

AREA SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

HISTORY

Iowa has had a long history of leadership in the junior college movement in the United States. The first public community or junior college in Iowa was organized as a department of the public schools in Mason City and began operation in September 1918. It was established without legal sanction, as there was no law in the statute books at the time authorizing the organization of junior colleges as part of the public school system. The following year, 1919, Mason City Junior College received accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

Burlington Junior College was organized in 1920. From then on the movement spread rapidly, and by 1939, at least thirty-two towns and cities in Iowa had organized junior colleges as a part of their public school systems. The junior college movement in Iowa reached its crest in 1927, during which year nine public junior colleges were organized. After 1930, no more public junior colleges were organized until 1946, when Clinton Junior College was organized.

The first law authorizing the establishment of public junior colleges was enacted in 1927 by the 42nd General Assembly. This law permitted the establishment of schools of higher order than an approved four-year high school course when duly authorized by the voters and approved by the state superintendent of public instruction. Such schools were able to include courses of study covering one or two years of work in advance of that offered by an accredited four-year high school.

Legislation approved by the 44th General Assembly in 1931 initiated the first restriction to the development of public junior colleges. This legislation prohibited the establishment of a public junior college in any school district having a population of less than twenty thousand. The 49th General Assembly in 1941 reduced this population requirement from twenty thousand to five thousand.

In 1949, the 53rd General Assembly established the concept of general state aid to public junior colleges by approving the payment of twenty-five cents per day of attendance for each junior college student enrolled for twelve or more semester hours of work. In 1957, the 57th General Assembly increased this amount to one dollar per day. State aid was later increased by the 59th General Assembly, in 1961, to one dollar and fifty cents per day for non-resident students.

From 1918 to 1953, thirty-five different public junior colleges were established under the operation of local public school districts. Some of these colleges later closed, although ten of the closed colleges reopened at later dates. The enrollment trend of the public junior colleges steadily increased over the years, although there were some exceptions to this trend such as the years during World War II. During the decade, 1955-1965, which immediately preceded the initiation of the area schools, enrollment of public junior colleges doubled.

By the year 1965, there were a total of sixteen public junior colleges operating in Iowa. The total full-time enrollment during the fall semester of the school year 1965-66 was 9,098. These public junior colleges were operated by local public school districts and were administered by a dean who reported directly to the superintendent of the local school district. The colleges offered college parallel programs equivalent to the first two years of a baccalaureate program and a limited number of occupational programs and adult education opportunities.

The names and dates of organization of the sixteen public community or junior colleges operating in Iowa immediately prior to development of the area schools are listed below:

Mason City Junior College	1918
Burlington Community College	1920
Fort Dodge Community College	1921
Clarinda Community College	1923
Estherville Junior College	1924
Creston Junior College	1926
Webster City Junior College	1926
Boone Junior College	1927
Marshalltown Community College	1927
Eagle Grove Junior College	1928
Ellsworth Community College (Iowa Falls)	1929
Muscatine Community College	1929
Centerville Community College	1930
Emmetsburg Community College	1930
Clinton Junior College	1946
Keokuk Community College	1953

Other community and junior colleges that have operated in Iowa but were discontinued prior to 1965 are:

Town	Date Established	Closed	Reopened	Closed
Grundy Center	1921	1929		
Red Oak	1922	1943	1945	1951
Waukon	1923	1948		
Sheldon	1926	1943	1945	1951
Washington	1926	1943	1946	1951
Albia	1927	1943		
Britt	1927	1943	1947	1951
Chariton	1927	1943		
Cresco	1927	1929		
Osceola	1927	1943		
Sioux City*	1927	1928		
Tipton	1927	1943		
Maquoketa	1927	1943		
Bloomfield	1928	1943	1945	1949
Earlham	1928	1931		
Independence	1928	1943		
Manchester	1928	1929		
Clarion	1929	1930		
Elkader	1929	1948		
Perry	1947	1948		

*Existing records are not clear as to whether the Sioux City Junior College was a public or private junior college. Consequently this college has not been included in the total number of public junior colleges.

The sixteen public junior colleges operating in 1965 were located for the most part in small communities which naturally curtailed the tax base for the support of the college and the bonding capacity which was essential for the construction of adequate physical facilities. According to the 1960 census, not one of the sixteen was located in any of the seven most populous counties in the state.

A parallel movement to the public junior colleges for providing vocational education was initiated in the 1960's as a result of Title VIII of the National Defense Education Act approved by Congress in 1958. Federal funds, as a result of this Act, were made available to states on a matching basis for the development of area vocational programs. The Iowa State Board of Public Instruction implemented this legislation by modifying the state plan for vocational education to make local school districts as well as Iowa State University eligible to operate as "area" schools. A total of fifteen schools were eventually designated as area vocational-technical schools by the Iowa State Board of Public Instruction. The total full-time day students enrolled in vocational education programs for school year 1965-66 was 1,815; the majority of these students attended the area vocational-technical schools.

