, it does embrace and expand on the population that is considered to have a disability, albeit in later life. More and more families are learning that the occurrence of a disability is a matter where care and dignity are crucial. That has implications for how we treat our youth and the education they are provided.

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports is Iowa's effort to prevent learning difficulties from going undetected and provide appropriate levels of educational assistance at the earliest time. The emphasis on monitoring progress of students' learning ensures that educational interventions are producing the desired results or other interventions are considered and implemented. C4K is Iowa's effort to unify educators' commitment to enhancing learning for all children and youth.

The ADA recently celebrated 25 years of contributions to the American culture. The ADA is a living legacy to many whose enduring advocacy made this possible, including Senator Tom Harkin. The ADA is highly valued by another generation of veterans as America's wounded warriors return from service and seek employment that may require adaptation or modification to permit them to function effectively in the workplace. It appears that the culture of America can become more inclusive. Heightened awareness of disabilities is foundational to the continuation of work that lies ahead.

Disability awareness, understanding, and services have expanded significantly in the past 50 years. The need for advocacy continues with the partnership of parents, professionals, and citizens who champion the cause of inclusivity and excellence in education.

Continuation of New Beginnings

In the blockbuster movie, *Titanic*, Lewis Bodine, a staff member of the excavation ship, narrates an animated sequence of the *Titanic's* sinking on a TV monitor, to a survivor of the *Titanic*, Rose. He discussed the sinking in technical terms of bulkheads, deck designations, tonnage, speed in knots, and hours of the day. After the technical presentation, Rose says, "*Thank you for that fine forensic analysis Mr. Bodine. Of course, the experience of it was...somewhat different.*"

Rose goes on to tell the wonderful, heartfelt, and personal experience of living the adventure firsthand. She was there and spoke of the nuances and realities that no history book or data set could address. After she told her story, Brock Lovett, the person in charge of the excavation replied, "*Three years, I've thought of nothing except Titanic; but I never got it...I never let it in.*" He never acknowledged the real story of people, the story that statistics and technical data, cannot reveal. It is the experience of people living the history that was the hidden treasure that made the story resonate.

Similarly, when the authors began the excavation of the evolution of Special Education in Iowa we did not know the depth of knowledge that was to be discovered. We learned, through interviewing the people who had lived the adventure, and who had created the future, the incredible story of developing services for children with special education needs. We have all benefited from their wisdom and hard work, and are indeed beholding to these pioneers of special education services.

The evolution of special education in Iowa is the story of people who exhibited, and in many cases are still demonstrating, a sustained passion for helping others and a willingness to take personal risks. Helping improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and their families drives their work and life. What follows are two sections, then and now.

Then. With a quick turn of the head, we look back on six examples of Iowans who have been game changers. Of course, six others could easily be added to this list, and six more and six more. The point is to illustrate a sample of excellence in Iowa's past.

Helen Henderson was rightly dismayed with the segregation and isolation of persons with disabilities and she took action. Helen Henderson was a parent who became an advocate for bringing individuals with disabilities into the community and out of institutional wards. She became an early professional whose voice helped shape legislative initiatives and supported

justice for those whose voices were not being heard. Helen Henderson changed Iowa for the better.

Frank Vance was a special education administrator in the Iowa Department of Education for over 30 years. Frank's leadership style led to uniting parents and professionals into a unified effort to explore new ways to move the state system forward. The goal was to enhance services for children with disabilities and their families. Progress occurred because of his leadership and advocacy. Frank Vance changed Iowa for the better.

Sylvia Piper, as a parent, saw firsthand the challenges and opportunities for individuals with disabilities. As a professional she led an initiative, Iowa Protection and Advocacy (now Disability Rights), that assisted others in need. Other parents who became leaders, like Paula Connolly, Mary Watkins and Deb Samson have also led organized efforts to support families in making their dreams come true. Sylvia Piper changed Iowa for the better.

Curt Sytsma is an attorney who has often represented parents of children with disabilities that were advancing an issue that was the opposite of what the state, district, or school personnel were proposing. Curt's knowledge of the law was well respected and his passion for fairness and seeing issues from multiple sides was evident. There is a distinct benefit in active exploration of alternatives. He made people pay attention. He made people improve their practices. Curt Systma changed Iowa for the better.

Sally Pederson is an advocate with the deep understanding of families raising a child with a disability. She and her husband, Jim Autry, have done this. It was not enough to draw the circle of excellence to include only one child, she redrew the boundaries to include others. Sally helped found Homestead Inc. to serve persons with autism, helped establish REACH at the University of Iowa, served on the State Special Education Advisory Panel, was a leader in the state Autism Society, and was Lieutenant Governor of Iowa. Sally Pederson changed Iowa for the better.

Tom Harkin has influenced the quality of disability services and employment opportunities nationwide. He is an effective advocate for the disability community and secured the necessary cooperation and collaboration from other legislators to pass the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act. Tom Harkin changed Iowa and the nation for the better.

Mark Twain once said, "History doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme". Or as is often said: "If you don't know history, you're doomed to repeat it." But in the case of the professional and personal characteristics of the leaders in special education maybe we can learn a great deal that should continue in the future.

