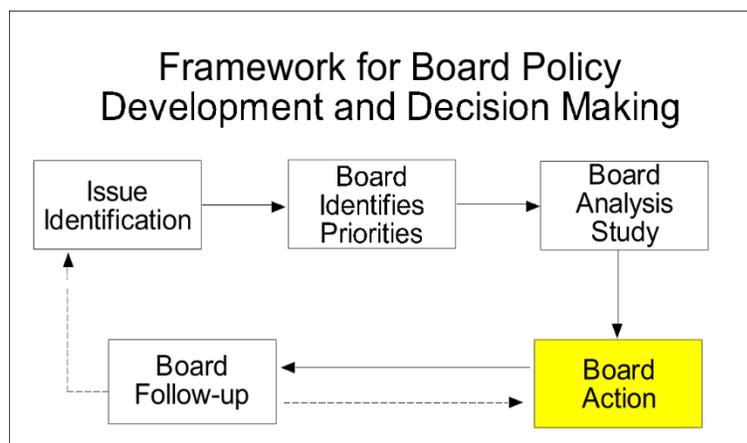


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

March 28, 2019



Agenda Item: Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency Accreditation

State Board Priority: All

State Board Role/Authority: Iowa Code 273; Iowa Administrative Code 281–72

Presenter(s): Amy J. Williamson, Chief
Bureau of School Improvement

Attachment(s): One

Recommendation: The accreditation team for Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency recommends that the State Board review all information presented in the written report and place Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency on conditional accreditation until the agency satisfies the requirements proposed in the Required Actions section of the report.

Background: In spring 2018, Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency (MBAEA) submitted their proposed fiscal year 2019 budget to the State Board. The proposed budget ended the year with a negative balance, which is not legal under Iowa Code chapter 273. Due to this, the State Board did not approve the MBAEA budget. The State Board requested that MBAEA return with a plan to balance their budget within two years, at which time the State Board would approve 2018-2019 spending for the AEA. In addition to providing a two-year plan, the State Board directed the Department to conduct an additional visit to the MBAEA based on the AEA's financial difficulties and State Board members' concerns that necessary budget cuts may affect services provided to districts and students. This accreditation visit was conducted November 27-29, 2018.

March 28, 2019



**Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency
Accreditation Report to
Iowa State Board of Education**

Executive Summary

In spring 2018, Mississippi Bend AEA (MBAEA) submitted a proposed fiscal year (FY) 2019 budget to the Iowa State Board of Education (State Board). The proposed budget ended the year with a negative balance which is not legal under Iowa Code chapter 273. MBAEA had submitted negative ending balances for three consecutive years prior to the FY 19 budget proposal. Due to these circumstances, the State Board did not approve the MBAEA FY 19 budget. The State Board requested that MBAEA return with a plan to balance the budget within two years, at which time the State Board would approve 2018-2019 spending for the AEA. In addition to providing a two-year plan, the State Board directed the Iowa Department of Education (Department) to conduct an accreditation visit to MBAEA based on the AEA's financial difficulties and State Board members' concerns that necessary budget cuts may affect services provided to districts and students. This additional Accreditation visit was conducted November 27-29, 2018.

The Accreditation Team found that while MBAEA is generally providing the services to districts and nonpublic schools required in Iowa Code, the majority of AEA and school staff interviewed have experienced a decline in the quality and/or frequency of AEA services in the last three to five years. In some cases nonpublic schools are not receiving services from MBAEA required by law. In general, MBAEA provides sufficient services to districts and schools to ensure that districts are able to meet the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), most importantly that students with disabilities receive a Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Even so, districts, school, and AEA staff reported being concerned about their continued ability to provide FAPE to children with disabilities given the financial situation of MBAEA. MBAEA continues to exercise its General Supervision responsibilities under the IDEA. Multiple MBAEA administrators who were interviewed indicated that budget cuts at the agency have been the result of staff attrition, and that no further cuts are necessary at this time. The agency expects current budget cuts to result in a positive balance by June 30, 2020.

Following the Accreditation Team's site visit and associated activities such as interviews and reviews of Iowa Code requirements related to the duties of AEAs, the Accreditation Team recommends that the State Board place MBAEA in conditional accreditation status until MBAEA satisfies the requirements proposed in the [Required Actions](#) section of this report.

The Accreditation Team's recommendations include the requirement that MBAEA work with one or more expert mentors in boardmanship, finance, and leadership. The expert mentor(s) will be selected and contracted by the Department for work with MBAEA on a part-time basis.

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Introduction

Iowa's area education agencies (AEAs) each are accredited by the Iowa State Board of Education (State Board) through a process implemented by the Iowa Department of Education (Department). The role of AEAs is to serve as intermediate units between the Department and local districts and accredited nonpublic schools in providing leadership and equitable services for school improvement. This role includes the provision of direct services to students and families in several areas, primarily for young children and students with disabilities. With approximately two-thirds of each AEA's funding coming from allocations from the state or federal government to serve children and students with disabilities, a large part of an AEA's work is to ensure they are fulfilling their responsibilities under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) [20 U.S.C § 1412 (11)].

Legal Authorities and Framework

Iowa Code chapter 273 and Iowa Administrative Code (IAC) 281–72 provide a process and substantive standards by which the Department and State Board accredit AEAs. The text of Iowa Code chapter 273 and IAC 281–72 may be found in [Appendices F](#) and [G](#), respectively.

Authority for this visit comes from [Iowa Code section 273.10](#), as well as the IDEA and the pursuant federal regulations. Iowa Code provisions require that the accreditation of each AEA in the state be reviewed at least once every five years. The Department uses the process of Differentiated Accountability (DA) to review and ensure AEA compliance with state and federal law.

As part of this DA process, the Department reviews all AEAs annually for basic compliance with Iowa Code chapter 273 through a desk audit process. In addition, the Department may follow up with an AEA through a targeted desk audit and/or intensive on-site visit if deemed necessary. An on-site visit is done by an accreditation team, made up of Department staff members and participants from AEAs across the state. The on-site review is followed by a report to the Director of the Department and the State Board, whose members may determine to accredit or conditionally accredit the AEA. The State Board may ultimately decide to remove accreditation from an AEA if circumstances warrant such action.

In addition, federal code and regulations require that the Department exercise general supervision over AEAs and districts in guaranteeing students with disabilities access to a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Examination of these requirements is a component of the accreditation review and also part of the standard of service for diverse learners.

The State Board has the authority to order the Department to conduct a site visit as part of its review of AEA accreditation and proposed budgets. This Accreditation visit and report were conducted on order of the State Board.

Background

The Department has reviewed MBAEA's program and finance operations multiple times in the past four years. This context is helpful background information on the MBAEA as the State Board considers the recommendations in this report.

An Accreditation Team from the Department, including participants from AEAs across the state, visited MBAEA on March 20-24, 2015, to review the AEA's accreditation per Iowa Code chapter 273 and IAC 281–72. A draft report based on the March 2015 visit was provided to the AEA. The draft report determined that the AEA met three of the eight standards of services required for accreditation. The AEA Chief Administrator, William Decker, and Executive Director, Edward Gronlund, expressed concern that the original report contained errors that made the report inaccurate. The AEA Chief Administrator and Director of the

Department agreed that the Department would provide a second review of the five standards for which the AEA was originally not determined to meet requirements.

Between the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years, the Department began conducting all accreditation visits through the DA process. This process allocates more intensive resources as needed based on data for both compliance and performance. Accordingly, the follow-up visit to MBAEA was conducted September 27-29, 2016. The 2016 site visit report determined that MBAEA met all accreditation requirements.

2016 Accreditation Team and Finance Observations and Recommendations

The Accreditation Team made the following observations and recommendations in the 2016 report:¹

- Board members lacked understanding of their role and responsibilities.
- Some districts had greater access to AEA services than others.
- There was inconsistency in communication about AEA staff roles to internal and external partners.
- Districts generally reported that services provided by special education staff were positive.
- MBAEA superintendents indicated staff were responsive to district requests.
- Data were not being used systemically but individually with districts one at a time.
- AEA and district interviewees spoke highly of the development and use of the MBAEA Data Team, which allows districts and schools to explore student performance data—including analyses of disaggregated data for subgroups—to inform services and enhance instruction.
- AEA staff, district interviewees, and submitted documentation supported the AEA's efforts to build relationships with community partners.
- The AEA provided minimal support for advanced learners or English learners (ELs).
- Most interviewees were not able to describe the AEA's General Supervision responsibilities.
- Concerns were expressed about how direct services were provided when staff members were on leave.
- Concerns were expressed that the supervisors over special education content may not have sufficient special education background knowledge to manage those areas.
- There were indications that caseloads for direct service providers had increased.
- Through document review and interviews with AEA and district staff, it became clear to the Accreditation Team members that AEA staff were focused on identifying student needs through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) rather than on a procedural compliance basis.
- MBAEA's materials used to support schools implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for students were not aligned with state materials.

In August 2016, a limited fiscal review of MBAEA was also completed. In the report issued September 21, 2016, the Department's finance staff noted the AEA's financial difficulties, steps taken to correct it, and provided several recommendations. These included:

- After several years of reporting a decline in unobligated funds, MBAEA had recently reported zero carry forward funds from the prior fiscal year. This is uncommon because AEAs receive funds 10 months of the year, as do school districts. Without the ability to levy, it is necessary for AEAs to carry a sufficient fund balance to cover expenses for the balance of the year.
- Five factors were found to have contributed to the erosion of the AEA's fund balance over time:

1. From FY 2011 to FY 2013, MBAEA had higher than normal spending on capital funding projects;
 2. The AEA experienced an increase in self-funded health insurance payouts;
 3. During one budget year, the AEA neglected to consider the decrease in funding to AEA's by the Legislature in its budgeting process;
 4. During one budget year, the approved budget for all funds (\$42 million) exceeded projected revenues (\$34 million) by \$8 million; and
 5. During this time, the person who had been providing oversight for the business office became terminally ill, leaving the business office without adequate support.
- The report noted several steps MBAEA had taken to correct the financial situation, including reducing staff, basing budgets on revenues, and eliminating non-essential programming.
 - The report noted no findings of improper use of funds.
 - The report recommended that the AEA: adjust coding to minimize use of "other expenditures," align the agency's Chart of Accounts to the Chart of Accounts provided by the Department, and budget within available revenues.

Accreditation Visit

In spring 2018, MBAEA's proposed FY 2019 budget submitted to the State Board projected that the AEA would end the year with a negative balance. MBAEA had also ended three consecutive fiscal years with a negative balance based on actual reported figures. It is not legal per Iowa Code chapter 273 for an AEA to deficit spend, so the State Board could not approve the MBAEA budget. MBAEA was asked to return with a plan to balance their budget within two years, at which time the Board would approve spending for the AEA for 2018-2019.

The State Board also directed the Department to conduct an additional visit to MBAEA based on the AEA's financial difficulties and State Board members' concerns that necessary budget cuts may affect services provided to districts and students. This additional visit was ordered by the State Board at their May 2018 meeting. This Accreditation visit was conducted November 27-29, 2018. This report addresses the following questions to answer the charge given to the Accreditation Team by the State Board:

1. Are districts receiving services from the AEA mandated in Iowa Code chapter 273 and IAC 281–72?
2. Are nonpublic schools also receiving required services from the AEA?
3. Are districts/schools receiving adequate services to provide a Free, Appropriate, Public Education (FAPE) to students with disabilities?
4. Is the AEA exercising General Supervision under the IDEA for all districts?
5. Has the AEA's budget deficit over the past four years influenced the agency's ability to provide services to districts, nonpublic schools, and/or individual students?
6. What specific cuts have been or will be made to balance the AEA budget by FY 2020, as required by the State Board? Will these cuts affect services to schools and students?

To address these questions, the Department focused the Accreditation MBAEA visit on three areas:

1. **Finances**, including past and current finances;
2. **Services**, including services to districts and schools (both public and nonpublic) students, children, and families; and
3. **General Supervision** responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Accreditation Team Members

The Mississippi Bend AEA (MBAEA) Accreditation Team consisted of the following personnel:

- Amy Williamson, Bureau Chief, Bureau of School Improvement, Accreditation Team Lead
- Brad Niebling, Ph.D., Bureau Chief, Bureau of Learner Strategies and Supports
- Holly Barnes, Education Program Consultant, Bureau of School Improvement
- Barbara Ohlund, Ph.D., Administrative Consultant, Division of Learning and Results
- Barbara Guy, Ph.D., Director of Special Education, Bureau of Learner Strategies and Supports
- Eric Heitz, Education Program Consultant, Bureau of School Improvement
- Steve Crew, J.D., Administrative Consultant for Compliance and Federal Programs, Bureau of School Improvement
- Pam McDonnell, Education Program Consultant for English Language Acquisition, Bureau of School Improvement
- Wendy Trotter, Education Program Consultant-Autism, Bureau of Learner Strategies and Supports
- Amy Alfrey, Education Program Consultant, Bureau of Learner Strategies and Supports

The Department's Attorney for the Division of Learning and Results, Thomas Mayes, was available to the Accreditation Team as needed for consultation.

Finances

Each spring, prior to spending for the following fiscal year, AEAs must submit their budgets to the State Board for approval. For state fiscal year (SFY) 2019, the AEAs' proposed budgets were presented to the State Board as listed in Tables 1 and 2. MBAEA is the only AEA with a beginning and/or ending negative fund balance.

Table 1. AEA Proposed Resources by Major Source for All Budgeted Funds FY 2019

AEA	Taxes (Controlled Funding)	Other Local Revenues	Intermediate Revenues	State Aid (Controlled Funding)	Other State Revenues	IDEA Federal Grant*	Other Federal Revenues	Long-Term Debt Proceeds	Other Financing Sources**	Beginning Fund Balance	Total
1	\$6,517,694	\$1,304,993	-	\$6,941,632	\$1,378,817	\$7,918,008	\$266,592	-	-	\$1,712,642	\$26,040,378
5	\$6,476,523	\$2,139,235	-	\$7,299,041	\$2,138,828	\$8,427,380	\$422,891	-	-	\$3,197,830	\$30,101,728
7	\$12,724,880	\$6,269,518	-	\$5,417,034	\$4,589,941	\$15,806,958	\$755,090	-	\$500,343	\$8,263,004	\$64,326,768
9	\$9,257,392	\$2,238,357	\$103,872	\$11,768,522	\$2,196,540	\$11,586,942	\$604,514	-	\$416,516	\$(4,606,256)	\$33,566,399
10	\$13,515,088	\$8,221,660	-	\$17,037,233	\$3,445,665	\$16,205,000	\$350,000	-	-	\$7,292,326	\$66,066,972
11	\$25,308,572	\$3,578,935	-	\$33,991,544	\$6,178,669	\$30,544,997	\$892,709	-	\$60,000	\$11,609,881	\$112,165,307
12	\$8,435,030	\$1,471,517	-	\$9,742,486	\$2,620,593	\$9,991,550	\$976,293	-	-	\$3,863,647	\$37,101,116
13	\$7,382,064	\$2,675,778	-	\$9,300,575	\$2,519,583	\$10,430,000	\$300,000	-	-	\$3,862,369	\$36,470,369
15	\$6,698,332	\$794,491	-	\$8,422,173	\$1,917,494	\$10,842,937	\$160,743	-	\$8,082	\$2,919,456	\$31,763,708
Total	\$96,315,575	\$28,694,484	\$103,872	\$119,920,240	\$26,986,130	\$121,753,772	\$4,728,832	\$0	\$984,941	\$38,114,899	\$437,602,745

Note. 1 = Keystone; 5 = Prairie Lakes; 7 = Central Rivers; 9 = Mississippi Bend; 10 = Grant Wood; 11 = Heartland; 12 = Northwest; 13 = Green Hills; 15 = Great Prairie.

Source: Iowa State Board of Education (2018)²

*IDEA Federal Grant includes Part B flowthrough to LEAs of approximately \$24,000,000. **Other Financing Sources include interfund transfers and proceeds from the disposition of fixed assets.

Table 2. AEA Proposed Expenditures by Function Category for All Budgeted Funds FY 2019

AEA	Instruction	Student Support Services	Staff Support Services	Admin & Central Support Services	Plant Ops & Maintenance	Transportation	Other Support Services	Non-Instructional Programs	Facilities Acquisition	Debt Service	Other Financing Uses	Ending Fund Balance	Total
1	\$158,436	\$9,351,336	\$7,224,374	\$4,694,247	\$1,028,860	\$500	-	\$62,528	-	-	\$1,444,590	\$2,075,507	\$26,040,378
5	\$1,255,497	\$15,990,055	\$2,981,136	\$4,005,670	\$1,074,485	-	-	\$106,250	-	-	\$1,490,805	\$3,197,830	\$30,101,728
7	\$8,130,727	\$20,906,838	\$12,400,094	\$8,244,817	\$1,649,320	\$14,500	\$487,982	\$176,248	\$25,000	\$475,343	\$3,570,693	\$8,245,206	\$64,326,768
9	\$1,143,661	\$18,125,367	\$8,607,248	\$5,460,954	\$700,422	-	\$71,248	-	-	\$416,516	\$2,786,176	\$(3,745,193)	\$33,566,399
10	\$2,474,071	\$23,110,219	\$19,333,781	\$9,506,530	\$1,310,589	-	\$3,500	\$732,024	-	-	\$3,300,000	\$6,296,258	\$66,066,972
11	\$3,906,374	\$42,514,425	\$29,589,484	\$16,638,965	\$1,367,300	\$3,750	\$480	\$229,797	-	-	\$6,634,858	\$11,279,874	\$112,165,307
12	\$884,473	\$11,718,143	\$10,978,395	\$6,773,224	\$1,094,683	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,083,005	\$3,569,193	\$37,101,116
13	\$3,300,000	\$14,885,000	\$5,760,000	\$5,267,000	\$860,000	\$3,500	\$600,000	\$102,000	-	-	\$1,858,564	\$3,834,305	\$36,470,369
15	\$2,689,096	\$12,071,138	\$7,004,598	\$4,892,726	\$979,339	\$1,000	-	\$129,549	-	-	\$1,725,254	\$2,271,008	\$31,763,708
Total	\$23,942,335	\$168,672,521	\$103,879,110	\$65,484,133	\$10,064,998	\$23,250	\$1,163,210	\$1,538,396	\$25,000	\$891,859	\$24,893,945	\$37,023,988	\$437,602,745

Note. 1 = Keystone; 5 = Prairie Lakes; 7 = Central Rivers; 9 = Mississippi Bend; 10 = Grant Wood; 11 = Heartland; 12 = Northwest; 13 = Green Hills; 15 = Great Prairie.
Source: Iowa State Board of Education (2018)

MBAEA's proposed ending balance for SFY 2019 was -\$3,745,193. While MBAEA had ended the prior three fiscal years with a negative balance, SFY 2019 is the first year for which their proposed budget reflected an expected negative balance. It is not permissible under Iowa Code chapter 273 for an AEA to deficit spend, so the State Board could not approve the MBAEA's proposed budget. MBAEA was asked to sign an assurance by the May 2018 State Board meeting stating that the AEA would submit a plan by September 1, 2018 to balance their budget within two fiscal years. After the assurance was received, the State Board agreed to approve spending for the AEA for 2018-2019. The two-year budget proposal MBAEA presented at the September 2018 State Board meeting is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. MBAEA Two-Year Budget Plan

Three-Year Budget Comparison		Budget 2020	Budget 2019	Re-Estimated 2018	Actual 2017
Resources (Sources) (Account ID 8):					
Taxes (1100-1299)	1	\$9,398,265	\$9,305,213	\$9,223,570	\$9,056,393
Tuition/Transportation Received (1300-1499)	2	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,207,066	\$1,195,692
Earnings on Investments (1500-1599)	3	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,295	\$7,411
Nutrition Program Sales (1600-1699)	4	\$0	\$0		
Student Activities & Sales (1700-1799)	5	\$48,500	\$48,500	\$48,527	\$59,303
Other Revenues from Local Sources (1800-1999)	6	\$1,215,000	\$1,215,000	\$2,714,501	\$1,784,093
Revenues from Intermediary Sources (2000-2999)	7	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$90,174	\$68,288
State Foundation Aid (3111)	8	\$11,995,833	\$11,877,062	\$10,216,658	\$9,639,960
Juvenile Home Tuition Aid Advance (3121)	9	\$446,706	\$446,706	\$439,834	\$378,471
Other State Sources including State Aid Categoricals (3112-3119, 3122-3999)	10	\$1,785,205	\$1,785,205	\$1,516,797	\$2,374,735
IDEA Grants (4510-4529)	11	\$11,605,577	\$11,605,577	\$11,604,293	\$11,785,972
Other Federal Sources (4000-4509, 4530-4999)	12	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$490,742	\$241,338
Total Revenues (Rows 1 - 12)	13	\$38,252,086	\$38,040,263	\$37,559,457	\$36,591,655
General Long-Term Debt Proceeds (5000-5199, 5400-5699)	14	\$0	\$0		
Operating Transfers In & Other Sources (5200-5299, 5700-6999)	15	\$416,516	\$416,516	\$416,115	\$416,453

Three-Year Budget Comparison		Budget 2020	Budget 2019	Re-Estimated 2018	Actual 2017
Proceeds of Fixed Asset Dispositions (5300-5399)	16	\$0	\$0		
Total Revenues & Other Financing Sources (Row 13 - 16)	17	\$38,668,602	\$38,456,779	\$37,975,572	\$37,008,108
Beginning Fund Balance	18	\$(2,036,707)	\$(4,493,486)	\$(4,656,460)	\$(1,564,937)
Total Resources (Row 17 + 18)	19	\$36,631,895	\$33,963,293	\$33,319,112	\$35,443,171
Requirements (Functions) (Account ID 9):					
Instruction (1000-1999)	20	\$1,101,965	\$1,077,573	\$1,416,512	\$991,903
Student Support Services (2100-2199)	21	\$17,694,874	\$17,471,632	\$17,943,541	\$17,695,143
Instructional Staff Support Services (2200-2299)	22	\$8,049,098	\$7,889,327	\$8,413,580	\$9,091,944
General Administration (2300-2399)	23	\$2,104,894	\$2,056,044	\$2,031,087	\$1,685,128
Building Administration (2400-2499)	24	\$635,000	\$635,000	\$635,337	\$4,321,368
Business & Central Administration (2500-2519, 2540-2599)	25	\$2,394,495	\$2,347,828	\$2,409,021	\$1,311,512
Purchasing, Distributing, Printing, Publishing, Duplicating (2520-2539)	26	\$337,938	\$334,249	\$200,720	\$374,286
Plant Operations and Maintenance (2600-2699)	27	\$668,447	\$659,989	\$838,293	\$898,234
Student Transportation (2700-2799)	28	\$0	\$0		
Other Support Services (2900-2999)	29	\$110,357	\$107,665	\$63,955	\$21,349
Noninstructional Programs (3000-3999)	30	\$0	\$0		\$414,446
Facilities Acquisition and Construction (4000-4999)	31	\$0	\$218,000		
Debt Service (5000-5999)	32	\$416,516	\$416,516	\$416,115	\$416,453
Total Expenditures (Row 20 - 32)	33	\$33,513,584	\$33,213,824	\$34,368,161	\$34,598,742

Three-Year Budget Comparison		Budget 2020	Budget 2019	Re-Estimated 2018	Actual 2017
Operating Transfers Out & Other Financing Uses (6100-6999)	34	\$2,786,176	\$2,786,176	\$3,444,437	\$5,500,888
Total Expenditures & Other Financing Uses (Row 33 + 34)	35	\$36,299,760	\$36,000,000	\$37,812,598	\$40,099,630
Ending Fund Balance (Row 19 - Row 35)	36	\$332,135	\$(2,036,707)	\$(4,493,486)	\$(4,656,460)
Total Requirements (Row 35 + 36)	37	\$36,631,895	\$33,963,293	\$33,319,112	\$35,443,171

Note. All funds except permanent funds; internal service funds; private-purpose, pension, and investment trust funds; and agencies. Source: Iowa State Board of Education (2018).

MBAEA's two-year plan shows the AEA's ending fund balance increasing to \$332,135, which meets the State Board requirement to create a budget that is positive at the end of FY 2020. MBAEA's two-year plan was approved by the State Board, and the Department was also ordered by the State Board to visit the AEA to determine if the budget deficit is—or will be—detrimental to the ability of the AEA to provide required services to districts, schools, and children.

In addition to the sources of information in Tables 1 and 2, the Accreditation Team reviewed MBAEA's financial position relative to all other AEAs in the state, finances over time, and reserves of federal dollars received under the IDEA. These reviews were done to help the Accreditation Team understand which questions would be relevant to ask interviewees on the site visit.

Table 4 both shows MBAEA's budgeted and actual revenue with fund balance included and budgeted and actual expenses including financing over the last seven years.¹ Figure 1 presents this information in graphical form, including the 2018 estimated figures. MBAEA's estimated actual ending balance for 2017-2018 is negative \$4.18 million, making this the fourth consecutive year that the agency has reported a negative balance. The negative balance decreased from 2016-2017 by approximately \$475,000. The sometimes large differences between budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures illustrate the instability in MBAEA's budget projections over the last several years. The result has been a sharp decline in the ending balance for the agency. More information is provided in Table 5. According to state records, over the same time period MBAEA's certified enrollment count decreased by 714 students, approximately 1.5% of the current certified enrollment as of 2018².

¹ Including the fund balance adds the unspent balance from the prior year to available revenues. Including financing adds financing costs to estimated or actual expenses.

² Total certified enrollment October 1, 2012 (47,272.3) through October 1, 2018 (46,558.1).

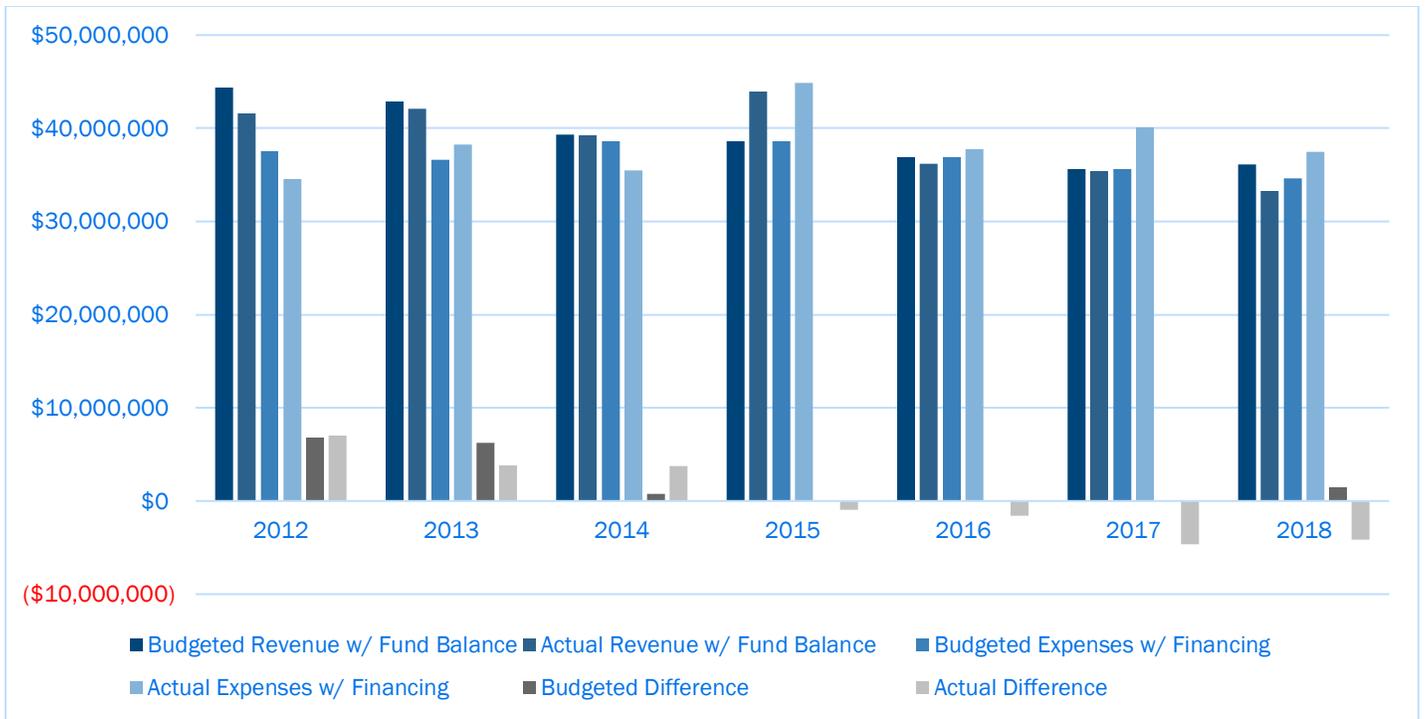


Figure 1. MBAEA reported finances 2011-2012 through 2017-2018. 2018 is not finalized. Source: Certified Annual Report (CAR).

Table 4. MBAEA Reported Finances from 2011-2012 through 2017-2018

Year	Budgeted Revenue w/ Fund Balance	Actual Revenue w/ Fund Balance	Budgeted Expenses w/ Financing	Actual Expenses w/ Financing	Budgeted Difference	Actual Difference
2012	\$44,345,922.00	\$41,568,496.28	\$37,555,473.00	\$34,526,754.81	\$6,790,449.00	\$7,041,741.47
2013	\$42,863,766.77	\$42,062,789.94	\$36,606,907.00	\$38,232,776.87	\$6,256,859.77	\$3,830,013.07
2014	\$39,354,834.00	\$39,221,775.33	\$38,611,007.00	\$35,484,891.04	\$743,827.00	\$3,736,884.29
2015	\$38,635,405.00	\$43,943,955.78	\$38,635,405.00	\$44,870,132.77	-	\$(926,176.99)
2016	\$36,910,049.00	\$36,190,698.58	\$36,910,049.00	\$37,755,635.67	-	\$(1,564,937.09)
2017	\$35,595,672.00	\$35,443,170.63	\$35,590,066.00	\$40,099,630.27	\$5,606.00	\$(4,656,459.64)
2018	\$36,138,967.00	\$34,110,298.96*	\$34,637,712.00	\$38,291,932.84*	\$1,501,255.00	\$(4,181,633.88)*

Note. The actuals for 2018 are not finalized and are subject to change. Source: CAR.

Figures 2 and 3 show MBAEA's allocation under IDEA and the carryover from the prior year as a percentage of the current year allocation. Figure 2 compares MBAEA with all other AEAs in the state, and Figure 3 shows MBAEA's data and trend line alone. It is rare for any agency to spend current year funds immediately within a fiscal year and common for agencies to keep a healthy carryover amount from the prior year's funding. This helps ensure continuity in funding for FTE and required services. As of 2017-2018 MBAEA has almost completely depleted all prior-year carryover in IDEA funds.

