



**Revision of
Reorganization Plan
Required by
Iowa Code Chapter 275**

March 9, 2017

Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9
729 – 21st Street
Bettendorf, Iowa 52722

Board of Directors

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Name	School Districts	Director District Number	Position
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Ken Krumwiede	Davenport	2	Member
Scott Saveraid	Davenport	3	Member
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Dick Wold	Central, Maquoketa, Bellevue, Northeast, Easton Valley, Andrew	7	Member
Robin Krueger	Muscatine, Durant	8	Member
Mike Dytschaver	West Liberty, Wilton, Columbus, Louisa-Muscatine, North Scott, Calamus-Wheatland, Davenport, Bennett, Delwood	9	Member

Secretary to the Board:

Cheryl Oake

Administrator:

William Decker

Preface

Iowa Code section 275.(3)2015, states that, “. . . The area education agency boards shall develop detailed studies and surveys of the school districts within the area education agency and all adjacent territory for the purpose of providing for reorganization of school districts in order to effect more economical operation and the attainment of higher standards of education in the schools. The plans shall be revised periodically to reflect reorganizations which may have taken place in the area education agency and adjacent territory.” The purposes of this publication are to comply with those mandates relative to reorganization planning, to provide assistance to the officials and citizens of school districts contemplating school district reorganization, and to assist the area education agency board of directors in the event it is presented a reorganization petition.

The plan is intended to provide general guidance to the AEA board of directors as it acts upon reorganization petitions, and the provisions of the plan are not expected to be binding upon the AEA board. The board reserves the right to base its future actions upon conditions as they develop and upon new information as it becomes available.

Revision of plan reviewed by AEA 9 board of directors	January 11, 2017
Public hearing on revision of plan	Bettendorf, Iowa
Revision of plan adopted by AEA 9 board of directors	February 8, 2017
Revision of plan transmitted to director of Department of Education	March 8, 2017
	March 10, 2017

Refer to Chapter 2 for dates of further surveys, hearings, elections, etc.

Table of Contents

Chapter One	Code Summary
Chapter Two	Records of Reorganization Plan and Activities
Chapter Three	Suggested Alternate Plans
Appendices:	
A	Supporting Data for Districts in AEA
B	Supporting Data for Adjacent Districts
C	Further Surveys and Assistance
D	Supporting Records – Development of Plan Revision
E	Supporting Records – Approval and Maintenance of Plan

Chapter One

Code Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to assist those who read and use this publication by summarizing the provisions of Chapter 275 of the Code of Iowa that relate to the mandated area education agency (AEA) reorganization plans. However, it is not intended for reading of this narrative to take the place of direct examination of the Code or consultation with an attorney. The first part of the chapter offers general background about the contents of Code Chapter 275, and the next three sections summarize portions of Code Chapter 275 that most specifically relate to the AEA reorganization plans. The fifth part lists the titles of the sections of Code Chapter 275 that most directly address the reorganization plan.

General Background

Chapter 275 of the Code of Iowa, along with a few minor references in other chapters of the Code, addresses the topic of school district reorganization. The terms reorganization, consolidation, and merger seem to be used interchangeably; although reorganization is in the Code chapter title and it is the most common. The word reorganization is used in this publication.

On July 1, 1975, the 15 area education agencies replaced the county boards of education, and they inherited the school district reorganization governance role. The AEA responsibilities can be placed into two broad categories. The first includes the area reorganization plan, and the second is the governance of the petition process. It is important to note that the AEAs have no responsibilities or capacities for initiating the reorganization process, or in any way causing a reorganization. The decision to start a reorganization effort through a petition is a decision of the local district residents. The eventual reorganization election decision is also within the realm of local district voters. The AEA's role in the reorganization process is to govern the activities that take place from the submission of the reorganization petition through the reorganization election. The AEA has some post-reorganization responsibilities, but they are more "housekeeping" in nature.

The Code contains three general methods for school districts to change their boundary lines. The first, and predominant method is the petition process in Code Chapter 275. The others are the dissolution method embodied in Code Sections 275.51 through 275.56, and the concurrent action method of changing boundaries as cited in Section 274.37. The AEA has no authority for dissolution, but concurrent action by two local school boards to change their boundaries may be disapproved by the respective AEA board or boards of directors.

Code Chapter 275 can be categorized into two broad areas, plus numerous lesser topics. The first is the AEA reorganization planning component, and the second is the reorganization petition process. Among the other topics in the chapter are the school dissolution process, school redistricting following decennial census, and changes in director district boundaries and numbers. This publication is limited to the AEA reorganization planning.

Three general concepts come together as the AEAs develop and use their reorganization plans:

- A. Code Chapter 275 begins with the mandate that area education agencies develop reorganization plans. Such plans must be developed whether or not any school districts expect to reorganize, or could potentially reorganize.
- B. School districts initiate the reorganization effort through the petition process. The petitions may be based upon the AEA reorganization plans, or they may be different than the plans. If they are different, the petitions must request the AEA to change its plans.
- C. When the AEA receives petitions, it must compare the petitions to the plans. If the petitions do not comply with the plans, the AEA board shall conduct further surveys.

The terms plans, surveys, and studies are used throughout Code Chapter 275. There seems to be little distinction among them. This publication uses the terms that are associated with the concepts being described.