The journey of talking to many leaders in special education in Iowa resulted in a rich understanding and appreciation of the strong core of personal characteristics that was the backbone of their courage:

- Enduring passion to help others experience life as they would choose to live.
- Willingness to take risks and push themselves, and others, out of their comfort zone and complacency with current conditions.
- Strong constitution to confront opposition, resistance, and adversity.
- Knowledge of systems and frameworks to enhance the overall effectiveness to function as a whole.
- Ability to create passion in others and then work with them side by side for improvements.
- Ability to build empowerment for people to work together for a shared goal.
- Understanding that education, health and well-being is a process, not an end point.
- Attitude of service that empowers others to serve those in need.
- Fairness in working with others in a manner that respects others' views and values.
- Resilience to try, fail, learn, and continue moving forward.

These characteristics were present in abundance in virtually everyone we interviewed. Progress in Iowa was not an accident; it was built through ingenuity and grit.

Now. It is often customary for undertakings like this to end with a section entitled "Conclusions", a deduction that sums up all that has been said. The notion of such a conclusion would be a sorry ending to this epic story. After all, this is about evolution and the end of this tale is not in sight. So much remains to be done. The final words are, as you can see, about the continuation of new beginnings. That is the nature of evolution.

We are not going back to the good old days. Nor should we. Back to the future in special education is achieved by respecting the past by carrying forward the passion for working together for children. In a conversation with Dr. Nathan Noble, a physician in Des Moines, he remarked, "There is two feet of topsoil in Iowa. You can grow anything, but you must plant the seeds. This is a terrific State in the greatest country in the world. This is not the best we can do." Prophetic words. How true.

As in a relay, the baton is passed forward, always forward. You, dear reader, are the recipient of this legacy. You will, with others, set the course. You, through your actions, will write the continuing history of the evolution of special education in Iowa. As others have done in the past, you have the potential to continue the progress for individuals with disabilities and their families. Your work may be in the role of a parent, family member, adult with a disability, teacher, physician, administrator, legislator, attorney, school psychologist, speech-language pathologist, audiologist or any other professional discipline that contributes to the team network in special education. The effort of everyone is needed.

There truly has been a dramatic evolutionary shift in special education. That journey moved from institutions to classrooms, from ignoring to opportunity, from disregard to equal rights, from then to now, from others to you. The process of change happens at every level of the system. Dear reader, the baton is in your hand. Go far. There are many roles, strategies and activities to embrace this critical challenge. Everyone has to find their own way to contribute to this cause. Find a way to express your passion and then change Iowa for the better.

Afterword

There are no more words, just a sincere farewell. This story of the evolution of special education ends, leastwise the writers' task. New history will be written and recorded. For these two writers, their attention turns to new horizons—it will all begin with two friends on a long bike ride. As Roy Rogers used to say in a song, "Happy Trails to you, until we meet again..." We wish you the same. May your trail lead you to happiness and may our paths cross.



APPENDIX A

Participants Engaged in Conversations

The authors are grateful to those who participated in conversations about their experience with Iowa's special education services system. Photos were typically taken at the time they were interviewed. The following participants were selected because of the strong contributions they made to enhancing services in special education in Iowa. The actual biography of achievement for each person would be far greater than what is captured here. These biographies are deliberately brief to provide a sense of context for the stories in the text.



Allison, Randy. Randy is currently teaching at Iowa State University, Drake University, and consults with AEAs and school districts on special education and school improvement issues. Prior to this work he was a school psychologist in three Iowa Area Education Agencies. In addition, he served as an AEA supervisor of school psychological services, zone coordinator, Coordinator of Systems Support and Innovative Practices, and director of special education. Randy was also a DE consultant.



Bartlett, Larry. Larry retired as a professor of education law and department chair of the Educational Policy & Leadership Studies in the College of Education at the University of Iowa. Larry currently is a state contracted mediator for the Iowa DE. Prior to that he was a high school history teacher and department chair, legal consultant to the Iowa Superintendent of Public Instruction (now Iowa DE), and an administrative law judge for the Iowa DE.



Andersen, Jennifer. Jennifer was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Berthelsen, Anne. Anne is currently a School Psychologist for an Area Education Agency 267.



Autry, Jim. Jim retired as an executive and editor at a Fortune 500 magazine corporation. He is the author of thirteen books. Jim held an endowed chair in leadership at Iowa State University and holds four honorary degrees.



Bill Boettcher. Bill retired as an Area Education Agency supervisor for behavior disorders and juvenile home educational programs. Prior to retirement Bill was a teacher for mathematics and science, guidance counselor, and school psychologist.



Brink, Jill. Jill was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Maria Cashman. Maria is currently an Associate Administrator for Grant Wood Area Education Agency. Prior to this position, Maria was a Speech-Language Pathologist and Regional AEA Administrator.



Brown, Sarah. Sarah is currently the Chief for the Bureau of Learner Strategies and Supports at the Iowa DE. She leads the statewide implementation of Multi-Tiered System of

Supports and educational programs related to special education. Sarah worked in three states, always supporting special education and problem solving practices. Prior to her current role she served as a Unique Learners Manager in a school district and worked in professional learning and special education in an Iowa AEA.