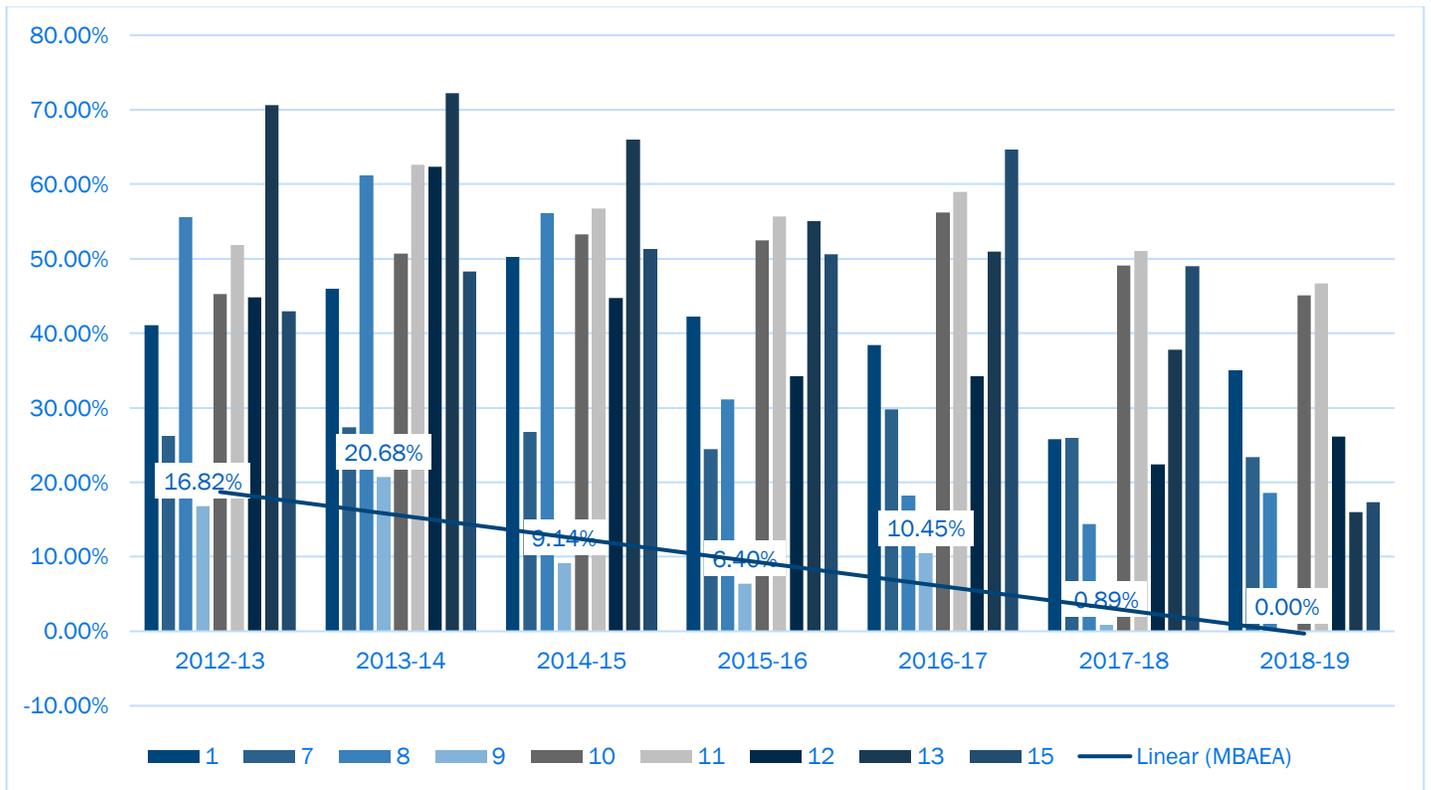


Figure 2. AEA IDEA Part B carryover as a percentage of current year allocation 2012-2013 through 2017-2018.

1 = Keystone; 5 = Prairie Lakes; 7 = Central Rivers; 9 = Mississippi Bend; 10 = Grant Wood; 11 = Heartland; 12 = Northwest; 13 = Green Hills; 15 = Great Prairie. Source: Department Records.

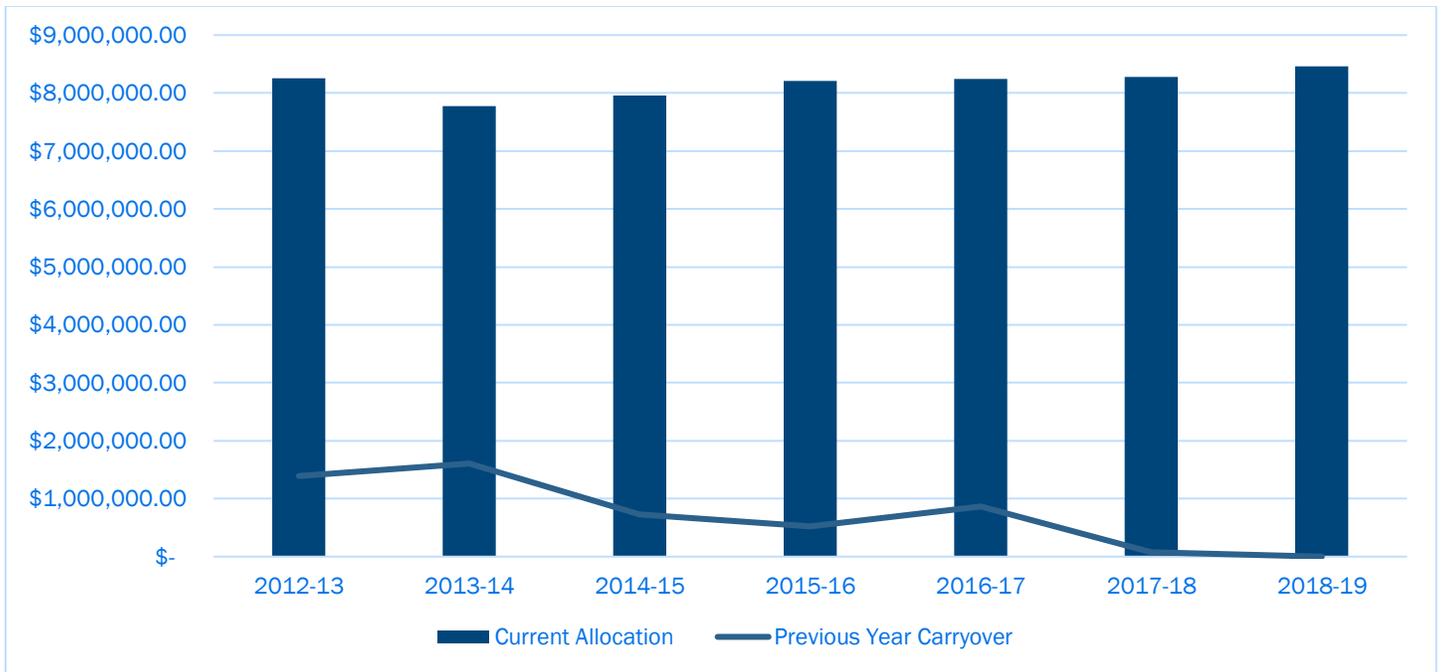


Figure 3. MBAEA IDEA Part B carryover in relation to current year allocation 2012-2013 through 2017-2018.
 Source: Department Records

MBAEA's budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures over time were examined to determine whether inaccurate predictions contributed to the AEA's budget difficulties. Table 5 shows MBAEA's budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures over a seven-year period. The Accreditation Team's interest in these data, from a program perspective, is whether the AEA will be able to provide stable predictions and, therefore, stable staffing levels in the future. The actual revenues, including fund balances, when compared to the budgeted revenues, including fund balances, ranged from a 7.91% decrease to a 13.74% increase over projections. The actual expenditures, including financing, when compared to the budgeted expenditures, including financing, ranged from an 8.10% decrease to a 16.14% increase over projections. Broad variance in projections for revenues and expenditures is concerning in light of the AEA's financial position and prospects for obtaining and maintaining financial stability.

Table 5. MBAEA Budgeted Versus Actual Revenues Expenditures from 2011-2012 through 2017-2018

Year	Difference in Budgeted vs Actual Revenue				Difference in Budgeted vs Actual Expenditures			
	Budgeted Revenue w/ Fund Balance	Actual Revenue w/ Fund Balance	Difference	Percent	Budgeted Expenses w/ Financing	Actual Expenses w/ Financing	Difference	Percent
2012	\$44,345,922.00	\$41,568,496.28	\$(2,777,425.72)	-6.26%	\$37,555,473.00	\$34,526,754.81	\$(3,028,718.19)	-8.06%
2013	\$42,863,766.77	\$42,062,789.94	\$(800,976.83)	-1.87%	\$36,606,907.00	\$38,232,776.87	\$1,625,869.87	4.44%
2014	\$39,354,834.00	\$39,221,775.33	\$(133,058.67)	-0.34%	\$38,611,007.00	\$35,484,891.04	\$(3,126,115.96)	-8.10%
2015	\$38,635,405.00	\$43,943,955.78	\$5,308,550.78	13.74%	\$38,635,405.00	\$44,870,132.77	\$6,234,727.77	16.14%
2016	\$36,910,049.00	\$36,190,698.58	\$(719,350.42)	-1.95%	\$36,910,049.00	\$37,755,635.67	\$845,586.67	2.29%
2017	\$35,595,672.00	\$35,443,170.63	\$(152,501.37)	-0.43%	\$35,590,066.00	\$40,099,630.27	\$4,509,564.27	12.67%
2018	\$36,138,967.00	\$34,110,298.96	\$(2,028,668.04)	-5.61%	\$34,637,712.00	\$38,291,932.84	\$3,654,220.84	8.15%

Note. The actuals for 2018 are not finalized and subject to change. Source: Iowa State Board of Education (2018) and CAR.

The Accreditation Team reviewed MBAEA’s staffing and salary patterns over time, as well. Table 6 presents MBAEA’s staffing information over a nine-year period. This table accounts for all staff and does not separate contract, non-contract, and administrators. The largest changes in staffing levels occurred between 2011 and 2013, with subsequent staffing levels remaining more stable over any one-year time period. Salary and benefits costs have increased over time with the exception of the most recent fiscal year.

Table 6. MBAEA Staff Information from 2010-2011 through 2018-2019

Year	Total Staff	FTE	Average Contract Days	Regular Salary	Salary + Benefits	Salary + Benefits / FTE	% Change in Staff	% Change in FTE
2010-11	322	302.2	200.6	\$18,607,509	\$25,092,624	\$83,033	-	-
2011-12	300	282.7	196.8	\$17,699,785	\$23,880,698	\$84,474	-6.83	-6.45
2012-13	318	301.3	196.8	\$19,025,155	\$25,748,963	\$85,460	6.00	6.58
2013-14	322	308.3	198.3	\$19,737,519	\$26,986,595	\$87,534	1.26	2.32
2014-15	324	313.2	200.4	\$20,451,499	\$27,856,233	\$88,941	0.62	1.59
2015-16	327	313.5	200.1	\$21,430,761	\$28,973,768	\$92,420	0.93	0.10
2016-17	315	301.8	198.7	\$21,062,745	\$28,548,154	\$94,584	-3.67	-3.72
2017-18	308	295.2	198.3	\$22,327,398	\$29,631,853	\$100,379	-2.22	-2.20
2018-19	300	287.4	196.7	\$20,170,838	\$27,579,185	\$95,961	-2.60	-2.64

Note. Source: Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS).

The Accreditation Team reviewed MBAEA’s Board minutes to understand the AEA’s use of anticipatory warrants to fund expenses. Anticipatory warrants are a financial tool AEA’s may use to borrow money in the short term to cover expenditures in anticipation of incoming revenue. Iowa Code section 273.3 specifically allows this practice. MBAEA began the use of anticipatory warrants to cover agency expenses in 2013. The AEA has consistently repaid warrants with incoming funds but also took on interest from the use of warrants. A full timeline of MBAEA Board of Directors (MBAEA Board) meeting minutes is provided in [Appendix D](#), which provides excerpts and links to MBAEA Board and State Board meeting minutes and MBAEA’s single audit reports relevant to this question.

Information in Table 6 was retrieved from the AEA’s single audit reports available on the Office of the State Auditor’s website and shows MBAEA’s use of anticipatory warrants in relation to revenue, expenditures, self-insurance, and salary changes over time. Information on the revenue, expenditures, fund balance, and salary changes is also presented in graphical form in Figure 3 below. The information in Table 6 and Figure 4 shows that as MBAEA’s fund balance has declined and their reserve for self-insurance claims has been depleted, their use of anticipatory warrants has grown. Salaries have consistently increased during this time except for the salary freeze put in place in 2012.

Table 7. MBAEA Warrant Use, Revenues, Expenditures, Insurance, and Salary Information FY 2012 through FY 2017

FY	General Fund Revenues	General Fund Expenditures	General Fund Balance	Self-Insured Claims Reserve	Warrants Issued	Interest Paid	Remaining Warrants at FY End	Outstanding Long-Term Debt	Details
2012 ^a	\$32,128,067	\$32,186,761	\$9,124,769	\$1,862,665	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,748,966	Freeze on salaries and five day cut on employee contracts
2013 ^b	\$32,691,722	\$34,761,296	\$5,540,982	\$1,841,783	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,696,166	4% salary increase and \$1,703,179 on construction and building maintenance
2014 ^c	\$34,128,901	\$35,762,581	\$3,588,274	\$1,275,297	\$1,000,000	\$3,160	\$0	\$6,539,361 +\$18,724,002 NPL	4.32% salary increase
2015 ^d	\$34,197,266	\$37,451,159	\$(101,423)	\$790,565	\$6,000,000	\$59,313	\$0	\$20,308,263	3% salary package increase
2016 ^e	\$34,808,122	\$38,032,188	\$(3,632,331)	\$4,325	\$7,000,000	\$171,777 +\$16,139 AI	\$3,816,792	\$23,914,516	3.5% annual salary package increase

FY	General Fund Revenues	General Fund Expenditures	General Fund Balance	Self-Insured Claims Reserve	Warrants Issued	Interest Paid	Remaining Warrants at FY End	Outstanding Long-Term Debt	Details
2017 ^f	\$35,520,939	\$36,711,849	\$(5,239,694)	depleted	\$9,000,000	\$237,050 +\$8,089 AI	\$5,200,000	\$29,776,966	Early retirement incentive and decrease in licensed staff contract days and attrition

Note. AI = accrued interest; NPL = net pension liability. Auditors required inclusion of net pension liability in AEA financials starting in 2015. Auditor calculated amount for 2014.
^aIowa Auditor of the State (2012). ^bIowa Auditor of the State (2013). ^cIowa Auditor of the State (2014). ^dIowa Auditor of the State (2015). ^eIowa Auditor of the State (2016). ^fIowa Auditor of the State (2017).

Figure 4 overlays MBAEA’s financial position with information from the state auditor’s reports in Table 7.

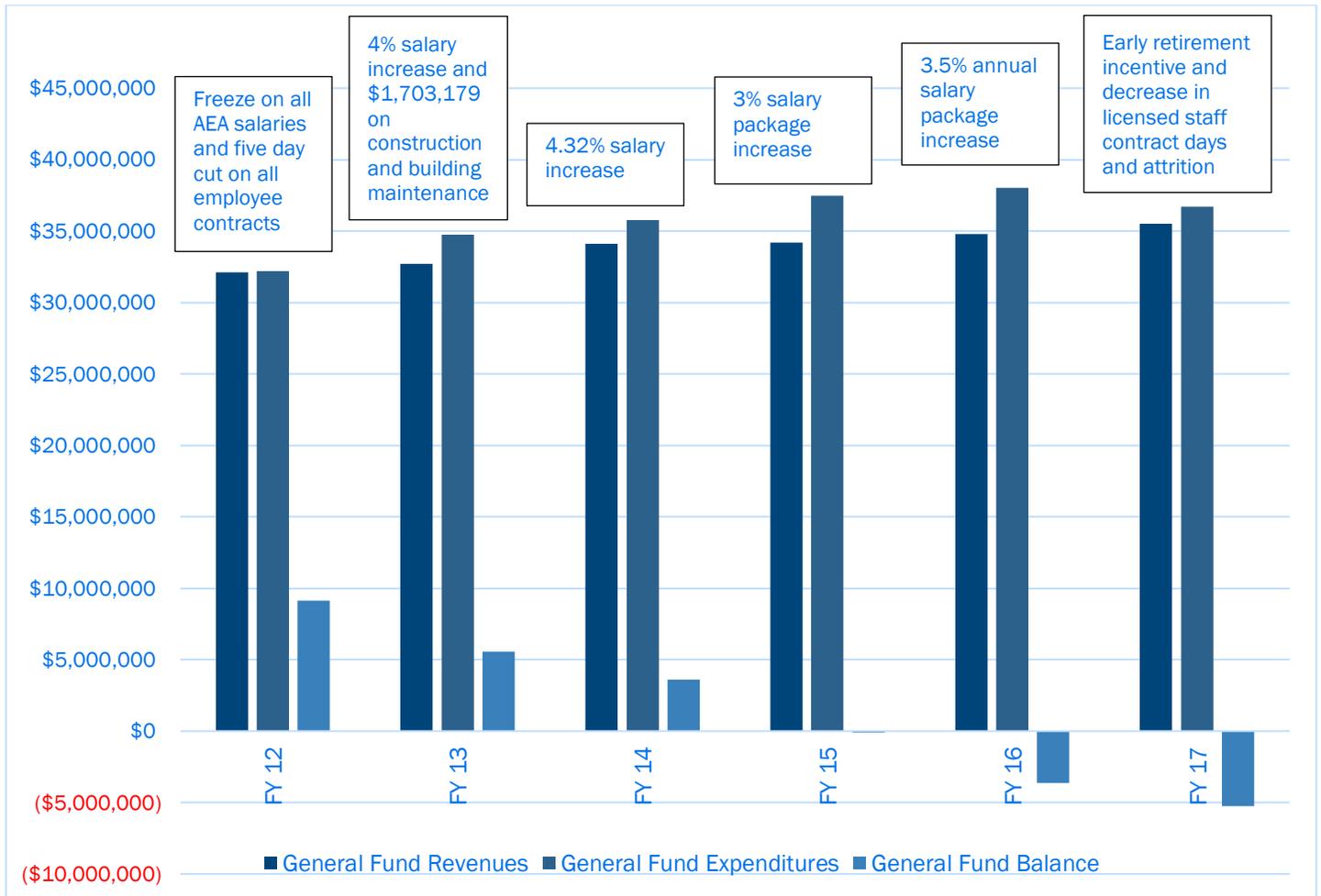


Figure 4. Revenues, expenditures, fund balance, and salary information

Auditors required inclusion of net pension liability in AEA financials starting in 2015. Auditor calculated amount for 2014.
^aIowa Auditor of the State (2012). ^bIowa Auditor of the State (2013). ^cIowa Auditor of the State (2014). ^dIowa Auditor of the State (2015). ^eIowa Auditor of the State (2016). ^fIowa Auditor of the State (2017).

Services

The information in the preceding sections assisted the Accreditation Team in determining which documents to review as part of the site visit, who to interview, and what questions to ask to best obtain answers to the State Board's questions. A list of interviewees and interview questions used is provided in [Appendices A](#) and [B](#). A list of additional information reviewed by the Accreditation Team is provided in [Appendix C](#). The review of financial information indicated that while the AEA's financial position had consistently deteriorated since 2012, staffing levels had not changed appreciably since 2012 and salaries had increased.

To determine the effect of financial strain on the ability of the AEA to provide required services to districts, nonpublic schools, and individuals, the Accreditation Team first referred to Iowa Code to clarify which services are required of an AEA. The exact language from the Iowa Code is provided in [Appendix F](#).

Duties and Powers of AEA Boards (Iowa Code § 273.3)

AEA boards are required, at a minimum, to do the following:

- Determine the policies of the AEA regarding agency programs and services.
- Receive and spend money for providing the programs and services.
- Provide data and prepare reports as directed by the Director of the Department.
- Provide for advisory committees as deemed necessary.
- Subject to rules of the State Board, provide special education programs and services, media services, and educational programs and services to local school districts either directly or pursuant to a contract with the local school district, other AEAs, or a public or private agency.
- Acquire, operate, and maintain facilities and buildings necessary to provide agency programs and services, subject to approval by the State Board if acquisition is in excess of a specified dollar amount or duration of time or under other specified circumstances.
- Enter into agreements for the joint use of personnel, buildings, facilities, supplies, and equipment with school corporations, subject to the approval of the Director of the Department of Education.
- Apply for, receive, and spend state and federal funds available for programs of educational benefit approved by the Director of the Department, as well as cooperate with the Department regarding the effectuation and administration of such programs.
- Employ personnel, including an administrator,³ necessary to carry out the functions of the AEA. Teachers and administrators must be licensed by the Board of Educational Examiners, and the contract requirements established for practitioners employed by school districts also apply to practitioners employed by AEAs.
- Prepare an annual budget estimating income and expenditures for agency programs and services. The AEA board must hold a public hearing on the budget prior to approving the budget. The AEA board-approved budget must then be submitted to the State Board for final approval. Only budgets submitted by AEAs that have been fully or conditionally accredited by the State Board may receive the State Board's final approval.
- Meet at least annually with the board members of the merged areas in which the AEA is located to discuss coordination of programs, services, and other areas of mutual interest. The Board shall also meet with the boards of the component school districts located within the agency on an annual basis, if the school boards so request.
- Annually submit to the Department, the information relating to the contracted salary and benefits of AEA administrators and AEA lobbyists, as well as the expenditures for lobbyists and lobbying activities by October 1.

³ The duties of the administrator are set forth in [Iowa Code section 273.4](#), which is available in [Appendix F](#).

AEA boards are authorized to do the following:

- Pay annual dues to an Iowa Association of School Boards.
- Establish a 403(b) retirement plan for employees.
- Establish and pay all or any part of the cost of group health insurance plans, nonprofit group medical service plans, and group life insurance plans adopted by the board for the benefit of AEA employees.
- Issue warrants and anticipatory warrants relating to public obligations not paid for want of funds.
- Issue school credit cards allowing AEA employees to pay for the actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of work-related duties.
- Charge user fees for certain materials and services that are not required by law or by rules of the State Board and are specifically requested by a school district or accredited nonpublic school.
- Purchase equipment under the same requirements as school districts.
- Sell, lease, or dispose of, in whole or in part, property belonging to the AEA, in compliance with Iowa Code requirements. However, before leasing property belonging to an AEA, its board must obtain the approval of the Director of the Department.
- Sell software and support services, professional development programs and materials, online professional development, and online training to entities other than school districts within the state, or to school districts within the state if the AEA is not otherwise required to provide such to a school district; and to school districts and other public agencies located outside of the state.
- Perform all other acts necessary to carry out the provisions and intent of Iowa Code chapter 273.

AEA Accreditation Standards (Iowa Code § 273.11)

AEAs must provide services to public and accredited nonpublic schools and meet standards for accreditation. AEA standards for accreditation include, but are not limited to:

- Support for school-community planning, including a means of assessing needs, establishing shared direction and implementing program plans and reporting progress.
- Professional development programs that respond to current needs.
- Support for curriculum development, instruction, and assessment for reading, language arts, math and science, using research-based methodologies.
- Special education compliance and support.
- Management services, including financial reporting and purchasing as requested and funded by local districts.
- Support for instructional media services that supplement and support local district media centers and services.
- Support for school technology planning and staff development for implementing instructional technologies.
- A program and services evaluation and reporting system.
- Support for school district libraries.
- Support for early childhood service coordination for families and children to meet health, safety, and learning needs.

AEAs and their boards are also required to meet requirements in Iowa Code chapter 273 for financial management of the AEA and collaboration with the Department regarding data collection.

AEA Provision of Services

In addition to providing the required basic services such as special education and media services, AEAs may provide some services within the limits of funds available or upon the request of the districts the AEA serves. Such services include:

- In-service training programs for employees of school districts and AEAs, provided at the time these programs and services do not duplicate programs and services available in that area from an institution of higher education. The in-service training programs shall include, but are not limited to, regular training concerning mental or emotional disorders which may afflict children and the impact children with such disorders have upon their families.
- Educational data processing.
- Research, demonstration projects and models, and educational planning for children under five years of age through grade 12 and children requiring special education as approved by the State Board.
- Auxiliary services for nonpublic school pupils. However, if auxiliary services are provided their funding shall be based on the type of service provided.
- Other educational programs and services for children under five years through grade 12, children requiring special education, and for district and AEA employees as approved by the State Board.

Additional and Prohibited Services

To arrange for any additional services to be provided to all school districts in the area, AEAs must receive a request in writing from “sixty percent of the number of local school boards located in an area education agency or if local school boards representing sixty percent of the enrollment in the school districts located in the agency” (Iowa Code § 273.7). Any additional services provided must be within the AEA’s financial capabilities.

There are some prohibitions on services AEAs may provide. AEAs may not provide services which duplicate programs and services provided by institutions of higher education, and AEAs must contract, whenever practical, with other school corporations for the use of personnel, buildings, facilities, supplies, equipment, programs, and services.

With such emphasis placed on AEA services to districts and nonpublic schools in the areas of special education, media services, and the standards for accreditation in Iowa Code, the Accreditation Team focused document reviews and interview questions on these topics. Special education makes up 70-80% of all AEA budgets and work, so questions and document reviews focused heavily in this area in particular. Both Iowa Code and federal law require the provision of direct services to students with disabilities in need of speech-language services, occupational therapy, and/or physical therapy. These are commonly referred to as “speech-only” or “related services” that are provided directly to children and families by the AEAs in Iowa. Many interview questions also focused on the caseloads carried by AEA staff responsible for providing these services.

The following section is divided into three subsections aligned with the questions the Accreditation Team is seeking to answer for the State Board:

1. Services to districts, nonpublic schools, students, and families;
2. Budget and finance; and
3. General Supervision responsibilities.

Services to Districts, Nonpublic Schools, Students, and Families

Interviewees reported a variety of strengths and concerns about the services provided by MBAEA. Among the strengths were the supports provided by AEA front-line staff to districts and schools they serve, the work of the AEA Challenging Behavior Team, and positive changes in special education since the accreditation visit in 2016.

Some principals, superintendents, curriculum directors, and one Board member noted that an AEA strength is the services of two recently established centers at the AEA: the Post-Secondary Success Center, and the center focused

on Competency-Based Education (CBE). While members of the Accreditation Team agree the work is commendable, there are four critical considerations for the AEA in this work:

1. The centers were established based on stated AEA goals, rather than data indicating this as a need for area districts as required by Iowa Code section 273.7;
2. The work of the centers is primarily the result of the directors of each center as there are no other staff assigned to work with districts or schools. Such a model is not sustainable, if it is the goal of the AEA system to look toward statewide implementation;
3. The centers divert resources from the primary function of the AEA's General Supervision responsibilities under IDEA; and
4. Iowa Code requires AEAs to coordinate any data collection efforts with the Department to avoid duplication of effort. It is unclear that the MBAEA centers regularly collaborate with the Department. Further, it is unclear if the data collected and used by the centers is supplementing or conflicting with the Department's data collections and reports.

Interviewees also expressed many concerns about AEA services, all of which reflected a concern that AEA staff members are "spread too thin" and AEA services are less available than they once were. General concerns about adequate communication between the AEA and the districts it serves was also a general theme. Multiple interviewees reported being unaware that MBAEA was in a negative financial position. Others reported having been told the financial position of the AEA had improved. Interviewees also reported limited availability of professional development opportunities relevant to their needs, with many saying they used other AEAs for professional learning.

Some of the specific strengths and concerns described by interviewees are listed below. Only statements voiced at least three times have been included in this report.

STRENGTHS

- Title III funds devoted to professional development were spent on the MBAEA district Title III consortium meetings and training, Imagine Learning workshops, national, and state conferences including: National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE), Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), the Iowa Culture and Language conference, and the Our Kids conference.
- MBAEA has incorporated the Eligibility Standards Module into onboarding of new school psychologists, which enhances practice for AEA Child Find responsibilities.
- More people report knowing who to go to with special education concerns than during the accreditation visit in 2016.
- Districts who have student services leads (SSLs) always mentioned them in interviews and reported relying on them for support.
- The Challenging Behavior Team is working hard and has trained the entire AEA staff on introductory information on challenging behavior. The Challenging Behavior Team has also trained schools on Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs).
- Some district administrators spoke positively about supports the AEA recently initiated, including the work of and support from the Post-Secondary Success Center, Competency-Based Education (CBE) center, and the Partnership School.

CONCERNS

- AEA supports for ELs are limited and fragmented. For example, there is limited consultant time dedicated to supporting districts that serve approximately 1,500 ELs.
 - Many interviewees reported little or no experience with EL support at the instructional level and were unaware of building level support. Nonpublic school staff also were not aware there was an EL consultant to support instructional efforts.

- The AEA is encouraged to pursue its intent to use EL student data to make decisions about use of Title III funding.
- AEA staff are working hard to meet the needs of the districts they serve, but staff allocations are not sufficient to provide the same level of service as districts have previously received.
 - Multiple interview groups acknowledged that AEA special education staff are working off-hours to complete work, not as available in district buildings/teams as they previously were, and not noticeably appreciated or supported by AEA administration. Several reasons were given for this shortfall including: addressing the noncompliance issues in Davenport, failing to replace retirees, being top-heavy in administration and light in field staff, and emphasizing compliance rather than instructional improvement.
 - While AEA and district interviewees reported that students are still receiving the services they need, they noted that less time is available to work as teams and there is less support for teachers. Ultimately, this affects the quality of instruction they can provide students.
 - AEA and district interviewees reported that continued decreases in services to districts and schools will affect services to students and families.
- Bi-directional communication between the AEA and district administrators is limited and affects district participation in AEA supports. For example:
 - Multiple district interviewees reported the AEA sets a vision and determines its emphasis without finding out the needs of the district and supporting those needs.
 - Some district administrators were not aware of the severity of the financial situation until they read it in the paper.
 - Administrators from small districts reported that big districts are getting most of the services; however, administrators from larger districts reported that small districts are getting more services.
 - Multiple interview groups stated that the AEA does not use data to make decisions about how to allocate resources and which services they will provide to which schools/districts. The AEA's methods of resource allocation were unclear from interviews.
 - Multiple districts reported considering or supplementing AEA services with their own psychologists, social workers, special education coordinators, professional learning, and/or EL services because they could then be assured of getting the services they need.
 - District staff reported a lack of understanding of the role of the AEA's middle managers. They would prefer additional front-line staff to help in buildings. This was a common point of discussion among groups of principal interviewees.
 - Multiple interviewees reported they do not ask the AEA for some services because they do not believe the AEA will be able to provide it.
- The AEA's professional development opportunities do not meet the needs of all for AEA staff and district leaders. For example:
 - Multiple interview groups reported a general lack of continued training and staff being asked to do jobs they are not equipped to do.
 - No interviewees reported being provided with AEA support in Iowa's Leadership Standards. These supports were previously included in the monthly Principal/Curriculum Director meetings. Local area education agency (LEA) staff reported these supports are no longer provided since these local meetings no longer occur.
 - Some district administrators reported using services from other AEAs. For example, multiple interviewees reported attending professional learning available at Grant Wood or Keystone AEAs.
 - Beyond the English language proficiency (ELP) modules, there were no indications of staff development for teachers who work with ELs and/or immigrants.