Summary of Plan Development

1. The AEA shall develop detailed studies and surveys.
2. The surveys and studies shall be of the school districts within the AEA and all adjacent territory.
3. The plans shall be revised periodically to reflect reorganizations which may have taken place.
4. The scope of the studies and surveys shall include:
 - a) the adequacy of the educational program
 - b) pupil enrollment
 - c) property valuation
 - d) existing buildings and equipment
 - e) natural community areas
 - f) road conditions
 - g) transportation
 - h) economic factors
 - i) individual attention given to the needs of students
 - j) opportunity of students to participate in a wide variety of activities
 - k) other matters that may bear on educational programs meeting minimum standards required by law.
5. The plans shall also include suggested alternate plans that incorporate the school districts in the area education agency into reorganized districts that meet the enrollment standards specified in Section 275.3. Section 275.3 lists 300 students as the minimum size for the formation of a new district. That 300 enrollment is incorporated into this planning provision, and it requires the AEA boards to suggest alternate plans for those districts under the 300 level.
6. The plan may include alternate plans proposed by school districts for sharing programs as an alternative to school reorganization.
7. In developing studies and surveys the AEA board:
 - a) shall consult with school officials and other citizens
 - b) from time to time hold public hearings
 - c) may employ research and other assistance to properly carry on its survey
 - d) shall consult with the director of the Department of Education

- e) may request assistance from the director of the Department of Education
- f) shall adopt and transmit completed plans to the director of the Department of Education

Summary of Petition Conforming to Plans

1. A reorganization petition shall contain a description of the area included in the proposed district.
2. The description shall conform to the AEA reorganization plan, or the petition shall request the plan to be changed.
3. It is also required that the provisions relating to studies, surveys, hearings and adoption of plans shall constitute a mandatory prerequisite to the effectuation of any proposal for district boundary change. It shall be the mandatory duty of the area education agency board to dismiss the petition if the above provisions are not complied with fully.

Summary of Changing Plans

1. Following the receipt of a petition, the area education agency board shall review its plans and determine whether the petition complies with the plan.
2. If the plan does not comply with the petition, the board shall conduct further surveys.
3. If the petitions are being considered at a hearing conducted by a joint board of more than one area education agency, the joint board shall determine if the petition conforms to plans.
4. If the petition requests a change of plans, the joint board shall determine whether a change should be made in any or all of the plans of the AEAs affected by the petition.

Portions of Chapter 275 That Most Directly Relate to AEA Reorganization Plans.

SEC 275.1	Declaration of policy – surveys – definitions (2 nd paragraph)
SEC 275.2	Scope of surveys
SEC 275.3	Minimum size
SEC 275.4	Studies, surveys, and plans
SEC 275.5	Proposals for merger or consolidation
SEC 275.7	Budget
SEC 275.8	Cooperation of Department of Education – planning joint districts
SEC 275.9	Methods of effectuating reorganization plans
SEC 275.12	Petitions – methods of election (subsection 1)
SEC 275.16	Hearing when territory in different area education agencies (1 st paragraph)

Chapter Two

Records of AEA 9 Reorganization Plans and Activities

As noted in the preceding chapter, the development of area education agency reorganization plans, the revision of the plans, and the use of the plans during the reorganization petition process, all require certain actions to be taken by the AEAs and their boards of directors. The purpose of this chapter is to maintain a set of records that chronicles such actions by Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9.

The records are in the form of a set of tables, which may be revised as actions are taken and conditions change. Following is a list of tables:

Table 01	Adoption of Plans and Revisions of Plans
Table 02	Approval of Changes
Table 03	Transmittal of Plans to the Director of the Department of Education
Table 04	Further Surveys
Table 05	Assistance from the Director of the Department of Education
Table 06	Public Hearings
Table 07	Passed Reorganization Elections
Table 08	Dismissed Reorganization Petitions and Failed Reorganization Elections
Table 09	Certification of Dissolution Commissions
Table 10	Boundary Line Changes by Concurrent Action
Table 11	Joint Board Actions

Table 2-01

**Record of Adoption of Plans and Revisions of Plans
Since July 1, 1975**

Iowa Code Reference:

Section 275.1(3): “. . . The area education agency boards shall develop detailed studies and surveys of the school districts within the area education agency and all adjacent territory for the purpose of providing for reorganization of school districts in order to effect more economical operation and the attainment of higher standards of education in the schools. The plans shall be revised periodically to reflect reorganizations which may have taken place in the area education agency and adjacent territory.”

Record of Adoption:

Dates	Notes
June 11, 1986	Original Plan
August 8, 2001	First Revision
March 8, 2017	Second Revision

Table 2-02

**Record of Approval of Changes
Since June 11, 1986**

Iowa Code Reference:

Section 275.12(1): “A petition describing the boundaries, or accurately describing the area included therein by legal descriptions, of the proposed district, which boundaries or area described shall conform to plans developed or the petitions shall request change of the plan, shall be filed with the area education agency administrator of the area education agency in which the greatest number of qualified electors reside . . .”

Record of Changes:

Dates	Notes
May 10, 1989	Calamus Wheatland New district – Calamus-Wheatland
March 30, 1992	Lost Nation (AEA 9) Midland (AEA 10) New district - Midland
May 10, 2010	East Central Preston New District – Easton Valley

Table 2-03

**Record of Transmittal of Plans to the
Director of the Department of Education
Since July 1, 1975**

Iowa Code Reference:

Section 275.4, unnumbered paragraph 3: “Completed plans shall be transmitted by the area education agency board to the director of the Department of Education.”

Record of Transmittal:

Dates	Notes
June 11, 1986	Original Plan
August 9, 2001	First Revision
March 10, 2017	Second Revision

Table 2-04

**Record of Further Surveys
Since January 1, 1987**

Iowa Code Reference:

Section 275.5: “. . . Following receipt of a petition pursuant to section 275.12, the area education agency board shall review its plans and determine whether the petition complies with the plans which have been adopted by the board. If the petition does not comply with the plans which had been adopted by the board, the board shall conduct further surveys pursuant to section 275.4 prior to the date set for the hearing upon the petition. If further surveys have been conducted by the board, the board shall present the results of the further surveys at the hearing upon the petition.”

The further surveys are attached to the area education agency plan as parts of Appendix C. The attachment of such surveys does not automatically indicate approval by the area education agency board of directors. The further surveys record includes those that were conducted or commissioned by the AEA, and those conducted by or commissioned by the school districts affected. The record of further surveys contains those that were presented at the hearings upon petitions and those that were prepared in anticipation of petitions that did not materialize. Out of date further surveys and those conducted for established reorganized districts were deleted from the record and from Appendix C.

