

Theme	What (Recommendation)	Why (Rationale)	Who	How and When
Theme 1 – The Case for Change	Articulate a case for change that would affirm and expand upon the Governor’s Executive Order to the Iowa Learns Council. The case would provide a rationale for developing a well coordinated and seamless education delivery system that ensures seamless pathways across education sectors and the workplace. The purposes of the work of the Council are to benefit lowans and enhance community and state economic development through achievement of two key ambitious goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ninety percent (90%) of Iowa children shall have a quality pre-school experience;</li> <li>• Ninety percent (90%) of Iowa high school graduates will go on to complete at least two years of college.</li> </ul>	The case for change should provide the rationale for moving forward with Council recommendations.	ILC Steering Committee	Deadline: August, 2004.  Each ILC team will be asked to react to and contribute to the draft.

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Theme 2 – Clear Expectations/Common Language	Develop and support rigorous and relevant graduation expectations for all students.	A review of local graduation requirements established by Boards of Education indicate that during 2002-2003 the range of mathematics units required for graduation was 2.03 to 2.46. Science ranged from 1.89 to 2.37. A unit means one year of study in the academic area. Thus, it can be assumed that most school districts are requiring about 2 years of study in mathematics and science. Recent recommendations from national studies indicate that students will need at least three years of mathematics and science in order to succeed in postsecondary. Thus, it is necessary for schools and communities to understand the need to increase graduation requirements that do not set a minimum of expectations, but establish a high bar for all graduates. This review process should create dialogue and local responsibility to undertake the changes needed to assist students in meeting the “high bar.”		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through regional and state forums, establish consensus on relevant and rigorous graduation requirements for all K- 12 students that align with what’s necessary for success in the post-secondary setting and creates a system of high expectations for all students that requires a commitment to 3R’s (Rigor, Relevance and Relationships). Attendees should include secondary and postsecondary students, teachers, and administrators, parents, community members, and employers.</li> <li>2. Promote and implement access to rigorous course opportunities for students across the state</li> <li>3. Provide and promote earlier access to post-secondary credit opportunities.</li> <li>4. Promote the use of research based models that include a comprehensive framework with related strategies for establishing and designing a system of high expectations such as: High Schools That Work (including Making Middle Grades Work). Other related supports could include State Scholars Program, International Diploma, Career Academies, and Smaller Learning Communities). Use existing schools involved in HSTW for guidance on what works.</li> </ol>

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Theme 3 – Results or Indicators	<p>Focus the system on attaining the results needed to meet the Governor’s Goal - 90% of Iowa high school graduates will go on to complete at least two years of college. Indicators for the system should be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. % of Iowa High School Seniors attaining a post-secondary degree or certificate.</li> <li>2. % of students completing a core program in high school (4 years of English; at least 3 years each of math, science, and social.)</li> <li>3. % of Iowa school districts having, at a minimum, graduation requirements that include the core program (described in #2 above).</li> <li>4. % of 11th grade students achieving proficiency in reading, math, and science.</li> <li>5. % of schools which report/collect information on employability skills attainment.</li> </ol>	<p>The primary means to effecting change is through creation of shared accountability for results.</p> <p>Having data available to effect change creates opportunities for dialogue and impetus for change at all levels of the educational system. Indicators that can inform the state of the general health of the system assist in directing resources and appropriate programs to the areas of need.</p>		<p>1. Provide a mechanism whereby all school districts can provide data that indicates continuous improvement. Annual data should be required so trends over time can be analyzed. A report card for the school district and state will be produced with the selected indicators.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The manner in which individual districts address state-level objectives <i>is</i> left to district-level control, through the establishment of research driven programs and instructional strategies utilizing a common language statewide.</li> <li>2. Technical assistance provided, including multiple research-based models for high school reform.</li> <li>3. Develop and promote multiple strategies for helping students and teachers make connections between academics and real world (including Work-based Learning).</li> <li>4. Evaluate employability assessments for use by school districts and direct appropriate funding to pay assessment costs.</li> <li>5. Develop evaluation strategies to determine the appropriateness of including applied academic courses in core program requirements.</li> <li>6. Post-secondary institutions provide reports to high schools on the number of graduates from the respective high school requiring remediation.</li> </ol>