Caster, Jerry. Jerry retired as principal of two special schools in the Des Moines CSD, and was a district supervisor of special education in Des Moines. Jerry

currently supervises student teachers for Drake University and teaches on-line special education and research classes for Morningside College. Prior to these positions he was a special education teacher, Iowa Department of Education special education consultant, and professor at Drake University.



Jan Campbell. Jan retired from a career as a special education teacher. She continues to be a substitute teacher, usually in special education classrooms. Most of

her teaching assignments were in elementary schools.



Clark, Jim. Jim Clark is currently retired from the position of AEA school social work supervisor and an AEA assistant director of special education compliance

monitoring. Prior to retirement Jim worked as an AEA school social work practitioner, an Iowa DE consultant for school social work, and administrative consultant.



Sean Casey. Sean Casey is currently the Challenging Behavior Consultant for the Iowa DE. His educational experiences span all age ranges, disability types, and

settings. He has worked in hospital inpatient programs, residential school settings, outpatient clinics, schools, homes and incarcerated programs. He has held faculty positions at several Universities in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Iowa.



Clary, Joan Turner. Joan retired from the Iowa DE where she worked for 20 years, serving as the Consultant for Early Childhood Special Education programs

(ECSE). Joan served as the coordinator of a federally funded Iowa ECSE Teacher Training Program between the three Regents Universities. Prior to 1975, Joan taught at University of Arkansas, high and middle school, DMACC, and owned and operated a preschool. She coordinated a Title I EC and family program, "Home Start" and was an early childhood consultant for an AEA.



Clopton, Kerri. Kerri is currently an associate professor in the School Psychology program at the University of Northern Iowa and is the program coordinator. Kerri's previous experience includes serving as a school psychologist at UNI's Malcolm Price Laboratory School and in a juvenile correctional facility. Her current research interests include school psychology training issues and supporting the needs of military-connected children and families.



Connolly, Paula. Paula Connolly is currently the Project Coordinator for Family-to-Family Iowa, at the ASK Resource Center. Paula has been a disability advocate for 25 years working on policy issues at both the state and national level. Paula has lived the experience of parenting a son with rare genetic disorder and co-founded The Access for Special Kids (ASK) Resource Center.



Coder, Emmy. Emmy was a student in school psychology at the University of Northern Iowa when interviewed and is now a school psychologist in an Iowa Area Education Agency.



Covey, Mary. Mary is a retired elementary education teacher. She taught in South Dakota and in the Des Moines Public Schools for a total of 29 years. She was a member of the Building Intervention Cadre, a coordinator for the talented and gifted program, and a DMEA representative while teaching in Des Moines.



Collins, Melinda. Melinda is retired from teaching 40 years in the Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS). Melinda is currently the program director for Plymouth Grounds, a coffee shop run by students with significant disabilities. She also supervises student teachers for Upper Iowa University. Previously, she was at Ruby Van Meter School, a self-contained special education school for students with significant intellectual disabilities. Melinda was a classroom teacher, teaching most subjects to different age groups. She worked in the area of transition as the work experience coordinator and a job developer for the DMPS STEP Program.



Cumings, Roxanne. Roxanne retired as the executive director of student services at Waukee CSD, a position that included directing early childhood and school age Special Education, 504 Accommodation Plans and Homelessness programs. Roxanne is currently a consultant for school districts and AEAs in special education regarding administrative issues. Prior to this work, she was a general and special education teacher in five Iowa school districts during her 34-year.



Connolly, Harold. Retired as Director of Special Education in Area Education Agency 14. Prior to that he was a special education teacher and principal of Rose Kennedy School in Council Bluff.



Moon Davis, Deb. Deb is retired from full time work as an AEA Audiologist, but works part time for an AEA. She started working as an AEA Audiologist in 1975, the first year of the AEA system.



Dierks, Darrell.

Darrell retired as the principal of Bremwood School, which was operated by an Area Education Agency. In retirement he co-directs the Rising Hope Food Pantry. Prior to retirement Darrell taught elementary school, drove a bus, coached, and was a principal. He served as school psychologist, supervisor of school psychology and social work, school psychologist for chronically disruptive, and a crisis intervention psychologist.



Draper, Mark.

Mark is currently the Director of Special Education for Green Hills Area Education Agency. Prior to this position he was both a general education and special education teacher, and an administrator working with both the Iowa Department of Education, as the Project Director for the Iowa High School Project, and the Pottawattamie County Preschool Project. Mark has been a regional administrator in the AEA system since 1990 and served as adjunct faculty for several area universities.



Dierks, Pat.

Pat is retired from an Area Education Agency where she specialized in working with head injury clients and consulted with group homes for adults with disabilities. After retirement Pat co-founded and co-directs the Rising Hope Food Pantry. Prior to retirement Patricia taught elementary school, special education, and served as special education consultant. She served as school psychologist and psychologist for disabled adults.



Dykstra, Dennis.

Dennis is currently retired from the position of administrative consultant for special education at the Iowa DE. His focus has been on fiscal and data management issues. Prior to that he taught general and special education in several Iowa school districts working with students with behavioral disorders.