- Multiple interviewees reported that AEA staff are “spread thin” and that it takes longer for the AEA to respond or initiate services.
 - School psychologists and early childhood consultants expressed concern about being unable to do work beyond basic compliance (e.g., coaching) because of caseload/workload. The work not being done includes coaching district staff and supporting teachers to learn to write compliant and effective IEPs.
 - Social workers reported feeling overworked, undertrained, and underappreciated.
 - District interviewees reported a general lack of access to people with early childhood knowledge and believe this will potentially affect the provision of FAPE for some students.
 - Staff reported they are trying to get service minutes in when students are not in school. “Staffing, caseloads, and coverage areas require us to be very creative.” In addition, staff members reported that retirees have not been replaced and the number of psychologists and consultants are down.
 - AEA and district interviewees reported that students are still getting the services they need but there is less time for working as teams and less support for teachers, which ultimately affects instruction.
 - Multiple AEA and district interviewees reported that services to some districts had declined in order to serve Davenport.
 - Districts reported frustration at the inability of district staff to access AEA services from the Challenging Behavior Team.
 - In general, nonpublic school staff reported that direct services for students such as speech are adequate, but they are no longer receiving curricular supports for general education.
 - There was mixed feedback about whether staff being stretched so thin that it is affecting student services. Many indicated that services are being interrupted, postponed, and/or delayed due to the work with Davenport, while others cited cuts at the AEA as the problem. Others reported that while it is more difficult to serve students, minimum services are still being provided.

Budget and Finance

AEAs are required to provide public districts with services to support general education, and they specifically receive federal and/or state funding to support special education, ELs, and school improvement efforts.

Generally, LEA and AEA staff indicated the budget cuts and AEA negative fund balance have caused a reduction of services to districts over the last three to five years. In interviews, the Accreditation Team found the closer the staff member was to the student services, the more detrimental those AEA cuts were perceived. AEA administrators were clear that the AEA has been careful not to cut services to schools that will affect students or direct services to students and families. Some AEA administrators and staff expressed concern that the current budget situation is neither appropriate nor sustainable. At least one AEA administrator was not aware of the severity of the financial situation until approximately one year ago.

Some of the specific concerns described by interviewees are listed below.

CONCERNS

- AEA administrators indicated most necessary cuts in expenses occurred in SFY16. While there was a reduction in actual expenditures from SFY15 of \$7,114,497, AEA administrators indicated that additional cuts were made since SFY16. These cuts were a result of attrition of staff (both certified and administrative). In addition, they believe no further cuts are warranted and that previous budget cuts will result in a positive balance by June 30, 2020. Lastly, the AEA administrators indicated the budget issues occurring in SFY15 were the result of an error made by a former staff member. The AEA administrators also identified the former chief administrator, who left the agency in June 2013, as a cause for the budgeting issues of SFY15.
- In terms of addressing deficiencies in the AEA’s budgeting process identified over the last five years, AEA administration and fiscal staff indicated no changes were deemed necessary to bring estimated revenues and expenditures closer to actuals. They indicated the previous AEA budgeting process was flawed and changed

after SFY15. Administration and staff believe the new budgeting process provides a better projection of what actuals would be but provided no specifics about what was changed in the budgeting process after SFY15.

- MBAEA is the only AEA in the state that self-insures its staff. When AEA administrators and Board members were asked if they ever considered changing to an insurance provider, they stated it was not considered and that such a move would most likely be cost prohibitive. Being a self-insured organization could cause budgeting issues because of the unknown costs. A reduction in the number of staff members contributing to the insurance pool, as a result of staff reductions, will reduce fund contributions and the ability of the AEA to pay these costs with insurance contributions. Fiscal staff indicated some minor modifications were made to staff contributions and benefit structures to assist with the reduction in the number of staff members contributing to the fund.

AEA administrators, MBAEA Board members, and superintendents were asked if they knew about the AEA's negative balance and when they became aware of the AEA's financial difficulties. Interviewees were provided with the information in [Appendix E](#) for their reference. Across these interviews the following were determined by the Accreditation Team:

- Superintendents knew little, if anything, about the AEA's financial difficulties.
- One Board member learned of the AEA's financial difficulty in the local newspaper.
- Multiple Board members reported not knowing that they had approved at least one deficit budget for the AEA.
- Multiple Board members were surprised by the financial situation, believing it to be already corrected.
- No Board members appeared to have seen the two-year budget given to the State Board, though it had been approved at a MBAEA Board meeting.
- One Board member said they did approve a deficit budget after the State Board approved it.
- There was a general perception among superintendents that MBAEA's financial position was either improving or had been rectified.
- According to the Chief Administrator and Executive Director, the AEA was unable to "right-size" AEA staffing sooner than 2016-2017 because the prior business manager used inaccurate projections. The prior business manager reportedly quit when asked how the budget had deteriorated.
- The AEA Board President disagreed with the financial data presented to him, declined to answer when asked when he knew about the financial problems, and disagreed that the Board ever approved a deficit budget. The Board President also reported that he knows everyone in the AEA (students/children) is getting their needs met because the administrators have assured him that is the case.
- In general, Board members reported trust in the Chief Administrator and Executive Director and comfort leaving budget decisions to them. Evidence of lack of Board involvement with the budget can be found in the Board minutes in [Appendix D](#). Examples include:
 - February 12, 2014: The Board convened the Public Hearing on the Proposed 2014-2015 Budget at 12:00 p.m. and ended at 12:04 p.m.
 - February 11, 2015: The Public Hearing on the Proposed 2015-2016 Budget began at 12:00 p.m. and ended at 12:03 p.m. Later in the meeting, the Board approved and adopted the resolution authorizing the issuance of taxable anticipatory warrants in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000 upon the General Fund of the MBAEA, as presented.
 - February 10, 2016: The Public Hearing on the Proposed 2016-2017 Budget began at 11:55 a.m. and ended at 12:04 p.m.
 - February 8, 2017: The Public Hearing on the Proposed 2017-2018 Budget lasted from 11:59 a.m. to 12:11 p.m.
 - June 14, 2017: The Public Hearing on the Amended Proposed 2017-2018 Budget began at 5:01 p.m. and ended at 5:04 p.m. Later in the same meeting, the Board approved and adopted the resolution authorizing the issuance of taxable anticipatory warrants in an amount not to exceed \$9,000,000 in anticipation of receipt of General Funds.

- February 14, 2018: The Public Hearing on the Proposed 2018-2019 budget started at 12:03 p.m. and ended 12:06 p.m.
- April 11, 2018: MBAEA Board minutes summarized discussion about the Department requesting assurance the AEA will develop a budget that balances and eliminates a deficit ending balance over the next two years.
- May 9, 2018: The MBAEA Board authorized and approved Mr. Decker as the representative of the AEA to pursue the purchase and execution of the purchase agreement for the acquisition of the Bettendorf Community School District property adjacent to the agency for parking.
- August 15, 2018: The evaluation of the Chief Administrator lasted from 2:28 p.m. to 2:52 p.m.

General Supervision

Overall, evidence suggests that the AEA is exercising General Supervision under IDEA for all districts. Even so, the current financial and staffing situation in the AEA is unlikely to be sustainable in the long-term and may put the agency at risk for not being able to fulfill their General Supervision responsibilities. Furthermore, while the AEA has fulfilled its General Supervision responsibilities with the Davenport Community School District, the AEA acknowledged that it could have acted more quickly to require Davenport to take action. Multiple interviewees reported that they believed the AEA did not move fast enough on Davenport because AEA staff were more concerned with relationship building with the district than fixing problems.

Some of the specific strengths and concerns described by interviewees are listed below.

STRENGTHS

A review of Educational Evaluation Reports (EERs), Functional Behavioral Assessments/Behavior Intervention Plans (FBAs/BIPs), and IEPs indicates that overall, the development of these required components is compliant with the IDEA. This supports the conclusion that the AEA is fulfilling their General Supervision responsibilities.

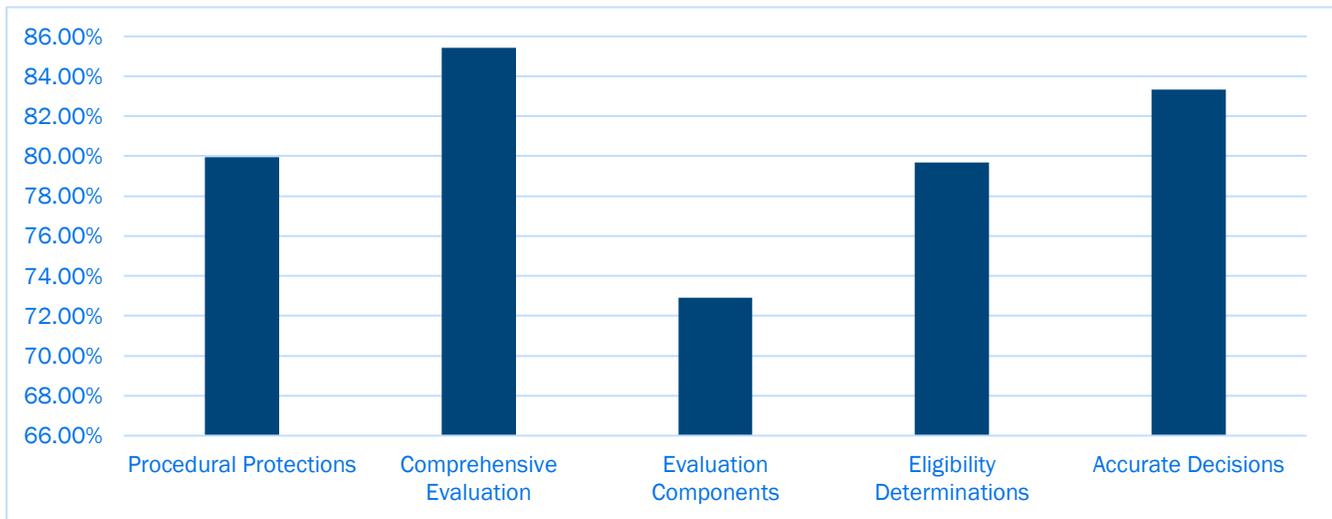
EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION REPORTS (EERS)

A sample of 24 randomly selected EERs were reviewed by the Department across five areas:

- **Procedural Protections**, which determine the extent to which qualified personnel conducted full and individual evaluations and made eligibility determinations. This includes whether parents both participated in this process and were provided notified of eligibility.
- **Comprehensive Evaluation**, which determines the extent to which the evaluation was thorough and comprehensive, contained all evaluation components and domains of concern, and used sound data to make decisions.
- **Evaluation Components**, which determines the extent to which the IEP indicates student response to intervention, the performance of the student to age/grade expectations, and includes a description of the child's needs.
- **Eligibility Determinations**, which determines the extent to which the IEP included consideration of student progress, discrepancy and exclusionary factors, consideration of the need for special education, and evidence that the final decision was aligned to the eligibility decision and the domains of need.
- **Accurate Decisions**, which indicates the final extent to which the final eligibility decision aligned to the evidence of need. Evidence of need is indicated if three or four of the components (i.e., Procedural Protections, Comprehensive Evaluation, Evaluation Components, Eligibility Determinations) are scored yes (or are deemed an accurate decision). Conversely, if less than three of the components are scored no, the decision is not deemed accurate.

Overall, available evidence (see Figure 5 below) suggests that decisions made based on the EERs are largely accurate.

Figure 5. Evaluation of Five EER Components for IDEA Compliance



Note. Source: Web IEP

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENTS/BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLANS (FBAS/BIPS)

A sample of 70 randomly selected FBAs and BIPs were reviewed by staff from the University of Iowa across two areas: operationalized behaviors of concern and rigor of assessment. For new FBAs, the date listed was used. If the FBA had been reviewed and revised, the revision date was used. If the FBA was reviewed but not revised, the original FBA date was used. Thus, 54% of the FBAs were written and/or revised in the last year and a half.

Table 8. FBAs Reviewed

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
n	1	2	7	10	11	35	3
%	1%	3%	10%	14%	16%	50%	4%

Note. Source: Web IEP (University of Iowa Staff, 2018)

Areas reviewed include Operationalized Behaviors of Concern and Rigor of Assessment.

- **Operationalized Behaviors of Concern:** Currently 60% of the behaviors of concerns are written in an operationalized or partially operationalized manner.
- **Rigor of Assessment:** Assessment categories included indirect assessment (i.e., function-based rating scales, function-based interviews) and direct assessment including scatterplots; function-based observations (e.g., ABC observations where A refers to Antecedent, B refers to Behavior, and C refers to Consequence), descriptive assessments, structural analysis, and functional analysis. Thirty-eight percent of the FBAs reviewed did not reference any of these assessments as part of their process.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPS)

The Department reviewed 435 randomly selected IEPs to determine the percent compliance within General Supervision responsibilities. IEPs met compliance at or above 93.8% across all IEP components with the exception of Postsecondary Assessment of Learning (65.2%), Working Expectations (74.1%), Child Outcomes Summary (COS) courses, activities, linkages (87.3%), Goal Alignment (84.2%), Services/Supports for All Needs (88%) and Phase Changes Considered (76.6%). Though there are issues with postsecondary IEP items and some confusion about

graduation versus completion requirements, these data are similar to IEP review outcomes across the state, indicating that MBAEA is meeting their General Supervision responsibilities.

CONCERNS

While General Supervision responsibilities have continued, AEA staff report they have taken on more responsibilities to ensure districts and schools are supported. It is clear, however, that the AEA may have reached the limit of ensuring that General Supervision is provided across districts and schools, as further budget shortfalls, deficits being addressed through attrition, and freezes on hiring staff will directly impact General Supervision.

The AEA is stretched to maximum capacity when it comes to meeting the needs of families and students. While they are able to continue to meet General Supervision responsibilities, any additional stress to the system, focus on activities outside of the basic role and function of an AEA, or further attrition without rehiring has a great potential to result in a significant decrease in direct services and a failure to meet General Supervision responsibilities.

While AEA administration, the AEA Board, and some superintendents indicated that services are not impacted and maintaining direct service personnel and fulfilling General Supervision responsibilities are priorities for the system, several stakeholders (e.g., principals, teachers, staff, parents) indicated a decided decrease in resources, support, and availability of AEA staff in buildings. A primary example of this is the circumstance in Davenport. Several interviewees across multiple stakeholder groups reported that they believe a reduction in access to AEA staff and services is because those AEA staff have been pulled to assist Davenport. However, several respondents directly indicated that there have been changes in services over the past three years, pre-dating the situation in Davenport. In most cases, stakeholders acknowledge that AEA special education staff are spread too thin. Examples of this include special education consultants, school psychologists, and social workers being in buildings a reduced number of days, and evaluations being completed closer to the deadlines than in the past. This has led to some districts considering hiring their own special education consultants, school psychologists, and social workers instead of relying on the AEA for these services.

Although no evidence was found to support the perspectives that Early ACCESS services could only be provided one to two times per month, many interviewees were under the impression that the maximum number they could identify was one to two times per month. Early ACCESS services, as with any IDEA service, must be based on the individual's needs. It is recommended, therefore, that the AEA widely inform staff, Early ACCESS partners and families of the accurate methods to identify the amount and type of services a child should receive.

Required Actions

AEAs are critical collaborative partners in Iowa's educational system. They serve as leaders in delivery of common professional development on evidence-based instructional and leadership practices to educators and support personnel and provide direct services to students and families. This collaborative nature of the system means that if one AEA experiences sustained financial issues, not only are the AEA's services and supports potentially affected but services and supports across the AEA system could also be. Therefore, the Accreditation Team recommends that the State Board place MBAEA on conditional accreditation for a period of no less than one year in order to fulfill several requirements.

The following required actions are recommended as the conditions upon which MBAEA may regain its full accreditation. Proposed required actions are listed in three areas, all contingent on State Board approval: MBAEA Board, Finance, and Leadership.

The Accreditation Team has determined that these actions are essential to ensure MBAEA is able to:

1. Meet the goal of operating within a viable and sustainable budget;
2. Provide quality services to students, families, and the schools that support them;
3. Nurture an inclusive and supportive work culture; and
4. Grow and thrive to meet the needs of the region's education community.

MBAEA Board

Duties and powers conferred on AEA boards of directors are included in [Appendix F](#). AEA boards are responsible for nearly every aspect of the function of the AEA including services, programs, facilities, personnel, finances, and budgeting that support the very foundation of AEA operations. Results of site visit interviews with AEA board members uniformly indicate members:

- Are poorly informed about the operation of the AEA or the AEA's financial situation;
- Are inadequately prepared to discuss, make decisions about, or approve the AEA's budget;
- Abdicate the responsibility of oversight of AEA finances and budget to the Chief Administrator;
- Typically conduct Board meetings by telephone, with the average⁴ meeting at 26 minutes, with the exception of the Board retreat; and
- Appear unaware of the legal requirements of the MBAEA Board.

Without an understanding of the role and function of a board—or the latitude to fulfill board responsibilities—members are unable to provide the ongoing systemic support the AEA needs to correct the current financial situation in order to guarantee FAPE and services to districts, schools, children, and families. For example, conducting meetings by phone less than 30 minutes is an unrealistically brief amount of time for a board to consider matters as significant as taking on millions of dollars in debt, submitting a budget to the State Board that does not meet Iowa Code requirements, or creating a new budget that will correct the prior deficiencies.

Given the current circumstances, the Accreditation Team recommends that the State Board require the MBAEA Board be assigned an outside expert mentor as a condition of MBAEA's accreditation. The expert mentor's responsibilities would be to:

1. Work with the AEA Board Chair to create board agendas and organize, structure, and facilitate Board meetings. This includes making sure the Board has optimal data to discuss issues before the board, make decisions, approve activities appropriately overseen by the Board, and engage in follow-up.

⁴ Average minutes were calculated from the 2018 board minutes.

2. Work with the AEA Board to support members to:
 - a. Understand relevant Iowa Code, specifically Iowa Code sections related to the duties and powers conferred to AEA boards;
 - b. Understand AEA operations and finances;
 - c. Understand the role of the AEA system; and
 - d. Enact their role as members of an AEA board.
3. Coordinate with the outside expert mentor in leadership (see below).

The Accreditation Team recommends that the expert mentor for the MBAEA Board be assigned and contracted by the Department. The expert mentor for the board would report directly to the Department's Bureau Chief for School Improvement.

Finances

As noted within the Finances section of this document, MBAEA's General Fund balance has consistently decreased between 2012 to 2017 and has operated at a deficit over the last four budget cycles (2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018). A substantial increase in the deficit occurred in a single year, moving from -\$1,564,937 to -\$4,656,460 between 2016 and 2017. During this same time period, MBAEA submitted estimated revenues and expenditures that differed—at times substantially—from actual revenues and expenditures.

Results from site visit interviews indicate the current financial plan to correct the budget deficiencies is through staff attrition with the intent to have little impact on direct services to children and families. The intent of the financial plan is substantiated by current staffing information, salary increases over the last five budgeting cycles (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017), and an agreement across interviewees that though services are stretched thin. There is no evidence of denial of FAPE for students with disabilities. There is, however, an estimated \$4,181,634 General Fund deficit to correct and a desire by the AEA to do so without affecting services. It is crucial to rectify the budget at this time as any further stress on the system has significant potential to jeopardize services and, therefore, FAPE. MBAEA should ensure services required by state and federal law are prioritized with the resources available at this time, since Iowa Code provides the primary functions of an AEA. The AEA may choose to reestablish additional services once the AEA is in a better financial position.

Given the current circumstances, the Accreditation Team recommends that the State Board require that:

1. The MBAEA Board must hold monthly face-to-face meetings reviewing progress toward meeting AEA financial corrective actions as determined by the State Board.
2. The Chief Administrator of MBAEA must work with an expert mentor in finance until such time as MBAEA has a positive ending balance that supports a functional operation is able to sustain a positive balance for at least one year. The Chief Administrator and expert mentor will work together to provide the State Board with the following, all of which must be agreed upon by the Chief administrator and expert mentor prior to submission:
 - a. Itemized budget cuts that will result in a positive general fund balance no later than SFY 2020. The itemized budget must be provided no later than the August 2019 meeting of the State Board.
 - b. A plan for the use of anticipatory warrants that includes how and when anticipatory warrants will be sought, what the money will be used for, and how the warrant will be paid off prior to approval.
 - c. A process by which any land or building purchases will be agreed upon by the Chief Administrator and expert mentor prior to being taken to the AEA board for approval.
 - d. A process by which expenditures for building improvements and maintenance over \$10,000 will be agreed upon by the Chief Administrator and expert mentor prior to being taken to the AEA board for approval.
 - e. A listing of all building and land with market values possessed by the AEA.
 - f. A plan agreed upon by the Chief Administrator and expert mentor for how MBAEA will address increasing amounts of outstanding long-term debt, particularly the net pension liability.

- a. Facilitating—or supporting the facilitation of—the AAIMI, including Specially Designed Instruction conversations (agenda development, data analysis, communication, follow-up);
 - b. Supporting the development and implementation of an action plan based on the AAIMI; and
 - c. Supporting the communication of progress internally at MBAEA and to the State Board.
2. Coordinate with the outside expert mentors for the MBAEA board and finance.

The Accreditation Team recommends that the expert mentor for MBAEA Leadership be assigned and contracted by the Department. The expert mentor for leadership would report directly to the Department’s Bureau Chief for School Improvement.

Conclusion

This report sought to answer several questions regarding the provision of required services by MBAEA. Each question is presented again below along with a brief answer provided from the perspective of the Accreditation Team members. These statements were created based on desk audit information and interviews and reflect the consensus opinion of all ten team members.

1. Are districts receiving services from the AEA mandated in Iowa Code chapter 273 and IAC 281–72?

Generally, yes. However, the majority of interviewees reported experiencing a decline in either the quality and/or frequency of AEA services in the last three to five years. The Accreditation Team acknowledges that MBAEA faces a significant challenge in providing services to Davenport at this time and also that a minimum level of required services are still being provided to other districts. Even so, it is clear from conversations with AEA and district staff that availability of AEA staff to serve districts has suffered in recent years and continued decline would inevitably affect the ability of the AEA to meet Iowa Code requirements.

2. Are nonpublic schools also receiving required services from the AEA?

In some cases, no. Interviewees from nonpublic schools reported having no knowledge of required AEA services, such as those provided to ELs. In addition, several nonpublic schools reported having chosen to pay for their own services in special education and/or English language education rather than relying on the AEA.

3. Are districts/schools receiving adequate services to provide a FAPE to students with disabilities?

Generally, yes. While interviewees reported receiving less frequent support from the AEA, no district reported an inability to provide a FAPE to students with disabilities. District and nonpublic school interviewees reported that special education services are the single most important AEA resource for which they rely upon the AEA. In general, the Accreditation Team found that while district interviewees were comfortable with the services they are able to provide students with disabilities, they are concerned about their continued ability to do so given the MBAEA’s current financial situation. Further, parents of children with disabilities were uniformly dissatisfied with the services from AEA staff, indicating that staff were more concerned with maintaining relationships with LEA staff than supporting the needs of students and their families. Parents reported being frustrated with services before, during, and after IEP meetings and had negative experiences with instruction, accommodation, transition services, and basic support to interpret and implement the IDEA.

4. Is the AEA exercising General Supervision under the IDEA for all districts?

Yes. Reviews of EERs and IEPs along with multiple interviews provided sufficient information to allow the Accreditation Team to conclude that the AEA is exercising its General Supervision responsibilities under the IDEA. However, parent interviewees indicated that the AEA does not adequately exercise General Supervision and, instead, has been directed to develop relationships with LEA staff. As stated previously in this report, it is essential that the AEA to prioritize their General Supervision responsibilities so it does not become secondary to other activities or relationships.

5. Has the AEA’s budget deficit over the past four years influenced the agency’s ability to provide services to districts, nonpublic schools, and/or individual students?

Yes. Interviewees from the AEA, districts, and nonpublic schools overwhelmingly reported declining services in the past three to five years. They spoke of this decline in terms of quality and variety of professional development provided, accessibility of AEA staff, amount of time AEA staff spent in buildings, and curricular supports provided. While some interviewees attributed the decline in services to an increase in services at Davenport, others were clear that the decline has been ongoing for more than one or two years.

6. What specific cuts have been or will be made to balance the AEA budget by FY 2020, as required by the State Board, and will these cuts affect services to schools and students?

Multiple AEA administrators indicated additional budget cuts have been the result of attrition of staff (both certified and administrative). In addition, they indicated that no further cuts are necessary and cuts previously made will result in a positive budget by June 30, 2020.

Recommendation

The Accreditation Team recommends that State Board members fully weigh the information provided in this report and place MBAEA in conditional accreditation status until they are able to satisfy the requirements proposed in the Required Actions section of this report.

Appendix A: Groups and Individuals Interviewed

Title	Name, AEA/District/School		
Business Manager	Jennifer Coombs, MBAEA		
Early Childhood Coordinator	Mary Shihadeh, MBAEA		
EL Coordinator & Building Collaborative Team Lead (BCTL)	Diane Campbell, MBAEA		
Occupational Therapists	Brianna Bosco, MBAEA Kelly Harry, MBAEA Carrie Paulsen, MBAEA	Kraig Hartz, MBAEA Christine Hunter, MBAEA Teresa Plett, MBAEA	Jordan Pulliam, MBAEA Barbara Townsend, MBAEA
Post-Secondary Success Lead	David Ford, MBAEA		
Chief Administrator	Bill Decker, MBAEA		
Media Director	Julie Larson, MBAEA		
EL Consultant	Helen Duranleau-Brennan, MBAEA		
Physical Therapists (PTs)	Elizabeth Flahive, MBAEA Kristen Gibson, MBAEA Katie Guyer, MBAEA	Catherine Hahn, MBAEA Dana Johnson, MBAEA	Sharon Sanyl, MBAEA Melissa Tolle, MBAEA
Special Education Administrator	Kim Hofmann, MBAEA		
Executive Director & Equity Coordinator	Edward Gronlund, MBAEA		

Title	Name, AEA/District/School		
School Improvement Administrator	Karinne Tharaldson Jones, MBAEA		
Social Workers	Theresa Armetta, MBAEA Melissa Burrage, MBAEA James Crawford, MBAEA	Lachelle Guy, MBAEA Jessica Leal, MBAEA Shannon Reschke, MBAEA	Lisa Schafer, MBAEA Hannah Swanson, MBAEA
Focus Area Consultant	Andrea Stewart, MBAEA		
Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs)	Madeline Grothus, MBAEA	Aleaka Morgan, MBAEA	Alisa Carslake, MBAEA
Educational Services Administrator	Shane Williams, MBAEA		
School Psychologists	Aaron Roome, MBAEA Louise Whitaker, MBAEA Jasmine Young, MBAEA Sarah Galloway, MBAEA	Kayla Bartz, MBAEA Andrew Corr, MBAEA Jennifer Kuhle, MBAEA	Caryl Duckett, MBAEA Amanda Lewis, MBAEA August Raack, MBAEA
Early Childhood/Special Education Staff	Lorry Wilson, MBAEA Denise Conner, MBAEA	Jennifer Fuhr, MBAEA	Rebecca Zeck, MBAEA
Early ACCESS Staff	Kathy Bartling, MBAEA Shari Huecksteadt, MBAEA Jamie Guerra, MBAEA Jacqueline Humphrey, MBAEA	Karyn Janoski, MBAEA Emily Johnson, MBAEA Jill Litterer, MBAEA Rachel Rettenmeier, MBAEA	Lauren Seden, MBAEA Lynne Swanson, MBAEA Julie Thomson, MBAEA

Title	Name, AEA/District/School		
General Education/School Improvement Staff	Lisa Hawker, MBAEA Jenny Meeske, MBAEA	Alicia Christiansen, MBAEA	Ann Craig, MBAEA
AEA Paraeducators	Laura Boyer, MBAEA	Jessica Sargent, MBAEA	
Special Education Consultants	Melissa Ogden, MBAEA Angela Senne, MBAEA	Debra Meyne, MBAEA Melissa Parkin, MBAEA	Debra Lara, MBAEA
Principals	Jeanette Hartung Schroeder, Bellevue William Petsche, Central DeWitt Jeffrey Recker, Bellevue George Pickup, Central DeWitt Theresa Schultz, Clinton Arian Kenney, Clinton Amy Wedeking, Louisa-Muscatine Shane Knoche, North Scott Steve Cotton, Pleasant Valley Rhett Weis, Clinton	Christopher Parkhurst, Louisa-Muscatine Kelly Rohlf, North Scott Jennifer Gertson, Pleasant Valley Michael Miller, Central DeWitt Kristine Cooley, Clinton Kyle Reeve, Columbus Patrick Bollman, Maquoketa Michael Kline, North Scott David Zimmer, Pleasant Valley Tony Hiatt, Pleasant Valley Mark Vervaecke, Maquoketa	Tim Green, North Scott Amanda Bonjour, Maquoketa Aernadette Brustkern, North Scott Michael Peakin, Pleasant Valley JR Kuch, Clinton Caleb Bonjour, Maquoketa John Hawley, North Scott Christopher Welch, Pleasant Valley Marc Snavely, Wilton Chad Ruth, North Scott Laurie Brasche, Pleasant Valley
Board Members	Ralph Johansen, MBAEA Rex Masterson, MBAEA	Joe Adam, MBAEA Mike Duytschaver, MBAEA	Dick Wold, MBAEA Mike Wolf, MBAEA
Superintendents	Chris Fee, Easton Valley & Andrew David Larson, Bennett	Lonnie Luepker, Cal-Wheat Tom Parker, Camanche	Jim Spelhaug, Pleasant Valley Mike Van Sickle, Louisa-Muscatine

Title	Name, AEA/District/School		
	Todd Hawley, Delwood Neil Gray, Northeast Jerry Riibe, Muscatine Tom Meyer, Bellevue Chris Hoover, Maquoketa	Joe Burnett, Durant & Wilton Gary Benda, Columbus Gary DeLacy, Clinton Mike Raso, Bettendorf	TJ Schneckloth, Davenport Joe Potts, West Liberty Joe Stutting, North Scott
LEA Special Education Director	Kay Ingham, Bettendorf		
Curriculum Directors	Wes Golden, Clinton Arian Strusz, Pleasant Valley Sue Kane, North Scott	Tara Notz, Maquoketa Missy Johnson, West Liberty Jamie Meyer, Wilton	Amy Lantigua, Louisa-Muscatine Jen Vance, Central DeWitt
Nonpublic School Principals	Geoffrey Kaiser, Marquette Catholic Nancy Peart, Prince of Peace Sharon Roling, St. Joseph Catholic	Aen Neitzel, St. Mary & Mathias Chad Steimle, JFK Jeanne Von Feldt, All Saints	Julie Delaney, St Paul the Apostle Jennifer Alongi, Lourdes Catholic
Student Services Leads	Lorry Wilson, MBAEA Aaron Maurer, MBAEA		
BCTL	Mark Bloom, MBAEA		
Special Education Teachers	Andrew Schnoor, Camanche Stephen Kelley, Wilton Stephanie Carpenter, Easton Valley & Andrew	Judy Arner, North Scott Andrea Martinez, Louisa-Muscatine	
Coordinator of Student Programs	Anne Budde, MBAEA		

Title	Name, AEA/District/School		
Coordinator of Teacher Leadership	Nicole Peterson, MBAEA		
Challenging Behavior Team	Ryan Gonzalez, MBAEA	Louise Whitaker, MBAEA	Snezanna Sullivan, MBAEA
Parents	Anonymous		

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Business Manager

- Please explain your budgeting process to arrive at budgeted revenues for the year.
- What changes to your budgeting process do you believe should be made moving forward based on the fact the Agency's average actual revenues are 94.55% of what was budgeted for over the last five years?
- Please explain your budgeting process to arrive at budgeted expenses for the year.
- What changes to your budgeting process do you believe should be made moving forward based on the fact the Agency's average actual expenditures are 104.65% of what was budgeted for over the last five years?
- What additional changes to your budgeting process not previously discussed do you believe should be made moving forward based on the fact the Agency's average actual total is operating at (8.86%) of the total budgeted over the last five years?
- What specific expenditure reductions will the AEA make in order to correct the financial shortfall in funding?
- What procedures will the AEA put in place to ensure the budgeted expenditures are not exceeded during the current and future years?
- Is the AEA current on all financial obligations in the current year?
- Is the AEA struggling with operational cash flow in the current year? Are all accounts payable being paid in a timely manner?
- What services are the AEA providing that fall outside the statutory categories of special education, educational services, and media services? What documentation does the AEA possess to support that 60% of districts in the AEA or districts with 60% of AEA enrollment have requested such service for a fee?
- Why did cabinet member salaries drastically increase from SFY17 to SFY18 when the AEA was having financial difficulties?
- Who is the Board Treasurer?
- MBAEA Board Policy 202.5 states that the Board Treasurer "will be appointed by the Board for a one-year term at the organization/annual meeting." When did this appointment occur? Why is Ed Gronlund listed as the Board Treasurer in the Board minutes for all of 2018?
- Preliminary staff reporting for 2018-19 show decreases in total staff of approximately 50 FTE, most of whom are certified staff, where exactly are these cuts being made?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Early Childhood Coordinator

- Please describe your administrative structure, including how special education administrative decisions are made.
- Please give us an overview of the early childhood programs.
- How does the AEA insure that Early ACCESS services are being implemented correctly and appropriately?
- To what extent are knowledgeable and skilled personnel available to provide Early ACCESS services in a timely manner throughout the AEA?
- How does the AEA ensure that personnel who provide early ACCESS services receive professional development that enables them to implement evidence-based interventions to enhance children's progress?
- What steps are taken to ensure that early ACCESS services are having a positive impact on families?

