

IOWA COLLABORATION FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (ICYD) COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD) Council members are leaders of 10 state agencies with the vision that ***“All Iowa youth will be safe, healthy, successful, and prepared for adulthood”***. The ICYD Council oversees the activities of the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC) and has sought input from these youth leaders in the development of more effective policies, practices, programs, and this Annual Report. SIYAC consists of youth between 14 –21 years of age who reside in Iowa, with the purpose to foster communication with the governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers regarding programs, policies, and practices affecting youth and families; and to advocate for youth on important issues affecting youth. In 2009, the Legislature passed House File 315 placing the ICYD Council and SIYAC in the Iowa Code, Section 216A.140.

Since becoming a formalized council, ICYD Council members have agreed that the focal point for collaborative efforts should be a specific and aggressive goal for the state. In the first Annual Report, dated February 1, 2010, the ICYD Council identified the goal: ***By 2020 Iowa will increase the graduation rate from 89% to 95%***. It is with the understanding that several issues (e.g. substance abuse, family, employment, and mental health) prevent many youth from graduating from high school, that the ICYD Council agencies work to address these issues as individual agencies and together as a team to maximize efficiency in state government, make the best use of existing resources, and create substantial and lasting positive changes for Iowa’s youth.

Activities and accomplishments in 2010 included taking deliberate steps to identify the issues in communities and to plan for action on these issues. Members of the Council traveled to 10 communities in Iowa to listen and have conversations with school and community people on the challenges students must overcome to graduate, success stories – what is working, and recommendations for the state agencies. In addition, the Council researched several studies and articles and concluded that for youth to be successful in school and be prepared for life, engagement in **all** of the following areas must occur:

- Students Need to Attend School and be Engaged
- Families Need to be Engaged with Schools
- Schools and Communities Need to Support Youth

The ICYD Council will continue to work with these communities to establish supports and services to engage youth, families, schools, and communities.

The ICYD Council is also assisting in the implementation of two federal grants received by the Department of Education in 2010. The grants have overlapping goals that will assist selected schools to assess needs, develop interventions to prevent substance use, improve conditions for learning, and ultimately lead to increased graduation rates.

The ICYD Council’s recommended actions for 2011 are to coordinate efforts with policymakers, schools, and multiple state and community partners in the development of action plans for these five areas:

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

