Lisa Albers: Welcome to the second of two live chats with Jason Glass, director of the Iowa Department of Education, and Linda Fandel, special assistant for education in the Branstad-Reynolds administration.

Lisa Albers: Type your questions/comments in the text box at the bottom of your screen and click on the "send" icon or press "enter" on your keyboard.

Jason Glass: Hi everyone!

Linda Fandel: Thanks to everyone joining us today. We are looking forward to your questions.

Jason Glass: Linda and I are eagerly awaiting questions - fire away!

Jason: What is the thought behind trying to build consensus before costing the impact of the reforms?

Fuzzy: Would a Charter School still have to be approved by the State Education Board, and still be subject to comply with, for example, special education services, transportation and student achievement/teacher quality requirements? What extra tool would the state board or school district have that they do not have now to shut them down?

George DeBakey: Can you discuss some of the technology needs in more detail for the Iowa blueprint?

Leslie McGuire: Hi Dr. Glass. I'm the parent of a 2nd grade boy who is far above grade level in math and science but struggles with oral fluency. Holding him back in third grade would be devastating if he had to repeat the same math and science curriculum again. Specifcally, how would retention work for kids like him?

Linda Fandel: Yes, a state panel (maybe the state board) would approve charter schools instead of local districts as is now the case. Charter schools would have somewhat more flexibility.

Jason Glass: Hi Jason - Our primary goal is making sure we have the right policy approaches in place first, then we move to costs. If we look back at all the money we've added to education in the past 10 years, our proposal would probably cost less than that. Keep in mind it's a 10 year plan.

Jackie and Belinda: Are we supposed to be hearing a conversation or is this all being typed?

Linda Fandel: Local school districts and the state will work out how to best meet technology needs together.

Becky: As a literacy consultant, I am also very concerned about holding 3rd graders back that just didn't 'get it' in the time frame developmentally appropriate. I think the social and behavioral ramifications could be devestating to some students. I'd like to hear more about this.

Linda Fandel: All this is being typed. It's a written conversation. Thanks for checking,.

HUMANeX Ventures: Will there be a transript available after the conclusion of the chat?

Jason Glass: Hi Leslie - our goal is to make sure every kid is literate by the end of 3rd grade. Kids like your child should be provided supports and intensive instruction in reading well before 3rd grade. We will want to tier this in over the next few years and allow lots of "good cause" exemptions for kids with special needs. This is much more about support and instruction than retention, but we do no favors in socially promoting kids who can't read.

Raul Carolus: I have read several stories from other states about charter schools occupying and taking over public school spaces without consent from the public school. In most of these cases, the public schools don't have any recourse to these actions. Are you considering allowing charter schools and public schools to exist in the same physical location?

Jason Glass: Hi Humanex - yes there will be a transcript available. We will post the transcript on the website for your convenience.

Melissa: There is a hefty focus on teachers and principals in the proposed plan- which is excellent. What about a focus on superintendents as the district leader... supervising, mentoring, evaluating, and developing principals into the desired instructional leaders? Seems like a missing component!

Jason Glass: Hi Raul - our plans wouldn't require that, but charters and districts could enter into sharing agreements if they chose. It's important to remember that charter schools are public schools.

S. Pelzer: In implementing the four tier model for teachers and raising teacher pay for each tier, has it been considered that with the four tiers, districts are going to have to add staff? If we take teachers out of the classroom for part of the day, we will need to add staff to cover this time. I hope this is considered when financing is discussed.

Becky: All in all - I think the blueprint suggested has some wonderful components. I especially salute you for the mantra involved in placing highly qualified teachers in every classroom as well as visionary leadership at every helm. Nice!

Linda Fandel: One of the strengths of the literacy proposal is building a lot more capacity to help children learn to read before they get to third grade. We realize that children are at different points developmentally, but after third grade, children are primarily reading to learn, not learning to read. So it is crucial we help them acquire the right skills.

Jason Glass: Hi Melissa - I think that's a fair critique of our plan. We really focused primarily on those who have the closest impact on instruction, but Superintendents will be critical leaders in carrying out all these proposed reforms at the local level.

Leslie McGuire: Thanks Dr Glass. I've read everything I can get my hands on about grade retention and find little research that supports it. Instead, I see where kids should be moved ahead AND give intensive supports to catch up.. I don't think it's an either or decision.

Kate Baldwin: Has the DE leadership discussed a process for establihsing the criteria to determine how teachers will qualify to be mentor and master teachers?

Jason Glass: Hi Leslie - I'd point to the recent RAND studies on the support/retention approach and evaluations of the FL reading program. Retention by itself does no good, but that's not what we are proposing. We are proposing a comprehensive reading program.

Randy Richardson: If we give our public schools extra funds for innovation and and greater flexibility where is the need for charter schools?

Linda Fandel: We anticipate that class sizes will grow somewhat (one to three children), but research shows that a highly qualifed teacher matters more than class size after early primary grades.

mike peterson: I have a school board meeting tonight and the Blueprint is on the agenda. I'm not sure what questions my board members will have, but I hope they have many. There are too many important ideas in the Blueprint for it to go unexamined.

Becky: I taught in a charter school [of sorts] for many years in Arizona. It's a different framework - but for our unique population, it really worked!