- What is the process for ensuring an effective transition from early ACCESS to other services and/or Part B special education services?
- What AEA supports and services are provided for students with IEPs in districts/schools? How does the AEA assist districts to ensure students have access to the curriculum (e.g., learners with challenging behaviors)?
 - Follow-up question: Does the Special Education Director/Department have established expectations or curriculum for certain settings/programs?
- What is the process the AEA uses with districts to change services if it is identified that the services being provided are not working for the individual? If amendments are used, are they typically made with or without a meeting?
- What processes does the AEA use to ensure the services identified in the IEP are provided? What process would a teacher, parent, or other IEP team member follow if services were not being provided?
- What do the AEA/district's data indicate regarding LRE for early childhood?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation (e.g., staffing across districts)?
- Who provides services when an AEA provider is absent or out on extended leave?
- Describe the Child Find process. What role do districts/AEAs play in the Child Find process?
- What have been the effect of the budget losses? What is going well right now for the MBAEA?
- What are the challenges in providing early childhood services in the MBAEA?

EL Coordinator and BCTL

- Please describe the types of EL supports the AEA provides to the districts (e.g., staff structure, responsibilities, etc.). *Listen for determining and prioritizing needs versus one size fits all support or support based on number of students.*
- Please describe the support structure used in terms of distributing EL responsibilities among the three AEA consultants (i.e., who serves whom, FTEs).
- Please describe the AEA's use of Title III funds for the past three years.
- How does the AEA as the subrecipient of Title III funds determine how to allocate the funds to districts? Listen for allocating based on need not specific per pupil.
- How do you determine district needs for serving EL populations?
- How do you determine the services each district will receive to support ELs?
- What are the AEA's priorities for general school improvement services? For special education? For BCTL support?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation for school improvement efforts? What data do you use? What subgroup data (e.g., EL, IEP)?
- Describe the BCTL support given in the past three years.
- How do BCLTs interact with the Special Education Director at the AEA?
- How do you determine service level with each district for BCLTs?
- Do you have the resources to properly support your districts?
- What are your current successes in serving the district's EL needs?
- What are your current challenges in serving the district's BCTL needs?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about either BCTL or EL services?

Occupational Therapists

- Please describe the types of EL supports the AEA provides to the districts (e.g., staff structure, responsibilities, etc.). *Listen for determining and prioritizing needs versus one size fits all support or support based on number of students*
- Please describe the support structure used in terms of distributing EL responsibilities among the three AEA consultants (i.e., who serves whom, FTEs).
- Please describe the AEA's use of Title III funds for the past three years.
- How does the AEA as the subrecipient of Title III funds determine how to allocate the funds to districts? *Listen for allocating based on need not specific per pupil*
- How do you determine district needs for serving EL populations?
- How do you determine the services each district will receive to support ELs?
- What are the AEA's priorities for general school improvement services? For special education? For BCTL support?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation for school improvement efforts? What data do you use? What subgroup data (e.g., EL, IEP)?
- Describe the BCTL support given in the past three years.
- How do BCLTs interact with the Special Education Director at the AEA?
- How do you determine service level with each district for BCLTs?
- Do you have the resources to properly support your districts?
- What are your current successes in serving the district's EL needs?
- What are your current challenges in serving the district's BCTL needs?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about either BCTL or EL services?

Post-Secondary Success Lead

- Please describe your role at the AEA.
- What services does the Post-Secondary Success Center offer to school districts and nonpublic schools? How did the AEA determine that these services were necessary and useful to districts and nonpublic schools?
- How is the budget for the Center created in collaboration with other AEAs? How is the Center staffed?
- How does the AEA communicate these services to school districts and nonpublic schools?
- How does the AEA receive feedback from school districts and nonpublic schools regarding Post-Secondary Success Center services? What feedback have you received?
- What data are used to guide the Post-Secondary Success Center services?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation (e.g. staffing across districts)? What changes have there been to this process in the last five years?
- How do you support districts whose data indicates inequities for some student groups, such as achievement gaps or disproportionality?
- What Post-Secondary Success Center services are provided to students, families, and community members who do not speak English?
- Have you reported information to the MBAEA Board on the Post-Secondary Success Center? If so, when and what did you report? What was the Board response?

Chief Administrator

- Please describe your administrative structure, including how special education administrative decisions are made.
- What do your data show about the outcomes of EL students, compared to the general population? Outcomes for students of color?
- Is disproportionality in special education or discipline a concern for any of your districts?
- What are the AEA priorities for special education?
- How do you determine allocation of special education resources to buildings and programs?
- How have allocations of special education resources changed over the past three years?
- How have you ensured that the AEA is meeting its General Supervision responsibilities under IDEA?
- How will the AEA continue to meet its IDEA responsibilities in the future?
- What are the procedures you advise districts to follow for implementing seclusion and restraint practices? How do you know if those practices are successful for a student?
- What are the AEA's priorities for general school improvement services?
- Is the AEA's MTSS model aligned with the state's MTSS materials?
- How do staff receive information about the AEA's procedure for processing grievances related to the non-discrimination and harassment policies?
- How is information regarding finances communicated to Board members, superintendents, and the public?
- How does the AEA ensure funds are spent appropriately?
- What led to the AEA's current budget deficit?
- The AEA has been deficit spending for several years. How was the Board informed? What actions did the Board take? Why did the Board approve the deficit budget?
- What specific items will you need to cut from your budget to meet the State Board's requirement to balance your budget in two years?
- Preliminary staff reporting for 2018-19 show decreases in total staff of approximately 50 FTE, most of whom are certified staff, where exactly are these cuts being made?
- Do you have concerns about meeting the needs of your districts given your budget constraints? Why or why not?
- Please explain your budgeting process to arrive at budgeted revenues for the year.
- What changes to your budgeting process do you believe should be made moving forward based on the fact the Agency's average actual revenues are 94.55% of what was budgeted for over the last five years?
- Please explain your budgeting process to arrive at budgeted expenses for the year.
- What changes to your budgeting process do you believe should be made moving forward based on the fact the Agency's average actual expenditures are 104.65% of what was budgeted for over the last five years?
- Please explain your budgeting process to arrive at total budget for the year.
- What changes to your budgeting process do you believe should be made moving forward based on the fact the agency's average actual total is 108.86% of what was total budgeted for over the last five years?
- What procedures will the AEA put in place to ensure the budgeted expenditures are not exceeded during the current and future years?
- Is the AEA current on all financial obligations in the current year?

- Is the AEA struggling with operational cash flow in the current year? Are all accounts payable being paid in a timely manner?
- What services are the AEA providing that fall outside the statutory categories of special education, educational services, and media services? What documentation does the AEA possess to support that 60% of districts in the AEA or districts with 60% of AEA enrollment have requested such service for a fee?
- Why did cabinet member salaries drastically increase from SFY17 to SFY18 when the AEA was having financial difficulties?
- How is the AEA Board kept informed of AEA business, including finances?
- Who is the Board Treasurer?
- MBAEA Board Policy 202.5 states that the Board Treasurer "will be appointed by the Board for a one-year term at the organization/annual meeting." When did this appointment occur? Why is Ed Gronlund listed as the Board Treasurer in the Board minutes for all of 2018?

Media Director

- What media services does MBAEA offer to school districts and nonpublic schools?
- How does MBAEA communicate these media services to school districts and nonpublic schools?
- How does MBAEA receive feedback from school districts and nonpublic schools regarding media services? What feedback have you received?
- How do MBAEA media services meet the needs of its diverse student populations?
- What data are used to guide MBAEA media services?
- How do you support districts whose data indicates inequities for some student groups, such as achievement gaps?
- What media services does MBAEA provide to students, families, and community members who do not speak English?
- Have you reported information to the MBAEA Board on media services? If so, when and what did you report? What was the Board response?

EL Consultant

- Please describe the types of supports the AEA provides to the districts (e.g., staff structure, responsibilities). *Listen for determining and prioritizing needs versus one size fits all support or support based on number of students*
- Please describe the support structure used in terms of distributing responsibilities among the three AEA consultants (i.e., who serves whom, FTEs).
- Please describe the AEA's use of Title III funds for the past three years.
- How does the AEA as the subrecipient of Title III funds determine how to allocate the funds to districts? *Listen for allocating based on need not specific per pupil*
- How do you determine district needs for serving EL populations?
- How do you determine the services each district will receive to support ELs?
- Who do you interact with most in districts? EL teachers? Content teachers? Principals, etc.?
- Do you have the resources to properly support your districts?
- What are your current successes in serving districts' EL needs? Challenges?

- What else would you like us to know about EL services provided for your districts?

PTs

- Please introduce yourself and describe your role at the AEA.
- What does the AEA do to support all employees in working effectively with diverse learners?
- Describe the Special Education Administrator's role in supporting you.
- Do you serve early ACCESS families? If so, how does the AEA ensure that personnel who provide early ACCESS services receive professional development that enables them to implement evidence-based interventions to enhance children's progress?
- What role, if any, do the PTs have in the Child Find process?
- What is the Special Education Administrator's role in ensuring that each child requiring special education in the area receives an appropriate special education program or service?
- Describe the Child Find process. What role do districts/AEAs play in the Child Find process?
- What are the strengths and challenges of the current Child Find process?
- Does the AEA have a problem with disproportionality? What has the AEA done to support you to address disproportionality?
- What does the AEA/district's data indicate regarding LRE for early childhood?
- Who provides services when an AEA provider is absent or out on extended leave?
- What is going well right now for the MBAEA?
- What are the biggest challenges?

Special Education Director

- Please describe your administrative structure, including how special education administrative decisions are made.
- How do you currently handle General Supervision and where do you want to go?
- What AEA supports and services are provided for students with IEPs in districts/schools? How does the AEA assist districts to ensure students have access to the curriculum (e.g., learners with challenging behaviors or on the alternate assessment)?
 - Follow-up question: Does the Special Education Director/Department have established expectations or curriculum for certain settings/programs?
- How do you determine allocation of special education resources to buildings and programs?
- How have allocations of special education resources changed over the past three years?
- How have you ensured that the AEA is meeting its responsibilities under IDEA?
- How will the AEA continue to meet its IDEA responsibilities in the future?
- How are IEPs assigned weightings after the IEP team has determined services?
- What is the process the AEA uses with districts to change services if it is identified that the services being provided are not working for the individual? If amendments are used, are they typically made with or without a meeting?
- How does the AEA ensure that IEP team decisions in districts are individualized to specific student needs, as opposed to documenting services provided in a specific placement/program?

- Describe the AEA's approach to amending IEPs.
- What processes does the AEA use to ensure the services identified in the IEP are provided? What process would a teacher, parent, or other IEP team member follow if services were not being provided?
- If an AEA consultant has a question or issue related to something occurring in a district or school, how do they solve it? What resources have been provided to staff to increase their capacity?
- What is the process for working with a student with challenging behaviors? Who has primary responsibility for writing a FBA/BIP?
- What are the procedures you advise districts to follow for implementing seclusion and restraint practices? How do you know if those practices are successful for a student?
- Describe the AEA's approach to General Supervision.
- Describe your relationship with the LEAs? How do you work together? Which LEAs are performing well? Are there any that are struggling? How do you see the AEA and LEA relationship in the next year?
- Describe the behavior program located at Central DeWitt CSD.
- What else would you like us to know about special education services in the AEA?
- Describe services offered to ELs and immigrant students who have an IEP or 504 plan.
- What is the proportion of ELs with an IEP? Is it similar to the general population?

Executive Director and Equity Coordinator

- Please describe your role in the AEA.
- What is your role as it pertains to supporting special education needs?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation (e.g. staffing across districts)?
- How does the AEA help schools: 1) assess the needs of all students, 2) develop relationships among community agencies, 3) establish shared direction, and 4) meet their goals.
- What does the AEA do to address diverse learning needs, including: 1) gifted and talented, 2) students with disabilities, and 3) ELs?
- How does the AEA develop and deliver leadership programs based on local and state educational needs and best practices?
- How does the AEA address its General Supervision responsibilities? What role does the Special Education Administrator play?
- What do you do when you have evidence that a district you work with is not following the law related to special education?
- With which districts do you have disproportionality concerns? What have you done to address disproportionality?
- Please describe how decisions are made about what EL services to provide to schools and how.
- Please discuss the achievement gaps of subgroup populations and how the AEA is addressing those gaps (e.g., EL, IEP, students of color).
- Preliminary staff reporting for 2018-19 show decreases in total staff of approximately 50 FTE, most of whom are certified staff. Where exactly are these cuts being made?

Equity

- How does the AEA notify staff, students, and families about your role as an equity coordinator?

- How do you interact and meet with AEA staff in your role as equity coordinator?
- How often are policies and procedures reviewed to ensure compliance with OCR and IDEA?
- How do staff receive information about the AEA's procedure for processing grievances related to the non-discrimination and harassment policies?
- What community groups, organizations, and agencies does the AEA communicate and collaborate with in efforts to better meet the needs of its diverse student populations?
- How does the AEA communicate with families and community members who do not speak English?
- What data do you use regularly in your role as equity coordinator?
- What equity/diversity-related issues and/or grievances have you dealt with in the past year?
- What are you doing to ensure that staff are culturally competent?

Finance

- How does the AEA ensure funds are spent appropriately?
- The AEA has been deficit spending for several years. When were you aware of this? (*Show graph*) How was the Board informed? What actions did the Board take? Why did the Board approve the deficit budget?
- Please explain your budgeting process to arrive at budgeted revenues for the year.
- What changes to your budgeting process do you believe should be made moving forward based on the fact the Agency's average actual revenues are 94.55% of what was budgeted for over the last five years?
- Please explain your budgeting process to arrive at budgeted expenses for the year.
- What changes to your budgeting process do you believe should be made moving forward based on the fact the Agency's average actual expenditures are 104.65% of what was budgeted for over the last five years?
- What additional changes to your budgeting process not previously discussed do you believe should be made moving forward based on the fact the Agency's average actual total is operating at (8.86%) of the total budgeted over the last five years?
- What specific expenditure reductions will the AEA make in order to correct the financial shortfall in funding?
- What procedures will the AEA put in place to ensure the budgeted expenditures are not exceeded during the current and future years?
- Is the AEA current on all financial obligations in the current year?
- Is the AEA struggling with operational cash flow in the current year? Are all accounts payable being paid in a timely manner?
- What services are the AEA providing that fall outside the statutory categories of special education, educational services, and media services? What documentation does the AEA possess to support that 60% of districts in the AEA or districts with 60% of AEA enrollment have requested such service for a fee?
- Why did cabinet member salaries drastically increase from SFY17 to SFY18 when the AEA was having financial difficulties?
- What is going well right now for the MBAEA?
- What are the three biggest challenges?

School Improvement Administrator

- Please describe the MBAEA's administrative structure.
- What are the AEA's priorities for general school improvement services?

- What do your data show about the outcomes of students with IEPs, compared with the general population? Outcomes for students of color? Outcomes for ELs?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation for school improvement efforts? What data do you use? What subgroup data (e.g., EL, IEP)?
- What efforts are underway to improve effectiveness of universal instruction across the AEA? How have these efforts affected referral and identification rates for special education?
- Is the AEA's MTSS model aligned with the state's MTSS materials?
- How does the AEA help schools: 1) assess the needs of all students, 2) develop relationships among community agencies, 3) establish shared direction, and 4) meet their goals?
- What does the AEA do to address diverse learning needs, including: 1) gifted and talented, 2) students with disabilities, and 3) ELs? How does MTSS support these efforts?
- How does the AEA deliver services that develop leadership based on the Iowa Standards for Administrators?
- How does the AEA develop and deliver leadership programs based on local and state educational needs and best practices?
- With which districts do you have disproportionality concerns? What have you done to address disproportionality?
- How is information regarding finances communicated to Board members, superintendents, and the public?
- How does the AEA ensure funds are spent appropriately?
- What led to the AEA's current budget deficit?
- The AEA has been deficit spending for several years. At what point were you aware of the budget deficit? What actions has the AEA taken?
- What specific items will you need to cut from your budget to meet the State Board's requirement to balance your budget in two years?
- Do you have concerns about meeting the needs of your districts given your budget constraints? Why or why not?
- What is going well right now for the MBAEA? What are the biggest challenges?
- Is there anything you would like to tell us that we did not ask you about?

Social Workers

- What does the AEA do to support all employees in working effectively with diverse learners?
- Describe the Special Education Administrator's role with the Building Collaboration Team Leads.
- What role, if any, do the building collaboration teams have in the Child Find process?
- What is the Special Education Administrator's role in ensuring that each child requiring special education in the area receives an appropriate special education program or service?
- Describe the Child Find process. What role do districts/AEAs play in the Child Find process?
- What are the strengths and challenges of the current Child Find process?
- Does the AEA have a problem with disproportionality? What has the AEA done to support you to address disproportionality?
- What does the AEA/district's data indicate regarding LRE for early childhood?
- Who provides services when an AEA provider is absent or out on extended leave?
- What is going well right now for the MBAEA?

- What are the biggest challenges?

Educational Services Director

- Please describe your administrative structure.
- What are the AEA's priorities for general school improvement services?
- What do your data show about the outcomes of students with IEPs, compared with the general population? Outcomes for students of color? Outcomes for ELs?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation for school improvement efforts? What data do you use? What subgroup data (e.g., EL, IEP)?
- What efforts are underway to improve effectiveness of universal instruction across the AEA? How have these efforts affected referral and identification rates for special education?
- Is the AEA's MTSS model aligned with the state's MTSS materials?
- How does the AEA help schools: 1) assess the needs of all students, 2) develop relationships among community agencies, 3) establish shared direction, and 4) meet their goals?
- What does the AEA do to address diverse learning needs, including: 1) gifted and talented, 2) students with disabilities, and 3) ELs? How does MTSS support these efforts?
- How does the AEA deliver services that develop leadership based on the Iowa Standards for Administrators?
- With which districts do you have disproportionality concerns? What have you done to address disproportionality?
- How is information regarding finances communicated to Board members, superintendents, and the public?
- How does the AEA ensure funds are spent appropriately?
- What led to the AEA's current budget deficit?
- The AEA has been deficit spending for several years. At what point were you aware of the budget deficit? What actions has the AEA taken?
- What specific items will you need to cut from your budget to meet the State Board's requirement to balance your budget in two years?
- Preliminary staff reporting for 2018-19 show decreases in total staff of approximately 50 FTE, most of whom are certified staff. Where exactly are these cuts being made?
- Do you have concerns about meeting the needs of your districts given your budget constraints? Why or why not?
- What is going well right now for the MBAEA?
- What are the biggest challenges?
- Is there anything you would like to tell us that we did not ask you about?

School Psychologists and SLPs

- What does the AEA do to support all employees in working effectively with diverse learners?
- Describe the Special Education Administrator's role with the Building Collaboration Team Leads.
- What role, if any, do the building collaboration teams have in the Child Find process?
- What is the Special Education Administrator's role in ensuring that each child requiring special education in the area receives an appropriate special education program or service?
- Describe the Child Find process. What role do districts/AEAs play in the Child Find process?

- What are the strengths and challenges of the current Child Find process?
- Does the AEA have a problem with disproportionality? What has the AEA done to support you to address disproportionality?
- What does the AEA/district's data indicate regarding LRE for early childhood?
- Who provides services when an AEA provider is absent or out on extended leave?

Early ACCESS Staff

- Please give us an overview of the early ACCESS/early childhood programs.
- How does the AEA assist early ACCESS personnel in developing collaborative relationships with signatory partners and community agencies?
- How does the AEA ensure that early intervention services are being implemented correctly and appropriately?
- To what extent are knowledgeable and skilled personnel available to provide early intervention services in a timely manner throughout the AEA?
- How does the AEA ensure that personnel who provide early ACCESS services receive professional development that enables them to implement evidence-based interventions to enhance children's progress?
- What steps are taken to ensure that early ACCESS services are having a positive impact on families?
- What is the process for ensuring an effective transition from early ACCESS to other services and/or Part B special education services?
- What support does the Agency provide to build service provider's capacity to serve diverse populations, including families in poverty?

General Education School Improvement Staff

- Please describe your role in the AEA. Approximately how much time do you spend in the districts?
- What are the AEA's priorities regarding general school improvement?
- What is your role as it pertains to supporting special education needs? EL needs? Other diverse learner groups?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation (e.g. staffing across districts)?
- What data do you use for planning and providing services to schools? Does it include subgroup data (e.g., EL, IEP, etc.)?
- Describe your collaboration with the Special Education Director.
- What do you do when you have evidence that a district you work with is not following the law related to special/general education?
- With which districts do you have disproportionality concerns? What have you done to address disproportionality?
- Is the AEA's MTSS model aligned with the state's MTSS materials?
- Do you have the necessary resources to provide adequate services for the schools you serve?

AEA Paraeducators

- Please tell us your name, the number of students with you work with, where you are located (building), and how long you have worked with the AEA.
- What does a typical day look like for you?

- How are placement decisions made? If students attend specific programs/locations, are there general assumptions about the services the student will receive (e.g., pull out music, PE)?
- What is the process that is used to change services if it is identified that what you are doing is not working for the individual? Who makes that decision and what data are reviewed in the process?
- What is the process for deciding what behavioral supports a learner needs? How are those supports provided and monitored?
- What are the discipline processes used when student behaviors escalate to the level that they are a distraction in the classroom?
- What are the AEA's greatest strengths and challenges in providing education services?
- Do you work with ELs and immigrant students? If so, do you feel equipped to do so?

Special Education/Early Childhood Staff

- Please describe your administrative structure, including how early childhood decisions are made.
- Please give us an overview of the early childhood programs.
- What AEA supports and services are provided for students with IEPs in districts/schools? How does the AEA assist districts to ensure students have access to the curriculum?
- How do you determine allocation of special education/early childhood resources to buildings and programs?
- What is the process the AEA uses with districts to change services if it is identified that the services being provided are not working for the individual? If amendments are used, are they typically made with or without a meeting?
- How does the IEP Team determine that preschool children are receiving special education instructional and support services in general education classrooms in conformity with LRE?
- What processes does the AEA use to ensure the services identified in the IEP are provided? What process would a teacher, parent, or other IEP team member follow if services were not being provided?
- What is the process for working with a student with challenging behaviors? Who has primary responsibility for writing a FBA/BIP?
- What is the process for ensuring an effective transition from early ACCESS to other services and/or Part B special education services?
- Describe your relationship with the LEAs. How do you work together? How do you see the AEA and LEA relationship in the next year?

Principals

- Introduce yourself. Describe your relationship with the AEA. How do you work together?
- What services do you primarily rely upon the AEA for (e.g., services for students with disabilities, professional development, media services)?
- How frequently do you use the AEA for professional development? On what topics?
- What do you see as the most important things to attend to in special education from a building principal's role?
- How is the allocation of special education resources determined in your buildings and/or programs?
- How do you stay up-to-date on special education requirements and changes?
- Describe the process you use if a special education issue or concern arises in your building and you need additional information or support to address it.

- How does the AEA deliver services that develop leadership based on the Iowa Standards for Administrators?
- How does the AEA work with you to determine your needs and the evidence-based practices that you may wish to implement?
- What role does AEA special education administration play in deciding services for individual students?
- How does professional development prepare all staff to address the needs of students with IEPs?
- Have you seen any changes in the services offered/provided by the AEA in the past three years? How have they affected FAPE for students with disabilities? Have they affected services to ELs?
- Describe your relationship with the AEA in regard to ELs and services provided.
- Does your building use seclusion and/or restraint for any students with IEPs? Without IEPs? If so, describe your procedures and training that staff receive who implement these practices. How do you know if these practices are successful?
- Are there programs or courses in your school that reflect primarily male or female participation/enrollment? Reflect over/under-representation of minority students? Over or under-representation of students with IEPs?
- Do you have issues with disproportionate representation of students of color in special education? Disproportionate rates of discipline for students of color? If so, what have you done to address the disproportionality?
- What services are you receiving from the AEA that are going well? What are your challenges, if any?

Board Members

- What are the AEA's current vision, mission, and goals? How does the Board maintain focus on the Agency's goals?
- How does the AEA Board develop its goals?
- What do your data show about the outcomes of students with IEPs, compared with the general population? What about outcomes for students of color?
- Has the Board ever discussed disproportionate representation of students of color in special education? Disproportionate disciplinary action for students of color?
- What role does the Board have in overseeing compliance with special education for the area districts?
- How are you informed as a Board member about compliance with special education?
- How does the AEA support districts with ELs and immigrant students?
- When did the Board last evaluate the Chief Administrator?
- How frequently does the Board meet? What topics do you discuss?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation (e.g., staffing across districts)?
- How does the AEA Board ensure funds are spent appropriately?
- When did you become aware that the AEA was spending more money than it was taking in? (*Show graph since 2012*) How were you made aware or why were not you made aware sooner?
- The AEA has been deficit spending for several years. What actions did the Board take to improve the deficit?
- Why did the Board approve the deficit budget for multiple years in a row? Are you aware that it is not permissible by Iowa Code for an AEA to overspend?
- Why did cabinet member salaries drastically increase from SFY17 to SFY18 when the AEA was having financial difficulties?

- Who is the Board Treasurer?
- MBAEA Board Policy 202.5 states that the Board Treasurer "will be appointed by the Board for a one-year term at the organization/annual meeting." When did this appointment occur? Why is Ed Gronlund listed as the Board Treasurer in the Board minutes for all of 2018?

Superintendents

- Please introduce yourself. Describe your relationship with the AEA. How do you work together?
- What services do you primarily rely upon the AEA for (e.g., services for students with disabilities, professional development, media services)?
- How frequently do you use the AEA for professional development? On what topics?
- How does the AEA work with you to determine your needs and the evidence-based practices that you may wish to implement?
- Have you seen any changes in the services offered/provided by the AEA in the past three years? How have they affected FAPE for students with disabilities? How have they affected services to ELs?
- How does the AEA provide oversight for special education compliance?
- How does the AEA deliver services that develop leadership based on the Iowa Standards for Administrators?
- Do you have issues in your district with disproportionate representation of students of color in special education? Disproportionate rates of discipline for students of color? If so, what have you done to address the disproportionality?
- Are you aware (or when did you become aware) that the AEA has been spending more money than it is taking in? (*Show graph since 2012*) How were you made aware?
- Are you aware that the AEA is required by the State Board to balance their budget by the end of the 2019-2020 school year?
- Do you have concerns about the AEA's financial situation?
- Are there services to students the AEA provides that you cannot effectively operate without? What are they?
- What services are you receiving from the AEA that are going well? What are your challenges, if any?

LEA Special Education Directors

- How does the AEA address its General Supervision responsibilities? What role does the Special Education Administrator play?
- Please describe services offered/provided by the AEA in the past three years. Has the decrease in direct services impacted FAPE for students?
- Describe the Child Find process. What role do districts/AEAs play in the Child Find process?
- What are the strengths and challenges of the current Child Find process?
- Describe how preschool services are provided. What is the role of the AEA in providing these?
- Describe the Special Education Administrator's role with the Building Collaboration Team Leads. How often do you meet with them?
- Describe the process you use if a special education issue or concern arises in your building and you need additional information or support to address it.
- What do your data indicate regarding disproportionality in your district? What has the AEA done to support you to address disproportionality?

Curriculum Directors

- What services do you primarily rely upon the AEA for (e.g., services for students with disabilities, professional development, media services)?
- How frequently do you use the AEA for professional development? On what topics?
- What are the most important curriculum supports provided by the AEA?
- How are the ELP standards and curricular support for ELs used in your work? Is support provided by the AEA?
- How do you stay up-to-date on special education requirements and changes?
- Describe the process you use if a special education issue or concern arises in your building and you need additional information or support to address it.
- How does the AEA deliver services that develop leadership based on the Iowa Standards for Administrators?
- How does the AEA work with you to determine your needs and the evidence-based practices that you may wish to implement?
- What role does AEA special education administration play in deciding services for individual students?
- How does professional development prepare all staff to address the needs of students with IEPs?
- Have you seen any changes in the services offered/provided by the AEA in the past three years? How have they affected FAPE for students with disabilities? Have they affected services to ELs?
- Are there programs or courses or in your schools that reflect primarily male or female participation/enrollment? Reflect over/under-representation of minority students? Over or under-representation of students with IEPs?
- Do you have issues in your district with disproportionate representation of students of color in special education? Disproportionate rates of discipline for students of color? If so, what have you done to address the disproportionality?