Downs, Jennifer.

Jennifer has worked as an Area Education Agency school social worker. She has extensive experience serving children from birth to age 21. Her focus for the last several years has been on the youngest population, birth to 5-year olds.



Ehly, Stewart.

Stewart is currently a professor in the School Psychology program at the University of Iowa. He has been on the faculty since 1979, serving as program coordinator for half of those years. Prior to living in Iowa, he was a school psychologist for the Fort Worth Independent School District. His research interests currently include home schooling practices and mental health services to adolescents.



Doyle, Jim.

Jim is currently retired from an Area Education Agency where he served as a regional coordinator, and supervisor for hearing, vision, and special education nurses. Prior to that he was employed by an AEA as a consultant for hearing impaired and teacher for deaf.



Jim Flansburg.

Jim is currently a consultant with the Iowa Department of Education, where he focuses much of his time on the e-newsletter *Each and Every Child*, a publication aimed at highlighting the special education community. He has worked in marketing and communications

in recent years, though most of his career was spent as a reporter and editor in the newspaper industry in both Iowa and Texas.



Ford, Jeremy. Jeremy is currently an assistant professor at Boise State University. Prior to this position, he spent eight years in Iowa as a school psychologist. As a doctoral student at the University of Iowa, Jeremy was involved in statewide projects with the Iowa DE and the Iowa Reading Research Center.



Freie, Molly. Molly was a student in school psychology at the University of Northern Iowa when interviewed and is now a school psychologist in an Iowa Area Education Agency.



Fynaardt, Angelisa Braaksma. Angelisa is currently an Associate Administrator and Director of Special Education for Great Prairie Area Education Agency. Prior to this position, Angelisa worked as a school psychologist, special education program assistant, a professional learning and leadership consultant for PBIS, then an AEA Regional Director.



Garrett, Amy. Amy retired from an Area Education Agency position serving as a Physical Disabilities Consultant and Assistive technology Specialist. Previously she was a special education teacher for students with significant disabilities.



Gassman, Brooke. Brooke currently serves as a Parent-Educator Coordinator at Keystone Area Education Agency. Prior to this position, Brooke spent over eight years working with families and schools in the nonprofit sector.



Gerken, Kathryn. Kit is retired after 36 years as a faculty position in school psychology at the University of Iowa. Kit started her career as a special education teacher in Illinois, did a psychology internship at Elgin State Mental Hospital in Illinois, and was a school psychologist in the northwest suburbs of Illinois and southern Illinois. She was also a psychologist for a private school in southern Illinois. She worked in Texas as a psychology professor and Director of Teacher Education for 6 years.



Gibson, Robert. Robert Gibson is currently retired from his position as AEA Special Education Director at Heartland Area Education Agency. Prior to retirement he was a general education and special education teacher, assistant principal at the Hospital School in Iowa City, County Superintendent and school psychologist, supervisor of special education and school psychologist, supervisor of special education for Polk County Superintendents Office, and director of special education for Polk and Story Joint County Superintendents Office.



Gile, Larry. Larry is currently retired from his position as supervisor of school psychological services and Special Education Administrative Consultant in Area Education Agency 14. Larry began his career as a school psychologist in a joint county in Iowa, prior to the AEA system. He was a charter board member and first president for the formation of Crossroads Mental Health Center located in Creston. In retirement Larry raises bison.



Gruba, Jerry. Currently, Jerry is an AEA regional director. Jerry began his career as a school psychologist, then became a research practitioner and supported schools as they implemented literacy assessments and evaluated the impact of their curriculum and instruction. Also, Jerry coordinated the early childhood programs and supervised the early childhood staff for an AEA.



Gorman, Jim. Jim is currently a Director of Special Education for Northwest Area Education Agency. Prior to that, he served as a Speech-Language Pathologist in two AEAs and as an AEA Special Education Supervisor.



Guy, Barb. Barb is currently Director of Special Education at the Iowa Department of Education. Prior to this position Barb was the secondary transition consultant for the Iowa DE, Associate Director for the National Transition Network at the University of Minnesota, Adjunct Professor at the University of Kansas, and a classroom teacher.



Grassley, Chuck. Chuck Grassley has served Iowa in the US Senate since 1981. Prior to that he served in the United States House of Representatives (1975–1981) and the Iowa state legislature (1959–1974). He is clearly a dedicated public servant.



Halley, Alyson. Alyson is a speech-language pathologist with an Area Education Agency where she has been employed for over 20 years. She has specifically worked with the early childhood population (0-5) for over 10 years and is part of the Autism Resource Team. Prior to this work Alyson worked in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, day care settings.



Green, Bonnie. Bonnie Green is retired. Previously, she he was a self-contained junior high special education teacher with the College Community Schools near Cedar Rapids before working as a self-contained elementary school teacher, and a elementary school resource teacher and a special education consultant for the Des Moines Public Schools.



Hansell, Phyllis. Phyllis retired from a combined practice of clinical psychology in private practice and consulting with business enterprises using an applied behavior analysis approach to organizational behavior. She volunteers in numerous community organizations related to applications of psychology and human services. Her prior professional work was as a school psychologist in the Des Moines Independent School District.