Jason Glass: Hi Kate - Mentor and Master teachers need to be very carefully selected through a competitive process. We are actually meeting with some folks from the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (TAP System) this afternoon to flesh this out further.

Leslie McGuire: If I read the proposed timeline correctly, it looked like end of course exams and third grade retention would go into effect right away. Will we have built the necessary supports and implemented them before these happen?

Linda Fandel: Becky, thanks so much for your encouraging comments about the blueprint? Are you a teacher?

Becky: I am a literacy consultant with AEA 267. Thanks for asking :)

Linda Fandel: Mike,

Jason Glass: Hi Randy - we have proposed adding flexibility for regualar public schools as well. But for those schools that are unable or unwilling to provide a high quality education for their students, we need to provide an option for those kids and families. Remember charter schools are public schools too.

Jackie and Belinda: What is the plan to work with the BoEE on licensure renewal in relation to the four tiered model?

mike peterson: I'm wondering how the tiered compensation system will affect negotiations. I certainly hope that superintendents and boards will get a good deal of training before they enter into that arena.

Jason: Linda- do you think allowing only 20% of teachers to ever get to the top two tiers and making them at will employees will encourage "highly qualified" teachers to want to teach in Iowa to offset larger class sizes?

Randy Richardson: Avrage class size can be misleading. You're calculating that over an entire district but the reality of how that impacts an individual school district or building is quite different. It will be hard to increase class size if a special education teacher is selected or a district only has one person qualified to teach a subject.

Linda Fandel: Please feel free to email me with questions regarding the blueprint: linda.fandel@iowa.gov.

Raul Carolus: One issue I have with the tiered system, is a teacher who excels at classroom instruction has a limit to how much they can earn. The plan has language about "attracting talented educators." I'm concerned that very talented educators will see these limits and not come to the state. Talented educators in the state may also hit that limit and not be able to move on. In business, you use compensation to keep your most talented employees, however we're trying to attract/retain talent by saying there is a limit to how much you can earn. Is this being considered?

Jason Glass: Leslie - the timelines indicate when these approaches start, not when they are fully implemented. We would have a lot of work to do in building a reading research center and making sure we have evidence based reading strategies before we put in place the retention piece.

Kym: How will this effect AEA?

Leslie McGuire: Dr. Glass, GREAT! I was worried. Whew!

Melissa: Love the fact that the arts, music and language are included as a focus for curricular standards... just curious why PE was left out of the recommendations?

Steve: What is the definition of "at-will" employee you are looking at?

Jason Glass: Hi Jackie and Belinda - we will build on some of the proposals the BoEE has put forward in the past, but we want to put into state law some changes around licensure and career paths. This is really the right way to go about changes of this magnitude - through legislative action.

Leslie McGuire: Dr. Glass, same answer with the End of Course exams?

Cedar Falls: The traditional view of reading instruction (learn to read vs read to learn) is flawed. PreK-3 students DO read to learn and 4-12 students DO need additional instruction in navigating text. The 3rd grade cut off seems so arbitrary when we conider what we know about a comprehensive reading program.

Kym: The quote: "Develop new formative and summative assessments aligned with the CommonCore Standards for grades three through eight. These assessments will be computeradaptive to reduce testing time, provide instant results, and will be available forboth classroom and end-of-year purposes. Iowa is part of the Smarter BalancedAssessment Consortium, which is working to design such assessments by 2014."I wonder how this might be done? Will we join "together" the work that was done at the state level just last year with Marget Heritage and the Moodle Site that was put together for teachers and administrators?

Jason Glass: Hi Kym - AEAs will be central partners in carrying much of this work out in terms of training and capacity building. We need them.

Linda Fandel: Teachers who are in the classroom full-time will be able to earn additional income in a variety of ways: taking on extra academic responsibilities, teaching hard to fill subjects, earning certification from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, etc. So there will be other avenues for a pay increase in addition to cost of living adjustments.