Record of Further Surveys:

Dates	District Name	Surveys Conducted By	Study Type
1987	Bennett	Department of Education	Consultation
1989	Bennett – Included Calamus, Durant, Wheatland, Wilton	Department of Education	Full Study
1989	Bennett	Department of Education	Consultation
1992	Bennett	Department of Education	Full Study
1992	Calamus-Wheatland and Central Clinton	Department of Education	Full Study
1992	Lost Nation	Department of Education	Financial Study
2000	Preston and East Central	Department of Education	Full Study
2005	Preston and East Central	Department of Education	Merger Study
2010	Preston, East Central, and Northeast	Department of Education	Feasibility Study
2014	Columbus	Department of Education	Feasibility Study

Table 2-05

**Record of Assistance from the Director
Of the Department of Education
Since January 1, 1987**

Iowa Code Reference:

Section 275.4, unnumbered paragraph 2: “In addition, the area education agency board shall consult with the director of the Department of Education in the development of surveys and plans. The director of the Department of Education shall provide assistance to the area education agency boards as requested and shall advise the area education agency boards concerning plans of contiguous area education agencies and the reorganization policies adopted by the state board of education.”

Record of Assistance and Consultation:

Dates of Consultations	Notes
NONE	

Table 2-06

**Record of Public Hearings
Since July 1, 1987**

Iowa Code References:

Section 275.4, unnumbered paragraph 1: “In developing studies and surveys the area education agency board shall consult with the officials of school districts in the area and other citizens, and shall from time to time hold public hearings, and may employ such research and other assistance as it may determine reasonably necessary in order to properly carry on its survey and prepare definite plans of reorganization.”

Section 275.5: “. . . Following receipt of a petition pursuant to section 275.12, the area education agency board shall review its plans and determine whether the petition complies with the plans which had been adopted by the board. If the petition does not comply with the plans which had been adopted by the board, the board shall conduct further surveys pursuant to section 275.4 prior to the date set for the hearing upon the petition. If further surveys have been conducted by the board, the board shall present the results of the further surveys at the hearing upon the petition.”

Record of Hearings:

Dates	Locations	Notes
June 11, 1986	Bettendorf, Iowa	Adoption of AEA 9 Reorganization Plan
August 8, 2001	Bettendorf, Iowa	Revision of AEA 9 Reorganization Plan
June 16, 2010	Maquoketa, Iowa	East Central & Preston Public Hearing
June 30, 2010	Maquoketa, Iowa	Public Hearing to Hear East Central & Preston Merger Objections
February 8, 2017	Bettendorf, Iowa	Revision of AEA 9 Reorganization Plan

Table 2-07

Record of Passed Reorganization Elections Since July 1, 1975

Iowa Code References:

Section 275.18(1): “When the boundaries of the territory to be included in a proposed school corporation and the number and method of the election of the school directors of the proposed school corporation have been determined as provided in this chapter, the area education agency administrator with whom the petition is filed shall give written notice of the election to the county commissioner of elections of the county in the proposed school corporation which has the greatest taxable base. The question shall be submitted to the voters at an election on a date specified in to section 39.2, subsection 44, paragraph “c” in the calendar year in which the reorganization will take effect.”

Section 275.20: “The voters shall vote separately in each existing school district affected and voters residing in the entire existing district are eligible to vote upon the proposition to create a new school corporation and on any additional provision authorized pursuant to section 275.12, subsection 6. If a proposition receives a majority of the votes cast in each of at least seventy-five percent of the districts, and also a majority of the total number of votes cast in all of the districts, the proposition is carried.”

Section 275.24: “When a school district is enlarged, reorganized, or changes its boundaries pursuant to sections 275.12 to 275.22, the change shall take effect on July 1 following the date of the reorganization election held pursuant to section 275.18.”

Section 275.27: “School districts created or enlarged under this chapter are community school districts and are part of the area education agency in which the greatest number of qualified electors of the district resides at the time of the special election . . .”

Record of Passed Reorganization Elections:

Effective Date	Original Districts & AEA Nos.	New District & AEA No.
June 20, 1989	Calamus (9) Wheatland (9)	Calamus-Wheatland (9)
July 1, 1993	Lost Nation (9) Midland (10)	Midland (10)
September 11, 2012	Easton Valley (9) Preston (9)	Easton Valley (9)

Table 2-08

Record of Dismissed Reorganization Petitions And Failed Reorganization Elections Since July 1, 1975

Iowa Code References:

Section 275.15(1): “At the hearing, which shall be held within ten days of the final date set for filing objections, interested parties, both petitioners and objectors, may present evidence and arguments, and the area education agency board shall review the matter on its merits and within ten days after the conclusion of any hearing, shall rule on the objections and shall enter an order fixing the boundaries for the proposed school corporation as will in its judgment be for the best interests of all parties concerned, having due regard for the welfare of adjoining districts, or dismiss the petition.”

Section 275.17: “If an area education agency board does not approve the change in boundaries of school districts in accordance with a petition, a petition describing the identical or similar boundaries shall not be filed for a period of six months following the date of the hearing or the vote of the board, whichever is later.”

Section 275.22: “. . . If the majority of the votes cast by the qualified electors is in favor of the proposition, as provided in section 275.20, a new school corporation shall be organized. If the majority of votes cast is opposed to the proposition, a new petition describing the identical or similar boundaries shall not be filed for at least six months from the date of the election . . .”

Record of Dismissed Petitions:

Hearing Dates	Original Districts	AEA Numbers
None		

Record of Failed Elections:

Election Dates	Original Districts	AEA Numbers
None		

Table 2-09

Record of Certification of Dissolution Commissions Since July 1, 1975

Iowa Code References:

Section 275.51, unnumbered paragraph 4: “The board of the school district shall certify to the area education agency board that a commission has been formed, the names and addresses of commission members, and that the commission members represent the various geographic areas and socioeconomic factors present in the district.”

Section 275.53, unnumbered paragraph 1: “The commission shall send a copy of its dissolution proposal or shall inform the board that it cannot agree upon a dissolution proposal not later than one year following the date of the organizational meeting of the commission . . .”