Student Service Lead

- Describe the role of a Student Service Lead (SSL). How long has this role existed?
- What supports have you been given to serve this role?
- How was the role of the SSL communicated to AEA staff and districts?
- What are your observations about the effect of having SSLs?
- How were the districts you serve identified? What is the process for districts that do not have an SSL assigned to them?
- What professional learning opportunities does the AEA offer to special education teachers? How does that compare to what was provided five years ago?
- Please describe the AEA's processes for General Supervision. What role do SSLs play?
- It is clear that AEA staff are committed to doing their best to ensure quality services continue to be provided during your budget shortfalls. How do you think districts, parents, and students view the services they receive?
- What does the AEA do in providing services ages three to five?

Nonpublic Principals

- What services do you primarily rely upon the AEA for (e.g., services for students with disabilities, professional development, media services)?
- How frequently do you use the AEA for professional development? On what topics?

- What do you see as the most important things to attend to in special education from a building principal's role?
- How is the allocation of special education resources determined in your buildings and/or programs?
- How do you stay up-to-date on special education requirements and changes?
- Describe the process you use if a special education issue or concern arises in your building and you need additional information or support to address it.
- How does the AEA deliver services that develop leadership based on the Iowa Standards for Administrators?
- How does the AEA work with you to determine your needs and the evidence-based practices that you may wish to implement?
- What role does AEA special education administration play in deciding services for individual students?
- How does professional development prepare all staff to address the needs of students with IEPs?
- Have you seen any changes in the services offered/provided by the AEA in the past three years? How have they affected FAPE for students with disabilities? Have they affected services to ELs?
- Describe your relationship with the AEA in regard to ELs and services provided.
- Does your building use seclusion and/or restraint for any students with IEPs? Without IEPs? If so, describe your procedures and training that staff receive who implement these practices. How do you know if these practices are successful?
- Are there programs or courses in your school that reflect primarily male or female participation/enrollment? Reflect over/under-representation of minority students? Over or under-representation of students with IEPs?
- Do you have issues with disproportionate representation of students of color in special education? Disproportionate rates of discipline for students of color? If so, what have you done to address the disproportionality?

Special Education Teachers

- Please tell us your name, your district, what you teach, and the length of time that you have been with the district.
- Describe the AEA services you have received over the past five years.
- Describe the Child Find process. What role do districts/AEAs play in the Child Find process?
- Do you meet with the building collaboration teams? Describe their role and how they support you.
- What do your data tell you about disproportionality in your district/school? What has the AEA done to support you to address disproportionality?
- Describe how you address challenging behaviors in your classroom, school, and district. What role does the AEA play?
- Does the AEA provide direct services to any of your students? Who provides those services when an AEA provider is absent or out on extended leave?
- What professional learning opportunities does the AEA offer to special education teachers? How does that compare to what was provided five years ago?

Focus Area Consultant

- Please describe your role at the AEA.
- What services does the Center offer to school districts and nonpublic schools? How did the AEA determine that these services were necessary and useful to districts and nonpublic schools?

- How does is the budget for the Center created in collaboration with other AEAs? How is the Center staffed?
- How does the AEA communicate these services to school districts and nonpublic schools?
- How does the AEA receive feedback from school districts and nonpublic schools regarding center services? What feedback have you received?
- What data is used to guide Center services?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation (e.g. staffing across districts)? What changes have there been to this process in the last five years?
- How do you support districts whose data indicates inequities for some student groups, such as achievement gaps or disproportionality?
- What Center services are provided to students, families, and community members who do not speak English?
- Have you reported information to the MBAEA Board on the Center? If so, when and what did you report? What was the Board response?

Special Education Consultants

- What services does the AEA offer to school districts and nonpublic schools? How did the AEA determine that these services were necessary and useful to districts and nonpublic schools?
- How does the AEA communicate these services to school districts and nonpublic schools?
- How does the AEA receive feedback from school districts and nonpublic schools regarding services? What feedback have you received?
- What data are used to guide AEA services?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation (e.g. staffing across districts)? What changes have there been to this process in the last five years?
- How do you support districts whose data indicates inequities for some student groups, such as achievement gaps or disproportionality?

Challenging Behavior Team

- What are the discipline processes used when student behaviors escalate to the level that they are a distraction in the classroom?
- What are the procedures you follow for implementing seclusion and restraint practices? How do you know if those practices are successful for a student?
- What is the process for working with a student with challenging behaviors? Who has primary responsibility for writing a FBA/BIP?
- Who implements the BIP and how is it revised if it is not working?
- How do people access the AEA's Challenging Behavior Team?
- Please describe how a district works with the AEA's Challenging Behavior Team.
- Describe the AEAs approach to equity in student discipline?
- How is overrepresentation of student subgroups addressed?
- How do you address districts with disparities in student subgroup discipline data?

Coordinator of Student Services

- Please describe your role in the AEA and specifically with Juvenile Detention and Home School Assistance.

- What are MBAEA's goals? How do you track your progress toward those goals?
- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation (e.g. staffing across districts)?
- How does the AEA determine what additional services are offered to the districts (e.g., driver's education, home school assistance program)?
- How does MBAEA communicate these services to school districts and nonpublic schools?
- Have you reported information to the MBAEA Board on student programs? If so, when and what did you report? What was the Board response?
- Please discuss the achievement gaps of subgroup populations and how the AEA is addressing those gaps.
- What are the AEA priorities for ELs?
- How does the AEA communicate with families and community members who do not speak English?
- What data do you use regularly in your role to determine if equity exists for all student groups?

Coordinator of Teacher Leadership

- What is the decision-making process for AEA resource allocation (e.g. staffing across districts)?
- What are MBAEA's goals? How do you track your progress toward those goals?
- How does MBAEA communicate services to school districts and nonpublic schools?
- Have you reported information to the MBAEA Board on teacher leadership services? If so, when and what did you report? What was the Board response?
- Please discuss the achievement gaps of subgroup populations and how the AEA is addressing those gaps.
- What are the AEA priorities for ELs?
- How does the AEA communicate with families and community members who do not speak English?
- What data do you use regularly in your role to determine if equity exists for all student groups?

Parents

- How has the AEA worked with you and your child?
- On a scale from one (low) to five (high) rate the AEA services. Why did you rate them this way?
- On a scale from one (low) to five (high) rate the communication from the AEA. Why did you rate them this way?
- What are the strengths of the AEA?
- What are the challenges of the AEA?
- What, if any, changes in AEA services have you seen over the past five years?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about support from or work with the AEA?

Appendix C: Documents and Information Reviewed

The Accreditation Team requested several documents prior to the site visit, including:

1. A list of Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), Occupational Therapists (OTs), Physical Therapists (PTs), TODs, Audiologists, including FTEs and their rosters and building assignments.
2. Work experience transition staff job descriptions, FTE, building assignments, any direct services provided.
3. Challenging behavior team job descriptions, FTE, building assignments, any direct services provided.
4. Staff building assignments in general.
5. A list of any direct service providers who have been out on leave for two weeks or more in the last year.
6. A list of AEA-level mediation events for past three years, including the topic and resolution.
7. A list of professional learning provided to AEA staff on any special education topic for last three years.
8. A list of professional learning opportunities on special education topics provided to districts over the past three years.
9. Policy and training provided to AEA staff regarding general supervision responsibilities for the last three years.
10. A list of English Language consultants, their FTEs, district assignments, method of assigning responsibilities, and other responsibilities.
11. A list of IDEA Part C home interventionists and service coordinators.
12. A list of professional learning provided to districts on serving English Learners in the past three years, along with list of district attendees.

Appendix D: Excerpts from MBAEA Board Meeting Minutes and Independent Auditor Reports

The following meeting minutes and independent audit report passages are only excerpts of the full documents. To access the full documents, see the References at the end of the report.

June 30, 2012: MBAEA Independent Auditor Report³

2012 Financial Highlights (p.4)

- General Fund revenues decreased from \$36,002,419 in fiscal year 2011 (FY11) to \$32,128,067 in fiscal year 2012 (FY12), while General Fund expenditures decreased from \$33,740,665 in FY11 to \$32,186,761 in FY12. This resulted in a decrease of the Agency's General Fund balance from \$9,501,014 in FY11 to \$9,124,769 in FY12, a 4.1% decrease from the prior year.
- The decrease in General Fund revenues was attributable to a \$20 million State Cut to all AEA's. AEA 9's portion of this cut was \$2,031,506. The decrease in expenditures can be attributed to a freeze on all AEA 9 employee salaries in FY12, as well as a five-day cut on all employee contracts.
- The Agency's self-insured medical insurance program continued to experience favorable claim costs. The Agency was able to maintain a minimum balance at \$1,500,000. The claims reserve balance at June 30, 2012 was \$1,862,665.
- The State of Iowa combined its Teacher Quality funding and Accreditation Funding into Teacher Salary Supplement funding in FY09. AEA 9's portion in FY12 amounted to \$1,263,446. The State of Iowa also provided \$104,240 for professional development in FY12.

Certificates of Participation (pp. 27-28)

On May 1, 2005, the Agency issued \$4,660,000 of Refunding Certificates of Participation, Series 2005A, with interest rates ranging from 3.60% to 4.45%, for various project costs and a crossover refunding of the Series 1997 Certificates of Participation issued July 1, 1997. The Agency entered into an escrow agreement whereby a portion of the proceeds of the refunding certificates of participation along with additional cash were placed in an escrow account for the purpose of paying the principal and interest on the refunded certificates of participation when they are subject to optional redemption in whole or in part on May 1, 2008. \$1,500,000 of the proceeds were placed into a construction fund to pay for various project costs. The transactions, balances and liabilities of the escrow account are recorded by the Agency since the refunded debt is not considered extinguished. Annual debt service requirements to maturity of the refunding certificates of participation are as follows:

Year Ending June 30	Principal	Interest	Total
2013	\$160,000	\$156,545	\$316,545
2014	\$170,000	\$150,345	\$320,345
2015	\$220,000	\$143,758	\$363,758
2016	\$230,000	\$135,068	\$365,068
2017	\$240,000	\$126	\$365,867
2018-2022	\$1,345,000	\$471,717	\$1,816,717

Year Ending June 30	Principal	Interest	Total
2023-2025	\$1,325,000	\$135,350	\$1,460,350
Total	\$3,690,000	\$1,318,650	\$5,008,650

June 30, 2013: MBAEA Independent Audit Report⁴

2013 Financial Highlights (p. 4)

- General Fund revenues increased from \$32,128,067 in fiscal year 2012 (FY12) to \$32,691,722 in fiscal year 2013 (FY13), while General Fund expenditures increased from \$32,186,761 in FY12 to \$34,761,296 in FY13. This resulted in a decrease of the Agency's General Fund balance from \$9,124,769 in FY12 to \$5,540,982 in FY13, a 39.3% decrease from the prior year.
- The increase in General fund revenues can be attributed to the 2% Allowable Growth on new money in FY12-13, as well as new contracts with local education agencies to provide additional services within the Hearing Interpreter program. The increase in General fund expenditures is a direct result of a 4% salary package increase to all AEA 9 employees as well as \$1,703,179 in expenses spent on construction projects and repairs and maintenance at the Bettendorf office location.
- The Agency's self-insured medical insurance program continued to experience favorable claim costs. The Agency was able to maintain a minimum balance at \$1,500,000. The claims reserve balance at June 30, 2013 was \$1,841,783.
- The State of Iowa combined its Teacher Quality funding and Accreditation Funding into Teacher Salary Supplement funding in FY09. AEA 9's portion in FY13 amounted to \$1,275,304. The State of Iowa also provided \$105,143 for professional development in FY13.

October 10, 2013: MBAEA Special Board Meeting⁵

Resolution Authorizing Issuance of Taxable Warrants in an Amount Not to Exceed \$1,000,000 in Anticipation of Receipt of General Fund Monies (p. 1)

Upon motion by Richard Kissack, seconded by Joe Adam, the Board approved the resolution authorizing issuance of taxable warrants in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 in anticipation of receipt of general fund monies, as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Adam, Masterson, Kissack, Krueger, Johanson. No (0). Motion carried.

May 14, 2014: MBAEA Board Meeting⁶

Chief Administrator's Report (p. 2)

Board considered the elimination and termination of the Assistant Director of Integrated Services for reasons discussed today. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Masterson, Kissack, Krueger, Johanson, Wold. No (0). Motion carried.

June 11, 2014: MBAEA Board Meeting⁷

Chief Administrator's Report (p. 1)

Bill Decker stated that the four new focus area coordinators will be attending the statewide Launching Teacher Leadership presentation.

June 30, 2014: MBAEA Independent Auditor's Report⁸

2014 Financial Highlights (p. 5)

- General Fund revenues increased from \$32,691,722 in fiscal year 2013 (FY13) to \$34,128,901 in fiscal year 2014 (FY14), while General Fund expenditures increased from \$34,761,296 in FY13 to \$35,762,581 in FY14. There was an overall decrease of the Agency's General Fund balance from \$5,540,982 in FY13 to \$3,588,274 in FY14, a 35.2% decrease from the prior year.
- The increase in General fund revenues can be attributed to the 4% Allowable Growth on new money in FY13-14 as well as the use of \$1,225,000 of AEA 9's Part B 611 carryover federal funds. The increase in General fund expenditures is a direct result of a 4.32% salary package increase to all AEA 9 employees.
- The Agency's self-insured medical insurance program continued to experience favorable claim costs. The Agency was able to maintain a minimum balance at \$874,659. The claims reserve balance at June 30, 2014 was \$1,275,297.
- The State of Iowa combined its Teacher Quality funding and Accreditation Funding into Teacher Salary Supplement funding in FY09. AEA 9's portion in FY14 amounted to \$1,294,158. The State of Iowa also provided \$151,897 for professional development in FY14.

Note 3 – Anticipatory Warrants (p. 26)

During the year ended June 30, 2014, the Agency issued \$1,000,000 of anticipatory warrants, at 3.25% interest per annum, resulting in interest paid of \$3,160 on the warrants. As of June 30, 2014, \$1,000,000 of those anticipatory warrants had been redeemed, leaving an unpaid balance at June 30, 2014 of \$-0-.

August 13, 2014: MBAEA Board Meeting⁹

Resolution Authorizing Issuance of Taxable Warrants in an Amount Not to Exceed \$4,000,000 in Anticipation of Receipt of General Fund Monies (p. 1)

Upon motion by Dick Wold, seconded by Joe Adam, the Board approved the resolution authorizing issuance of taxable warrants in an amount not to exceed \$4,000,000 in anticipation of receipt of general fund monies, as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Masterson, Kissack, Krueger, Krumwiede, Wold. No (0). Motion carried.

September 10, 2014: MBAEA Board Meeting¹⁰

Chief Administrator's Report (p. 1)

William Decker recapped the history of the potential relocation of the Clinton satellite office. Upon motion by Dick Wold, seconded by Joe Adam, the recommendation to approve the purchase of real estate for the offering price of \$525,000, located at 2001 Manufacturing Court, in Clinton, Iowa, was approved.

October 15, 2014: MBAEA Board Hearing, Annual Meeting, Regular Board Meeting/Retreat¹¹

BOARD HEARING (P. 1)

Board President Krueger convened the Board Hearing for the Authorization and Entering into Lease Purchase Agreements and Issuance of Certificates of Participation at 11:51 a.m.

The Board investigated and found that the notice of the Agency's proposal to enter into a lease purchase agreement (the "Lease Purchase Agreement") in a principal amount not to exceed \$4,450,000 and to sell and issue Certificates of Participation (the "Certificates"), evidencing an interest therein had been duly published as provided by law and that this is the time and place at which the Board shall receive oral or written objections from any resident or property owner of the Agency.

Board Secretary Cheryl Oake announced that no written objections had been previously filed; the Board President called for any oral or written objections from any resident or property owner of the Agency and there were none.

Upon motion by Rex Masterson, seconded by Joe Adam, Board President Krueger closed the Hearing at 11:54 a.m.

BOARD MEETING

Consideration and Approval of Resolution Authorizing Issuance of Certificates of Participation, Series 2014, and Authorizing and Approving Lease Purchase Agreement, Trust Agreement, and Ground Lease (p. 2)

Upon motion by Joe Adam, seconded by Richard Kissack, the Board approved the resolution authorizing issuance of Certificates of Participation, Series 2014, and authorizing and approving Lease Purchase Agreement, Trust Agreement, and Ground Lease. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Masterson, Kissack, Krueger, Krumwiede, Johanson. No (0). Motion carried.

Consideration and Approval of Resolution Related to Adoption of Tax-Exempt Bond Compliant Procedures (p. 2)

Upon motion by Ken Krumwiede, seconded by Rex Masterson, the Board approved the resolution related to Adoption of Tax-Exempt Bond Compliant Procedures. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Masterson, Kissack, Krueger, Krumwiede, Johanson. No (0). Motion carried.

William Decker stated that as a result of moving from two Executive Directors, and an Assistant to the Executive Director, to having just one Executive Director, many additional duties have been placed on Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund. William Decker recommended the Board appoint Paula Carter as Board Treasurer. Upon motion by Richard Kissack, seconded by Joe Adam, the Board appointed Paula Carter as Board Treasurer: Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Masterson, Kissack, Krueger, Krumwiede, Johanson. No (0). Motion carried. The oath of office was administered.

November 12, 2014: MBAEA Regular Board Meeting¹²

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Paula Carter reported that the first quarter payment on federal grants has been received, as well as payment for the Certificates of Participation for the refinance and building purchase in Clinton. Upon motion by William Koellner, seconded by Richard Kissack, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to October 31, 2014, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Masterson, Kissack, Koellner, Krueger, Krumwiede. No (0). Motion carried.

Chief Administrator's Report (p. 1)

William Decker updated the Board on the Clinton satellite office; including acquisition of the building, status of renovations, and a potential timeline of moving Agency staff to the new location and exiting the Clinton County Administration building. Mr. Decker also reported that press releases were sent to all Clinton and Jackson County/Sector I newspapers on November 11, 2014.

January 14, 2015: MBAEA Board Meeting¹³

Board and Committee Reports

Board Treasurer Paula Carter reported that a payment of \$1.5 million was made in December, 2014, on the August, 2014, Anticipatory Warrant.

Upon motion by Scott Saveraid, seconded by William Koellner, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to December 31, 2014, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Krueger, Kissack, Koellner, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

February 11, 2015: MBAEA Budget Hearing, Regular Board Meeting, and Board Retreat¹⁴

PUBLIC HEARING

Board President Rex Masterson convened the Public Hearing on the Proposed 2015-2016 Budget at 12:00 p.m. Board Treasurer Paula Carter presented the 2014 actual budget, re-estimation of the 2015 budget, and projected estimated budget for 2016.

Upon motion by Joe Adam, seconded by Dick Wold, the Board approved the Proposed 2015-2016 Budget as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Johanson, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

Upon motion by Ken Krumwiede, seconded by Robin Krueger, the Public Hearing was concluded at approximately 12:03 p.m. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Johanson, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

BOARD MEETING

Board and Committee Reports

Upon motion by Richard Kissack, seconded by Joe Adam, the Board approved and adopted the resolution authorizing the issuance of taxable anticipatory warrants in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000 upon the general fund of the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency, as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Johanson, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

March 11, 2015: MBAEA Public Hearing and Board Meeting¹⁵

BOARD MEETING

Board and Committee Reports (p. 2)

Board Treasurer Paula Carter reported that a draw of \$1,000,000 has been made to the \$2,000,000 Anticipatory Warrant approved at the February 11, 2015.

April 8, 2015: MBAEA Board Meeting¹⁶

Chief Administrator Report (pp. 1-2)

Mr. Decker reported that at the same time, over the course of this year, a group of Agency speech-language pathologists (SLPs) were meeting to address concerns with their high caseloads, being understaffed, Agency's financial situation, and the funding from the legislature not conducive to adding more SLPs. In order to make themselves more effective, the group of SLPs brought a recommendation to Administrative Cabinet to address their concerns. Mr. Decker reported that they came up with the same thing as the administrative conversation about how to be more economical and still be more effective at the same time. The result of both of those conversations was that operating in a sector-based organizational pattern gets in the way of the Agency being as effective as it can be. It creates artificial walls around geographic areas and that segments services, and when we segment services we are not able to fully utilize those different people and different services. Mr. Decker reported that at the May 13, 2015, Board Retreat he will be presenting to the Board a plan for working to not operate in a sector-based scenario. Mr. Decker explained that the goals of the Agency are going to be the same as they have been; they are probably going to be able to be delivered upon stronger than in the past. The guiding concepts of the AEA Compact are still going to be what drives the Agency. The Focus Area Teams and Building Collaboration Teams in each district and in each school building will be stronger as the Agency moves this way and will be supported at a stronger level. Mr. Decker further explained that the benefit will also be a reduction of administrative costs between \$100,000 - 200,000. That is the equivalent of, administratively, being able to keep between 1 and 3 FTE staff in the field and at the same time be more effective administratively in delivering on the AEA Compact. Mr. Decker shared that the main staff impacted by this conversation are the four Sector Coordinators and that he and Dr. Gronlund have had conversations with the Sector Coordinators and they will be offered positions within the Agency, but they will not be at the same level of leadership. Mr. Decker indicated there will be a couple of leadership positions created and the Sector Coordinators certainly will be candidates, if they choose to be.

May 13, 2015: MBAEA Board Meeting and Board Retreat¹⁷

Chief Administrator's Report (pp. 2-3)

Mr. Decker discussed the organizational redesign and the next layer of continuous improvement. The motivation for the redesign comes from a financial perspective and an alignment of our people, our resources, and our processes to continue to let us serve in the field at a higher level. Mr. Decker stated that just like every educational institution in the state that receives public funding, the Agency will receive less new money this year than it will take to open the doors next year. That financial incentive has us look at how we adjust ourselves so we can become more effective even though we have less resources. Mr. Decker recapped his report from the April 8, 2015, Board meeting, reviewing the process Kim Hofmann led with a cross section of speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to address their concerns of high caseloads, being understaffed, and the financial situation not conducive to adding additional SLPs. The result of their study was that the Agency should not work in a sector-based environment; when SLPs are isolated by sector, it limits capacity and we are not as productive as we can be. Mr. Decker shared that Administrative Cabinet looked at the scenario of Early Childhood, Low Incidence, and the Challenging Behavior Team all operating without sector lines and are all strong, growing programs. Mr. Decker further explained that our entire AEA, geographically, isn't any larger than some of the regions in other AEAs. The recommendation of the SLPs, and the recommendations of Administrative Cabinet, led us to know we can gain efficiency and improve services without operating in a sector mentality. The sector coordinator is based on geography and has little impact on literacy and MTSS. The piece that it does have impact is on relationships with schools. And yet as you looked at the list of responsibilities that a sector coordinator had, that was maybe the responsibility that really did need to be based on geography because you had to have someone close enough to be in contact and close enough to develop a relationship but that wasn't necessarily the sole responsibility of the sector coordinator. The decision to make the recommendation to move away from sectors then caused that job shift; spending less money on coordinators and replacing them with lead positions and giving them an individual responsibility of relationships that are based on geography and making that their prime responsibility. The net effect of that, in comparing this year's costs to the same positions at this year's salaries, is a savings of \$152,000; roughly 2 FTE, depending on the position. Two people that would have otherwise probably been lost to attrition that now will be hired back because of the savings. In addition to that, administrative positions were replaced with positions that their sole responsibility is in the field—saving dollars, having more licensed staff in the field, and having administrators more in touch with the buildings and their needs.

Mr. Decker defined the duties of the sector coordinator in three levels: 1) high-level strategic conflict resolution issues (mediations, staff assignments), 2) middle-level duties (working with IEPS, resolving paperwork issues, compliance), and 3) being an ambassador—knowing what is going on in districts and being available in districts. Mr. Decker stated that Kim Hofmann will now be handling the upper level duties for the entire Agency; i.e., conflict resolution, mediation (whether that's internal/external, parents, employees, school staff, or some combination thereof). Mr. Decker reported that he expected an Assistant Coordinator of Special Education position will be posted. This Assistant Coordinator would work with Ms. Hofmann on the upper level duties and is included in the cost savings. The routine kinds of things are going to be handled by the Student Service Leads, formerly known as Sector Heads. This is a part of their current duties, but will be expanded as a bigger priority. The third level (PR piece) will be the responsibility of the Building Collaboration Team Leads (BCTL). Mr. Decker stated that interviews have begun for three BCTL positions and their sole responsibility will be to develop relationships with principals, superintendents, and Agency staff. The sector coordinator duties are going to be handled in ways that are more consistent, more efficient, and a financial savings.

Mr. Decker stated the organizational redesign is a structure that matches people, resources, and processes together and supports the seven areas the Agency is focusing on: literacy, numeracy, MTSS, student engagement, special education, early childhood, and teacher leadership.

June 10, 2015: MBAEA Board Meeting¹⁸

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Paula Carter reported that the Maximum Budget FY15 Estimate will be increased on next month's History of Expenditures to Budget from to \$38,635,405 to \$42,800,000 due to the building acquisition and reissuance of certificates; a re-estimate was submitted in February. Upon motion by Richard Kissack, seconded by Scott Saveraid,

the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to May 31, 2015, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Saveraid, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

Chief Administrator Report (p. 1)

William Decker provided an overview of the hiring process for the Building Collaboration Team Leaders (BCTLs). Mr. Decker stated that the recommendation to hire three highly-qualified individuals (Mark Bloom, Diane Campbell, and Tony Hiatt) is included in the consent agenda.

June 29, 2015: MBAEA Special Board Meeting¹⁹

Resolution Authorizing Issuance of Taxable Warrants in an Amount Not to Exceed \$7,000,000, in Anticipation of Receipt of General Fund Monies (p. 1)

June 30, 2015: MBAEA Independent Auditor's Report²⁰

2015 Financial Highlights (p. 5)

- General Fund revenues increased from \$34,128,901 in fiscal year 2014 (FY14) to \$34,197,266 in fiscal year 2015 (FY15), while General Fund expenditures increased from \$35,762,581 in FY14 to \$37,451,159 in FY15. There was an overall decrease of the Agency's General Fund balance from \$3,588,274 in FY14 to (\$101,423) in FY15, a 102.8% decrease from the prior year.
- The Agency's self-insured medical insurance program continued to experience favorable claim costs. The claims reserve balance at June 30, 2015 was \$790,565.
- The State of Iowa combined its Teacher Quality funding and Accreditation Funding into Teacher Salary Supplement funding in FY09. AEA 9's portion in FY15 amounted to \$1,345,530. The State of Iowa also provided \$110,823 for professional development in FY15.

Individual Fund Analysis (p. 10)

AEA 9 also had a 3.00% salary package increase to all agency employees in FY 15.

Note 3 – Anticipatory Warrants (p. 26)

During the year ended June 30, 2015, the Agency issued \$6,000,000 of anticipatory warrants, at 3.25% interest per annum, resulting in interest paid of \$59,313 on the warrants. As of June 30, 2015, \$6,000,000 of those anticipatory warrants had been redeemed, leaving an unpaid balance at June 30, 2015 of \$-0-.

Note 13 – Subsequent Event (p. 37)

On July 1, 2015, the Agency issued taxable anticipatory warrants in an amount not to exceed \$7,000,000 at a rate of 3.25%. The warrants mature on June 30, 2016.

July 8, 2015: MBAEA Board Meeting²¹

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Paula Carter stated that the \$2,000,000 Payment on Anticipatory Warrant in the Treasurer's Report was a payment on the FY 2014-2015 series; it is now paid in full. Edward Gronlund commented that the Governor's veto of the one-time portion of the spending bill will result in \$200,000 the Agency will not receive. Upon motion by William Koellner, seconded by Joe Adam, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to June 30, 2015, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Koellner, Saveraid, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

August 12, 2015: MBAEA Board Meeting and Board Retreat²²

Chief Administrator's Report (p. 4)

Mr. Decker reported that AEA 9 has hired David Ford, formerly Director of Guidance at Southeast Polk School District. Mr. Ford has done some amazing work with the National Student Clearinghouse, an organization that keeps track of enrollment in colleges and post-secondary opportunities across the nation. AEA 9 has negotiated a subscription with National Clearinghouse so all of our district's student records will be available to us and Mr. Ford can analyze the commonalities of student's school experiences (attendance, courses taken, how involved in activities) and what did they do after school and reporting that back. One of his biggest findings is the success rate of students taking four years of math (three years is required for graduation).

September 9, 2015: MBAEA Board Meeting²³

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Paula Carter reported that the fourth quarter federal funds payment has been received; this is the final payment for the last fiscal year. Ms. Carter also noted that they are still working on finalizing the budget; therefore, the FY16 percents are all set at 0. Upon motion by Joe Adam, seconded by Dick Wold, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to August 31, 2015, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

November 11, 2015: MBAEA Board Meeting²⁴

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Dr. Edward Gronlund reported that on October 5 the Agency received approximately \$1.2 million in special education flow through dollars; it is also reflected in the higher than normal bills for payment this month as that money is going directly back out to the schools. Dr. Gronlund further reported that the Agency also received approximately \$3.8 million in federal payments on October 9. Upon motion by Scott Saveraid, seconded by Dick Wold, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to October 31, 2015, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: (7) Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

December 9, 2015: MBAEA Board Meeting²⁵

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Dr. Edward Gronlund stated that a large portion of the expenses on the Treasurer's Report is special education flow through dollars to the local districts. Dr. Gronlund reported that the Agency will be applying for the second quarter payment of federal dollars in January and then begin the process of repaying the current warrants. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Joe Adam, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to November 30, 2015, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

January 13, 2016: MBAEA Board Meeting²⁶

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Dr. Edward Gronlund reported that there will be another payment of Part B Federal funds during the month of January and a repayment process will be started for the warrants. Dr. Gronlund reminded the Board that the Certified Budget Hearing will be held at the February 10, 2016, Board Retreat. Upon motion by Dick Wold, seconded by Scott Saveraid, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to December 31, 2015, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Duytschaver, Kissack, Krumwiede, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

February 10, 2016: MBAEA Public Budget Hearing, Board Meeting, and Board Retreat²⁷

PUBLIC HEARING (P. 1)

Board President Rex Masterson convened the Public Hearing on the Proposed 2016-2017 Budget at 11:55 a.m. Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund presented the 2015 actual budget, re-estimation of the 2016 budget, and projected estimated budget for 2017. Dr. Gronlund reported the figures in the Resources section, as provided by the Department of Education, reflect zero Supplemental State Aid (SSA) and does not include the Governor's proposed FY17 1.5 million dollar cut. If legislature moves on the proposed cut, the Resource numbers would be reduced by \$1.5 million and increased by the approved SSA.