Becky: Are you considering the NWEA map assessment? It certainly seems to be the right fit...and so many of our districts already use it. Just wondered.
Jason Glass: Leslie - E.O.C. are something we could put in place sooner, but we could make it optional at first for schools and then move to a more directed framework of those measures.
Jason Glass: Hi Steve - "at will" basically means that the individual has no contract right to a job or position.
Kevin Schipper: I am a strong propenent of change and I like what I see in the plan. However real, meaningful change will only occur when people are convinced, led or driven to change. What steps will you be taking to make this happen.
Randy Richardson: I continue to hear about cost of living adjustments for salaries. How will that be determined? Would there be a cap?
Peggy Germain: Would the new ESEA bill affect the plan if adopted as currently written?
Lisa Arndt: Special Education is not mentioned in the Education Blue Print. How will this impact special education students and programing?
Margaret Buckton: Hi Jason and Linda. Do the targets of 5% Master Teachers and 15-20% Mentor teachers come from some other country, state or districts which demonstrated this is the appropriate mix? And does the blueprint envision that each district would have it's own mix of Master and Mentor teachers or would there be a pool of those around the state?
mike peterson: Cedar Falls brings up a good point. Reading is different in every content area. Reading a science text is much different that reading a social studies text. All teachers must realize that they are responsible for teaching students to read the type of materials that go along with a specific content area. Reading instruction can't stop as kids get older.
Leslie McGuire: Cedar Falls, I agree. My oldest didn't read really well until 6th grade. Something clicked for him and he reads well now . ACT reading score as a junior last year was 34). Late readers, especially boys, won't benefit from retention.
Jason Glass: Becky - I really like the NWEA MAP assessment. The Smarter Balanced work we are involved in builds on that computer adaptive approach and the End of Course assessments are computer based as well.
Linda Fandel: Please consider Florida's success after ending social promotion if students can't read at the end of third grade. That state's fourth-grade reading score on national tests is 226 vs. Iowa's 221.. And Florida's Hispanic students' score is 223. Better than all kids in Iowa.
Linda Fandel: Local district negotiations will determine COLAs.
Steve: Does that mean they can be let go at will and leave at will?
mike peterson: We have a presentation on MAP at our administrator meeting tomorrow. I'm excited to see this program's potential.
Jason Glass: Kevin - We will be taking all of these approaches. We want to build as much consensus as we can, but we realize not everyone will be on board with all these changes. If we aren't pushing, we aren't doing our job.
Linda Fandel: No, the blueprint should fit in with federal expectations.
Randy Richardson: Is it a true COLA or just a locally bargainned increase in pay?
Linda Fandel: Margaret,
Linda Fandel: the percentages are closely aligned with the TAP program, the model for the blueprint tiers.
Jason Glass: Lisa - the heart of this plan is making sure we have great teachers with kids for everyone, including SPED. One of the first things I put in place in Iowa when I got here was the RTI framework, which is targeted to closing the achievement gap for SPED>
Bridgette Wagoner: Thanks for your work on this. I'm supportive of much of the Blueprint. If anything, I wish it was more ambitious. However, I experience some dissonance when I hear the constant refrain that these recommendations are built on what works proven in the highest achieving states/nations. Frankly, it seems like we're playing catch up, rather than really aiming to lead the way by creating new systems. I appreciate the broad call for innovation, but so much

of the details of the plan are still steeped in our traditional, time-bound system (i.e. 3rd grade retention, end of corse exams, etc).

Becky: IF the NWEA MAP assessment hypothetically becomes the assessment of choice...and IF ITBS/ITED fall to the wayside - do you have any suggestion for a second alternative assessment we might suggest to our LEA partners?

Leslie McGuire: Linda, Florida defines reading success as scoring proficient on a standardized test. Success for my kids in reading is much more than a test score. I want them to love reading, continue reading their entire life, discuss books with me, etc.

Linda Fandel: Yes, a COLA would be locally bargained.

Jason Glass: Thanks Mike

Jason Glass: Steve - yes.

Jason Glass: Randy - we are thinking both actually. A Cost of Living adjustment determined locally.

Lisa Arndt: So are at will employes truly what is best for kids?

Linda Fandel: Bridgette: How would you make the blueprint more ambitious please? We are looking for recommendations to improve this plan.

Randy Richardson: It would make sense that NAEP scores will increase when you're holding back the least able 3rd graders so they don't show up on 4th grade tests.

Nate Willems: After a charter school has been approved in a small town, how is a small district supposed to absorb the loss of revenue that has been diverted to the charter school?

Wayne B: How is it envisioned that parents are actively engaged in this process if increasing student achievement is one of the main goals other than hiring an additional community/parent liaison?

Jason Glass: Hi Becky - I think we are looking at Smarter Balanced and not NWEA MAP for our alternative to ITBS. Its an option we will need to look at.

Linda Fandel: The best employees are those who are highly qualified, motivated and can connect with students.

Kym: The quote: "Develop new formative and summative assessments aligned with the CommonCore Standards for grades three through eight. These assessments will be computeradaptive to reduce testing time, provide instant results, and will be available forboth classroom and end-of-year purposes. Iowa is part of the Smarter BalancedAssessment Consortium, which is working to design such assessments by 2014."I wonder how this might be done? Will we join "together" the work that was done at the state level just last year with Marget Heritage and the Moodle Site that was put together for teachers and administrators?

Jason Glass: Randy - we are interested in getting kids to read. I know you are as well

mike peterson: I am going to venture into the lion's den, here, but should our purpose be to foster a deep love of reading, or should it be to help people be successful when they encounter text in their lives? There are many, many successful people who have no desire to read in their spare time and do not have a strongly developed love of reading. As a former English teacher, I always felt my goal was to get kids to love reading, like I do. Now, I think my focus was a bit too narrow.

Leslie McGuire: Great question Wayne B. As a parent, I feel completely left of out of the development of this plan. Parent input wasn't sought at the summit or before the blueprint was introduced to the public. Very discouraging.

Linda Fandel: Charter schools may not be feasible in small disricts due to limited enrollment. That will be one factor the state will consider before deciding whether to approve a new charter.

Melissa: 3rd grade retention seems reactive.... what elements are going to be infused to be proactive with our little people- from preK to 2nd grade? From teacher prep, instructional strategies, early intervention, etc...

