

Legislative Report

Virtual Schools in Iowa Annual Report



January 15, 2019

State of Iowa
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

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OVERVIEW

I. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

During the 2018 legislative session, lawmakers amended Iowa Code 256.7 with Senate File 475, which removes open enrollment caps, removes restrictions allowing open enrollment only to CAM and Clayton Ridge Community School District academies whose educational instruction and course content are delivered primarily over the internet, and removes the requirement that the Iowa Department of Education conduct annual surveys of not less than ten percent of the total number of students enrolled. Additionally, Senate File 475 no longer requires the Department to collaborate with the International Association for K-12 Online Learning regarding the collection of data.

Iowa Code 256.7(32) (e) and Senate File 475 established the following requirements. *The State Board shall:*

- (1) Adopt rules which require that educational instruction and course content delivered primarily over the internet be aligned with the Iowa core standards as applicable. Under such rules, a school district may develop and offer to students enrolled in the district educational instruction and course content for delivery primarily over the internet. A school district providing educational instruction and course content that are delivered primarily over the internet shall annually submit to the department, in the manner prescribed by the department, data that includes but is not limited to the following:*
 - (a) Student achievement and demographic characteristics.*
 - (b) Retention rates.*
 - (c) The percentage of enrolled students' active participation in extracurricular activities.*
 - (d) Academic proficiency levels, consistent with requirements applicable to all school districts and accredited nonpublic schools in this state.*
 - (e) Academic growth measures, which shall include either of the following:*
 - (i) Entry and exit assessments in, at a minimum, math and English for elementary and middle school students, and additional subjects, including science, for high school students.*
 - (ii) State-required assessments that track year-over-year improvements in academic proficiency.*
 - (f) Academic mobility. To facilitate the tracking of academic mobility, school districts shall request the following information from the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in educational instruction and course content that are delivered primarily over the internet.*
 - (i) For a student newly enrolling, the reasons for choosing such enrollment.*
 - (ii) For a student terminating enrollment, the reasons for terminating such enrollment.*
 - (g) Student progress toward graduation. Measurement of such progress shall account for specific characteristics of each enrolled student, including but not limited to age and course credit accrued prior to enrollment in educational instruction and course*

content that are delivered primarily over the internet, and shall be consistent with evidence-based best practices.

(2) The department shall compile and review the data collected pursuant to this paragraph “c” and shall submit its findings and recommendations for the continued delivery of educational instruction and course content by school districts delivered primarily over the internet, in a report to the general assembly by January 15 annually.

The Department received the demographic data, student achievement, retention rates, participation, academic proficiency, academic growth, academic mobility, and progress toward graduation from both the Iowa Connections Academy at CAM Community School District (hereinafter “ICA”) and Iowa Virtual Academy at Clayton Ridge Community School District (hereinafter “IVA”) for the 2017-2018 school year. The data are presented in this report.

II. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA - SCHOOL YEAR 2018-2019

Demographic information, number of students, for both IACA and IAVA are presented below.

Characteristic	IACA	IAVA
Enrollment	614	433
Male	261	191
Female	353	242
Asian	*	*
African-American	14	35
Hispanic	44	35
Multiracial	38	*
Native American	*	*
Pacific Islander	*	*
White	506	352
English Language Learner	*	*
504 Plan	66	21
Students with individualized education program (IEP)	39	34
Free-Reduced Lunch Eligible	248	173

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates that there are fewer than ten students in that particular cell. No data will be publicly reported for those cells, to protect student privacy pursuant to state and federal law.

III. ACADEMIC DATA - SCHOOL YEAR 2017-2018 (MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE)

Achievement data, percent proficient based on the Iowa Assessments, including alternate assessment scores, in reading, math, and science for both IACA and IAVA are presented below. Results are calculated for all grade levels served combined.

	Reading	Math	Science
IACA	80.6	66.8	74.1
IAVA	68.2	59.6	57.6

IACA – Academic Proficiency Levels by Subgroup, percent proficient based on the Iowa Assessments

	Male	Female	ELL	Low SES	504	IEP
Reading	75.3	84.5	*	74.6	84.8	38.7
Math	63.3	69.4	*	57.3	73.3	16.7
Science	71.2	76.2	*	64.4	78.3	36.7

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates that there are fewer than ten students in that particular cell. No data will be publicly reported for those cells, to protect student privacy pursuant to state and federal law. English language learners (ELL), low socioeconomic status (SES), 504, individualized education program (IEP)

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American/Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	Multiple Race/Ethnicity
Reading	81.2	64.3	88.5	*	*	*	66.7
Math	68.7	28.6	69.2	*	*	*	52.9
Science	76.5	35.7	80.8	*	*	*	55.6

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates that there are fewer than ten students in that particular cell. No data will be publicly reported for those cells, to protect student privacy pursuant to state and federal law.