President Masterson reported no members of the general public were present and no written objections were received by the Board Secretary. Upon motion by Joe Adam, seconded by Richard Kissack, the Board approved the Proposed 2016-2017 Budget as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

Upon motion by Ken Krumwiede, seconded by Robin Krueger, the Public Hearing was concluded at approximately 12:04 p.m. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried

BOARD MEETING

Board and Committee Reports

Treasurer's Report (p. 2)

Dr. Gronlund reported that the Federal payment from the state was received later than anticipated and the Agency will begin repaying the warrants starting in February. Dr. Gronlund further stated that due to the timing of these payments, and the Agency's cost recovery programs (e.g. hearing interpreters), a request to extend repayment of the warrants past June 30, as well as approval of a new set of warrants, will be requested at the May Board Meeting. Upon motion by Robin Krueger, seconded by Joe Adam, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to January 31, 2016, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Johanson, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

March 9, 2016: MBAEA Board Meeting²⁸

Board and Committee Reports (p. 2)

Dr. Edward Gronlund reported that the repayment process of the warrants has begun and by June, 2016, a repayment of \$5 million dollars will be made. Dr. Gronlund stated that he has visited with the Agency attorney, and because of the delayed federal payments of almost 2 million dollars during July and August, the Agency is allowed to do an extension for 90 days. Therefore, the paperwork to extend repayment of the warrants past June 30 and approval of a new set of warrants will be requested at the May Board meeting.

Mr. Decker commented that without having a reserve above what the state will allow, the Agency will almost always be in the position of having to borrow funds to pay the July, August, and September payroll. Dr. Gronlund further added that the first large federal payment does not happen until late October or early November, so in order for the Agency to not have to borrow money from this point forward, the Agency would need a reserve of 30% on July 1 and the state has made it clear that they want a reserve of 10% or lower.

Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Joe Adam, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to February 29, 2016, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (8) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Johanson, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

William Decker commented on a letter he received from Dr. Ryan Wise regarding the Agency's response to the Department's (DE) draft report of the MBAEA's March 20-24, 2015, accreditation site visit. Mr. Decker stated that the DE will not submit the report as written to the State Board of Education and will instead schedule a follow-up site visit next fall. Mr. Decker stated that this exceeded his expectations of what the result might be and expressed his appreciation to Dr. Gronlund for writing the document and summarizing the situation from his and Dr. Gronlund's perspective. Mr. Decker commented that it is a win for Agency employees to have the DE affirm the report was not accurate. Mr. Decker further commented that to have the State Board take action and say Agency staff are not meeting the standard is just unacceptable. Mr. Decker stated that he will be putting together a follow-up

communiqué from the January 29 All Staff In-service to address the two most asked questions, the budget and the accreditation visit. Mr. Decker explained that budget was highly reliant upon the results of the early retirement incentive and the accreditation visit was dependent upon the March 3, 2016, meeting, so to this point he has not been able to give staff substantive answers. Mr. Decker stated that the deadline for the early retirement incentive is Friday, March 11, so he will have a better idea of what that will entail after that time.

April 13, 2016: MBAEA Board Meeting²⁹

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Dr. Edward Gronlund reported that another million dollars has been paid on the current warrants and reminded the Board that action will be requested at the May Board Retreat on the current warrants, and because of the delayed revenues, a new set of warrants. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Richard Kissack, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to March 31, 2016, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (8) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Johanson, Krumwiede, Saveraid, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

Chief Administrator Report (p. 1)

William Decker reported that Administrative Cabinet has met three times in the last week and a half for the purpose of reacting to the early retirement results and starting to plan for operating in a way that the Agency can absorb as many of those positions as possible. Mr. Decker stated that 19 staff are resigning/retiring and the plan is to only replace a couple of those positions. Mr. Decker stated that the duties of retiring administrators will be absorbed into the current administrative team, resulting in spending a lower percentage of the Agency budget on administration next year, and expects there to be a significant reduction in administrative costs in the following two or three years. Mr. Decker stated the focus for next year is to put teams of staff in place to work on comprehensive improvement with school districts that have expressed interest, currently there are ten districts.

May 11, 2016: MBAEA Board Meeting and Board Retreat³⁰

Board and Committee Reports (p. 2)

Dr. Gronlund explained that because many of the revenues are not recovered until late July or August, a request is being made to extend \$2,600,000 of the current \$7,000,000 in warrants; repayment of the warrants will occur when the revenue matches up. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Joe Adam, the Board approved and adopted the resolution authorizing the carryover of anticipatory warrants and authorizing an inter-fund loan, as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried and President Masterson declared the resolution adopted.

Dr. Gronlund provided an overview of what the warrant use will be over the next three years. Dr. Gronlund stated that, with the situation of delayed federal payment, debt service, and large insurance payments, approval is being requested for warrants to cover costs during the first four months of the new fiscal year. Dr. Gronlund further explained that it is not expected the Agency will need to borrow the full \$9,000,000, but it will eliminate the need to have additional special sessions of the Board and would be, in a sense, setting and approving a ceiling. Dr. Gronlund presented a slide indicating that as the Agency moves forward and builds up reserves, the amount of the warrants will decline over time.

Mr. Decker stated that the legislature cut an additional \$3.75 million to AEAs and their reason given was that AEAs have reserve balances and taking five million away from the AEA system will not have any impact on services whatsoever. Mr. Decker explained that the reality is, the state-wide AEA total reserve is about 8.32% and the unencumbered reserve is 6.41%; if our Agency had 6.41% reserve we would not be able to get through the month of August. Mr. Decker stated that until the legislature is ok with AEAs carrying higher than a 10% balance (or 8.32% in the case this year) and not cutting our funding because we have too much money, we will have warrants. Mr. Decker commented that this is not the case of us as an AEA doing anything wrong or different than any other AEA, it is the scenario of what the legislature is saying by their actions and this is where they want AEAs to be. Mr. Decker stated that he pointed out to local legislators and state-wide legislators that in doing this they are actually taking away more funding because now we are paying interest, and will pay close to the equivalent of an FTE in interest this year, and

we won't get away from that any time in the near future. Mr. Decker commented that as the AEA moved to the point of reserves not being available to use, and to the point of warrants being necessary, staff took that as an indicator of the Agency's condition or indicator of management. Mr. Decker explained that to a certain degree, for one year, that may be correct because we didn't get information administratively that we should have received and waited a year longer in using reserves. If we had gotten correct information, we would have started a year sooner. Mr. Decker concluded by saying that the idea there is a warrant should not be interpreted by staff, from this point forward, as anything other than just a necessary tool that the legislature is putting in our lap, there is no other way around it.

Upon motion by Richard Kissack, seconded by Robin Krueger, the Board approved and adopted the resolution authorizing the issuance of taxable anticipatory warrants in an amount not to exceed \$9,000,000 upon the general fund of the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried and President Masterson declared the resolution adopted.

June 30, 2016: MBAEA Independent Auditor's Report³¹

2016 Financial Highlights (p. 5)

- General Fund revenues increased from \$34,197,266 in fiscal year 2015(FY15) to \$34,808,122 in fiscal year 2016 (FY16). The increase in General Fund revenues was attributable to the release of deferred revenue in fiscal year 2016.
- General Fund expenditures increased from \$37,451,159 in FY15 to \$38,032,188 in FY16. The Increase in General Fund expenditures was attributable to the annual salary package increase of 3.5%.
- There was an overall decrease of the Agency's General Fund balance from \$(101,423) in FY15 to \$(3,632,331) in FY16, a \$3,530,908 decrease from the prior year. The General Fund balance decreased mainly due to an increase in other liabilities including the extension of the 2015 warrants, early retirement payable and compensated absences.
- The Agency's self-insured medical insurance program continued to experience favorable claim costs. The claims reserve balance at June 30, 2016 was \$4,325.

Note 3 – Anticipatory Warrants (p. 26)

During the year ended June 30, 2016, the Agency issued \$7,000,000 of anticipatory warrants, at 3.25% interest per annum. As of June 30, 2016, \$3,183,208 of those anticipatory warrants had been redeemed, leaving an unpaid balance at June 30, 2016 of \$3,816,792. Interest expense paid during fiscal year 2016 was \$171,777. Accrued interest as of June 30, 2016 was \$16,139.

In May 2016, the Agency issued taxable anticipatory warrants in an amount not to exceed \$9,000,000 at a rate 3.25%. As of June 30,2016, no amounts had been drawn on the warrants.

July 13, 2016: MBAEA Board Meeting³²

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Dr. Gronlund reported that all Iowa AEAs received a Freedom of Information Request from the Des Moines Register regarding special education enrollment numbers, staffing numbers, and financial data. Mr. Decker commented that Brent Siegrist has had several positive conversations with the reporter and is hopeful that the article will provide the public information on what the AEA system does and who it serves. Mr. Decker will forward the link to the story to all Board members when it is published. Mr. Decker further commented that the Des Moines Register recently finished a series of articles on minority students in Iowa, and the gap between their test results and other students, and that may have led to this request. Director Kissack commented that at some point it may also be good to have an article on the importance of pre-kindergarten. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Scott Saveraid, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to June 30, 2016, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Johanson, Saveraid, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

August 10, 2016: MBAEA Board Meeting and Board Retreat³³

Board and Committee Reports (pp. 1-2)

Dr. Gronlund reported that as a result of the early separation process, the Agency has a reduction of 23 staff: 5 administrators, 11 licensed, and 7 classified staff. Dr. Gronlund stated that additional hearing interpreters have been hired due to Muscatine CSD utilizing the cost recovery hearing interpreter program. Dr. Gronlund also explained that a Network Specialist has been hired under a new pilot program partnered with Maquoketa CSD to serve district technology needs. This program allows the district to purchase this service with non-general funds. Mr. Decker stated that he sees a great potential for growth with this program with larger districts with the ability to use management funds rather than general funds, as well as, smaller districts that cannot afford to hire a full-time technology position. Dr. Gronlund commented that all Agency programs and services, including travel and mileage expenses, will be reviewed to identify potential cost efficiencies

In response to Director Kissack's inquiry of the \$457,000 health insurance claims disbursement, Dr. Gronlund explained that due to the payment occurring on July 1, it includes two payments, June and July. Director Kissack also questioned the large reduction on the Monthly History of Revenues to Budget for July FY16 - FY17; Dr. Gronlund explained it is due to the timing of the receipt of 4th Quarter Part B Federal funds and the increase will be reflected in the next report.

Director Krumwiede questioned the impact of services to districts with a reduction of 23 staff. Mr. Decker explained that there will be very little change in the area of child find and direct service. He further commented that he will be addressing the Department of Education's article *Special Education: what was, what is, and where we need to go* at the All Staff In-service and the idea of going away from pulling students out and serving with specialized teachers, to all students served in general education. Mr. Decker stated there needs to be a balance and an emphasis on Tier I core instruction in the classroom; Tier II where students are not pulled out, served in the way that they need, and then reintroduced; and Tier III for students where that's not successful. The essential functions will be covered as they always have been but the work to improve those Tiers will happen in different ways than in the past. Kim Hofmann further commented that general education and special education will be working together in an integrated fashion to provide high quality special education services. Director Krumwiede expressed a concern, as sitting on the IASB Resolutions Committee, of delivering the message that we are delivering just as good, if not better services, with reduced funding. Mr. Decker explained that in the past specific staff were assigned to specific buildings and they handled the demands of the building. Now a team is assigned to a group of buildings so instead of one person with one set of skills and one expertise assigned to a building they get a team of expertise.

In regards to funding, Mr. Decker commented "would we be better served if we had more teams, absolutely! Education is far too good at making adjustments to not having enough funding, and we make it work, and so it never falls off the cliff and legislators think it is OK (we've made cuts in the past and it made no impact, this cut will not have an impact). We need to put a different scenario on to say we could do better with more funding but at the same time, with the funding we have, we are going to try to be the best we can be". Mr. Decker further commented that "1.8 million would pay for close to two additional building collaboration teams, giving each team 40% less schools, resulting in each school getting more time, attention, coaching, modeling, expertise, collaboration, and leadership to establish professional learning communities. Additional money DOES make a difference but we still have to do the best we can with what we have". Ms. Hofmann commented that direct service is driven by individual student IEPs and we are obligated to provide the service outlined in the IEP. It will be challenging to provide that direct service and maintain child find with reduced funds. Director Joe Adam commented that "we need to exercise caution in not coming out saying we've taken these steps and we're going to be fine, we will deal with it. The message needs to be these are really challenging times and we've made serious cuts and put additional burden on employees, reduced some services, but this is not at all acceptable and changes need to be made to restore funding". Shane Williams stated that "at some point efficiencies go up and effectiveness comes down. The Agency is currently maximizing efficiencies but if we continue to get cut our effectiveness and quality is going to decrease; you can't always do more with less".

October 12, 2016: MBAEA Annual Meeting, Board Meeting/Board Retreat³⁴

Treasurer's Report (p. 1)

Edward Gronlund reported: 1) the extended warrants have been paid before the October 1st deadline and 2) part of the approved bills includes the flow through dollars from the state department that go straight to the school districts. Upon motion by Richard Kissack, seconded by Ken Krumwiede, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to September 30, 2016, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Chief Administrator's Report (p. 4)

Mr. Decker briefly reviewed the summary report from Jeff Berger, Deputy Director, Department, related to the review of the finances and financial management processes of MBAEA9. Mr. Decker brought attention to the following statement in the letter: *The review team found nothing to indicate the current administration has done, or is doing, anything other than to try to restore balance and rhythm to the financial management of the Agency. The adjustments made by the administration are appropriate and are in context with changes the review team deemed as necessary to reduce spending and provide proper leadership and fiscal management.* Mr. Decker stated that, with the fiscal visit and the recent site visit, the Agency has made a lot of progress with the Department of Education in both sharing areas that have been challenges and how the Agency is addressing those challenges, and also the Agency's areas of success.

November 9, 2016: MBAEA Board Meeting³⁵

Board and Committee Reports (pp. 1-2)

Edward Gronlund reported that the Agency has received the first round of Federal Part B, Early Access, and Part C payments. Upon motion by Richard Kissack, seconded by Dick Wold, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to October 31, 2016, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Mr. Decker stated that any time the Certified Annual Report (CAR) is not turned in by the deadline, the School Budget Review Committee (SBRC) requires a response and, potentially, asked to appear before them. Mr. Decker stated he felt the Corrective Action Plan included in the Board packets clearly explains the details of the Agency's situation and is specific about what led to the late filing; it has been corrected and the plan is specific on how the Agency is ensuring that it will not happen again. Mr. Decker asked for approval of the Corrective Action Plan and stated the minutes showing Board approval will be sent to the SBRC to show that the Board has seen that the plan is to make sure this will not happen again. Upon motion by Richard Kissack, seconded by Mike Duytschaver, the School Budget Review Committee Corrective Action Plan was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried. Mr. Decker commented that, as shared at the October Board Retreat, the DE had conducted an informal site visit before the CAR was due and they are very aware of the Agency's scenario and of the correction.

December 14, 2016: MBAEA Board Meeting³⁶

Chief Administrator Report (p. 1)

Mr. Decker reported that the School Budget Review Committee (SBRC) met yesterday and part of the agenda was the Agency's plan to assure that we would submit the Certified Annual Report (CAR) in a timely fashion next year. Mr. Decker stated that although he has not received an official report from the SBRC, he is confident that the plan was approved.

February 8, 2017: Public Hearing, Regular Board Meeting, and Board Retreat³⁷

PUBLIC HEARING

Budget Hearing (pp. 1-2)

Business Manager Jennifer Coombes presented the 2016 actual budget, re-estimation of the 2017 budget, and projected estimated budget for 2018. Ms. Coombes explained that the state requires \$1.5 million, which will most likely be cut, be included in the 2018 revenue, making the revenue overstated by \$1.5 million dollars. Revenue is

projected to be flat and does not reflect the 1.1% state supplemental aid (SSA) increase. Ms. Coombes provided the board with a revised budget which she feels is a better reflection of where the actual expenditures and revenues will be. Ms. Coombes commented that, unfortunately because of the timing issue with having to file the Certified Annual Report (CAR) so early in the beginning of the fiscal year, as well as requiring to include revenue the Agency will not receive, the certified annual budget at this point is not as accurate as it really should be reflected. Mr. Decker commented that the budget included with the board packet is the one that was required of the Agency to meet the state required timelines. The budget, as put out publicly, is not as accurate as one based on current knowledge; as Jennifer Coombes worked to make the Agency budget meet state guidelines on reporting, there are factors to consider: 1) the printed budget reflects more negatively than what reality is because there were a lot of corrections that had to be made to the CAR that was submitted the prior year by the former business manager, and 2) the Agency is just about to the completion of the audit so the auditors were able to provide numbers to Ms. Coombes that were not available at the time the budget had to be published. Mr. Decker shared a slide with a historical look at revenues and expenditures.

President Masterson reported no members of the general public were present and no written objections were received. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Ken Krumwiede, the Board approved the Proposed FY2017-2018 Budget as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Kissack, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No: (0) Motion carried.

BOARD MEETING/BOARD RETREAT

Treasurer's Report (p. 2)

Business Manager Jennifer Coombes reported that the Agency will be receiving the second quarter of Federal funds and will begin the process of repaying the warrants. Upon motion by Joe Adam, seconded by Richard Kissack, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to January 31, 2017, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Kissack, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No: (0) Motion carried.

Special Education Staff Feedback/Reflections (p. 4)

Kim Hofmann, MBAEA Special Education Administrator, reported that in November and December she offered all psychologists, social workers, and consultants an opportunity to have one-on-one conversations about their work. Over the last two years there has been a decrease in FTE because of funding challenges and a lot of that occurred within those three disciplines. Ms. Hofmann stated the conversations were an opportunity to discuss with staff how they are feeling about things, what support they need, strengths they bring to the Agency, and if the Agency is matching them appropriately with their talents and skills based on their assignment. The conversations were not mandatory and 88% of staff members scheduled an appointment (60 out of 77). Ms. Hofmann commented that, overwhelmingly, the biggest take away from the meetings was that staff feel very supportive in this Agency; even in a climate of change and challenge, with less people and potentially more work to do, they still feel extremely supported and they are very invested in the Agency. The conversations gave direction on adjustments that need to be made with service delivery to help staff be more efficient next year and to better align with the services provided to schools. The conversations also provided some direction on professional development and staff needs for growth and suggestions on support. Ms. Hofmann indicated she will be attending discipline specific meetings over the next three weeks and will share the data from these conversations, not only from their discipline, but overall from the child find perspective. They will then engage in an activity to review what their current role is, what they are being asked to do within the Agency, and do some visioning work about what their role could or should be. Ms. Hofmann stated she will then use that information to reframe how assignments are determined and the philosophy in assignments moving forward.

March 8, 2017: MBAEA Board Meeting³⁸

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Edward Gronlund reported that in early March the Agency received a \$1.8 million dollar federal payment for the last quarter of 2016; it is not reflected in the March Treasurer's Report. Upon motion by Dick Wold, seconded by Richard Kissack, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to February 28, 2017, was approved

as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Duytschaver, Kissack, Johanson, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No: (0) Motion carried.

It is noted that Ralph Johanson left the meeting at approximately 5:05 p.m.

April 12, 2017: MBAEA Board Meeting³⁹

Chief Administrator Report (p. 1)

Mr. Decker complimented Edward Gronlund and David Ford, MBAEA Postsecondary Success Lead, on the work they have done with submitting a five-year, \$3.2 million dollar federal grant entitled *Charting the Course: Improving College-Going Culture Using Post-secondary Success Coaches*.

Strategic Management & Evaluation (p. 2)

Joe Adam, as the Board representative of the Internal Audit Committee, provided a summary of the April 10, 2017, audit meeting with Jennifer Coombes, William Decker, Edward Gronlund, and Andrea Rumler of Winkle, Parker, & Foster, CPA PC. Mr. Adam reported that it was a clean audit opinion and the records that were maintained give the reader a full and adequate picture of the financial condition of the Agency. Mr. Adam stated that this is a draft audit and a revision will be made to the language in the 'Notes to Financial Statements' section on page 24 regarding non-current compensated absences. Mr. Decker stated he will provide a detailed report on the financial condition of the Agency at the May Board retreat, including historical data and a five-year projection.

May 10, 2017: MBAEA Board Meeting and Board Retreat⁴⁰

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Joe Adam questioned if the adjustment had been made to the final audit report as discussed last month; Jennifer Coombes responded that she has not yet received the final audit report but they are working on it. The final audit report will be sent to all board members when received.

Chief Administrator's Report (pp. 2-3)

Mr. Decker made a recommendation to the board to eliminate the numeracy coordinator position based on the following reasons: the Agency is reorganizing administrative positions to maintain administrative costs at or below the current level and prevent an increase in administrative costs; the Agency is addressing priority programs and services for financial and budgeting reasons; the state is continually moving toward Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) as opposed to numeracy, which is based on the AEA Compact; and the Agency is preserving as many staff working in the field as possible with bigger cuts in administration. Mr. Decker commented that there have been conversations about this in the past and this is not a first-time conversation with those involved. There was a great deal of warning given that this was a likely scenario and the only way that this wouldn't be a likely scenario is if somehow the Agency received an influx of unexpected funding; unfortunately, that has not happened. The area education agencies received 1.1% new money and that is not enough dollars to sustain a status quo scenario.

There was considerable conversation regarding the elimination of the numeracy coordinator position and the board asked many questions, including: is the current numeracy coordinator qualified to be the STEM lead, who will be doing the work of the numeracy coordinator in the interim, will the STEM position be a lesser salary than the current numeracy coordinator position, why are we eliminating a numeracy coordinator when there is such a high need, what are the certification requirements for the STEM position, what could be done going forward or what could have been done in the past to avert this kind of circumstance?

Mr. Decker explained that the STEM position will be a lead position and will not have as much administrative responsibility as a coordinator position. The lead will be more of a collaborator in the field, at a salary that is significantly less. The Agency will be looking at the most broad qualifications in regard to filling as many of the STEM areas as possible. The Agency will seek the most highly qualified person for the position, and that would not exclude the current numeracy coordinator. Mr. Decker noted that the current numeracy coordinator could apply for the STEM position if they chose to do so and pointed out that a non-administrative position was offered to the numeracy

coordinator and it was turned down. Mr. Decker explained that a lot of the field and administrative work currently being done by the numeracy coordinator will be taken on by several other administrators. Shane Williams will take the lead in either filling those duties or assigning the work to others.

Mr. Decker stated that the Agency needs to become more involved in the Southeast Iowa STEM Council, with the hope of getting school districts, in a systemic way, to make application to the Council and put something in place for our districts that will be more replicable. Mr. Decker commented that, as a society, there is a shortage of STEM. The Lieutenant Governor has influenced more dollars toward STEM and the Agency can help to coordinate that in Area 9 to a higher degree than has been in the past.

Edward Gronlund provided a personnel cost trajectory, including the impact of the early separation incentive, licensed staff contract changes, and the Professional Staff Organization (PSO) 2017 contract settlement. Mr. Decker presented a five-year projected fund balance as a result of those changes, indicating an estimated 10% solvency ratio. Mr. Decker presented a plan for reducing administrative costs, while keeping as many staff in the field as possible.

June 14, 2017: MBAEA Public Hearing on Amended Proposed 2017-2018 Budget and Regular Board Meeting⁴¹

PUBLIC HEARING (P. 1)

Board President Rex Masterson convened the Public Hearing on the Amended Proposed 2017-2018 Budget at 5:01 p.m. Jennifer Coombes explained that when the budget was prepared in February the audit was not yet complete with all of the adjustments, which would typically be represented in the re-estimated column. Board approval is being requested on the amended budget which reflects those audit adjustments. President Masterson reported no members of the general public were present and no written objections were received by the board secretary.

Upon motion by Dick Wold, seconded by Richard Kissack, the board approved the Amended Proposed 2017-2018 Budget as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

Upon motion by Ken Krumwiede, seconded by Dick Wold, the Public Hearing was concluded at approximately 5:04 p.m. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried.

BOARD MEETING

Board and Committee Reports (p. 2)

Upon motion by Richard Kissack, seconded by Dick Wold, the board approved and adopted the Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of Taxable Anticipatory Warrants in an Amount Not to Exceed \$9,000,000 in Anticipation of Receipt of General Fund Monies. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Krueger, Kissack, Krumwiede, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Chief Administrator Report (p. 2)

Mr. Decker asked for input from the board on moving AEA personnel to a schedule of four ten-hour days Monday through Thursday and having all facilities closed on Fridays in an effort to save on energy costs. This would be for the month of July only and the Learning Center and Media Center would remain open. The board informally approved running it as a pilot this year and reviewing the energy savings data and evaluating the pros and cons at the August board retreat.

June 30, 2017: MBAEA Independent Auditor's Report⁴²

2017 Financial Highlights (p. 5)

- General Fund revenues increased from \$34,808,122 in fiscal year 2016 (FY16) to \$35,520,939 in fiscal year 2017 (FY17). The increase in General Fund revenues was attributable to an increase in local revenues for hearing interpreter services and drawing \$487,000 of Federal grant reserves for FY2017.
- General Fund expenditures decreased from \$38,032,188 in FY16 to \$36,711,849 in FY17. The decrease in General Fund expenditures was attributable to a decrease in staffing due to the offering of an early retirement incentive, a decrease in licensed staff contract days and attrition.
- There was an overall decrease of the Agency's General Fund balance from \$(3,632,331) in FY16 to \$(5,239,694) in FY17, a \$1,607,363 decrease from the prior year. The General Fund balance decreased mainly due to an increase in other liabilities including early retirement payable and the extension of the warrants.
- The Agency's self-insured medical insurance claims reserve balance was depleted during FY17.

Note 3 – Anticipatory Warrants (pp. 26-27)

During the year ended June 30, 2016, the Agency issued \$7,000,000 of anticipatory warrants, at 3.25% interest per annum. As of June 30, 2017, those anticipatory warrants had been redeemed.

During the year ended June 30, 2017, the Agency issued \$9,000,000 of anticipatory warrants, at 3.25% interest per annum. On June 14, 2017 the maturity date was extended from June 30, 2017 to October 1, 2017. As of June 30, 2017, \$3,800,000 of those anticipatory warrants had been redeemed, leaving an unpaid balance at June 30, 2017 of \$5,200,000.

Interest expense during fiscal year 2017 was \$237,050. Accrued interest as of June 30, 2017 was \$8,089.

On June 14, 2017, the Agency issued taxable anticipatory warrants in an amount not to exceed \$9,000,000 at a rate of 3.79% with a maturity date of June 30, 2018. As of June 30, 2017, no amounts had been drawn on the warrants; however, those warrants were utilized during fiscal year 2018.

July 12, 2017: MBAEA Board Meeting⁴³

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Edward Gronlund explained that the process of entering purchase orders for the year-end, and posting items in regard to expenses, created a negative balance of (\$66,557.95) on the Treasurers Report. Dr. Gronlund clarified that does not represent a negative bank balance. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Dick Wold, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to June 29, 2017, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Duytschaver, Kissack, Johanson, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Jennifer Coombes reported that after many conversations with the banker expressing her dissatisfaction with the bank adjusting the interest rate on the warrants, and the short timeline to call a special board meeting to approve the changes, the banker decided to leave the interest rate at what was approved at the June board meeting. Therefore, the Special Meeting that was scheduled for Friday, June 30, was not needed. Dr. Gronlund commented that he followed up with the Agency's attorney, and as we move forward, warrants will be presented simultaneously with the loan agreement.

August 9, 2017: MBAEA Board Meeting and Board Retreat⁴⁴

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Dr. Gronlund reported that the out-of-cycle checks amount on the Treasurers Reports includes flow-through dollars for special education that go to the local school districts. At the time of this report, those funds had not yet been received from the Department of Education, resulting in a negative balance. Jennifer Coombes reported that she talked with John Lee, Department (DE), regarding the hardship it causes for AEAs to receive federal dollars only ten months a year; this year the DE allowed AEAs to have an advance of the FY18 dollars. The Agency received 20% of what will be received for FY18 in July and that is reflected in this month's Treasurers Report. Typically the FY18

payment would not be received until late September/October. This is extremely positive for the Agency and is reflected in the amount of draws on the warrants for the month of July. The fourth quarter of 2017 federal dollars was received the first week of August. Ms. Coombes commented that if state aid payments allowed an advance it would help in the cash flow and the amount of borrowing that AEAs have to do. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Ken Krumwiede, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to July 31, 2017, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (8) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Kissack, Johanson, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

October 11, 2017: MBAEA Organizational Meeting, Regular Board Meeting/Retreat⁴⁵

Treasurer's Report (p. 1)

In response to Director Kissack's inquiry, Jennifer Coombes reported the status of repaying the warrants. Upon motion by Ken Krumwiede, seconded by Mike Duytschaver, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to September 30, 2017, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Duytschaver, Kissack, Johanson, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

November 8, 2017: MBAEA Board Meeting⁴⁶

Present on roll call were: Board President Rex Masterson and Directors Mike Duytschaver, Robin Krueger, Mike Wolf, Scott Saveraid, Dick Wold. Absent: Vice President Joe Adam and Directors Ralph Johanson and Ken Krumwiede. Also present were: Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, and Board Secretary Cheryl Oake.

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Edward Gronlund pointed out that the federal withholding and IPERS are higher this month because there were three payrolls in September and a portion of the withholding dollars does not get sent until the end of the month. Dr. Gronlund stated that the Agency is trending toward the projected overall budget costs for the year and are well within hitting the six month target. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Dick Wold, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to October 31, 2017, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Strategic Management & Evaluation (p. 2)

Revisions in the 800 series include increasing the bid limit from \$5,000 to \$15,000, approval of outside presenters from \$1,000 to \$5,000, and payment of bills to move to a weekly process.

January 10, 2018: MBAEA Board Meeting⁴⁷

Present on roll call were: Board President Rex Masterson, Vice President Joe Adam, and Directors Mike Duytschaver, Robin Krueger, Mike Wolf, Ralph Johanson, Scott Saveraid, Dick Wold. Absent: Director Ken Krumwiede. Also present were: Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, and Board Secretary Cheryl Oake.

February 14, 2018: MBAEA Public Hearing on Proposed 2018-2019 Budget, Board meeting, and Board Retreat⁴⁸

Present on roll call were: Board President Rex Masterson, Board Vice President Joe Adam, and Directors Mike Duytschaver, Robin Krueger, Mike Wolf, Ken Krumwiede, and Dick Wold. Absent: Directors Ralph Johanson and Scott Saveraid. Also present were: Chief Administrator William Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, and Board Secretary Cheryl Oake.