Jason Glass: Hi Wayne - the community/parent liaison is just one component of the parent engagement piece. Check out the Iowa PIRC model for more detail;

Linda Fandel: Kym,
Raul Carolus: I'd take Leslie's comment one step further - scoring proficient on a standardized test doesn't often mean proficiency in the subject. Are considerations being given to alternative measures of proficiency? Standardized tests don't allow for much leeway with critical thinking or creativity.
Wayne B: Are we assuming the PIRCs will be funded?
Jason: Teacher input was not sought for the plan either Leslie. "Experts" were sought out instead and goals for Iowa based on other countries. Why are we not asking the real experts...teachers and parents what works best for kids?
Linda Fandel: We will assess whether Smarter Balanced tests are the right way to go after we see those assessments, so premature to say now.
Jason Glass: Mike - successful and healthy kids involve more than just core content and test scores, but the core content and assessment results are important and meaningful as well. We need to find the right balance.
Bridgette Wagoner: Linda--to me, the ambition of the plan sinks when we copy the history of other states/nations. I would like to see more energy and support behind creating a truly competency-based system. That will get us to high standards, aligned assessments, ensuring every student learns essential concepts/ skills, and more. And we'd be doing more than replicating bits and pieces that have worked elsewhere. We'd be building a whole new system.
Linda Fandel: Parent input is being sought at town hall meetings and in our online feedback forms on the governor's and education department websites and thorugh other events, like this live chat. We very much want to hear from parents.
Jason Glass: Melissa- we'd actually start the focus on literacy PreK and have a focused set of supports in every school. Retaining kids at 3rd grade is one small component. It's not a retention program, it's a reading program.
Julie and Lori: What would the difference be between the IA Core and the rigorous "model" curriculum that is going to be designed by 2013?
Becky: On a complete aside ... this is a nice opportunity to talk with the 'power's that be.' I want to salute you for bringing this to our front doors! Thank you
Jason Glass: Wayne B - correct
Linda Fandel: Raul: Yes, alternative assessments could be used including portfoliios.
Rod Earleywine: How much will this cost and how do you propose to fund it? Wheteher we admit it or not funding will be an issue.
Wayne B: I appreciate that Linda, however, there is a difference between soliciting parent input and having parent engagement as a part of any plan.
Jason Glass: Julie and Lori - the Iowa Core is one basic level. We are proposing the development of a model "curriculum" with scope and sequence as a starting point for districts. Much like Alberta's approach.
Leslie McGuire: Linda, if parent input is truly being sought, than it should be asked for in our schools, in our community newspapers, and advertised widely. It hasn't been at all. I only learned about this chat from a teacher friend. I only learned about a town hall meeting being held in Ankeny tonight - yesterday!
Melissa: Why create a new Iowa Center for Literacy Ed? Couldn't we tap into the budding Jacobsen Center at UNI or some other established organization?
Jason Glass: Thanks Becky.
Lisa Arndt: Linda, Isn't difficult for you to get the teachers and parents opinions though when you hold a majority of the town hall meetings and chats duirng the work day?
Linda Fandel: Bridgette: competency based learning is a focus of the plan. We do need to put many details around this. I

Melissa: To add to Rod's inquiry about funding... are we exploring not only additional funding needed, but smarter funding through examination of how funds are currently spent that are wasteful?

Bridgette Wagoner: Jason--Do you envision that scope and sequence to be grade level specific? If so, does that interfere with progress toward a competency based system? Does it further entrench our current time-bound system?

Jason Glass: Rod - Funding is certainly an issue. We"ll need to look at repurposing as much money in the current system that we possibly can and then be very strategic and thoughtful when we add funding to education going forward. Just dumping new money in isn't the answer. We need to spend it in systemic ways.

Wayne B: Another question is why do we have an assumption that all students are college bound by making them take the ACT/SAT? How do we address the vocational aspect of schools?

Linda Fandel: Wayne B and Leslie: Good points. We will look for me ways to bring parents into blueprint discussions. Thank you.

Jason Glass: Melissa - exactly correct on both fronts

Jason: There is a huge difference between input into a plan and feedback on a plan that was presented as a take it or leave it "whole system approach"

Jason Glass: Hi Lisa - we have several opportunities this week in Ankeny, Van Meter, Council Bluffs, and Iowa City all in the next few days where teachers can attend. Also, I chat it up via twitter with educators every night!

Leslie McGuire: Jason, I agree! I got the impression that the plan was a done deal - take the whole thing- no negotiables. Very discouraging.

Bridgette Wagoner: Linda--I couldn't agree more. At the same time, I fear some of the details we have will interfere with progress toward a competency-based system if not carefully constructed. Prime example: end of course exams. They could be created in a way that allow flexibility beyond a Carnegie unit focus, or they could be created to fit our current factory model construct. The details will be critical.

mike peterson: As a school leader, I view informing the public as partly my responsibility. If the residents of my district don't feel they have enough information about the Blueprint, then I haven't done enough to inform them.

Steve: Are we folks in northern or western Iowa having any meetings we can attend?

Jason Glass: Hi Bridgette - yes it would be grade specific and developmentally appropriate. However keep in mind its a "model" and not a mandate.

Linda Fandel: Wayne: Good question on the ACT/SAT. No, we do not assume all kids are college-bound. But they will need the same base of knowledge and skills to succeed with career training,too.

Jason Glass: Leslie - this process is about learning and making adaptations. Linda and I are learning today!

Linda Fandel: Mike: We appreciate your support for improving schools, but don't hesitate to contact me with questions: linda.fandel@iowa. gov.

Jason Glass: We are working on a Sioux City meeting for November and we have Council Bluffs this weekend Steve.

Bridgette Wagoner: Jason--The could we consider parallel models? One built around a traditional framework and one built for a competency-based system? A singular model has tremendous influence.