IAVA – Academic Proficiency Levels by Subgroup, percent proficient based on the Iowa Assessments

	Male	Female	ELL	Low SES	504	IEP
Reading	58.7	76.8	*	50	*	33.3
Math	56.8	62.2	*	43.8	*	41.7
Science	48.3	64.9	*	25	*	25

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates that there are fewer than ten students in that particular cell. No data will be publicly reported for those cells, to protect student privacy pursuant to state and federal law. English language learners (ELL), low socioeconomic status (SES), 504, individualized education program (IEP)

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American/Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	Multiple Race/Ethnicity
Reading	70.1	37.5	*	*	*	*	*
Math	62.4	25	*	*	*	*	*
Science	58.6	42.9	*	*	*	*	*

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates that there are fewer than ten students in that particular cell. No data will be publicly reported for those cells, to protect student privacy pursuant to state and federal law.

IV. RETENTION RATES - SCHOOL YEAR 2017-2018

Retention rates, defined as the percent of students who return to the school this year from the previous year, for both IACA and IAVA are presented below. Over half of students who attended each online academy in the preceding school year returned in 2016-2017.

	Percent of Students
IACA	54
IAVA	58

V. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES - SCHOOL YEAR 2017-2018

Extracurricular activity data, percent of students participating in extracurricular activities, for both IACA and IAVA are presented below.

	Percent of Students
IACA	24
IAVA	17

VI. ACADEMIC GROWTH – FOUR YEAR TREND

Academic growth data, percent proficient based on the Iowa Assessments, including alternate assessment scores, in reading, math, and science for both IACA and IAVA are presented below. The percent proficient in reading, math, and science in both online academies has declined between 2014-2015 and 2017-2018.

Reading – Percent Proficient

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
IACA	87.7	76.1	85.4	80.6
IAVA	74.2	68.9	71.8	68.2

Math – Percent Proficient

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
IACA	84.2	66.5	71.7	66.8
IAVA	66.9	52.3	63.8	59.6

Science – Percent Proficient

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
IACA	87.1	71.6	79.3	74.1
IAVA	75	33.3	72.0	57.6

VII. ACADEMIC MOBILITY - SCHOOL YEAR 2017-2018

Enrollment data, percent of newly enrolled students choosing such enrollment for specified reason, for both IACA and IAVA are presented below.

	IACA	IAVA
Anyplace/Anytime Learning	34	20
Illness/Injury	17	11
Bullying/Harassment	10	35
More/Less Course Selection	4	0
Under Credit/Overage	9	0
More/Less Personalized Learning	7	17
Miscellaneous	19	17

Enrollment termination data, percent of students choosing to terminate their enrollment for specified reason, for both IACA and IAVA are presented below.

	IACA	IAVA
Anyplace/Anytime Learning	11	3

	IACA	IAVA
Illness/Injury	0	8
Bullying/Harassment	0	0
More/Less Course Selection	11	0
Under Credit/Overage	1	0
More/Less Personalized Learning	20	11
Miscellaneous	57	78

VIII. PROGRESS TOWARD GRADUATION – SCHOOL YEAR 2017-2018

Progress toward graduation data, percent of students on track for graduation, for both IACA and IAVA are presented below.

	IACA	IAVA
First Year High School Students	71	56
Second Year High School Students	57	71
Third Year High School Students	68	63
Fourth Year High School Students	76	73
Fifth Year Plus High School Students	50	0

IX. CONCLUSION

As required by legislation, both IACA and IAVA have submitted the required and available data to the Department for school year 2017-2018. The evidence submitted supports that IACA and IAVA are continuing to operate schools with educational instruction and course content delivered primarily over the internet.

The percent of students proficient in reading, math, and science in both districts' online programs decreased this school year. Just over half of students that attended either of the programs during the 2016-2017 school year chose to attend again during the 2017-2018 school year. Of high school students, the percent on-track for graduation ranges from a low of 56 percent for first-year high school students at IAVA to a high of 76 percent for fourth-year students at IACA. It is difficult to tell from enrollment termination information why students are choosing to leave either academy, with a large percentage of the responses falling in the miscellaneous category for IAVA students. The largest percentage of enrollment termination for IACA was "More/Less Personalized Learning." All of these pieces of information, taken together with results from last year's review, would again suggest that it may be beneficial to determine (a) to what extent each district is working through its virtual academy to provide an evidence-based multi-tiered system of supports that will support student achievement, (b) what work each district is doing within its virtual academy to support on-time graduation, and (c) if a revised survey/method of collection on termination of enrollment would glean better information.