By the year 1965, there were a total of fifteen schools that were designated as area vocational-technical high schools or programs. The names of these schools are listed below:

Ames Community School District	Des Moines Independent Community School District
Burlington Community School District	Fort Dodge Community School District
Cedar Rapids Community School District	Iowa State University
Centerville Community School District	Mason City Community School District
Clarinda Community School District	Ottumwa Community School District
Clinton Community School District	Sioux City Community School District
Council Bluffs Community School District	Waterloo Community School District
Davenport Community School District	

The 61st General Assembly in 1965 approved legislation (Senate File 550, Acts of the Iowa 61st General Assembly which became Chapter 280A, **Code of Iowa**) permitting the development of a statewide system of post-secondary educational institutions operated under the direction of the Iowa State Board of Public Instruction. These institutions were officially designated as area schools and were to be organized by merged areas which included two or more counties. The boards of education of county systems were authorized to plan for the merger of county school systems or parts thereof to develop a merged area. Each merged area was required to have a minimum of at least 4,000 public and private pupils in grades 9 through 12.

The merged areas were authorized to develop area schools as either area community colleges or area vocational schools. The statement of philosophy contained in the original enabling legislation and amended in 1967 by the 62nd General Assembly (Senate File 616, Acts of the Iowa 62nd General Assembly) identified the following categories as appropriate educational opportunities and services to be provided by the area schools.

1. The first two years of college work including pre-professional education. (This does not apply to those merged areas that organized as area vocational schools.)
2. Vocational and technical training.
3. Programs for in-service training and retraining of workers.
4. Programs for high school completion for students of post-high school age.
5. Programs for all students of high school age who may best serve themselves by enrolling for vocational and technical training while also enrolled in a local school, public or private.
6. Student personnel services.
7. Community services.

8. Vocational education for persons who have academic, socio-economic, or other handicaps which prevent their succeeding in regular vocational education programs.
9. Training, retraining, and all necessary preparation for productive employment of all citizens.
10. Vocational and technical training for persons who are not enrolled in a high school and who have not completed high school.

The legislation establishing the area schools limited the number of merged areas to not more than twenty. This number was amended by Senate File 616 to permit the development of no more than seventeen area schools.

The funding of the area schools was provided for through a combination of federal, state, and local funds and student tuitions. These funds include a local three quarter mill levy on property within the merged area for operational funds and an additional three quarter mill levy for the purchase of sites and construction of buildings. The levy for sites and construction must be approved by the voters in the merged area for a period not to exceed five years. General state aid is distributed to area schools on the basis of \$2.25 per day on the average daily enrollment of full-time students and the full-time equivalent of part-time students. The individual area school has the authority to establish tuition. However, tuition for residents of Iowa is not to exceed the local tuition rate per semester, or the equivalent, charged by one of the three state universities. Tuition for non-residents of Iowa shall be not less than one hundred fifty percent and not more than two hundred percent of the tuition established for residents of Iowa.

Admission to the area schools is open to all Iowans of post-high school age as well as high school students who qualify for one of the special programs offered in some area schools. All area schools are co-educational and have an "open door" policy of admissions. Individual programs within area schools may have certain prerequisites but these are generally only those minimal requirements necessitated by the nature and level of the program.

CURRENT STATUS

There are currently fifteen area schools operating in Iowa. The merged areas of these fifteen area schools include major portions of 93 of the 99 counties in Iowa. Crawford County, the last county to merge in the area system, merged with Merged Area XII on July 1, 1969. Eleven of the area schools have been organized as area community colleges and four have been organized as area vocational schools.

There has been a tendency to merge existing public post-secondary programs into the statewide system of area schools. For example, fifteen of the former public junior colleges have merged with area schools. In addition, a great many adult education programs and post-secondary occupational programs operated by local schools districts have merged into the area schools. The only public community college which has not merged with the area schools is the Emmetsburg Community College.

Several of the area schools have emerged as multi-campus institutions. These institutions have merged with existing public junior colleges and in some instances have developed additional sites which are more convenient to large population centers.

The growth of the area schools has been impressive both in terms of total number of students enrolled and the number of program opportunities offered. In the school year 1965-66, immediately prior to the formation of the area schools, there were only twenty-five different occupational programs available in post-secondary institutions throughout the state. This number increased to 84

different occupational programs by the fall of the school year 1968-69. The total number of students enrolled in area schools during the school year 1968-69 was approximately 100,000, of which the great majority were part-time students enrolled in adult education programs.

The relatively large increase in enrollment can also be illustrated by the increase in full-time equivalent enrollment in the area schools. The full-time equivalent enrollment includes the enrollment of full-time students and the equated enrollment of part-time students. Since this figure is used to determine state general aid it includes only Iowa residents enrolled in programs eligible for state general aid, which include slightly more than ninety-five percent of the total full-time enrollment in area schools and most of the part-time enrollments, exclusive of the non-reimbursable continuing and general adult education classes. This full-time equivalent enrollment has increased from 10,165 in the 1966-67 school year to 19,758 for the 1968-69 school year. The increase over the first year of operation is nearly ninety-five percent. It is important to note that the vast majority of students included in the 1966-67 full-time equivalent enrollment represented enrollment which to some extent carried over from the former public junior colleges that merged with the area schools.