Steve: Mason City? Algona? Spencer? Those are north.

Kim Didier: To the question about ACT test, have you given consideration to using the National Career Readiness Certificate as another measure in the proposed system?

Jason Glass: Bridgette - yes exactly. The model curriculum is just a model. We adapt and build from that in a number of ways.

Raul Carolus: Has any consideration been given to changing the school year? I lived in Germany for a while and their year was broken up with several weeks off between semesters. Has there been consideration to changing to a different calendar?

Linda Fandel: Steve: Please check the upcoming town halll meetings on the governor's website for locations for town halls.

Julie and Lori: Is the College and Work Readiness Assessment part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment work?

Jason Glass: Kim we have considered other options. I advocate for the ACT to 1) Give every Iowa kid one of the keys they need for college and 2) to have another state to state comparison data set where we can compare to the other 9 states where all kids take ACT. The globally competitive nature of our economy begs that we try and get more kids to consider some level of college.

Jason Glass: Julie and Lori - it is not. Smarter Balanced is currently in development under a federal Race to the Top award.

Becky: I don't remember reading in the Blueprint anything about extended school years / days. Did I miss that? Is such a thing behing considered?

Linda Fandel: Raul: School districts would have flexibility to lengthen the school year somewhat due to more days that will be expected of teachers (five to 20). But a number of people have asked about a longer school year for all children. We will take a look at that. What is your recommendation please?

Jason: Is the goal to test and compare and test again and compare more? Or is the goal to improve student learning?

Nate Willems: If we want greater community involvement in local school districts and individuals to play a greater role in activities or competency-based programs, don’t we need to do something to make it easier for people with regular jobs outside of education to devote the time to kids in a school activity?

Linda Fandel: The goal is to improve student achievement.

Raul Carolus: Becky: I don't think it's in there, but it was on my mind.

Jason Glass: Becky - we have included 5 additional days for apprentice and career teachers, 10 days for mentors, and 20 days for masters. All these provide options for extended day/year.

Judith Olson: I agree with Cedar Falls that "the traditional instruction of learning to read and reading to learn" is flawed. What many researchers have shown is that for all children, learning to read and reading to learn should be happening simultaneously and continuously, from preschool through middle school -- and perhaps beyond. Teaching comprehension is a critical piece of learning to read. I am a retired first grade teacher and a former school board member in Spencer, IA.

Jason: How does testing inprove student achievement?

Becky: How about extended time for students? isn't that where the focus should be?

Jason Glass: Nate - what are your ideas on that front?

Bridgette Wagoner: Jaosn- I wasn't very clear on that last question. Could the state provide parallel models? I know districts can create parallel models, but if we're serious about CBE, the model for it should come from the state.

Linda Fandel: Judith: You are right that of course the two things - learning to read and reading to learn are somewhat simultaneous - but we've got to do more to make sure students read well.

Jason Glass: Jason - testing, in itself, does not improve student achievement. Its a measure of student achievement. It's the thermometer, not the temperature.

Nate Willems: Right to take X # of hours, unpaid, away from my job to direct a play or acoach a sport.

Jason: So what in the plan does improve student achievement?

Linda Fandel: Becky: We do need extended time for children who are behind. And there seems to be considerable support for a longer school year for all children. What is your suggestion?

Jason Glass: Bridgette - hmm.... I don't see why not! Our first step would be to build out the model curriculum and then adapt.

Kate Baldwin: If/When the blueprint is adopted, I would encourage the legilation to include an assurance that it will not be subject to wholesale change or abandonment with a change is governors. Change is can be progressive but riding a merri-go-round of change is counter productive and impossible for LEA

Randy Richardson: Linda: I would rather see us focus on restructuring the school year rather than adding additional student days. Des Moines has done a good job with their non-traditional calendars.

Raul Carolus: Nate: another approach could be paring a lesson plan with an industry, so children could go to a buisness and see what they're learning in action.

Jason Glass: Nate that sounds like something that we'd have to carefully consider as it would have economic and business consequences as well. I am open to discussing.

Becky: When I see what other nations around the world use as a calendar for students - we are significantly behind the game. I might suggest starting with a 5% increase ... either in days or hours across days - and see where that gets us.

Linda Fandel: Jason: To improve student achievement, the plans puts a great teacher in every classroom and a great principal in every building, it raises academic standards in a variety of ways, and it provides more support for doing all of the above.

Jason Glass: Hi Kate - we want to put in place a plan that has broad and bipartisan support. Education shouldn't be a political issue, we all love our kids. We need to put something in place that is right for kids and pragmatic - that will be our best insulation from political winds of change.

Kym: you talked about support in the PreK-3, but will their be additional monies for districts for this.

Linda Fandel: Randy: Rearranging the 180-day school year is certainly something to look at.

Jason:To my early question Linda. Do you think great teachers will want to become at will employees and only have a 20% chance of achieving anything above the bottom two tiers?

Deb Johnsen: Linda, After attending the summitt I was underthe suposition that longer school year was not an effective strategy, at least for Finland. I would like your thoughts since you have researched this concept. Thanks!

Linda Fandel: Randy: Rearranging the school year is certainly something to look at. Thank you.