Section 275.55(3): “The proposition shall be adopted if a majority of the electors voting on the proposition approve its adoption.”

Certification of Commission:

Date	District
None	

Failure of Commission to Agree:

Date	District
None	

Approval by Electors:

Date	District
None	

Failure of Electors to Approve:

Date	District
None	

Table 2-10

**Record of Boundary Line Changes by Concurrent Action
Since July 1, 1975**

Iowa Code References:

Section 274.37: “The boundary lines of contiguous school corporations may be changed by the concurrent action of the respective boards of directors at their regular meetings in July, or at special meetings called for that purpose. Such concurrent action shall be subject to the approval of the area education agency board but such concurrent action shall stand approved if the said board does not disapprove such concurrent action within thirty days following receipt of notice thereof. The corporation from which territory is detached shall, after the change, contain not less than four government sections of land.”

Section 275.22: “. . . If territory is excluded from the reorganized district, action pursuant to section 274.37 shall be taken prior to the effective date of reorganization. . .”

Territory Exclusion/Inclusion:

Effective Date	Excluded From	Included In
August 1981	Tipton	Bennett
August 1983	Dubuque	Bellevue
July 1, 1987	Wilton	Tipton

Other Concurrent Action:

Effective Dates	Districts	Districts
July 1, 1984	Delwood	Central Clinton
July 1, 1991	Pleasant Valley	Bettendorf
July 1, 1997	Pleasant Valley	Bettendorf

Table 2-11

**Record of Joint Board Actions
Since July 1, 1975**

Iowa Code References:

Section 275.8(3): “Planning of joint districts shall be conducted in the same manner as planning for single districts, except as provided in this section. Studies and surveys relating to the planning of joint districts shall be filed with the area education agency in which one of the districts is located which has the greatest taxable property base. In the case of controversy over the planning of joint districts, the matter shall be submitted to the director of the department of education. Judicial review of the director’s decision may be sought in accordance with the terms of the Iowa Administrative Procedure Act, Chapter 17A. Notwithstanding the terms of that Act, petitions for judicial review must be filed within thirty days after the decision of the director.

Section 275.16(1): “If the territory described in the petition for the proposed corporation lies in more than one area education agency, the agency administrator with whom the petition is filed shall fix the time and place for a hearing and call a joint meeting of the members of all the agency boards in which territory of the proposed school corporation lies, to act as a single board for the hearing of the objections, and a majority of members of each of the agency boards of the different agencies in which any part of the proposed corporation lies, constitutes a quorum. The president of the board of directors of the area education agency in which the petition has been filed, or a member of the board designated by the president, shall preside at the joint meeting. The joint boards acting as a single board shall determine whether the petition conforms to plans or, if the petition requests a change in plans, whether a change should be made, and may change the plans of any or all the area education agency boards affected by the petition. The joint board shall determine and fix boundaries for the proposed corporation as provided in section 275.15 or dismiss the petition. The joint board may continue the hearing as provided in section 275.15.”

Actions of Joint Boards:

Effective Dates Or Action Dates	AEA Nos.	Districts	Joint Board Actions
July 1, 1993	9 10	Lost Nation Midland	Joint board approved petition – election passed
December 10, 2012	9	East Central Preston	Joint board organizational meeting after the September 2012 election

Chapter Three

Suggested Alternate Plans

Iowa Code References:

Section 275.2: “. . . The plans shall also include suggested alternate plans that incorporate the school districts in the area education agency into reorganized districts that meet the enrollment standards specified in section 275.3 and may include alternate plans proposed by school districts for sharing programs under section 28E.9, 256.13, 280.15, 282.7, or 282.10 as an alternative to school reorganization.”

Section 275.3: “No new school district shall be planned by an area education agency board nor shall any proposal for creation or enlargement of any school district be approved by an area education agency board or submitted to electors unless there reside within the proposed limits of such district at least three hundred persons of school age who were enrolled in public schools in the preceding school year. Provided, however, that the director of the Department of Education shall have authority to grant permission to an area education agency board to approve the formation or enlargement of a school district containing a lower school enrollment than required in this section on the written request of such area education agency board if such request is accompanied by evidence tending to show that sparsity of population, natural barriers or other good reason makes it impracticable to meet the schools enrollment requirement.”

Table 01	List of Districts in Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency	9
Table 02	List of Alternate Whole-Grade Plans	
Table 03	Overview of Plans	

Table 3-01 -- Size

**List of Districts in Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9
2015-2016 School Year**

List According to Enrollment Size:

#	AEA #	Co. #	Dist. #	District Name	Certified Enrollment 2015-2016	Statewide Rank from Smallest	Operates High School
1	9	16	0603	Bennett Community School	187	12	No
2	9	23	1675	Delwood Community School	189	13	No
3	9	49	0243	Andrew Community School	251	25	No
4	9	23	0918	Calamus-Wheatland Comm.	479	97	Yes
5	9	23	4773	Northeast Community School	552	128	Yes
6	9	49	0585	Bellevue Community School	561	131	Yes
7	9	16	1926	Durant Community School	571	136	Yes
8	9	23	1965	Easton Valley Community	621	150	Yes
9	9	58	3841	Louisa-Muscatine Community	736	189	Yes
10	9	70	7038	Wilton Community School	799	198	Yes
11	9	58	1368	Columbus Community School	818	201	Yes
12	9	23	0936	Camanche Community School	877	211	Yes
13	9	70	6975	West Liberty Community	1,260	250	Yes
14	9	49	4041	Maquoketa Community School	1,347	257	Yes
15	9	23	1082	Central Community School	1,451	269	Yes
16	9	82	4784	North Scott Comm. School	3,078	308	Yes
17	9	23	1278	Clinton Community School	3,846	313	Yes
18	9	82	0621	Bettendorf Community School	4,057	314	Yes
19	9	82	5250	Pleasant Valley Community	4,532	317	Yes
20	9	70	4581	Muscatine Community School	5,170	321	Yes
21	9	82	1611	Davenport Community School	15,801	334	Yes
Totals					47,186		
Average					2,147		
Number of Districts					21		