Currently the area schools offer a wide range of programs. Included among these programs are the following:

Part-time adult education for all Iowans of post-high school age. These opportunities include: adult basic education, high school completion, college parallel courses, supplementary occupational programs for employed workers, and a wide variety of continuing education courses of an avocational, recreational or preoccupational nature within each merged area. Many of these programs are offered with the cooperation of local school districts within merged areas.

A variety of occupational programs which provide initial preparation for employment and include study in full-time programs of from one quarter to two years or more in length. These programs include preparation in a variety of careers from those that require mastery of relatively complicated manipulative skills to those technical programs that require extensive preparation in math and science before entry into the program.

College parallel programs which include full-time programs comparable to the first two years of a baccalaureate degree program which may be transferred to a four year institution and specialized programs of study which initially may serve a terminal purpose of employment, but which may later be applied toward a baccalaureate degree as the person advances professionally in his career. Examples of the latter type of program are law enforcement and library science.

Community services related to the needs of the individual merged area.

Special programs for students who also are attending local high schools in the merged areas while attending the area school.

Remedial programs for students with special needs who require assistance in the development of basic skills before entrance into other programs.

Programs for handicapped students which include such opportunities as special courses, evaluation centers, and sheltered workshops.

Special educational programs designed to assist Iowans who are currently institutionalized. These programs include opportunities for residents of the Men's Reformatory at Anamosa and the State Penitentiary at Fort Madison and the Women's Reformatory at Rockwell City.

All area schools provide an opportunity for the development of NEBIT (New and Expanding Business and Industry Training) programs. These are programs offered in conjunction with local business and industrial organizations to prepare individuals for new employment opportunities as they arise. This program is geared to assist in the expansion of existing corporations and the attraction of new corporations to Iowa.

The above mentioned programs are indicative of some of the programs now offered in the area schools. Not all area schools offer identical programs. Programs are developed according to local needs and the resources available to the area schools.

ENROLLMENT GROWTH

The statewide system of area schools has demonstrated significant growth since its inception during the school year 1966-67. Fourteen of the present fifteen area schools were organized during that year and offered one or more educational programs. In some cases, the area schools assumed operating control of local public community and junior colleges during the first year.

Full-Time Equivalent Enrollments (FTEE)* Reimbursable Only

	Adult Education	College Parallel	Vocational- Technical	Totals
School Year 1966-67	669.53	7,345.29	2,150.43	10,165.25
School Year 1967-68	2,431.22	9,264.58	4,720.53	16,416.33
School Year 1968-69	3,262.68	9,236.28	7,259.33	19,758.29

The full time equivalent enrollments indicated above demonstrate the enrollment growth of the area schools in their three years of operation. However, this enrollment represents only the reimbursable full time equivalent enrollment and therefore represents only a part of the enrollment growth albeit a very significant part. Perhaps a more meaningful picture of the actual enrollment is presented by the headcount (actual bodies) of students enrolled. During the 1968-69 school year the area schools enrolled more than 100,000 students. The vast majority of these students were part-time students who enrolled in adult education programs. The actual headcount for school year 1968-69 of all students enrolled (including non-resident and students enrolled in non-reimbursable) as well as the headcounts for just those students enrolled in reimbursable programs is listed below. In addition, below each headcount is the full-time equivalent enrollment for each headcount. These figures represent the most complete picture of enrollment in the area schools.

Enrollments and Full-Time Equivalent Enrollments (FTEE)* (1968-69 School Year)

	Adult Education	College Parallel	Vocational- Technical	Totals
Headcount (All students)	63,353	15,777	22,873	102,003
Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment (All students)	3,729.178	9,785.365	7,409.441	20,923.984
Headcount (Reimbursable only)	47,549	14,656	22,524	84,729
Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment (Reimbursable only)	3,262.68	9,236.28	7,259.33	19,758.29

The enrollment for adult education includes part-time enrollments in a number of individual programs. The 1968-69 full time equivalent enrollment for reimbursable adult education programs is broken down below to illustrate the major classifications included.

*One full-time equivalent enrollment (FTEE) is equal to either: (1) one student carrying twelve or more semester hours of work for 180 days; or (2) a total of 432 equivalent contact hours of two or more part-time students.

Adult Enrollment — School Year 1968-69
Full-Time Equivalent Enrollments (FTEE)* Reimbursable Only

Adult Basic Education	923.683
College Parallel	60.790
Continuing and General	1027.270
High School Completion	1152.834
Vocational-Technical	98.100
Total	3262.677

*One full-time equivalent enrollment (FTEE) is equal to either: (1) one student carrying twelve or more semester hours of work for 180 days; or (2) a total of 432 equivalent contact hours of two or more part-time students.