Happe, David. David retired as a consultant with the Iowa DE. David currently supports the process of keeping statewide procedures up-to-date by chairing the Procedures Coordinating Council. David has served Iowa's special education system as a school psychologist, supervisor of AEA support professionals, AEA special education director. He also was the psychologist at the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School.



Harkin, Tom. Tom retired the U.S. Senate in 2015 after serving for 30 years. Tom was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1974 and served five terms in the House. Tom Harkin won a race for U.S. Senate in 1984 and served five senate terms. He served as chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. He was the moving force behind the Americans with Disabilities Act.



Hedlund, Bill. Bill is retired. Prior to that he managed two retirement facilities in Des Moines and West Des Moines. He is part of a group and on the Board of a not-for-profit that developed two projects for apartments for persons with low income and individuals with disabilities.



Hendrix, Nicole. Nicole was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Holley, Jessica. Jessica currently serves as an Early Childhood Special Education Consultant for an AEA. Previously Jessica taught both general and special education in early childhood, elementary, and secondary classrooms in Eastern Iowa.



Honnold, Amanda. Amanda is currently employed as an AEA School Psychologist. Amanda has worked at AEA 267 for 16 years. Prior to Amanda worked at Green Valley AEA 14 for four years. Amanda has served on the executive board of the Iowa School Psychologist Association as an AEA representative and president.



Hood, Connor. Connor currently works at the Iowa DE supporting the use of data in school improvement and early literacy. He worked for fourteen years in schools in north central Iowa as a school psychologist focusing on individual student needs, fourteen years in an AEA in central Iowa as a school psychologist focusing on assessment and school improvement, and now is working on his third fourteen year stint, this time as a school psychologist focusing on state-level systems change.



Hoss, Sue. Sue is a food editor and co-founder of *Look, Cook, and Eat*, a digital magazine designed to teach people with intellectual and learning disabilities how to cook and lead a more independent lifestyle.



Hudson, Penny. Penny is currently a Special Education Consultant at an AEA. Prior to this position she was a special education teacher at Interstate 35 School District, Carlisle School District and Ankeny School District.



Ikeda, Marty. Marty is a regional director for an AEA. Prior to that he was a school psychologist, special projects practitioner, special research and projects coordinator at an AEA; then assessment coordinator, administrative consultant, and chief of the Bureau of Student and Family Support Services and State director of special education at the Iowa DE; and later the clinical director and psychologist at The Homestead.



Ing, Anna. Anna was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Jensen, Bruce. Bruce is retired as an area director of special education at AEA 267. Prior to that he served as a school psychologist, supervisor of school psychological services, special education sector coordinator, all within the Iowa AEA system. During retirement he has helped conduct school accreditation visits for the Iowa DE and served as a mental health consultant for Head Start in an eight county area.



Jeschke, Tom. Tom retired from the Des Moines Public School (DMPS) as the Director of Special Education. He currently consults with

school districts and state agencies, and serves as a level II abuse investigator. Tom was originally employed by the DMPS to implement a Title III Diagnostic and Educational Learning Center for Learning Disabled Students in Des Moines.



Johnson, Linda. Linda Johnson is now retired. She was a classroom teacher in Des Moines. She taught Language Arts, Spanish, French, and the last 22 years she taught ESL, K-8



Jones - Vo, Stephanie. Stephanie is currently an ESL/Diversity Consultant for an AEA. Stephanie has worked as ESL/Diversity consultant for K-12 educators and administrators, as a co-developer of Human Relations classes required for teacher licensure in Iowa, Director of Federal Title III grants, adjunct professor of university *ESL Methods* and *Language and Culture* classes.



Kauffman, Clark. Clark is currently an editor for the Des Moines Register. Clark was a 2005 finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting. He was an editor and investigative reporter for other newspapers including The Quad-City Times.



King, David. David is currently retired having been employed by Heartland AEA for 38 years as the director of finance and chief financial officer. He was AEA 11s first accountant, and business manager.



Kirstein, Nathan. Nathan Kirstein is an attorney for DRI who specializes in representing students in special education cases and has provided training to Iowa attorneys who are also interested in representing students in such cases. He specializes in monitoring and investigating various facilities in which youth with disabilities reside and providing individual/systemic advocacy to residents who have had their federal or state rights violated.



Lewis, Marvin. Marvin is retired from the position of director of special education at AEA 6. Previously he was a classroom teacher in regular and special education, worked as a consultant for a joint county school system, was supervisor of instructional services for an AEA, and associate superintendent for a community college. For eight years after retiring as director of special education he consulted with AEAs and local districts on special education issues.



Krueger, Fritz. Fritz is currently retired as an AEA 5 Special Education Director. Following retirement, Fritz served as a Special Education Mediator for the State of Iowa. Previously he was a speech therapist and audiologist for the Polk County School System, and Special Education Director for a Joint County School System.



Linstig, Nicole. Nicole was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Lee, Gungung. Lee was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Lyon, Joy. Joy is a speech and Language pathologist who currently serves as an Assistive Technology Specialist at an AEA.