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Theme 4 – Implementation:	<p>Academic and Career Planning: Provide for high school academic support systems for students and parents for planning and decision-making to assist in postsecondary readiness. These systems shall include communication supports and the development of individual student plans that will enable all students to attain postsecondary success</p>	<p>In order to achieve a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary there must be a concerted effort to remove any barriers that exist for students and their families. Students, their families, school systems, and other educational support systems need to create systemic communication avenues to share data and information within and across systems to constantly evolve the system to meet changing workplace needs.</p> <p>Effective support systems must be in place to provide all students with the additional help and assistance, if needed, to meet the knowledge and skill requirements for each transition for and each level of schooling.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage articulation guarantee to secondary parents/students, developed by participating Iowa institutions.</li> <li>2. Require post-secondary institutions to report the number of dual credits earned in high school that will be accepted and applied toward a post-secondary degree.</li> <li>3. Provide models that effectively engage students and their families in academic and career planning. Utilizing a well developed Advisor/Advisee Program with structured parental involvement and individualized career planning. (See High Schools That Work (HSTW) model strategies.)</li> <li>4. Supplemental assistance such as tutoring, guidance counseling, and financial aid planning should be provided at all high schools in the state.</li> <li>5. An individual flexible plan for each student should be developed that details the expectations for graduation, milestones to be attained throughout the K-12 schooling experiences, academic expectations (courses, knowledge &amp; skills), and career aspirations. This plan should include an annual contract between the student/parents and the school showing the progress, planning, and changes.</li> <li>6. Restructure roles and responsibilities of the adults in the high school to create personal relationships to ensure career and academic guidance through current research-based strategies.</li> </ol>

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<p>Theme 4 – Implementation:</p>	<p>Partnerships/Alliances: Develop and support partnerships at the local, regional, and state level that remove barriers and integrate resources to meet student needs.</p> <p>Establish and support a system that facilitates curriculum discussions between secondary and post-secondary instructors.</p>	<p>The task of restructuring the educational system to meet the changing needs of students, families, and employment requires partnerships between communities, employers, postsecondary and K-12 educational systems. Changes cannot be accomplished without building the capacity and will to change, leveraging resources, and having local stakeholders who are committed to accepting the responsibilities of meeting the educational needs of all students. This level of change is possible with the support of community and business leaders.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Every high school has a process by which students graduate with a flexible identified academic and career plan.</li> <li>2. Every high school has a process whereby students participate in opportunities such as internships, regional academies, and Tech Prep appropriate to their individual career plans.</li> <li>3. Creation of a statewide “counselor academy” involving the following partners: middle school and high school counselors; community college counselors; four-year institution counselors and employers.</li> <li>4. Creation of opportunities for all instructors across secondary and postsecondary to articulate expectations and create systems that meet the academic and career needs of students in K-16.</li> </ol>

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<p>Theme 4 – Implementation:</p>	<p>Leadership/Coordination: Provide for leadership development and support to influence and enact system change.</p>	<p>Leadership at all levels must be able to communicate and influence the needed changes to meet the rapidly changing demands for K-12 students. The immediate supervisor of employees has a direct influence on the culture, climate, and expectations of the organization. These relationships can influence the pace of needed changes.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators to effect high school changes.</li> <li>2. Leadership academies to highlight best practices, extraordinary leaders, emerging skill sets, and strategies to identify potential leaders. Done both in communities and regions.</li> <li>3. Training and support system for both school and community leaders.</li> </ol>

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Theme 4 – Implementation:	<p>Professional Development: Provide quality professional development opportunities to all educators.</p>	<p>A quality teacher is the key to improving student academic success. Thus, teachers must have access to quality professional development opportunities that will provide knowledge and skill development that encourage academic supports and climate supportive of high school reform and continuous improvement, establishing high expectations for all students.</p> <p>Professional development opportunities should be based on the best research to assure implementation and must include the development of knowledge and skills for educators in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acceleration <u>not</u> remediation</li> <li>Structured system of help (supporting inclusion of special education students)</li> <li>Technology as a tool</li> <li>Research-based instructional strategies</li> </ul>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invest in professional development that clearly communicates that improving teaching is the primary way to improve student learning.</li> <li>2. Add ten days of staff development time or re-structure the school day to provide content and learning strategies specifically linked to the identified reform strategies. Consider establishing up to 2 days of common time across the state for state-wide initiatives when needed.</li> <li>3. The state and AEAs facilitate opportunities for K-16 systems to create common expectations.</li> <li>4. Pilot re-structured school day/year to provide for community-based—not school-based—activities. Time then used for professional development activities.</li> <li>5. Create structures at the local level that enable long-term commitment to professional development beyond grants and other incentives. Through state and local leadership efforts sustain focus over time on practices that create results.</li> <li>6. Create statewide networks to build the capacity for training and expansion of knowledge and skills required for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.</li> <li>7. Convert the culture of schools to embrace the value of “No student may fail.”</li> </ol>

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Theme 4 – Implementation:	Policy and Funding: Provide articulated policies and funding that support the reform agenda of Iowa Learns.	Policies and Practices support continuous improvement (high school reform, transition, and success in continued education and work.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of policies that “mandate” articulation agreements; e.g., supplemental weighting, Perkins, etc.</li> <li>2. Adequate funding for improved instruction to reach a broader range of students in both secondary and post-secondary schools (content and instruction).</li> <li>3. Legislation needs to be enacted to support the creation of regional high schools in order to provide supports needed to ensure educational success.</li> </ol>