Melissa: The proposal is thoughful... However, when I got to the end game- our goals... I felt defeated. Is our #1 goal to really be a top performing on NAEP? No where in our goals does it say "to produce world class students... who critically think, innovate, inspire, have global aspirations, etc"... Seems to me like many of the goals are actually measures that doen't get at the heart of what we claim we are trying to do with this reform.

Judith Olson: Linda, we need to look carefully at the scope and sequence of teaching beginning reading skills. The curriculum and methods of teaching by a quality teacher need to be researched and explored.

Melissa Hesner: If all students are expected to achieve the expectations of the Iowa Core, how will we ensure that all teachers are prepared to teach the Iowa Core? Specifically, how does professional development fit into the Blue Print?

Jason Glass: Becky - some higher performing systems have more days/time and some don't. We definitely need to think about how we can extend time for kids in poverty or who are behind - that's where we need to target the extensions.

Linda Fandel: Florida look at ways to better utilize existing state and federal dollars, but additional dollars may be needed as well.

Steve: If I am not mistaken, don't most, if not all, of these countries we are "competing" against have longer student years?

Linda Fandel: Jason: Yes, i do think great teachers will be drawn to the tiered system because of higher pay in the early years of teaching and the way teaching is treated as a true profession.

Jason Glass: Hi Melissa - our goal is to make Iowa's schools among the best in the world. There are a number of ways to measure that including NAEP, PISA, and ACT. We have also included measures of student hope, engagement, wellbeing - parent satisfaction - and staff working conditions in our approach. It's broader than just assessments.

Becky: I couldn't agree more. We need to address the needs of all students ... and just increasing seat time or hours per day won't guarantee any degree of success. It goes right back to the quality teacher and administrator portion of the BP.

Bridgette Wagoner: Melissa--Agree 100%! We need to be clear about what our goals are and whatthe measures/indicators of those goals are. We've got them intertwined right now. That's fixable.

Leslie McGuire 2: Melissa, I had a similar reaction. Plan seems focused on competition, making sure our kids beat all other kids in the world. I want my kids to be good people, love learning, know how to think for themselves, create. ALL of that is missing. It's only about being the best on a test. Sigh.

Steve:I really, really hope the Iowa model is not Florida.

Linda Fandel: Melissa Hesner: Stronger professional development and coaching will better prepare teachers to teach the Iowa Core.

Jason Glass: Steve - several in fact do. Our plan would provide this flexibility through added days for all teacher tiers.

Jason: Career earnings will be much lower. You may encourage young teachers to come. The lack of advancement will also encourage them to leave. turnover in teaching is already incredibly high. A tiered system with limited advancement will not help.

Jason Glass: I agree Becky.

Linda Fandel: Judith: I agree.

mike peterson: Being an "at will" employee does not mean that a person will automatically be fired on a whim. School leaders will do everything possible to hire good people and coach people to become the best educators possible. It's not as if a school's current "at will" employees are constantly being let go. People who are effective at what they do and who are willing to work to be even more effective have nothing to fear from "at will."

Deb Johnsen: I am pleased the blueprint includes "at will" employees and a tiered system. We need major reform in Iowa's teaching and learning framework!

Jason Glass: Steve - we are taking some of the best approaches from other districts, states, and nations. This is not a wholesale adoption of anyone's approach. It's tailored for Iowa.

Kim Didier: Jason, your points on the ACT are well taken. Nevertheless, there are a certain % of our students who will enter the workforce immediately either because they are unable to afford a post-secondary education or are delaying the cost of a post secondary education until they have more understanding of what kind of career they want to pursue. In these situations, the NCRC can provide some measurement of how well the students are prepared to apply their knowledge to workplace needs. No it may not provide the kind of data you want to compare to other states, but it could be of great benefit to our businesses to understand who is prepared to work.

Jason: Mike- being an at will employee literally does mean you can be fired on a whim!

Linda Fandel: Leslie: You are right that children also need to learn about being independent thinkers who are committed to making the world a better place. But they will be at a disadvantage if they don't have a great academic education as well.
Steve: Current employees are not at will. They have contracts. An at will employee has no contract, can be let go at any time OR can decide to leave at any time during the year.
Leslie McGuire 2: Steve, the Iowa blueprint is very, very, very similar to Florida. You should read some of the parent feedback about Florida's system. Parents and kids detest it. Check out the number of anti Florida, anti FCAT pages on Facebook sometime. Pure rage at a system focused on testing.
mike peterson: In reality, it rarely, rarely happens.
Lisa Arndt: Jason is correct. where is the motivation and encouragement for teachers to stay in this profession when only 20% of the profession will have the opportunity for the top rate of pay and the rest will have less carrer earnings overall?
Jason Glass: Jason - you make assumptions in this statement that are questionable. The number one thing we know about compensation is that it's most important to get base pay right. That's what we are trying to do. No one here is argueing we should pay teachers less.
Jason: Yet the 4-tier system will pay teachers less?
Jason Glass: Lisa - we want to get base pay to a point where all teachers want to enter and stay in education. The additional pay for mentors and masters comes with more responsibility, time, and accountability.
Jason Glass: Jason - it will not pay teachers less. Over the next decade I fully expect we will be paying teachers more.
Steven: From the comments and discussion here, it seems to me that getting consensus and buy in by all parties will be a challenge!
Leslie McGuire 2: Linda Fandel; Yet the blueprint fails to address anything about non measureable attributes we want our children to develop.
Linda Fandel: Jason: the four-tier system will include a significantly higher beginnng salary, and the other tiers' salary will grow as a percentage of that.
Jason: How will the tiers be funded if teachers will be paid more within ten years?
Linda Fandel: Steven: A lot of details have to be worked out, but there is broad agreement that Iowa needs to give children a world-class education - and that we are not where we need to be now.
Jason Glass: Kim - there are certainly compelling reasons for the college work readiness assessment and career/tech options. THose should be available to students. However all the arguments do not diminish those that I have advanced for ACT.
Leslie McGuire 2: Linda Fandel, it's not an either or. Not a zero sum game. We can provide great education AND grow good kids at the same time. But if the education system focuses only on the former, growing good kids will be left out.
Steve: How much higher salary. I heard Arne Duncan say 80,000, Jason Glass say 45,000 and Governor Brandstad say maybe $35,000. Those are very different targets.
Linda Fandel: Leslie: the accountability dashboard will consider other measures of the quality of school life.
Wayne B: I think when teachers become "at will" employees without fair, due process, we will lose great teachers to other professions and states. And what is the purpsoe of doing that in the name of increasing student achievement? Parents want to know that their children are taught by good teachers.
Jason Glass: Jason - we are suggesting that we use the funds we have in teacher salaries now in more strategic and thoughtful ways. Paying based on experience and education credits is not strategic.
Nate Willems: Currently, our teachers are not quite "at-will," but the standard for dismissing a teacher is extremely deferential to the school district.