Table 3-01 -- Size

**List of Districts in Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9
2015-2016 School Year**

List According to Alphabet:

#	AEA #	Co. #	Dist. #	District Name	Certified Enrollment 2015-2016	Statewide Rank from Smallest	Operates High School
1	9	49	243	Andrew Community School	251	25	No
2	9	49	585	Bellevue Community School	561	131	Yes
3	9	16	603	Bennett Community School	187	12	No
4	9	82	621	Bettendorf Community	4,057	314	Yes
5	9	23	918	Calamus-Wheatland Comm.	479	97	Yes
6	9	23	936	Camanche Community	877	211	Yes
7	9	23	1082	Central Community School	1,451	269	Yes
8	9	23	1278	Clinton Community School	3,846	313	Yes
9	9	58	1368	Columbus Community School	818	201	Yes
10	9	82	1611	Davenport Community	15,801	334	Yes
11	9	23	1675	Delwood Community School	189	13	No
12	9	16	1926	Durant Community School	571	136	Yes
13	9	49	1965	Easton Valley Community	621	150	Yes
14	9	58	3841	Louisa-Muscatine Community	736	189	Yes
15	9	49	4041	Maquoketa Community	1,347	257	Yes
16	9	70	4581	Muscatine Community School	5,170	321	Yes
17	9	82	4784	North Scott Comm. School	3,078	308	Yes
18	9	23	4773	Northeast Community School	552	128	Yes
19	9	82	5250	Pleasant Valley Community	4,532	317	Yes
20	9	70	6975	West Liberty Community	1,260	250	Yes
21	9	70	7038	Wilton Community School	799	198	Yes
Totals					47,186		
Average					2,147		
Number of Districts					21		

Table 3-02

**List of Alternate Whole-Grade Plans
2016-2017**

#	AEA #	School District	First Year	Grade Levels Receiving	Grade Levels Sending	Operates High School	Partner School Districts
1	9	Delwood	1988-89		7-12	No	Maquoketa
2	9	Bennett	2005-06 2011-12		7-12 7-12	No	Durant Tipton
3	9	Andrew	2010-11 2010-11		9-12 9-12	No	Bellevue Maquoketa

Table 3-03

Overview of Plans

Iowa Code section 275.2, in part, requires that, “The plans shall also include suggested alternate plans that incorporate the school districts in the area education agency into reorganized districts that meet the enrollment standards specified in section 275.3 and may include alternate plans proposed by school districts for sharing programs under section 28E.9, 256.13, 280.15, 282.7, or 282.10 as an alternative to school reorganization.” The minimum number listed in Section 275.3 is 300. Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9 (AEA 9) currently has three districts below an enrollment of 300, as noted in the following table:

Districts with Less than 300 Enrollment

District	2015-2016 School Year Enrollment
Andrew Community School District	251
Bennett Community School District	187
Delwood Community School District	189

The purposes of the overview section of this plan are to comply with the mandate relative to enrollment size as stated in Iowa Code section 275.2, 1997, to provide assistance to the officials and citizens of school districts contemplating school district reorganization, and to assist the area education agency board of directors in the event it is presented a reorganization petition. Alternate reorganization proposals have been prepared for the districts that have less than 300 students.

This section of the plan lists principles that the AEA board of directors will consider as it acts upon reorganization petitions presented to it and as it enters the order “fixing boundary lines.” These principles will apply to petitions presented by districts with less than 300 students, and they will apply to districts with more than 300 students that may be included in a reorganization petition.

A. Overriding reorganization principles.

As the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9 board of directors works with the reorganization process it embraces three overriding principles:

1. School district reorganization is a local issue. The decision to begin the process by circulating a petition is the sole responsibility of the district’s citizens and elected officials. The ultimate decision to vote for or against a reorganization proposal is within the realm of the registered voters of the districts involved.
2. The Code of Iowa, specifically Chapter 275, requires the area education agency and its board of directors to assume stated responsibilities and authorities. In general terms, those mandates relate to the development of the area education agency reorganization plan; relate

to the governance of the petition process from the time the administrator is presented with such petition, to the AEA board of directors' order to approve or disapprove an election; and relate to several other narrower responsibilities, such as the acceptance of a certification that a dissolution commission has been formed. The area education agency and its board of directors will be limited to those actions required by the Code, and assistance that is specifically requested by the local districts which will not be in potential conflict with the mandates of the petition process.

3. The board of directors views the merger of school districts as the union of public business entities. The AEA encourages the local residents and boards of directors to determine if reorganization will result in improved services and programs, an enhancement in the efficiency and economical operations of the district or districts, and an increase in the value of the district or districts as assets to the residents of the communities and territories they serve. As required by Chapter 275 of the Code of Iowa, Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9 “shall, insofar as possible, authorize submission of proposals to the electors as they are developed and approved.”

B. Petition and boundary line principles.

When acting upon reorganization petitions that may be presented to it, the area education agency board shall consider the following principles. These tenets are not stated in order of importance, and other factors may be considered.

1. The Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency board encourages the local boards of directors to:
 - Thoroughly study the reorganization conditions before submitting a proposal to the AEA;
 - Involve the community in the study and decision making process through the formation of citizens committees, open forums for the purpose of disseminating information, and group and personal contacts for obtaining citizen input; and
 - Explore all options connected with the possible reorganization.
2. Reorganization studies and surveys shall be comprehensive, and they shall help determine whether the proposed district:
 - Will have reasonable long-term stability;
 - Will be able to comfortably meet the minimum educational standards required by the State of Iowa;
 - Will be able to operate in an economical and efficient manner;
 - Will have adequate facilities for the combined student body or have a plan for the development of adequate facilities;
 - Will form a reasonable geographic entity considering the outline of the territory, and the locations of the students, the municipalities, and the school structures;
 - Has demonstrated the compatibility of the existing individual units through sharing agreements and other forms of cooperation; and
 - Will satisfy the “matters” expressed in Iowa Code section 275.2, 1997.