PUBLIC HEARING

Budget Hearing (p. 1)

President Masterson convened the Public Hearing on the Proposed 2018-2019 Budget at 12:03 p.m. Dr. Gronlund presented the 2017 actual budget, re-estimation of the 2018 budget, and projected estimated budget for 2019. Ms. Coombes stated that from the 2017 Actual to the 2018 Re-Estimated, revenues increased by 3% and expenditures decreased by 5%. Assumptions made to project the 2019 budget include remaining flat on the revenue side and decreasing expenditures by 2%. President Masterson reported no members of the general public were present and no written objections were received. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Joe Adam, the board approved the Proposed FY2018-2019 Budget as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No: (0) Motion carried. Upon motion by Ken Krumwiede, seconded by Mike Wolf, the Public Hearing was concluded at approximately 12:06 p.m. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No: (0) Motion carried.

BOARD MEETING/BOARD RETREAT

Board and Committee Reports

Treasurer's Report (pp. 1-2)

Business Manager Jennifer Coombes reported that the Agency received one half of the payment for the AEA Postsecondary Readiness & Equity Partnership (PREP) Consortium. Mr. Decker stated that, when compared to the past five years, the current expenditures through January are the lowest total spent during that seven-month time period.

Upon motion by Ken Krumwiede, seconded by Mike Duytschaver, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to January 31, 2018, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Krumwiede, Wold, Masterson. No: (0) Motion carried.

Chief Administrator Report

Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) Legal Service Fund Application for Participation (p. 2)

Mr. Decker made a recommendation to the board that the Agency become a member of the IASB Legal Service Fund. The Legal Service Fund assists IASB members across the state in legal issues of statewide significance. The initial membership fee is \$600. The board authorized the board secretary to submit the enrollment form.

June 30, 2017, Audit Report (pp. 2-3)

As the board representative of the Internal Audit Committee, Joe Adam provided a brief report of the January 29, 2018, meeting with Andrea Rumler, Mr. Decker, Dr. Gronlund, and Ms. Coombes. Mr. Adam stated that the auditor concluded that the evidence and documentation that was obtained was sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for their audit and the financial statements fairly present, in all material respects, the financial position of the Agency. Mr. Adam brought attention to the 2017 financial highlights, including that the general fund revenues increased by \$700,000 and expenditures decreased. Much of the decrease is attributable to a decrease in staffing due to the offering of an early retirement incentive, a decrease in licensed staff contract days, and attrition. There was an overall decrease in the general fund balance from a negative \$3.6 million to a negative \$5.2 million, mainly due to an increase to other liabilities including early retirement payable and the extension of the warrants. The Agency's total net position decreased by 24.4% from FY16, primarily due to an increase to other liabilities including early retirement and the extension of warrants. Ms. Coombes commented that in addition to the recognition of the pension liability, we are now required to recognize our other post-retirement benefits in the same manner. An actuarial study has been done to calculate that liability.

The Audit Report will be placed on the March Board agenda for approval.

Mr. Adam commented that Winkle, Parker & Foster having been doing the Agency audits since 2009 and the board discussed the possibility of putting out a Request for Proposal (RFP).

March 14, 2018: MBAEA Board Meeting⁴⁹

Present on roll call were: Board President Rex Masterson, Vice President Joe Adam, and Directors Mike Duytschaver, Robin Krueger, Mike Wolf, Ken Krumwiede, Scott Saveraid. Absent: Directors Ralph Johanson and Dick Wold. Also

present were: Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, and Board Secretary Cheryl Oake.

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Board members received a corrected copy of the Breakdown of February 2018 Deposits. Dr. Gronlund reported that the ending total on the copy in the board packets was correct, but because of a formatting error, the amounts were off by one line and the MBAEA Partnership School revenue source was inadvertently omitted from the list.

Upon motion by Dick Wold, seconded by Robin Krueger, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to February 28, 2018, was approved as amended and presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (8) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Krumwiede, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Chief Administrator Report (pp. 1-2)

Mr. Decker reported on a meeting he attended Monday, March 12, with the North Region Superintendents, regarding creating a regional career technical center in their area. This group, representing eight districts, will also be approaching Eastern Iowa Community College District regarding a potential partnership for the center and creating great opportunities for students. Mr. Decker will be meeting with administrative staff from the Clinton and Camanche school districts on March 15, 2018, to discuss the possibility of an alternative school-type setting, much like the MBAEA Partnership School. This would provide an environment that would effectively serve kids that need something different to be successful. Mr. Decker will follow-up with the board as to what possible AEA involvement there may be. Director Wolf commented on the need for a facility like this in the area and expressed his support.

April 11, 2018: MBAEA Board Meeting⁵⁰

Present on roll call were: Board President Rex Masterson, Vice President Joe Adam, and Directors Mike Duytschaver, Mike Wolf, Scott Saveraid, Dick Wold. Absent: Directors Robin Krueger, Ralph Johanson, and Ken Krumwiede. Also present were: Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, Board Secretary Cheryl Oake, Sally Christophersen, Anna Johnson, Barb Ickes.

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Jennifer Coombes presented the Treasurer's Report for approval. The board discussed the balance of the warrants, repayment of the warrants, and clarification of bills presented for approval and corresponding account numbers/revenue source. Upon motion by Dick Wold, seconded by Mike Duytschaver, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to March 30, 2018, was approved as amended and presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Wolf, Saveraid, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Chief Administrator Report (p. 2)

The Department of Education would like assurance no later than May 10, 2018, that the Agency will develop a budget that balances and eliminates a deficit ending balance over the next two years. The budget must be presented to the State Board of Education no later than September 1, 2018. Both Mr. Decker and Director Adam, on behalf of the board of directors, have made that assurance in writing; however, both letters were dated and arrived before the State Board actually took action. Dr. Wise is requesting a letter signed by both Mr. Decker and Rex Masterson giving that assurance. Mr. Decker will draft a letter assuring that this process is ongoing and we expect full cooperation and a positive end result. No board action is required at this time.

Mr. Decker, Jennifer Coombes, Edward Gronlund, and several cabinet members have spent a considerable amount of time starting the process of looking at the requirements to develop the budget with the least amount of interruption of service to schools. The focus will be on staffing, expenditures, revenues, and any necessary adjustments to the insurance plan. Avoiding a reduction in staff remains a high priority as we cannot serve kids and make great things happen for students, schools, and teachers without having staff. An overview will be presented at the May retreat. Conversations have already taken place with the Professional Staff Organization (PSO) leadership and the same invitation will be extended to the Communication Workers of America (CWA) group.

May 9, 2018: MBAEA Board Meeting and Board Retreat⁵¹

Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, Board Secretary Cheryl Oake, Administrative Cabinet/Leadership Council Members Nicole Peterson, Mark Bloom, Diane Campbell, David Ford, Andrea Stewart, Kim Hofmann, Karinne Tharaldson, Shane Williams.

Board and Committee Reports (pp. 1-2)

Dr. Gronlund reported that a payment was made to the warrants at the end of the month and will appear on the June Treasurer's Report. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Joe Adam, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to April 30, 2018, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Saveraid, Masterson. No: (1) Wolf. Motion carried.

Chief Administrator's Report (p. 2)

The state auditors are at the Agency this week. Mr. Decker commented that he welcomes them being here and is happy to accommodate any areas needing improvement.

Request for Board Approval to Pursue Property Purchase (pp. 3-4)

The Bettendorf Community School District has notified the Agency that they have received an offer to purchase the adjacent property to the Agency's Bettendorf Office. Mr. Decker requested board permission to act as representative of the board and pursue the purchase of this property. Board members previously received photos of the Agency's use of the parking spaces and a map and description of the area for sale. The timing of this possible transaction is not ideal, but unfortunately necessary if the Agency's Bettendorf Office site is to remain a viable location for delivering AEA services. Failure to retain these parking spots will diminish the value of this property and potentially require relocation of the Agency. The MBAEA administration team has updated recent budget planning for FY19 to include these purchase expenses and the costs will not be an obstacle to meeting the Iowa State Board of Education's June 2020 fund balance mandate. Verbal approval has been received by the DE.

Upon motion by Joe Adam, seconded by Mike Duytschaver, the board authorized and approved Mr. Decker as the representative of the Agency to pursue the purchase and execution of the purchase agreement for the acquisition of the Old Bettendorf HS Addition: Lot 003. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Saveraid, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

It was discussed that any purchase agreement will include approval of the Department of Education.

The board discussed an email they received from Jamie Volmeer on a series in support for public education.

June 13, 2018: MBAEA Board Meeting⁵²

Also present were: Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, Board Secretary Cheryl Oake.

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Mr. Decker stated a new format for the Treasurer's Report will be presented for discussion at the August Board Retreat to reflect the conversation from the May Board Retreat. Upon motion by Joe Adam, seconded by Robin Krueger, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to May 31, 2018, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Krumwiede, Masterson. No: (1) Wolf. Motion carried. Director Wolf stated that he has received public feedback requesting additional clarity on the outstanding warrants and warrant balances. Mr. Decker stated that additional warrant information, including the extension of warrants, will be forwarded to the board and Dr. Gronlund will provide a report at the July board meeting.

Upon motion by Ken Krumwiede, seconded by Joe Adam, the board approved and adopted the resolution authorizing the carryover of 2018 anticipatory warrants and inter-fund loan, as presented. Roll call voted was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Krumwiede, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried and President Masterson declared the resolution adopted.

Upon motion by Robin Krueger, seconded by Mike Duytschaver, the board approved and adopted the resolution authorizing issuance of series 2019 taxable anticipatory warrants in an amount not to exceed \$9,000,000 in

anticipation of receipt of general fund monies, as presented. Roll call voted was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Krumwiede, Masterson. No (0). Motion carried and President Masterson declared the resolution adopted.

Strategic Management & Evaluation (p. 2)

Director Wolf requested that Item 505 Audit – Request for Proposal (RFP) be pulled from the consent agenda and voted on separately. Upon motion by Ken Krumwiede, seconded by Robin Krueger, the board approved items 501, 502, 503, 504, 506 in the Consent Agenda, as amended and presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Krumwiede, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Director Wolf reported that he has worked closely with Winkel, Parker & Foster, and feels they are qualified and have done long standing work for the Agency; his vote would be to keep them as the Agency's auditing firm. President Masterson indicated that all five firms were qualified and Clifton Larson Allen was the lowest bid. Director Adam stated that Winkel, Parker & Foster have been the Agency's auditor for nine years and found value in requesting RFPs. Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Robin Krueger, the board approved item 505 of the Consent Agenda, as amended and presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Krumwiede, Masterson. No: (1) Wolf. Motion carried.

June 27, 2018: MBAEA Special Board Meeting⁵³

Also present were: Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, Board Secretary Cheryl Oake, Quad-City Times Reporter Tom Geyer.

Iowa Department of Education Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Complaint Process and Waiver of Conflict of Interest (p. 1)

Mr. Decker stated that a complaint was filed with the Department by a private attorney. The complaint was made to eleven school districts around the state and five area education agencies (AEAs) in regard to seclusion data. The district in AEA 9 is Muscatine Community School District. Because the complaint covers eleven districts and five AEAs, our insurer has recommended that the Agency proceed jointly and have Ahlers Cooney law firm represent all five AEAs and the eleven districts against the complaint. Board action is required to join that group effort through Ahlers Cooney.

Upon motion by Joe Adam, seconded by Mike Wolf, the board approved joint representation in the Department IDEA Complaint Process and Waiver of Conflict of Interest. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Saveraid, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Approve a Borrowing Base Agreement between MBAEA and Quad City Bank and Trust Company as to the Anticipatory Warrant, Series 2019 (p. 1)

Jennifer Coombes stated the business loan agreement is to renew the \$9,000,000 warrant (FY19) and carry over of the current warrant (FY18) at \$3,500,000. Mr. Decker stated that there are no changes from what the board acted on at the June 13, 2018, board meeting; this is just a form that goes along with previously approved documents and was not available at that time. The documents have been reviewed by Dick Davidson with Lane & Waterman.

Upon motion by Mike Duytschaver, seconded by Ralph Johanson, the board approved the Borrowing Base Agreement between MBAEA and Quad City Bank and Trust Company as to the Anticipatory Warrant, Series 2019. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (7) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Johanson, Saveraid, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

July 18, 2018: MBAEA Board Meeting⁵⁴

Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, Board Secretary Cheryl Oake.

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Dr. Gronlund reviewed the anticipated usage and repayment of warrants with the board. The Iowa Code state aid payments begin late in the first quarter of the year; therefore, the need for warrants will continue into the foreseeable future.

August 15, 2018: MBAEA Meeting and Board retreat⁵⁵

Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, Board Secretary Cheryl Oake, and AEA administrators Kim Hofmann, Karinne Tharaldson, Shane Williams.

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

The board reviewed the new format of the Treasurer's Report and the Agency budget that will be presented to the State Board of Education in September. Upon motion by Joe Adam, seconded by Robin Krueger, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to July 31, 2018, and the Agency budget to be submitted to the State Board of Education was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Adam, Krueger, Krumwiede, Saveraid, Masterson. No: (0). Abstain: (1) Wolf. Motion carried. Director Wolf chose to abstain from the vote as he was not present for the discussion, but commented that he had reviewed the treasurer's report prior to the meeting.

Closed Session – Chief Administrator Evaluation (p. 3)

Upon motion by Mike Wolf, seconded by Robin Krueger, the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency convened in closed session at 2:28 p.m. as provided in the Code of Iowa, Chapter 21, Section 21.5, Subsection 1(i), to evaluate the competency of an individual whose appointment, hiring, performance, or discharge is being considered when necessary to prevent needless and irreparable injury to that individual's reputation and that individual requests a closed session. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (5) Adam, Krueger, Wolf, Krumwiede, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Reconvene in Open Session (p. 3)

The meeting returned to open session at 2:52 p.m.

September 12, 2018: MBAEA Board Meeting⁵⁶

Chief Administrator William J. Decker, Board Treasurer Edward Gronlund, Business Manager Jennifer Coombes, Board Secretary Cheryl Oake

Chief Administrator's Report (p. 1)

William Decker, Edward Gronlund, Kim Hofmann, Shane Williams, and Jennifer Coombes will be attending the State Board of Education meeting at Central Rivers AEA in Cedar Falls September 13, 2018. Dr. Wise, Director of the Department, has indicated in the agenda that his recommendation is to approve the Agency's two-year budget plan.

September 13, 2018: State Board Meeting Minutes⁵⁷

Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Annual Budget Approval for Area Education Agencies – Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency (pp. 4-6)

Cooley provided background information. During its March meeting, the State Board returned the 2019 budget for Mississippi Bend AEA with comments that required the agency to do the following: 1) provide an assurance in writing, no later than the May 10 meeting of the State Board, that the AEA will construct a plan to balance the budget within two years, and 2) submit the complete two-year budget plan, approved by the AEA board, no later than September 1, 2018. The State Board also directed the Department to conduct an on-site accreditation visit of the agency by September 1, 2019.

Mississippi Bend AEA's 2020 budget will be brought before the State Board in March 2019 for approval as required by Iowa Code. In the event the agency is unable to meet the two-year budget plan, resulting in a positive budget, the State Board's recourse was discussed.

Williamson talked about next steps and the State Board's options and reiterated that an on-site accreditation visit will occur during the 2018-2019 school year.

Motion: Mike Bearden made a motion and Mike May seconded that the State Board accept Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency's two-year budget plan, which has been approved by the AEA's board.

Vote: Nay: Angela English and Joshua Byrnes. The motion passed.

A report will be brought back to the State Board in November regarding next steps.

November 14, 2018: MBAEA Regular Board Meeting⁵⁸

Board and Committee Reports (p. 1)

Jennifer Coombes reported that the auditors finished their onsite work of the Agency's annual financial audit this week. It is anticipated that a preliminary report will be received late December/early January. The state audit is in the final review stage and the Agency has not been notified as to when to expect this report. Upon motion by Dick Wold, seconded by Joe Adam, the Treasurer's Report of receipts and disbursements to the various accounts to October 31, 2018, was approved as presented. Roll call vote was recorded: Yes: (6) Adam, Duytschaver, Krueger, Wolf, Wold, Masterson. No: (0). Motion carried.

Chief Administrator's Report (p. 2)

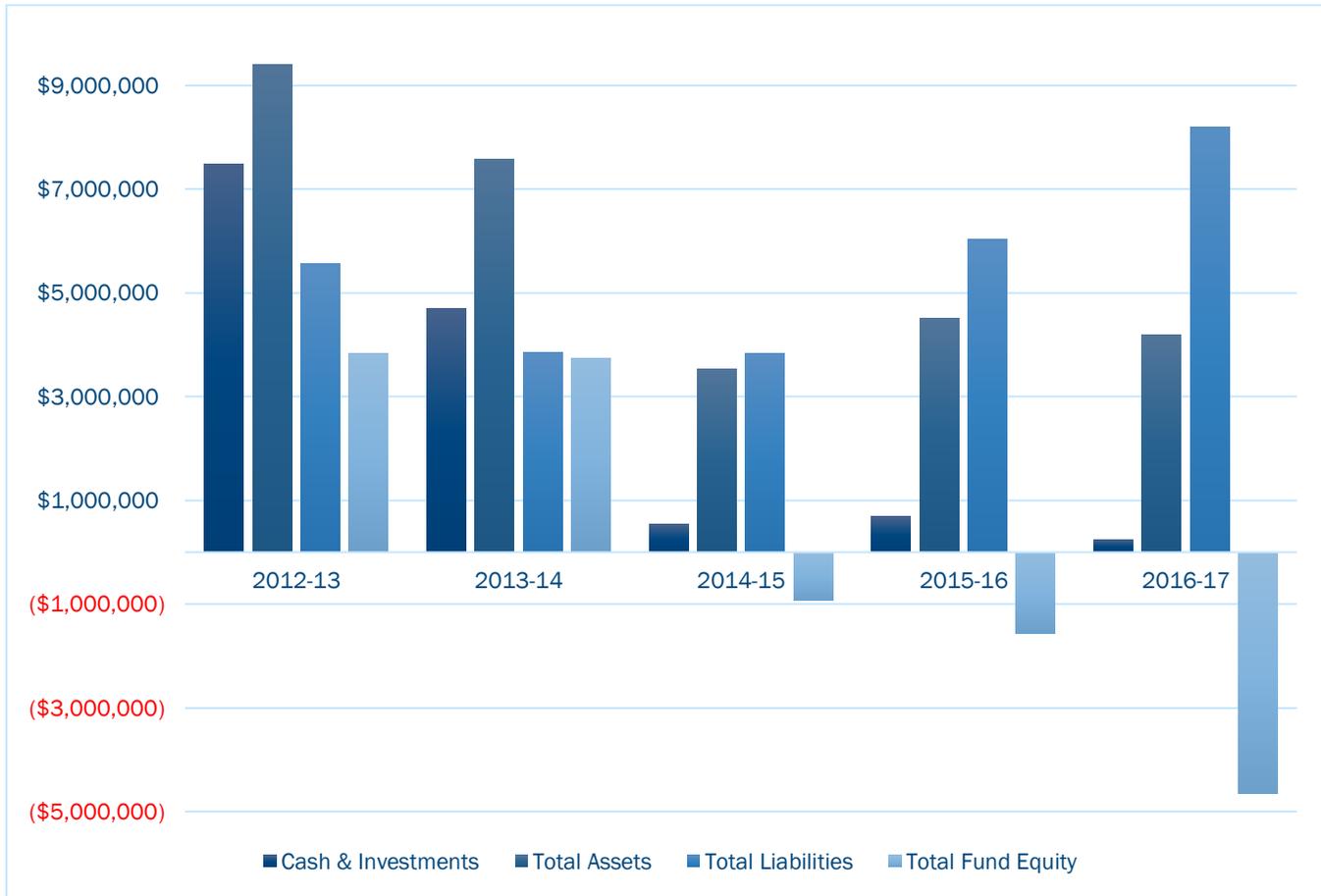
The DE will be conducting an Agency site visit on November 27-28, 2018. Mr. Decker will forward a copy of the interview schedule to board members.

Appendix E: Handouts Provided During Site Visit

During the Accreditation site visit from November 27-29, 2018, the following handouts were provided to specific interviewees as indicated:

1. **MBAEA Reported Finances from 2012-2013 to 2016-2017.** Handouts provided to the Business Manager, Chief Administrator, Education Services Director, Special Education Director, Executive Director of Equity Coordination, AEA Board Members, and superintendents.
2. **State Board Agenda Item 9: FY 2018-2019 Annual Budget Approval for MBAEA – Executive Summary.** Handouts provided to the Business Manager, Chief Administrator, Education Services Director, Special Education Director, Executive Director of Equity Coordination, AEA Board Members, and superintendents. In addition to the Executive Summary page, Table 3 of this report was provided. The content of Table 3 was originally provided to the State Board as an exhibit at the September 2018 meeting.

Handout #1: MBAEA Reported Finances from 2012-2013 to 2016-2017



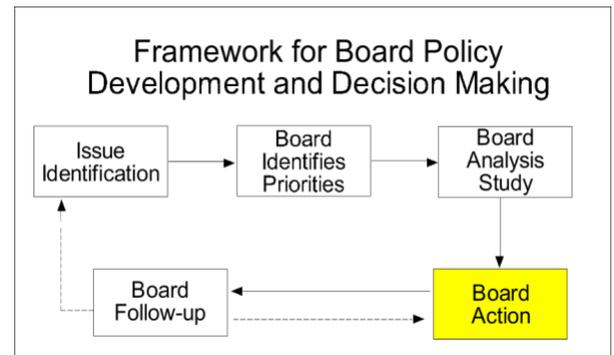
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Cash & Investments	\$7,489,005.19	\$4,693,266.57	\$542,596.62	\$683,345.07	\$245,966.71
Total Assets	\$9,400,759.71	\$7,586,097.01	\$3,539,548.30	\$4,508,732.09	\$4,183,882.33
Total Liabilities	\$5,570,746.64	\$3,849,212.72	\$3,837,909.81	\$6,035,860.88	\$8,198,181.50
Total Fund Equity	\$3,830,013.07	\$3,736,884.29	(\$926,176.99)	(\$1,564,937.09)	(\$4,656,459.64)

Handout #2: Iowa State Board of Education Agenda, September 2018, Item 9: FY 2018-2019 Annual Budget Approval for MBAEA – Executive Summary

Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

September 13, 2018



Agenda Item: Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Annual Budget Approval for Area Education Agencies – Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency

State Board Priority: All

State Board Role/Authority: Iowa Code section 273.3(12) authorizes the State Board to review the proposed budget of each area education agency (AEA) and either grant approval or return the budget without approval with comments of the State Board included. An unapproved budget shall be resubmitted to the State Board for final approval.

Presenter(s): Tom Cooley, Chief
Bureau of Finance, Facilities, Operation and Transportation Services
Amy J. Williamson, Chief
Bureau of School Improvement

Attachment(s): Four

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State board accept Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency's two-year budget plan, which has been approved by the AEA's board.

Background: Iowa Code section 273.3, subsection 12, requires that the State Board review the proposed budget of each AEA and either grant approval or return the budget without approval with comments by May 1. The State Board shall give final approval only to budgets submitted by AEAs accredited by the State Board or that have been given conditional accreditation by the State Board. Mississippi Bend AEA has been accredited for the 2017- 2018 fiscal year.

During its March meeting, the State Board returned the budget for Mississippi Bend AEA with comments that required the agency to provide an assurance in writing, no later than the May 10 meeting of the State Board, that the AEA will construct a plan to balance the budget within two years, and 2) submit the complete two-year budget plan, approved by the AEA board, no later than September 1, 2018. The State Board also directed the Department to conduct an on-site accreditation visit of the agency by September 1, 2019.

The assurance was presented as required at the May meeting. The Department received the agency's two-year budget plan on August 31, 2018. The budget was approved by the agency's board during its August 15 regular meeting.

Appendix F: Iowa Code Requirements for AEA's

Requirements for AEA's are found in Iowa Code chapter 273. Please note that the following sections of code are not the chapter in its totality but, instead, excerpts related to AEA requirements, duties of the administrator, and the duties and powers of AEA boards.

273.1 Intent.

It is the intent of the general assembly to provide an effective, efficient, and economical means of identifying and serving children from under five years of age through grade twelve who require special education and any other children requiring special education as defined in section 256B.2; to provide for media services and other programs and services for pupils in grades kindergarten through twelve and children requiring special education as defined in section 256B.2; to provide a method of financing the programs and services; and to avoid a duplication of programs and services provided by any other school corporation in the state; and to provide services to school districts under a contract with those school districts.

273.2 Area education agencies established—powers—services and programs.

1. There are established throughout the state fifteen area education agencies, each of which is governed by an area education agency board of directors. The boundaries of an area education agency shall not divide a school district. The director of the department of education shall change boundaries of area education agencies to take into account mergers of local school districts and changes in boundaries of local school districts, when necessary to maintain the policy of this chapter that a local school district shall not be a part of more than one area education agency.
2. An area education agency established under this chapter is a body politic as a school corporation for the purpose of exercising powers granted under this chapter, and may sue and be sued. An area education agency may hold property and execute purchase agreements within two years of a disaster as defined in section 29C.2, subsection 4, and lease-purchase agreements pursuant to section 273.3, subsection 7, and if the lease-purchase agreement exceeds ten years or the purchase price of the property to be acquired pursuant to a purchase or lease-purchase agreement exceeds twenty-five thousand dollars, the area education agency shall conduct a public hearing on the proposed purchase or lease-purchase agreement and receive approval from the area education agency board of directors and the state board of education or its designee before entering into the agreement.
3. The area education agency board shall furnish educational services and programs as provided in section 273.1, this section, sections 273.3 to 273.9, and chapter 256B to the pupils enrolled in public or nonpublic schools located within its boundaries which are on the list of accredited schools pursuant to section 256.11. The programs and services provided shall be at least commensurate with programs and services existing on July 1, 1974. The programs and services provided to pupils enrolled in nonpublic schools shall be comparable to programs and services provided to pupils enrolled in public schools within constitutional guidelines.
4. The area education agency board shall provide for special education services and media services for the local school districts in the area and shall encourage and assist school districts in the area to establish programs for gifted and talented children. The board shall assist in facilitating interlibrary loans of materials between school districts and other libraries.
5. The area education agency board may provide for the following programs and services to local school districts, and at the request of local school districts to providers of child development services who have received grants under chapter 256A from the child development coordinating council, within the limits of funds available:

- a. In-service training programs for employees of school districts and area education agencies, provided at the time programs and services are established they do not duplicate programs and services available in that area from the universities under the state board of regents and from other universities and four-year institutions of higher education in Iowa. The in-service training programs shall include but are not limited to regular training concerning mental or emotional disorders which may afflict children and the impact children with such disorders have upon their families.
 - b. Educational data processing pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 11.
 - c. Research, demonstration projects and models, and educational planning for children under five years of age through grade twelve and children requiring special education as defined in section 256B.2 as approved by the state board of education.
 - d. Auxiliary services for nonpublic school pupils as provided in section 256.12. However, if auxiliary services are provided their funding shall be based on the type of service provided.
 - e. Other educational programs and services for children under five years through grade twelve and children requiring special education as defined in section 256B.2 and for employees of school districts and area education agencies as approved by the state board of education.
6. The board of directors of an area education agency shall not establish programs and services which duplicate programs and services which are or may be provided by the community colleges under the provisions of chapter 260C. An area education agency shall contract, whenever practicable, with other school corporations for the use of personnel, buildings, facilities, supplies, equipment, programs, and services.
 7. The board of an area education agency or a consortium of two or more area education agencies shall contract with one or more licensed dietitians for the support of nutritional provisions in individual education plans developed in accordance with chapter 256B and to provide information to support school nutrition coordinators.
 8. The area education agency board shall collaborate with the department of education to provide a statewide infrastructure for educational data to create cost efficiencies, provide storage and disaster mitigation, and improve interconnectivity between schools and school districts. In addition, the area education agency boards shall work with the department to provide systemwide coordination in the implementation of the statewide longitudinal data system consistent with the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The area education agencies shall provide support to school districts' information technology infrastructure that is consistent with the statewide infrastructure for the educational data collaborative.
 9. The area education agency boards shall jointly develop a three-year statewide strategic plan that supports goals adopted by the state board of education pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 4, and the accreditation standards established pursuant to section 256.11; establish performance goals; and clearly identify the statewide efforts to improve student learning and create efficiencies in management operations for area education agencies and school districts. The statewide strategic plan shall be approved by the state board of education. The area education agency boards shall jointly provide the state board with annual updates on the performance measures.
 10. The area education agency board is encouraged to employ a child welfare liaison to provide services and guidance to local school districts to facilitate the efficient and effective transfer and enrollment of a child adjudicated under chapter 232 or receiving foster care services to another school district, including but not limited to guidance relating to the transfer of credit earned for coursework taken by the student, enrollment transition planning, facilitating information sharing between education and child welfare agencies, and developing systems designed to ameliorate the transition issues faced by a child adjudicated under chapter 232 or receiving foster care services who is transferring to and enrolling in a school district.

273.3 Duties and powers of area education agency board.

The board in carrying out the provisions of section 273.2 shall:

1. Determine the policies of the area education agency for providing programs and services.
2. Be authorized to receive and expend money for providing programs and services as provided in sections 273.1, 273.2, this section, sections 273.4 to 273.9, and chapters 256B and 257. All costs incurred in providing the programs and services, including administrative costs, shall be paid from funds received pursuant to sections 273.1, 273.2, this section, sections 273.4 to 273.9, and chapters 256B and 257.
3. Provide data and prepare reports as directed by the director of the department of education.
4. Provide for advisory committees as deemed necessary.
5. Be authorized, subject to rules of the state board of education, to provide directly or by contractual arrangement with public or private agencies for special education programs and services, media services, and educational programs and services requested by the local boards of education as provided in this chapter, including but not limited to contracts for the area education agency to provide programs or services to the local school districts and contracts for local school districts, other educational agencies, and public and private agencies to provide programs and services to the local school districts in the area education agency in lieu of the area education agency providing the services. Contracts may be made with public or private agencies located outside the state if the programs and services comply with the rules of the state board. Rules adopted by the state board of education shall be consistent with rules, adopted by the board of educational examiners, relating to licensing of practitioners.
6. Area education agencies may cooperate and contract between themselves and with other public agencies to provide special education programs and services, media services, and educational services to schools and children residing within their respective areas. Area education agencies may provide print and nonprint materials to public and private colleges and universities that have teacher education programs approved by the state board of education.
7. Be authorized to lease, purchase, or lease-purchase, subject to the approval of the state board of education or its designee and to receive by gift and operate and maintain facilities and buildings necessary to provide authorized programs and services. However, a lease for less than ten years and with an annual cost of less than twenty-five thousand dollars does not require the approval of the state board. The state board shall not approve a lease, purchase, or lease-purchase until the state board is satisfied by investigation that public school corporations within the area do not have suitable facilities available. A purchase of property that is not a lease-purchase may be made only within two years of a disaster as defined in section 29C.2, subsection 4, and subject to the requirements of this subsection.
8. Be authorized, subject to the approval of the director of the department of education, to enter into agreements for the joint use of personnel, buildings, facilities, supplies, and equipment with school corporations as deemed necessary to provide authorized programs and services.
9. Be authorized to make application for, accept, and expend state and federal funds that are available for programs of educational benefit approved by the director of the department of education, and cooperate with the department in the manner provided in federal-state plans or department rules in the effectuation and administration of programs approved by the director, or approved by other educational agencies, which agencies have been approved as state educational authorities.
10. Be authorized to perform all other acts necessary to carry out the provisions and intent of this chapter.
11. Employ personnel to carry out the functions of the area education agency which shall include the employment of an administrator who shall possess a license issued under chapter 272. The administrator shall be employed pursuant to section 279.20 and sections 279.23, 279.24, and 279.25. The salary for an area education agency administrator shall be established by the board based

upon the previous experience and education of the administrator. Section 279.13 applies to the area education agency board and to all teachers employed by the area education agency. Sections 279.23, 279.24, and 279.25 apply to the area education board and to all administrators employed by the area education agency. Section 279.69 applies to the area education agency board and employees of the board, including part-time, substitute, or contract employees, who provide services to a school or school district.