Jason Glass: Steve - we should try and get it as high as we can.
Steven: As an educator of over 30 years and a school leader for part of that time, I find it difficult to argue with most of the blueprint. It seems aggressive, but not over aggressive. I have felt change has been needed for years and I applaud this plan.
Raul Carolus: For those students who aren't on the college track, could there be room for trade apprenticeship programs?
Linda Fandel: Steve: Salary levels have yet to be specified, but starting salaries will be substantially higher than today's $28,000 minimum, and the other tiers will build on that.
Jason Glass: Thank you Steven - want all want great schools for Iowa.
Jason: Jason, with all due respect, if you use the funds you have now more strategically, that means some teachers get more and some get less. That isn't elevating the profession. that is pitting colleagues against each other for pay. that will not improve student achievement.
Becky: I agree, Steven. I've also been an educator in excess of 30 years...this change is a long time coming and very over-due.
Leslie McGuire 2: Linda, the accountability dashboard can't measure love of learning, creativity, honor, respect, courage, honesty, helpfulness, etc.
Linda Fandel: Steven: Thanks for praise for the blueprint.
Steven: Sustainablility worries me
Jason Glass: Wayne B and Nate - we aren't suggesting an end to due process, but we are suggesting a fair and efficient process to remove ineffective educators. No child should be subject to an ineffective educator.
Linda Fandel: Raul: We do need to look more carefully at promoting trade apprentice programs and more internships. Very good idea.
Steven: I appreciate your passion for this as I have seen so many "reforms" come and go without any impact. Whatever you do, make sure that doesn't happen again please.
Jason Glass: Jason - no one would be paid less because we are allowing those on the old system to stay on it or choose to come over.
Lisa Arndt: How is the process in the blue print fair, when a teachers only recourse is to appeal to the school board that just voted to fire them?
Wayne B: I agree. What is not working with the current process is the question?
Kate Baldwin: I do applaud the efforts of Governor Branstad's team and the DE leadership for tackling change to improve education. If we truly want the best for our kids we need to examine every option with an open mind while maintaining a balance of common sense. Thanks for your time.
Linda Fandel: Leslie: Those values, however, should be promoted by parents, teachers and others invovled with children. A love of learning is critical to success.
Kym: The blueprint has wondering merits, how will this be rolled out so that all school districts will be on the same page
Jason: How will a local be able to fund both schedules if no one gets paid less and new teachers on tier are getting paid more?
Jason Glass: Steven - sustainability is certainly a concern. We have to build this across political ideology and party so it's built to last and also put in place well supported reforms for the long haul.
Nate Willems: Within the past couple of years, there have been proposals to effectively make "adjudication" the last step in teacher termination (no appeal to district court). These have not been supported by IASB.
Jason Glass: Thanks Kate.
Staci: Ten minutes remain in this live chat.
Linda Fandel: Kym: Thank you for your comments abuot the blueprints merits. We will work very closely with districts to roll the blueprint out, if the Legislature approves the proposal.