3. When acting upon objections that request property to be removed from a proposed reorganization, the area education agency board will adhere to the mandates of Iowa Code section 275.15, unnumbered paragraph 2, 1997. As it rules upon the exclusion of territory, the decisions of the board, “shall represent a balance between the rights of the objectors and the welfare of the reorganized district.”

The Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9 board of directors recognizes that each reorganization petition situation is unique. At the deliberation upon the petition, the board will first examine the petition according to the principles established in this plan. However, the board reserves the right to add to those principles or detract from them as is warranted by each circumstance.

C. Suggested alternate plans.

As of the date of the approval of this plan, there are three districts in Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9 that sends its secondary students to another district and three districts that have a certified enrollment of less than 300. The suggested alternate plans for these districts are:

1. Delwood Community School currently sends its 7-12 students to Maquoketa. If Delwood were to consider reorganizing, Mississippi Bend AEA suggests that Delwood consider reorganizing with the Maquoketa Community School District, Northeast (Goose Lake) Community School District, or Central Community School District.
2. Bennett Community School District currently sends its 7-12 students to Durant. If Bennett were to consider reorganizing, Mississippi Bend AEA suggests that the Bennett Community School District consider reorganizing with Calamus-Wheatland Community School District, Durant Community School District, North Scott Community School District, or Wilton Community School District.
3. Andrew currently sends its 9-12 students to Maquoketa or Bellevue. If Andrew were to consider reorganizing, Mississippi Bend AEA suggests that the Andrew Community School District consider reorganizing with Bellevue Community School District, Easton Valley Community School District, or Maquoketa Community School District.

D. Anticipated exploratory planning.

As of the date of the approval of this plan, there are four districts in Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9 that have a certified enrollment greater than 300 and less than 600. It is anticipated these districts may consider after careful needs assessment analysis to explore alternate plans to meet student learning needs:

4. If Calamus-Wheatland Community School District were to consider initiating exploratory conversations regarding reorganizing and/or sharing, Mississippi Bend Area Education AEA suggests exploring discussions with Central Community School District or North Scott Community School District.

5. If Northeast Community School District were to consider initiating exploratory conversations regarding reorganizing and/or continued sharing, Mississippi Bend Area Education AEA suggests exploring discussions with Easton Valley Community School District, Central Community School District, or Clinton Community School District.
6. If Bellevue Community School District were to consider initiating exploratory conversations regarding reorganizing and/or continued sharing, Mississippi Bend Area Education AEA suggests exploring discussions with Andrew Community School District and/or Easton Valley Community School District.
7. If Durant Community School District were to consider initiating exploratory conversations regarding reorganizing and/or continued sharing, Mississippi Bend Area Education AEA suggests exploring discussions with Bennett Community School District, and/or Wilton Community School District.

Petitions filed by any of the above listed districts, by other districts in AEA 9, or by a district in AEA 9 jointly with a district in a contiguous area education agency, shall be presented and written in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Iowa. If necessary, such petition shall request a change in the AEA's reorganization plan, and the request will be considered at the hearing on the petition.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Supporting Data for Districts in AEA 9

Iowa Code References:

Section 275.2: “The scope of the studies and surveys shall include the following matters in the various districts in the area education agency and all districts adjacent to the area education agency: the adequacy of the educational program, pupil enrollment, property valuations, existing buildings and equipment, natural community areas, road conditions, transportation, economic factors, individual attention given to the needs of students, the opportunity of students to participate in a wide variety of activities related to the total development of the student, and other matters that may bear on educational programs meeting minimum standards required by law...”

Supporting data for the school districts in Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9 are contained in Appendix A. This appendix consists of detailed tables listing data for the districts in the AEA.

Attachment A-01
Attachment A-02

Preliminary Review
District Feedback

Table A-01 – Preliminary Review

Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency conducted a preliminary review of the three school districts with fewer than 300 students. The preliminary review included the code Section 275.2 recommended study areas. The following tables summarize the preliminary review findings.

District Student Enrollment 2015-2016	Delwood	Bennett	Andrew
Resident Students In-District	90.0	64.0	132.0
Open Enrollment Out	42.0	53.3	58.3
Tuition Out	57.2	70.0	61.0
Certified Enrollment	189.2	187.3	251.3
Open Enrollment In	51.0	6.0	15.0
Statewide Voluntary Preschool	8.0	4.5	7.0

The Iowa Department of Education's enrollment projections have a stable five-year enrollment trend for the three districts. The table below presents the five-year enrollment trend.

DELWOOD COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Level Certified Enrollment Projections – March 4, 2016, Iowa Department of Education

Five Year Certified Enrollment History					Five Year Certified Enrollment Projections				
2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
218.3	204.3	212.0	294.0	189.2	187.5	186.2	185.4	183.7	183.5

BENNETT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Level Certified Enrollment Projections – March 4, 2016, Iowa Department of Education

Five Year Certified Enrollment History					Five Year Certified Enrollment Projections				
2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
190.0	196.0	194.3	190.3	187.3	185.6	184.3	183.5	181.8	181.7

ANDREW COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Level Certified Enrollment Projections – March 4, 2016, Iowa Department of Education

Five Year Certified Enrollment History					Five Year Certified Enrollment Projections				
2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
277.4	273.3	272.3	256.3	251.3	249.1	247.4	246.1	244.1	243.8

The Iowa Department of Education educational statistics dated December 21, 2016, presented below, indicate district per pupil transportation cost averages are significantly above the state average. Delwood's average cost per transportation mile is significantly above the state average. Andrew and Bennett average per mile cost are below the state average.

District Transportation Costs 2015-2016	Average Cost Per Pupil Transported	Rank #	Average Cost Per Pupil Enrolled	Rank #	Average Cost Per Mile (Route)	Rank #
Andrew CSD	\$1,264.89	36	\$592.43	51	\$3.11	192
Bennett CSD	\$1,356.36	25	\$692.40	37	\$2.59	272
Delwood CSD	\$1,559.42	16	\$848.94	4	\$4.54	43

State	\$612.78	225	\$308.51	239	\$3.55	137
Ranking is listed from highest to lowest with #1 being the highest average in the state.						