Lee, John. John works at the Iowa DE as an Administrative Assistant for Special Education and subsequently as a Consultant for Special Education Fiscal and Data Services. John provides guidance to AEAs, LEAs in use of IDEA and other special education funding, data collection related to IDEA and the behind the scenes fiscal and data tasks necessary to operate special education in Iowa.



Mayes, Thomas. Thomas is an attorney for the Iowa DE, where special education is one of his assignments. Prior to joining the Iowa DE in 2006, he was a staff attorney to the Iowa Court of Appeals, a staff attorney at Iowa Legal Aid, and law clerk to Justice James H. Carter of the Iowa Supreme Court. Thomas earned his law degree at The University of Iowa and a master's degree from Lehigh University.



McAtee, Linda.

Linda is currently a speech-language pathologist (SLP) with duties as SLP Facilitator for an AEA and also provides SLP services for an elementary school and high school. She currently serves as Lead Speech-Language Pathologist for the State of Iowa. Prior to these positions, she has served as a SLP in many school districts.



Moreano, Ginna.

Ginna was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Megill, Pam.

Pam is currently a Parent-Educator Coordinator at Northwest AEA.



Mountsier, Deb.

Deb retired as full time AEA Audiologist where she worked from 1983-2014. She currently is working part time as an audiologist for an AEA.



Merk, Jenny.

Jenny was a student in school psychology at the University of Northern Iowa when interviewed and is now a school psychologist in an Iowa Area Education Agency.



Neessen, Eric.

Eric is currently the Director of Student Services for the Norwalk School District. Prior to this, he worked as a school psychologist and a regional director at two different AEAs in Iowa, followed by serving as the consultant for school psychological services at the Iowa DE and as a consultant for conflict resolution.



Michelson, Lana.

Lana is currently retired from the Iowa DE where she served as the Bureau Chief for Special Education. Prior to that she was a teacher for students with significant intellectual disabilities, a special education consultant at an AEA, an AEA educational trainer, and an administrative consultant at the Iowa DE.



Niebling, Brad.

Brad is currently program consultant at the Iowa DE. Brad previously worked at the university, school, and intermediate service agency levels as a school psychologist, trainer, and researcher. His current work focuses on supporting Iowa's statewide implementation of the Iowa Core State Standards and assisting schools to improve Tier 1 practices within a multi-tiered system of supports.



Miller, Kristin.

Jennifer was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Noble, Nathan.

Dr. Noble is the medical director of the Anna Blank Developmental Center in Des Moines, specializing in the care of children with special health care needs. He is certified in Pediatrics, Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics and Clinical Genetics.



Olberding, Robin. Robin is an Adapted PE Consultant/Teacher at an AEA. She has presented at the State, District and National level advocating for all children to participant in movement activities.



Parker, Wendy. Wendy is currently the Special Education Director at Prairie Lakes AEA. Prior to this position she was a teacher for individuals with behavior disorders, a behavior interventionist, assistant principal, principal, special education coordinator, and district director of special educational services.



Pederson, Sally. Sally J. Pederson is an advocate for children and adults with disabilities and a voice for progressive causes. She served as Lieutenant Governor of Iowa from 1999 to 2007 and is a former editor with *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine. Sally is founding President of The Homestead, and founding Chair of REACH, at the University of Iowa. She has served on the National Alliance for Autism Research (now Autism Speaks) and on the Advisory Board of the *Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Civic Engagement* at Drake University in Des Moines.



Pinkston, Chad. Chad is a school psychologist in an Iowa AEA.



Piper, Sylvia. Sylvia is currently semi-retired and works part-time as CEO of Disability Advocacy Now, LLC. Additionally she rides a bus each day

to support children with disabilities to and from school. Prior to that she was the executive director for Disability Rights Iowa, public relations and training manager for Iowa Protection and Advocacy Services, and development director for ARC.



Pratt, Gene. Gene retired as the director of special education for Keystone AEA 1. Prior to that he was a speech - language pathologist and audiologist in a multi-county special education unit in Iowa and later became the director of special education for a newly formed multi-county special education unit.



Quinn, David. Dave retired as special education director for Mississippi Bend AEA. David currently teaches college courses on a part-time basis, supervises student teachers, and is a State of Iowa contracted mediator for the Iowa DE. Previously Dave served as a general education teacher, special education teacher, special education consultant, special education supervisor, and special education assistant director for an AEA.



Reschly, Dan. Dan is retired as a professor of Education and Psychology, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University. He was chair of the Department of Special Education. Previously Dan served as a school psychologist in Iowa, Oregon, and Arizona, and was an Assistant Professor for at the University of Arizona. Dan was Distinguished Professor and Director of the School Psychology Program at Iowa State University. Dan currently provides psychological and adaptive behavior assessments and testimony for felons with intellectual disabilities who are on death row.



Robinson, Greg.

Greg retired as superintendent of the Urbandale Community School District. He is currently on the Educational Administration faculty at Iowa State University. Prior to that he was a special education teacher, a school psychologist at the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School and two AEAs, consultant for mental disabilities at the Iowa DE, an elementary principal, and assistant superintendent.