Melissa: As an educator, I agree that pay is instrumental, but the fact that the topic is dominating so much of this forum sheds light on the nature of our education beast....
Steven: GREAT thought Melissa. I had picked up on that also
Leslie McGuire 2: Linda Fandel; Agreed. But schools and what goes on in them everyday have a profound and lasting impact on children, their character, and their future plans. We have to be careful we're not crushing children in a rush to get high test scores.
mike peterson: Has there been any thought of how the Iowa Teaching Standards fit into this system? Has there been any thought on updating them? Regardless, school leaders will need to go through some intensive training on evaluation in order to make the tiered model effective. I like the idea of tiers. Just not sure how our current evaluation tool can fit.
Steven: Let's get back to kids....achievement that is the FOCUS of this plan.
Kym: when will this proposal be voted on?
Jason Glass: Nate - We will work with IASB, ISEA, SAI and other key advocacy groups to see if we can get to a "Nash Equilibrium" on that question.
Kevin Schipper: How can we help to move this forward?
Linda Fandel: Lisa: We are suggesting the process happens locally, but we are willing to discuss other options.
Linda Fandel: Leslie: I couldn't agree more. The high performing schools I visited in Finland and Alberta truly nurtured kids and got strong achievement results.
Steven: I shared the blueprint with our staff and received only one comment. I think most of our educators know this is needed but have the same concerns with implementation and sustaining it over time.
Jason Glass: Mike - we are working now on a proposal to update and improve the Iowa Teaching Standards. They were a good start, solid foundation. But we need to pick them up again and improve them. Especially in light of the new INTASC standards popping nationally.
mike peterson: I am embarrassed to say that I have never heard of INTASC. Looks like I have some research to do.
Deb Johnsen: Totally agree Melissa, what about teacher accountability? Scores continue to decline statewide! If we are truly educators for tomorrow's youth, we have to insitutue major change within the system and quit tinkering!!
Steve: Mike, the Iowa Teaching Standards are fairly recent and research based. It is not the standards that are holding achievement back.
Lynne: To piggy back off the question about professional development for teachers, can you supply details about how we can make professional development "stronger" and incorporate coaching?
Jason Glass: Kevin - you can move this forward by helping us understand what's right and what can be improved with our plan. If you support our final version, then please advocate for it in your community and at the state level.
Leslie McGuire 2: When can we expect a final version?
Jason Glass: Deb I don't think most would describe our proposal as tinkering!
Linda Fandel: Kym: the governor will issue final recommendations for the Legislature to consider in 2012. It will be up to lawmakers to decide whether to put this pin place. But it will also be up to Iowans, who can let their elected officials know they what they want.
Steven: Jason, I do hope early actions focus on our teacher prep programs. Our young teachers deserve a better experience in preparing for the classrooms.
Jason Glass: But I share your sense of urgency Deb!
Jason Glass: Leslie 2 - we'll be putting forward a proposal for legislative consideration in the first week of the legislative session. I expect we will issue several updates on changes between now and then.
Kym: I agree Steve

Deb Johnsen: Jason, sorry I did not mean the blueprint is tinkering, it is change! Yeah! We have fallen victim tinkering in past years. I fully support the blueprint!
Linda Fandel: Lynne:: One of the changes needed is to make sure AEAs deliver consistently strong training that is truly useful to teachers.
Staci: Five minutes remain in this live chat.
Meghan Schemmel: Steven, I also agree with this, our teachers need better training at the college level!!
Wayne B: Scores may have declined...but we educate all students. Where are the parents in the schools? What are we doing to engage them in the process? I go back to that question. It is not only the educators responsibility.
Jason Glass: Steven - we do have a section dealing with improving teacher prep and it is a key part. I agree completely.
Jason Glass: Thanks Deb - I so appreciate your words of encouragement.
Becky: I agree with Linda's comment about AEA's delivering consistently...but I might add that this needs to be in concert from one AEA to the next. We all need to share the same message.
Linda Fandel: Wayne: We also want to strengthen parent involvement and are looking at ways to do that.
Steven: Young teachers should come out of college knowing how to interpret test data and how to use this data to influence instruction.
Jason Glass: Completely agree Steven.
Melissa: Will there be more opportunities to do the live chats? These are great discussions... your willingness to engage is to be commended!
Leslie McGuire 2: Wayne B: As a parent, I want to be involved in my schools, but am usually limited to fundraising efforts or cutting out shapes for kindergarten. Not feeling very welcome or useful.
Wayne B: :-)
Staci: We'll work in more live chats. Keep an eye on the DE web site for more details.
Steven: Thank you for this opportunity. I applaud the plan, your efforts and passion for our students in Iowa.
Judith Olson: So, will the Iowa legislators in 2012 be able to vote for and against the specifics in the Blueprint?
Deb Johnsen: May the force be with Linda and Jason:)!
Leslie McGuire 2: Yes, thank you Dr. Glass. Your passion is inspiring.
Jason Glass: That's right Judith - we hope they can support the whole package, but ultimately the decisions rest with the legislature.
Linda Fandel: Deb: Thanks. We will need it.
Jason Glass: Deb -- "do or do not, there is no try."
Jason Glass: Thank you Leslie!
mike peterson: Oh dear...Yoda is alive and well!
Linda Fandel: Thanks to everyone for the great conversation today. We will try to do more live chats down the road.
Jason Glass: I have been trying to perfect the force on my dog ... so far my abilities are "non-proficient."
Steven: Doggie blueprint????
Leslie McGuire 2 :You and your dog will be held back for remediation :)
Kim Didier: Jason, these reasons I gave for the NCRC were not intended to diminish the reasons for the ACT but raise the possibility that there are additional reasons to consider other assessments (e.g. NCRC) of our educational system and its success in preparing students to be contributing members of the state especially if they will become part of the workforce immediately upon exiting the secondary system. I think there are compelling reasons to find

appropriate roles for both the ACT test and the NCRC in the proposed changes. That is why I keep brining it up :)

Jason Glass: 1 minute remaining!

Jason Glass: Thanks Kim - I appreciate your perspective.

Jason Glass: And I agree the NCRC is a good measure.

mike peterson: Thanks for the chance to share, everyone! Looking forward to next time!