The December 21, 2016, net operating transportation district cost indicate districts have net operating costs significantly below the state average and district route miles are also significantly below the state average.

District Transportation December 21, 2016	Net Operating Cost	Rank #	Route Miles	Rank #
Andrew CSD	\$148,877.44	300	47,969	312
Bennett CSD	\$119,223.98	326	45,987	315
Delwood CSD	\$160,619.86	290	35,387	343
State Average	\$407,318.68	98	114,875	115

The search of the Iowa Department of Education's educational statistics related the scope of reorganization study inquiry found within Iowa Code is presented below. The educational data inquiry did not identify a significant need for further inquiry.

Areas of Study January 2, 2017	Delwood Community School District	Bennett Community School District	Andrew Community School District
Educational Program	K-6 High Performing & Accredited	K-6 High Performing & Accredited	K-6 Commendable 7-8 Acceptable & Accredited
Pupil Enrollment	189	187	251
Property Valuations	\$332,205,858	\$388,717,744	\$394,632,600
Property Valuations Per Pupil (State Average = \$542,930)	\$1,757,703	\$2,078,705	\$1,572,241
Existing Facilities	No Known Issues of Concern	No Known Issues of Concern	No Known Issues of Concern
Natural Community Areas	No Known Issues of Concern	No Known Issues of Concern	No Known Issues of Concern
Road Conditions	No Known Issues of Concern	No Known Issues of Concern	No Known Issues of Concern
Transportation Net Operating Costs	\$160,619.86	\$119,223.98	\$148,877.44
Transported Students	103	88	118
Economic Factors	No Known Issues of Concern	No Known Issues of Concern	No Known Issues of Concern

Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency concluded from the preliminary review that additional studies and surveys were not necessary at the time of reorganization plan revision. It was concluded from the preliminary review that continual monitoring is recommended.

Table A-02 – District Feedback

Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency contacted the three school districts with fewer than 300 students. These districts have suggested alternate plans as required by code. The three district superintendents responded to the December 2016 request for feedback. The following feedback received matched the preliminary education data inquiry (Table A-01, pages 29-30).

<p>Delwood Community School District Feedback</p>	<p>Todd Hawley, Superintendent, Delwood Community School District, reported the district currently has a long standing whole grade sharing agreement with Maquoketa Community School District since the 1988-1989 school year. The agreement provides grades 7-12 district students being transported to Maquoketa for their educational program. The district provides grades preK-6 educational program at the Delwood Elementary School site. The elementary school has academic achievement above 90% proficiency rate on the state accountability measures. The educational program has been recognized as outstanding by <i>StartClass</i> and it has a long history of meeting Iowa's accreditation public school accreditation standards. The school was classified as high performing according to the Iowa Department of Education's Report Card. The district's fiscal, transportation, and facility well-being is sound.</p>
<p>Bennett Community School District Feedback</p>	<p>David Larson, Superintendent, Bennett Community School District, reported the district currently has a long standing whole grade sharing agreement with Durant Community School District (began 2005-2006) and Tipton Community School District (began 2011-2012). The agreement provides grades 7-12 district students being transported to these school districts for their educational program. The district provides grades preK-6 educational program at the Bennett Elementary School site. The 2015 Iowa Department of Education Report Card indicated the school is a high performing elementary school. The Iowa Department of Education's enrollment projections have a stable five-year enrollment trend.</p>
<p>Andrew Community School District Feedback</p>	<p>Chris Fee, Superintendent, Andrew Community School District, reported the school board have reviewed our current data to determine the viability of the district for the future. A challenge that we are aware of is our continual decline in certified enrollment. However, we also have many strong indicators such as high preschool/kindergarten enrollment numbers as well as positive financial indicators according to targets identified by Iowa Association of School Boards. Based on our current whole grade sharing partnerships with Maquoketa Community School District and Bellevue Community School district, we believe Andrew Community School District has a strong future serving Pre-k through 8th grade students. We have healthy class sizes in most grade levels. We are also confident in our continued ability to meet and exceed all the curricular needs of the students we serve. Under our current model, we have every reason to believe that Andrew Community School District is and will continue to be a viable school district.</p>

Appendix B

Supporting Data for Adjacent Districts

Iowa Code Reference:

Section 275.1(3): "...The area education agency boards shall develop detailed studies and surveys of the school districts within the area education agency and all adjacent territory..."

The data for adjacent districts are attached to the area education agency plan as parts of Appendix B. The attachments of such data do not automatically indicate approval by the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency 9 board of directors.

Table B-01 – Clockwise

**List of Adjacent Districts
January 11, 2017**

Listed Counter-Clockwise – From North:

No. Districts	AEA No.	County No.	District No.	District Name
1	1	31	1863	Dubuque Community School District
2	1	31	6961	Western Dubuque Community School District
3	10	53	4269	Midland Community School District
4	10	16	3691	North Cedar Community School District
5	10	16	6408	Tipton Community School District
6	10	16	6930	West Branch Community School District
7	10	52	3816	Lone Tree Community School District
8	10	92	2977	Highland Community School District
9	15	44	6700	Waco Community School District
10	15	44	7047	Winfield-Mt. Union Community School District
11	15	58	6759	Wapello Community School District

Table B-01 – Alphabetical

**List of Adjacent Districts
January 11, 2017**

Listed Alphabetically:

No. Districts	AEA No.	County No.	District No.	District Name
1	1	31	1863	Dubuque Community School District
2	10	92	2977	Highland Community School District
3	10	52	3816	Lone Tree Community School District
4	10	53	4269	Midland Community School District
5	10	16	3691	North Cedar Community School District
6	10	16	6408	Tipton Community School District
7	15	44	6700	Waco Community School District
8	15	58	6759	Wapello Community School District
9	10	16	6930	West Branch Community School District
10	1	31	6961	Western Dubuque Community School District
11	15	44	7047	Winfield-Mt. Union Community School District

Appendix C

Further Surveys and Assistance

Iowa Code References:

Section 275.5: "...Following receipt of a petition pursuant to section 275.12, the area education agency board shall review its plans and determine whether the petition complies with the plans that had been adopted by the board. If the petition does not comply with the plans that had been adopted by the board, the board shall conduct further surveys pursuant to section 275.4 prior to the date set for the hearing upon the petition. If further surveys have been conducted by the board, the board shall present the results of the further surveys at the hearing upon the petition."