Robinson, Wendy.

Wendy Robinson is currently the Director of Instructional Services at Heartland AEA. Previously she was a speech-language pathologist, staff development specialist, trainer of language and literacy, and assistant director of professional development.



Rodee, Myron.

Myron retired as the director of special education for Grant Wood AEA after twenty years of service. Prior to that his career in education included teaching general and special education classes at the high school level in Kansas and Illinois.



Ross-Reynolds, Gary.

Gary is a retired bilingual registered nurse in Asheville, NC. He currently volunteers at a free clinic and with hospice. For many years he served as a guardian ad litem. He began his career in school psychology in AEA 2 and became the school psychology supervisor. Additionally Gary was an associate professor of psychology at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA. Subsequently he served as an ER and ICU RN and nursing supervisor.



Ryan, Nicole.

Nicole is a physical therapist for an AEA. She started in that role following graduation from University of Iowa in physical therapy.



Rydberg, Beth.

Beth is a senior advocate for DRI who specializes in advocated for students in special education cases and has provided training to Iowa parents of students with disabilities as well as various providers regarding student special education rights. She also specializes in monitoring and investigating various facilities in which youth with disabilities reside and providing individual/systemic advocacy to residents who have had their federal or state rights violated.



Samson, Deb.

Deb currently co-coordinates the Parent & Educator Connection at the Iowa Department of Education. She is the parent of an adult child with a disability who was the focus of the first due process case in Iowa. Prevailing in this case opened doors of service for other students with disabilities and propelled Deb into a lifelong journey of disability advocacy. Prior to her advocacy vocation, Deb worked in the operating room at 2 hospitals and in a multi-specialty medical clinic with a general surgeon.



Samson, Rick.

Rick is on several councils and one board of directors serving individuals with disabilities. These include the Olmsted Consumer Task Force, Governors Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the Central Iowa Center for Independent Living board of directors. Rick is a founding member of a group named Skywalk Rollers.



Santos, Ann. Ann was part of the University of Iowa faculty in the school psychology program at the time of her interview. She and has since taken employment out of Iowa.

chology program. Prior to this position, she practiced for 10 years as a school psychologist in an AEA.



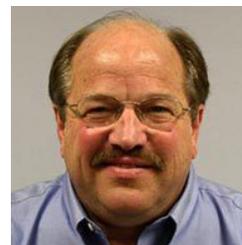
Silzer, Gus. Gus was one of the first psychologists to work in Iowa schools, beginning in the 1950s. He was of five regional school psychologists at the Iowa DE in

the early 1960s, and worked as an AEA school psychologist in the 1970s. He was a teacher and coach in an Iowa school district. Gus was awarded The Purple Heart for his service during WWII. Gus passed away in 2015.



Schendle, Julie. Julie is retired from the position of the Director of Special Education for Mississippi Bend AEA. Julie's career as a special educator includes serving

as a school psychologist and staff development trainer for two AEAs. She worked for the Iowa DE as a professional development consultant before taking an administrative position as a Zone Coordinator for an AEA.



Sinclair, Denny.

Denny is serving as the area director of special education at AEA 267. Prior to this he served as a school psychologist, supervisor of school psychology and special

education coordinator at AEA 267, and principal at Bremwood School in Waverly, Iowa, a school for students with learning and behavioral disabilities.



Schild, Jeananne Hagen. Jeananne retired as the Director of Special Education for Grant Wood AEA. Her career includes experience as a general education teacher,

special education teacher, consultant in an AEA, Chief of the Bureau of Special Education at the Iowa DE, and interim superintendent of the Iowa Braille School.



Skaar, Nicole. Nicole is an Assistant Professor at the University of Northern Iowa in the School Psychology Program. Her research interests include assess-

ment of adolescent risk behaviors, systems level mental health practices, and behavioral interventions. She is also a practicing school psychologist in a rural Iowa school district. Previous to her work at UNI, she was a school psychologist for an AEA.



Schletzbaum, Maureen. Maureen has served as a Parent & Educator Connection Coordinator for an AEA the past 14 years. She is head coach for Marion

County Special Olympics, and job coach for her daughter, Marissa—who owns and operates her business Straw Hat Farms.



Schmitz, Stephanie. Stephanie is an Assistant Professor at the University of Northern Iowa, serving as one of the three primary faculty in the UNI school psy-



Smith, Carl. Carl retired from a faculty position at Iowa State University. Prior to this he taught in a special education resource room in Iowa, taught at a residential treatment program in Virginia, was the consultant for Behavior Disorders at the Iowa DE, the director for Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center located at Drake University, and was on faculty in the Special Education Department at Buena Vista University.



Stumme, Jessica. Jessica was a student in school psychology at the University of Northern Iowa when interviewed and is now a school psychologist in an Iowa Area Education Agency.



Stevens Mary. Mary is the Director of Special Education at AEA 267. Prior to this she worked as a school psychologist in two Iowa AEAs as well as in Minnesota and Illinois, a Special Education Supervisor at AEA 6, and an Area Director of Special Education at AEA 267.