12. Prepare an annual budget estimating income and expenditures for programs and services as provided in sections 273.1, 273.2, this section, sections 273.4 to 273.9, and chapter 256B within the limits of funds provided under section 256B.9 and chapter 257. The board shall give notice of a public hearing on the proposed budget by publication in an official county newspaper in each county in the territory of the area education agency in which the principal place of business of a school district that is a part of the area education agency is located. The notice shall specify the date, which shall be not later than March 1 of each year, the time, and the location of the public hearing. The proposed budget as approved by the board shall then be submitted to the state board of education, on forms provided by the department, no later than March 15 preceding the next fiscal year for approval. The state board shall review the proposed budget of each area education agency and shall before May 1, either grant approval or return the budget without approval with comments of the state board included. An unapproved budget shall be resubmitted to the state board for final approval not later than May 15. The state board shall give final approval only to budgets submitted by area education agencies accredited by the state board or that have been given conditional accreditation by the state board.
13. Be authorized to pay, out of funds available to the board reasonable annual dues to an Iowa association of school boards. Membership shall be limited to those duly elected members of the area education agency board.
14. a. The board may establish a plan, in accordance with section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, as defined in section 422.3, for employees, which plan shall consist of one or more investment contracts, on a group or individual basis, acquired from a company, or a salesperson for that company, that is authorized to do business in this state.
15. The selection of investment contracts to be included within the plan established by the board shall be made either pursuant to a competitive bidding process conducted by the board, in coordination with employee organizations representing employees eligible to participate in the plan, or pursuant to an agreement with the department of administrative services to make available investment contracts included in a deferred compensation or similar plan established by the department pursuant to section 8A.438, which plan meets the requirements of this subsection. The determination of whether to select investment contracts for the plan pursuant to a competitive bidding process or by agreement with the department of administrative services shall be made by agreement between the board and the employee organizations representing employees eligible to participate in the plan.
 - b. The board may make elective deferrals in accordance with the plan as authorized by an eligible employee for the purpose of making contributions to the investment contract on behalf of the employee. The deferrals shall be made in the manner which will qualify contributions to the investment contract for the benefits under section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, as defined in section 422.3. In addition, the board may make nonelective employer contributions to the plan.
 - c. As used in this subsection, unless the context otherwise requires, "investment contract" shall mean a custodial account utilizing mutual funds or an annuity contract which meets the requirements of section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, as defined in section 422.3.
 - d. Be authorized to establish and pay all or any part of the cost of group health insurance plans, nonprofit group medical service plans and group life insurance plans adopted by the board for the benefit of employees of the area education agency, from funds available to the board.

16. Meet at least annually with the members of the boards of directors of the merged areas in which the area education agency is located to discuss coordination of programs and services and other matters of mutual interest to the boards.
17. Be authorized to issue warrants and anticipatory warrants pursuant to chapter 74. The applicable rate of interest shall be determined pursuant to sections 74A.2, 74A.3, and 74A.7. This subsection shall not be construed to authorize a board to levy a tax.
18. Be authorized to issue school credit cards allowing area education agency employees to pay for the actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of work-related duties.
19. Pursuant to rules adopted by the state board of education, be authorized to charge user fees for certain materials and services that are not required by law or by rules of the state board of education and are specifically requested by a school district or accredited nonpublic school.
20. Be authorized to purchase equipment as provided in [section 279.48](#).
21. Be authorized to sell, lease, or dispose of, in whole or in part, property belonging to the area education agency. Before the area education agency may sell property belonging to the agency, the board of directors shall comply with the requirements set forth in section 297.22. Before the board of directors of an area education agency may lease property belonging to the agency, the board shall obtain the approval of the director of the department of education.
22. Meet annually with the members of the boards of directors of the school districts located within its boundaries if requested by the school district boards.
23. By October 1 of each year, submit to the department of education the following information:
 - a. The contracted salary including bonus wages and benefits, annuity payments, or any other benefit for the administrators of the area education agency.
 - b. The contracted salary and benefits and any other expenses related to support for governmental affairs efforts, including expenditures for lobbyists and lobbying activities for the area education agency.
24. Be authorized to sell software and support services, professional development programs and materials, online professional development, and online training to entities other than school districts within the state and to school districts and other public agencies located outside of the state. The board may also sell to school districts within this state software and support services, professional development programs and materials, online professional development, and online training which the area education agency is not otherwise required to provide to a school district under this chapter or chapter 256B or 257.

273.4 Duties of administrator.

Under direction of the board of directors of the area education agency, the administrator of the area education agency shall, in addition to other duties:

1. Cooperate with boards of directors of local school districts of the area education agency in considering and developing plans for the improvement of the educational programs and services in the area education agency.
2. When requested, provide such other assistance as possible to school districts of the area education agency for the general improvement of their educational programs and operations.
3. Submit program plans each year to the department of education, for approval by the director of the department, to reflect the needs of the area education agency for media services as provided in section 273.6.

273.5 Special education.

There shall be established a division of special education of the area education agency which shall provide for special education programs and services to the local school districts. The division of special education shall be headed by a director of special education who meets certification standards of the department of education. The director of special education shall have the responsibility for implementation of state regulations and guidelines relating to special education programs and services. The director of special education shall have the following powers and duties:

1. Properly identify children requiring special education.
2. Insure that each child requiring special education in the area receives an appropriate special education program or service.
3. Assign appropriate weights for each child requiring special education programs or services as provided in section 256B.9.
4. Supervise special education support personnel.
5. Provide each school district within the area served and the department of education with a special education weighted enrollment count, including the additional enrollment because of special education for December 1 of each year.
6. Submit to the department of education special education instructional and support program plans and applications, subject to criteria listed in chapter 256B and this chapter, for approval by February 15 of each year for the school year commencing the following July 1.
7. Coordinate the special education program within the area served.

273.6 Media centers.

1. The media centers required under section 273.2 shall contain:
 - a. A materials lending library, consisting of print and nonprint materials.
 - b. A professional library.
 - c. A curriculum laboratory, including textbooks and correlated print and audiovisual materials.
 - d. Capability for production of media-oriented instructional materials.
 - e. Qualified media personnel.
 - f. Appropriate physical facilities.
 - g. Other materials and equipment deemed necessary by the department.
2. Program plans submitted by the area education agency to the department of education for approval by the state board of media centers under this subsection shall include all of the following:
 - a. Evidence that the services proposed are based upon an analysis of the needs of the local school districts in the area.
 - b. Description of the manner in which the services of the area education agency media center will be coordinated with other agencies and programs providing educational media.
 - c. Description of the means for delivery of circulation materials.
 - d. Evidence that the media center fulfills the requirements of subsection 1.

273.7 Additional services.

If sixty percent of the number of local school boards located in an area education agency, or if local school boards representing sixty percent of the enrollment in the school districts located in the agency, request in writing to the area education agency board that an additional service be provided them, for pupils in grades kindergarten through twelve or children requiring special education as defined in section 256B.2 or for employees or board members of school districts or area education agencies, the area education agency board shall arrange for the service to be provided to all school districts in the area within the financial capabilities of the area education agency.

273.7A Services to school districts.

1. The board of an area education agency may provide services to school districts located in the area education agency under contract with the school districts. These services may include, but are not limited to, superintendency services, personnel services, business management services, specialized maintenance services, and transportation services. In addition, the board of the area education agency may provide for furnishing expensive and specialized equipment for school districts. School districts shall pay to area education agencies the cost of providing the services.
2. The board of an area education agency may also provide services authorized to be performed by area education agencies to other area education agencies in this state and to provide a method of payment for these services.

273.8 Area education agency board of directors.

1. *Board of directors.* The board of directors of an area education agency shall consist of not less than five nor more than nine members, each a resident of and elected in the manner provided in this section from a director district that is approximately equal in population to the other director districts in the area education agency. Each director shall serve a four-year term which commences at the organization meeting.
2. *Election of directors.* Except as otherwise provided in subsection 3, the board of directors of an area education agency shall be elected by a vote of the members of the boards of directors of the local school districts located within the director district. The procedure for conducting the elections shall be as follows:
 - a. Notice of the election shall be published by the area education agency administrator not later than July 15 of the odd-numbered year in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the director district. The cost of publication shall be paid by the area education agency.
 - b. A candidate for election to the area education agency board shall file a statement of candidacy with the area education agency secretary not later than August 15 of the odd-numbered year, on forms prescribed by the department of education. The statement of candidacy shall include the candidate's name, address, and school district. The list of candidates shall be sent by the secretary of the area education agency in ballot form by certified mail to the presidents of the boards of directors of all school districts within the director district not later than September 1. In order for the ballot to be counted, the ballot must be received in the secretary's office by the end of the normal business day on September 30 or be clearly postmarked by an officially authorized postal service not later than September 29 and received by the secretary not later than noon on the first Monday following September 30.
 - c. The board of each separate school district that is located entirely or partially inside an area education agency director district shall cast a vote for director of the area education agency board based upon the ratio that the population of the school district, or portion of the school district, in the director district bears to the total population in the director district. The population of each school district or portion shall be determined by the department of

273.9 Funding.

1. School districts shall pay for the programs and services provided through the area education agency and shall include expenditures for the programs and services in their budgets, in accordance with this section.
2. School districts shall pay the costs of special education instructional programs with the moneys available to the districts for each child requiring special education, by application of the special education weighting plan in section 256B.9. Special education instructional programs shall be provided at the local level if practicable, or otherwise by contractual arrangements with the area education agency board as provided in section 273.3, subsection 5, but in each case the total money available through section 256B.9 and chapter 257 because of weighted enrollment for each child requiring special education instruction shall be made available to the district or agency which provides the special education instructional program to the child, subject to adjustments for transportation or other costs which may be paid by the school district in which the child is enrolled. Each district shall cooperate with its area education agency to provide an appropriate special education instructional program for each child who requires special education instruction, as identified and counted within the certification by the area director of special education or as identified by the area director of special education subsequent to the certification, and shall not provide a special education instructional program to a child who has not been so identified and counted within the certification or identified subsequent to the certification.
3. The costs of special education support services provided through the area education agency shall be funded as provided in chapter 257. Special education support services shall not be funded until the program plans submitted by the special education directors of each area education agency as required by section 273.5 are modified as necessary and approved by the director of the department of education according to the criteria and limitations of chapters 256B and 257.
4. The costs of media services provided through the area education agency shall not be funded until the program plans submitted by the administrators of each area education agency as required by section 273.4 are modified as necessary and approved by the director of the department of education according to the criteria of section 273.6.
5. The state board of education shall adopt rules under chapter 17A relating to the approval of program plans under this section.

273.10 Accreditation of area education programs.

1. The department of education shall develop, in consultation with the area education agencies, and establish an accreditation process for area education agencies by July 1, 1997. At a minimum, the accreditation process shall consist of the following:
 - a. The timely submission by an area education agency of information required by the department on forms provided by the department.
 - b. The use of an accreditation team appointed by the director of the department of education to conduct an evaluation, including an on-site visit of each area education agency. The team shall include, but is not limited to, department staff members, representatives from the school districts served by the area education agency being evaluated, area education agency staff members from area education agencies other than the area education agency that conducts the programs being evaluated for accreditation, and other team members with expertise as deemed appropriate by the director.

2. Prior to a visit to an area education agency, the accreditation team shall have access to that area education agency's program audit report filed with the department. After a visit to an area education agency, the accreditation team shall determine whether the accreditation standards for a program, including but not limited to standards established pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 54, have been met and shall make a report to the director and the state board, together with a recommendation as to whether the programs of the area education agency should receive initial accreditation or remain accredited. The accreditation team shall report strengths and weaknesses, if any, for each accreditation standard and shall advise the area education agency of available resources and technical assistance to further enhance the strengths and improve areas of weakness. An area education agency may respond to the accreditation team's report.
3. The state board of education shall determine whether a program of an area education agency shall receive initial accreditation or shall remain accredited.
 - a. Approval of area education agency programs by the state board shall be based upon the recommendation of the director of the department of education after a study of the factual and evaluative evidence on record about each area education agency program in terms of the accreditation standards adopted by the state board.
 - b. Approval, if granted, shall be for a term of five years. However, the state board may grant conditional approval for a term of less than five years if conditions warrant.
4. If the state board of education determines that an area education agency's program does not meet accreditation standards, the director of the department of education, in cooperation with the board of directors of the area education agency, shall establish a remediation plan prescribing the procedures that must be taken to correct deficiencies in meeting the program standards, and shall establish a deadline date for correction of the deficiencies. The remediation plan is subject to the approval of the state board.
5. The area education agency program shall remain accredited during the implementation of the remediation plan. The accreditation team shall visit the area education agency and shall determine whether the deficiencies in the standards for the program have been corrected and shall make a report and recommendation to the director and the state board of education. The state board shall review the report and recommendation and shall determine whether the deficiencies in the program have been corrected.
6.
 - a. If the deficiencies in an area education program have not been corrected, the agency board shall take one of the following actions within sixty days from removal of accreditation:
 - (1) Merge the deficient program with a program from another accredited area education agency.
 - (2) Contract with another area education agency or other public educational institution for purposes of program delivery.
 - b. The rules developed by the state board of education for the accreditation process shall include provisions for removal of accreditation, including provisions for proper notice to the administrator of the area education agency, each member of the board of directors of the area education agency, and the superintendents and administrators of the schools of the districts served by the area education agency.

273.11 Standards for accrediting area education programs.

1. The state board of education shall develop standards and rules for the accreditation of area education agencies. Standards shall be general in nature, but at a minimum shall identify requirements addressing the services provided by each division, as well as identifying indicators of quality that will permit area education agencies, school districts, the department of education, and the general public to judge accurately the effectiveness of area education agency services.

2. Standards developed shall include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Support for school-community planning, including a means of assessing needs, establishing shared direction and implementing program plans and reporting progress.
 - b. Professional development programs that respond to current needs.
 - c. Support for curriculum development, instruction, and assessment for reading, language arts, math and science, using research-based methodologies.
 - d. Special education compliance and support.
 - e. Management services, including financial reporting and purchasing as requested and funded by local districts.
 - f. Support for instructional media services that supplement and support local district media centers and services.
 - g. Support for school technology planning and staff development for implementing instructional technologies.
 - h. A program and services evaluation and reporting system.
 - i. Support for school district libraries in accordance with section 273.2, subsection 4.
 - j. Support for early childhood service coordination for families and children to meet health, safety, and learning needs.

273.12 Funds — use restricted.

Funds generated for educational services shall not be expended by an area education agency for the purpose of assisting either a public employer or employee organization in collective bargaining negotiations under chapter 20 if the public employer is a school district, or the employee organization consists of employees of a school district, located within the boundaries of the area education agency.

273.13 Administrative expenditures.

The administrative expenditures as a percent of an area education agency's general fund for a base year shall not exceed five percent. Annually, the board of directors shall certify to the department of education the amounts of the area education agency's expenditures and its general fund. For the purposes of this section, "base year" means the same as defined in section 257.2, and "administrative expenditures" means expenditures for executive administration.

273.14 Emergency repairs.

When emergency repairs costing more than the competitive bid threshold in section 26.3, or the adjusted competitive bid threshold established in section 314.1B, subsection 2, are necessary in order to ensure the use of an area education agency facility, the provisions of law with reference to advertising for bids shall not apply within two years of a disaster as defined in section 29C.2, subsection 2, and the area education agency board may contract for such emergency repairs without advertising for bids. However, before such emergency repairs can be made to an area education agency facility, the state board of education or its designee must certify that such emergency repairs are necessary to ensure the use of the area education agency facility.

273.15 Advisory group.

1. The board of directors of each area education agency shall appoint an advisory group to make recommendations on policy, programs, and services to the board. The advisory group shall provide input, feedback, and recommendations to the board regarding projected future needs, and shall provide are view and response to any state-directed study or task force report on area education agency efficiencies or reorganization.

2. The advisory group shall consist of the following:
 - a. A minimum of three superintendents employed by school districts served by the area education agency, at least one of whom shall represent a small school district, at least one of whom shall represent a medium-sized school district, and at least one of whom shall represent a large school district.
 - b. A minimum of three principals employed by school districts served by the area education agency, at least one of whom shall represent an elementary school, at least one of whom shall represent a middle school, and at least one of whom shall represent a high school.
 - c. A minimum of four teachers employed by school districts served by the area education agency, at least one of whom shall represent early childhood teachers, at least one of whom shall represent elementary school teachers, at least one of whom shall represent middle school teachers, and at least one of whom shall represent high school teachers. At least one of the teachers appointed shall also represent special education and at least one of the teachers appointed shall represent general education. At least one of the teachers appointed shall represent related personnel, including but not limited to media and technology specialists and counselors.
 - d. A minimum of three parents or guardians of school age children receiving services from the area education agency, at least one of whom shall be the parent or guardian of a child requiring special education.
 - e. One member who represents accredited nonpublic schools located within the boundaries of the area education agency.
3. In appointing members of the advisory group pursuant to subsection 2, the area education agency shall collaborate with the superintendents and school boards of the school districts served by the area education agency.
4. All member appointments made pursuant to subsection 2 shall comply with sections 69.16, 69.16A, and 69.16C. In addition, every reasonable effort shall be made to appoint members to provide balanced representation based on age, experience, ethnicity, district size, and geography.

The advisory group shall meet at least twice annually and shall submit its recommendations in a report to the board of directors of the area education agency at least once annually. The report shall be timely submitted to allow for consideration of the recommendations prior to program planning and budgeting for the following fiscal year.

Appendix G: Accreditation of AEAs (IAC 281–72)

281–72.1(273) Scope. The purpose of Iowa’s early childhood through twelfth grade educational system is to support learning for all students. Area education agencies, as part of that system, exist to provide leadership and equitable services for school improvement to schools and school districts in order to enable every learner to perform at higher education levels. Area education agencies are subject to accreditation by the state board of education as specified in Iowa Code section 273.10. These rules apply to the accreditation of area education agencies.

281–72.3(273) Accreditation components.

To be accredited by the board and maintain accreditation status, an AEA shall: provide services which meet the standards defined in rule 281–72.4(273), establish a comprehensive improvement plan as defined in rule 281–72.9(273), submit a board-approved annual budget as defined in subrule 72.10(1), and annually provide a progress report as defined in subrule 72.10(2).

281–72.4(273) Standards for services.

An AEA shall provide services that meet these standards as evidenced by, but not limited to, the descriptors following each standard. These services shall be accessible to all schools and school districts within the agency’s service region.

72.4(1) The AEA shall deliver services for school-community planning. The AEA assists schools and school districts in assessing needs of all students, developing collaborative relationships among community agencies, establishing shared direction, implementing actions to meet goals, and reporting progress towards goals.

72.4(2) The AEA shall deliver professional development services for schools, school districts and AEA instructional, administrative, and support personnel. The AEA anticipates and responds to schools’ and school districts’ needs; supports proven and emerging educational practices; aligns with school and school district comprehensive long-range and annual improvement goals; uses adult learning theory; supports improved teaching; uses theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching; and addresses professional development activities as required by the Iowa Code or administrative rules.

72.4(3) The AEA shall deliver curriculum, instruction, and assessment services that address the areas of reading, language arts, mathematics, and science but may also be applied to other curriculum areas. These services support the development, implementation, and assessment of rigorous content standards in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science. The AEA assists schools and school districts in gathering and analyzing student achievement data as well as data about the learning environment, compares those data to the external knowledge base, and uses that information to guide school and school district goal setting and implementation of actions to improve student learning.

72.4(4) The AEA shall address the diverse learning needs of all children and youth, including but not limited to services which address gifted and talented students, and meet the unique needs of students with disabilities who require special education. Services provide support to schools and school districts and include special education compliance with Iowa administrative rules for special education.

72.4(5) The AEA shall provide services that support multicultural, gender-fair approaches to the educational program pursuant to Iowa Code section 256.11. These services assist schools and school districts to take actions that ensure all students are free from discriminatory acts and practices; to establish policies and take actions that ensure all students are free from harassment; to incorporate into the educational program instructional strategies and student activities related to responsibilities, rights, and the respect for diversity which are necessary for successful citizenship in a diverse community and a global economy; and to incorporate on an ongoing basis activities within professional development that prepare and assist all employees to work effectively with diverse learners.

72.4(6) The AEA shall deliver media services. These services align with school and school district needs, support effective instruction, and provide consultation, research and information services, instructional resources, and materials preparation and dissemination to assist schools and school districts to meet the learning needs of all students and support local district media services. These services support the implementation of content standards in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science. These services also support and integrate emerging technology.

72.4(7) The AEA shall supplement and support effective instruction for all students through school technology services. These services provide technology planning, technical assistance, and professional development, and support the incorporation of instructional technologies to improve student achievement. These services support the implementation of content standards in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science. These services support and integrate emerging technology.

72.4(8) The AEA shall deliver services that develop leadership based upon the Iowa Standards for School Administrators as adopted by the board of educational examiners. Leadership services assist with recruitment, induction, retention, and professional development of educational leaders. AEAs develop and deliver leadership programs based on local and state educational needs and best practices.

72.4(9) The AEA shall deliver management services if requested. If the AEA provides management services to school districts, the services shall conform to the provisions of Iowa Code section 273.7A.

281—72.9(273) Comprehensive improvement plan.

Each AEA, on a cycle established by the department, shall submit to the department a comprehensive improvement plan. The plan shall be the basis for the improvement actions taken by the agency and shall also serve as a basis for the comprehensive site visit.

72.9(1) Comprehensive improvement plan contents. At a minimum, the comprehensive improvement plan for an AEA shall include the following:

a. *Needs assessment.* The plan shall contain a description of how the AEA conducts ongoing needs assessment.

b. *Needs assessment summary.* The plan shall contain a summary of the findings from agencywide needs assessment. The summary, at a minimum, shall include the following:

(1) Findings from AEA internal needs assessment which includes, at a minimum, four indicators of improvement:

1. Implementation of a continuous improvement model;
2. Implementation of services that respond to schools' and school districts' needs;
3. Demonstration of proactive leadership;
4. Use of data to implement actions to improve student learning;

(2) Findings from school and school district state indicator data;

(3) Findings from reviews of school and school district comprehensive school improvement plans;

(4) Findings from the department's comprehensive site visit reports to schools and school districts;

(5) Findings from AEA comprehensive site visit reports; and

(6) Findings from the department's statewide customer service survey.

c. *Agencywide goals.* The plan shall contain agencywide goals developed as a result of needs assessment findings. Agencywide goals shall be measurable and, at a minimum, focused on assisting schools and school districts with the school improvement process and improving teaching and learning as evidenced in the indicators of quality as prescribed in subrule 72.10(2).

d. *Services.* The plan shall describe the services developed to meet agencywide goals and to meet the standards defined in this chapter.

e. *Action plans.* The plan shall include agencywide actions to accomplish agencywide goals. Action plans shall include evidence of meeting all standards for services. Action plans shall include provisions for equitable availability of services. The agencywide action plans shall include, at a minimum, the following components:

- (1) Agencywide data sources;

- (2) Agencywide baseline data;
 - (3) Services to meet the agencywide goals;
 - (4) Agencywide resources, which include funding, staff allocation, and time and may be delivered directly, through contractual agreements, and through collaborative arrangements with other educational or community agencies;
 - (5) Agencywide responsible parties that will monitor the implementation of services in the action plan;
 - (6) A system for measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of services; and
 - (7) A process for reporting progress toward agencywide goals.
- f. Provisions for management services.* If the AEA provides management services to school districts, the plan shall include a description of how the agency provides those services as described in Iowa Code section 273.7A.
- g. Professional development plan.* The plan shall contain a summary of the agencywide professional development plan developed pursuant to 281—subrule 83.6(2).

72.9(2) Plan submission and cycle. Rescinded IAB 9/5/01, effective 10/10/01.

72.9(3) Comprehensive improvement plan review process. The comprehensive improvement plan of an AEA shall be reviewed by the department to determine if the plan meets the requirements of this chapter. An AEA will be provided reasonable time to correct any deficiencies.

281—72.10(273) Annual budget and annual progress report.

Each AEA shall submit to the board an annual budget as required by Iowa Code section 273.3 and shall provide an annual progress report on the indicators of quality and the agencywide goals.

72.10(1) Annual budget. An annual budget shall be submitted by an AEA accredited by the board or an AEA that has been given conditional accreditation by the board as described in Iowa Code section 273.3(12) and subrule 72.11(4) to the board for approval, on forms provided by the department, no later than March 15 preceding the next fiscal year. The board shall review the proposed budget and shall, before April 1, either grant approval or return the budget without approval with comments of the board included. An unapproved budget shall be resubmitted to the board for final approval no later than April 15.

72.10(2) Annual progress report. An AEA shall annually submit a written progress report to its schools and school districts and the department and make the report available to the public. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

a. Agencywide goals. Progress, at a minimum, toward the agencywide goals described in paragraph 72.9(1)“c” shall be reported. This progress shall include agencywide baseline data and changes in the baseline data as a result of services provided in each action plan.

b. Indicators of quality. Aggregated agencywide data shall include baseline data and trends over time for the following indicators of quality from, at a minimum, the state indicators, the statewide customer service survey, school and school district comprehensive school improvement plans, and school and school district annual progress reports:

(1) Targeted assistance. An AEA assists schools and school districts with specific student, teacher, and school needs evidenced in local school improvement plans by:

1. Addressing teacher, school and school district needs.
2. Responding to student learning needs.

(2) Improved student learning. An AEA assists schools and school districts in:

1. Improving student achievement in mathematics.
2. Improving student achievement in reading.
3. Improving student achievement in science.
4. Reducing student achievement gaps in mathematics.
5. Reducing student achievement gaps in reading.
6. Reducing student achievement gaps in science.
7. Reducing dropout rates.

8. Preparing students for postsecondary success.
9. Planning to ensure that students complete a core program.
- (3) Improved teaching. An AEA assists schools and school districts in improving teaching in the following areas:
 1. Mathematics.
 2. Reading.
 3. Science.
- (4) Resource management. An AEA assists schools and school districts:
 1. By delivering cost-efficient services.
 2. By timely delivery of services.
- (5) Customer satisfaction with services. An AEA determines customer satisfaction through:
 1. High levels of participation.
 2. High levels of customer satisfaction with quality of AEA services.
- (6) *Annual progress report review process*. The annual progress report of an AEA shall be reviewed by a team appointed by the director. Following the review of an AEA's report, feedback will be provided to the agency.

281–72.11(273) Comprehensive site visit.

72.11(1) *On-site review.* An accreditation team shall conduct one or more on-site reviews of the AEA's progress toward agencywide goals and shall determine if services meet the standards in this chapter. Prior to an on-site review of an AEA, the accreditation team shall have access to the AEA's comprehensive improvement plan, annual progress report, and annual budget as well as any other information collected by the department relating to the AEA.

72.11(2) *Accreditation team.* The membership of the accreditation team shall be determined by the director. Each team member should have appropriate competencies, background, and experiences to enable the member to contribute to the evaluation visit. The team shall include at least four members, including, but not limited to:

- a. Department staff.
- b. Representatives from various sizes of schools and school districts served by the AEA being evaluated.
- c. AEA staff from other AEAs.
- d. Others with expertise as deemed appropriate by the director.

72.11(3) *Accreditation team action.* After an on-site review of an AEA, the accreditation team shall determine whether the requirements of this chapter have been met and shall make a report to the director identifying which standards and other accreditation requirements in this chapter an AEA has or has not met. The accreditation team shall report strengths and weaknesses, if any, for each standard or requirement, and shall advise the AEA of available resources and technical assistance to further enhance the strengths and improve areas of weakness. An AEA may respond to the accreditation team's report by providing to the board factual information concerning its services.

72.11(4) *Accreditation.* All AEAs shall be deemed accredited upon the date of implementation of these rules. Accreditation of an AEA by the board shall be based on the recommendation of the director after study of the factual and evaluative evidence on record about the standards and other requirements as described in this chapter and based upon the timely submission of information required by the department. If, at any time, the board determines that an AEA has not met all standards and other requirements, the board shall require the AEA to address the deficiencies.

a. *Accreditation status.* After completion of the comprehensive site visit under rule 281–72.11(273), the board shall grant continuation of accreditation if all standards and other requirements are met. If the board determines that an AEA has not met all standards and other requirements, the board shall grant conditional accreditation to the agency.

b. Conditional accreditation. If the board grants conditional accreditation, the department shall notify the administrator of the AEA and each member of the board of directors of the AEA within 15 days. The notice shall contain a description of the accreditation deficiencies.

c. Remediation plan. Upon granting of conditional accreditation by the board, the director, in cooperation with the board of directors of the AEA, shall establish a remediation plan. The remediation plan shall describe how the AEA will correct deficiencies to meet accreditation standards and shall establish a timeline and deadline date for correction of the deficiencies. The remediation plan is subject to the approval of the board. The AEA shall remain conditionally accredited during the implementation of the remediation plan.

d. Implementation of remediation plan. At intervals prescribed in the remediation plan or at the request of the director, the accreditation team shall revisit the AEA and shall determine whether the deficiencies in the accreditation standards are being or have been corrected and shall make a report and recommendation to the director and the board. The board shall review this report and recommendations and shall determine whether the deficiencies have been corrected.

e. Failure to correct deficiencies. If the deficiencies have not been corrected within the time stipulated in the remediation plan, the board shall remove accreditation of the agency. At the hearing before the board, the AEA may be represented by counsel and may present evidence. The board may provide for the hearing to be recorded or reported. If requested by the AEA at least 10 days before the hearing, the board shall provide for the hearing to be recorded or reported at the expense of the AEA. Within 30 days after the hearing, the board shall render a written decision approving or removing the accreditation. Action by the board at this time is final agency action for the purposes of Iowa Code chapter 17A. The department shall notify the administrator of the AEA, each member of the board of directors of the AEA, and the schools and school districts served by the AEA of the decision of the board.

f. Required response to removal of accreditation. After removal of accreditation of the agency, the AEA board of directors shall make provisions for the continuation of services to schools and school districts subject to approval by the state board of education.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 273.10.

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