Section 275.16(1): "...The joint boards acting as a single board shall determine whether the petition conforms to plans or, if the petition requests a change in plans, whether a change should be made, and may change the plans of any or all the area education agency boards affected by the petition..."

Table C-01
Reorganization Studies Conducted by
Department of Education
Since July 1, 1986

Sorted by Year and Report Number:

District Name	AEA No.	Year and Study Number	Study Type
Bennett Community School District	9	1987	Consultation
Bennett Community School District	9	1989	Full Study
Bennett Community School District	9	1989	Consultation
Bennett Community School District	9	1992	Full Study
Calamus-Wheatland Community School District and Central Clinton Community School District	9	1992	Full Study
Lost Nation Community School District	9	1992	Financial Study
Preston Community School District and East Central Community School District	9	2000	Full Study
Preston Community School District and East Central Community School District	9	2005	Merger Study
Preston Community School District, East Central Community School District, and Northeast Community School District	9	2010	Feasibility Study
Columbus Community School District	9	2014	Feasibility Study

Appendix D

Supporting Records Development of Plan Revision

Appendix D Includes the written correspondence that supports the process used to develop the revision of the AEA reorganization plan.

Iowa Department of Education

Barbara Byrd, School Improvement Consultant – The Iowa Department of Education was to contacted to identify the availability of district level information, district requests for reorganization studies by the Department, and gather data related to the following code referenced inquiry: the adequacy of the educational program; pupil enrollment; property valuations; existing buildings and equipment; natural community areas; road conditions; transportation; economic factors; individual attention given to the needs of students; the opportunity of students to participate in a wide variety of activities related to the total development of the student; and other matters that may bear on educational programs meeting minimum standards required by law. The Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency and Iowa Department of Education corresponded on the following dates:

November 30, 2016
December 9, 2016
December 12, 2016
December 15, 2016
December 21, 2016
December 22, 2016

School Districts

December 12, 2016 – Superintendents from district with fewer than 300 students were given an opportunity to respond to the preliminary reorganization plan. The following districts responded and the responses are found on page 31.

Chris Fee, Andrew Community School District
David Larson, Bennett Community School District
Todd Hawley, Delwood Community School District

December 12, 2016 – Superintendents listed within the reorganization plan for the districts with fewer than 300 students were given the opportunity to respond to the preliminary reorganization plan. The following districts acknowledged receiving the plan and the superintendents did not express concerns.

Tom Meyer, Bellevue Community School District
Lonnie Luepker, Calamus-Wheatland Community School District
Dr. Dan Peterson, Central Community School District
Duane Bennett, Durant Community School District
Chris Fee, Easton Valley Community School District
Chris Hoover, Maquoketa Community School District
Neil Gray, Northeast Community School District
Joe Stutting, North Scott Community School District
Joe Burnett, Wilton Community School District

January 10, 2017 – All school district superintendents and all adjacent district superintendents listed on page 33 electronically received the draft reorganization plan reviewed by the board of directors on January 8, 2017. The contacted superintendents were given an opportunity to respond to the plan before the February 8, 2017 public hearing and were also invited to the public hearing. The superintendent responses were presented to board of directors prior to the February 8, 2017 public hearing. The following correspondences were received:

Appendix E

Supporting Records Approval and Maintenance of Plan

This appendix contains documentation for the administrative set-up of the plan, for board approval of the plan, and for maintenance of the plan. As reorganization petitions are presented to the area education agency, and as other reorganization related activities take place, additional correspondence and records will be generated. The area education agency board of directors is designating this appendix to be a gathering location for such documentation or for the purpose of noting the existence of such information.

Attachment E-01	Preparation for Approval
Attachment E-02	Approval by Board of Directors
Attachment E-03	Maintaining the Plan

Attachment E-01

Administrative Preparation for Approval

The following steps were taken to process the plan for board approval:

- A. Set dates for public hearing, for review of the plan by the board, for board approval, and for transmittal to the Department of Education. These dates were inserted in the Preface.
- B. Followed the same procedures used for other important board of directors activities.
- C. Recorded date of approval on cover and in Table 2-01.
- D. Recorded date of transmittal in Table 2-03.
- E. Recorded date of hearing in Table 2-06.

After the approval process is completed, the plan will be filed for future use as reorganization petitions are presented to the AEA. Following are suggestions that may make the plan more useful in the event reorganization petitions are filed with the administrator:

- A. File the plan, including the supporting data in Appendix A, where it is secure, but ready for use if necessary.
- B. Contact the neighboring AEAs for copies of their plans. Include this material with the plan, and file it as Appendix B.
- C. Gather the “further surveys” that are on file at the AEA, and file them as Appendix C. This may include a large collection of documents. The AEA may wish to pull-out the old and/or irrelevant material at this time. Regarding studies and surveys conducted for districts that subsequently reorganized, the AEA may decide to keep the reports until after the initial board of the newly formed district is phased-out. This is usually three to four years. Studies and surveys for districts that did not reorganize may be kept on file for a longer period of time—until it is decided the reports have become too out-of-date for any use. The further surveys kept on file are to be recorded in Table 2-04.
- D. Distribute the plan, or portions thereof, as has been done with previous versions for the plan. It is suggested that a copy be filed with the AEA attorney.
- E. Table E-03, in Appendix E, is included in order to help the AEA maintain the plan and to use it if reorganization petitions are presented.

Attachment E-02

Approval by Board of Directors

Attachment E-03

Maintaining the Plan