Sytsma, Curt. Curt is semi-retired attorney representing parents of individuals with disability, and teaches paralegal coursework on legal research and writing at the Des Moines Area Community College. Prior to this work he was an attorney representing individuals with disability in civil cases, and a coordinator for the Iowa Farm Family Assistance Program during the farm crisis in Iowa.



Stoycheff, Jim. Jim is a practicing School Psychologist with an AEA, serving River Hills School, a special school for students with moderate to profound developmental disabilities, and providing consultation to surrounding districts on issues with students on the autism spectrum.



Thomas, Deb. Deb teaches at Drake University and is on contract with the Iowa Department of Education as a State Special Education Mediator. Prior to this work Deb was a special education teacher, AEA Coordinator of Special Projects, Administrator for the Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, an Educational Advocate at Disability Rights Iowa, and Parent & Educator Coordinator for the Iowa Department of Education.



Strawhacker, MaryAnn. MaryAnn is employed at an AEA as a Special Education Nurse and Section 504 Consultant. She teaches classes for school nurses, school counselors, and administrators and has developed many courses for Iowa AEA Online. Prior to working in the AEA, she was a pediatric nurse employed in various units at Blank Children's Hospital.



Tilly, David. David is the Deputy Director of the Division of Learning and Results at the Iowa DE. Prior to his return to the DE, David worked as a school psychologist, a consultant for special education research in the Bureau of Special Education at the Iowa DE, director of innovation and assessment at an AEA, and an AEA regional coordinator. David served as an adjunct faculty member at Iowa State University.



Ulman, Joe. Joe is retired from the position of AEA 3 Director of Special Education. During his career, Joe worked as a School Psychologist, Supervisor of School Psychology, and Sector Coordinator. He also consulted for two Universities and the Iowa DE.



Van Cleve, Toni. Toni is retired as an administrative consultant at the Iowa DE. Previously Toni was a special education teacher, a staff development trainer at an AEA, and a consultant at the Iowa DE for computerized and the web-based IEPs.



Vance, Vernon. Vernon retired as the Director of Special Education for Mississippi Bend AEA after twenty-five years. Prior to this position he taught general and special education at the elementary level in Kansas before accepting a position as supervisor of special education and school psychologist in Iowa in 1956.



Vancel, Samantha. Samantha was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Vincent, Paula. Paula is the Chief Administrator of Heartland Area Education Agency. She has had a diverse professional career with experiences from the classroom to the central office in rural and urban school districts. Paula has served as a special education teacher; special education consultant, assistant

director of special education, and director of special education at Grant Wood AEA; an associate superintendent; and superintendent of schools.



Waterman, Jen. Jen was a student in school psychology at the University of Northern Iowa when interviewed and is now a school psychologist in an Iowa Area Education Agency.



Watkins, Mary. Mary Watkins is retired as Parent & Educator Connection Coordinator in an AEA. Previously, Mary had been an elementary teacher, co-chaired the Up With Downs Support Group, co-founded The Access for Special Kids (ASK) Resource Center, and helped develop outreach and summer programs for children with disabilities.



Webber, Heidi. Heidi has worked as an occupational therapist for 16 years at an AEA. She works with all grade levels, and has served the youngest population in the agency, 0-5 year olds, for the past 11 years.



West, Doug. Doug is currently a Financial Advisor with a financial services company in Des Moines. Previously, Doug was a speech - language pathologist, a faculty member at the University of Iowa Speech and Hearing Clinic Graduate Training Program, and a consultant in the Department of Public Instruction in Special Education Certification.



Wetzel, Cheryl. Cheryl is currently a part time Dental Hygienist. Cheryl is married to her husband of 25 year and parent of three children.



Wright, Rhea. Rhea is an Education Consultant for an AEA, a Transition Lead Consultant, and Lead Consultant. Previously she had served as a 7th grade Resource Teacher and K-8 Special Education Teacher/Special Education Coordinator for Sac & Fox Settlement School.



Wilkinson, Shaun. Shaun was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Yang, Nai-Jiin. Nai-Jiin was a student in school psychology at the University of Iowa when interviewed.



Wilson, Barry. Barry Wilson is professor emeritus and former department head of Educational Psychology and Foundations at UNI. He also has served as director of assessment for the College of Education and was a member of the UNI school psychology program faculty.



Yelick, Cindy. Cindy is an Associate Administrator at Heartland AEA. Prior to this position she was an ESL teacher, a program director at Drake University, principal in two districts, district director of special education, AEA regional coordinator, and AEA executive director of instructional services and director of special education.



Wilson, Dee Ann. Dee Ann is retired from the Iowa DE as a consultant for conflict resolution. Prior to that she was an elementary general education teacher, an elementary resource teacher for students in special education, and a consultant at the Iowa DE working with special education certification.



Young, Sue. Sue is an AEA Assistive Technology consultant. Previously, she was an Adapted Physical Education consultant with the AEA, and teacher.



Wood, Dave. Dave is currently an AEA regional director. Prior to this position he was an AEA school psychologist and challenging behavior and autism consultant, a program assistant of special education, and adjunct professor at Central College.

APPENDIX B

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