BOARD OF REGENTS **AGENDA ITEM 13**
STATE OF IOWA **DECEMBER 5, 2012**

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

FEASIBILITY STUDY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Action Requested: Receive the recommendations submitted by the Feasibility Study and Planning Committee regarding their examination of the administrative and programmatic functions of the Iowa Education Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Iowa School for the Deaf as required by Iowa Code §270.10.

Executive Summary: The Iowa School for the Deaf and Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired operate under the direction of the Board of Regents as two separate entities to provide needed educational services to students who are deaf or hard of hearing and students who are blind or visually impaired. In order to plan for future effective and efficient operation of services for students with sensory impairments, it is necessary to examine the administrative and programmatic functions of the two schools. This report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priorities to provide "educational excellence and impact; and economic development and vitality." It also addresses Goal #8 of the Board's Strategic Plan – "Iowa's public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and productive."

The Board of Regents recognized the need to (1) examine practices and structures to ensure equitable access to statewide quality services for students who are blind or deaf to obtain high achievement levels; and (2) advance in an efficient and effective manner the implementation of the preferred future recommendations proposed by the Coordinating Council for Vision Services and the Coordinating Council for Hearing Services and approved by the Board of Regents and the State Board of Education.

After six months of deliberation and three public hearings, the Feasibility Study and Planning Committee concluded its work and recommended that the Board of Regents continue to provide educational and residential services at the Iowa School for the Deaf in Council Bluffs and that four other regional centers be established, including one at the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School in Vinton.

Summary of recommendations. The Committee identified and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each of the guiding questions using the data, information, and public comments received. The Committee eliminated those options that did not meet the criteria for more effective and efficient administrative and programmatic services. The single campus option was eliminated unless the single campus also included a regional component. All of the remaining options recognized the value of adding a regional program model to the continuum of services statewide. In particular, the Committee determined that there was value in using both special school campuses in configuring the regional programs.

1. It is recommended that the Management Team for Vision Services and the Executive Team for Hearing Services be combined to create a Leadership Team for Sensory Impairments. This team will lead the planning and implementation of recommended proposals with the superintendent. It is recommended that the superintendent provide progress updates to the Board at least twice annually.

2. The Committee recommends the establishment of regional centers with Iowa School for the Deaf and Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School as two regional centers. (See Iowa state map on page 14 for a possible location of the five regional centers.) Based on equitable access to high quality services statewide, it is recommended that:
   2.1. The Leadership Teams for Iowa services to students with sensory impairments plan for and implement a regional model of services with regional centers in five locations for ease of access.
   2.2. These regional centers will operate in partnership with the local education agencies and area education agencies in the respective communities and in the service areas.
   2.3. These regional centers are intended to add to the continuum of services for students while maintaining the current services offered through the AEAs. LEAs, ISD, and IESBVI.
   2.4. These five regional centers will serve as the special school option for those students who currently access one of Iowa's special schools and that the two special schools will serve as regional centers for the southwest and northeast parts of Iowa.
   2.5. ISD will include a residential option for students who may require this service; no other regional program will include a residential component.
   2.6. Under this model, services to students who are blind or visually impaired will be planned and implemented at ISD and services to students who are deaf or hard of hearing will be planned at IBSSS as they are provided in the other regional centers.
   2.7. The planning and implementation of the regional model and programs will begin upon approval with full implementation targeted to occur by 2015.

3. The Committee recommends that the additional cost to develop three new regional centers and operate the ISD and IBSSS campuses as regional centers is projected to be $3,270,442. To plan for the additional cost, it is recommended that:
   3.1. The Leadership Team work with the partner agencies to develop agreements, further analyze costs associated with the model, further analyze savings associated with changes to the current delivery systems, and present a proposal to the Board of Regents by September 2013 which includes cost and proposed funding sources.
   3.2. A portion of the additional cost to develop and operate regional centers will be shared by partner agencies through personnel assignment, contract for services, reassignment of personnel, reallocation of services, and savings from centralized administration.
   3.3. In the initial analysis, it is recognized that additional state appropriations will be necessary to implement this proposal and that the analysis by the Leadership Team will determine the request necessary to support the proposal.

4. The Committee recommends that administrative services to students who are deaf, blind, visually impaired, hard of hearing, or deafblind be centralized. To plan for this centralization, it is recommended that:
   4.1. Administrative services under consideration will include central administration; superintendent; assistant administrator; human resources; business functions; information technology; and outreach.
   4.2. Program specific administrative functions, including principal, program directors, and regional directors, will remain separate by area of focus but under the direction of the central administration.

4.3. Central administration shall examine the potential advantages of cooperative services, such as payroll, accounts payable/receivable, with Iowa State University, and move forward with planning and implementation based on the resulting analysis.

4.4. The initial estimate in savings to centralize administration will be $287,928.

5. The Committee understands that legislative approval, changes in Iowa Code, and additional state appropriations will be necessary to implement these recommendations. However, since the Committee recommendations do not include the closing or physical merger of either campus, the Committee recommends that:

5.1. The Leadership Team complete the recommendations outlined in recommendation 2.1 and submit to the Board of Regents its findings and recommendations prior to having the Department of Management submit the Committee's findings and recommendations to the Iowa Legislature.

5.2. The Leadership Team and the Board Office prepare the necessary proposals for changes in Iowa Code and administrative rules.

Background:

In June, the Board of Regents Executive Director met with the Director of the Iowa Department of Management to discuss the proposed feasibility study. Iowa Code §270.10 specifies that "the state board of regents shall not merge the school for the deaf at Council Bluffs with the Iowa Braille and sight saving school at Vinton or close either of those institutions until all of the following requirements have been met:

1. The department of management has presented to the general assembly a comprehensive plan, program, and fiscal analysis of the existing circumstances and the circumstances which would prevail upon the proposed merger or closing, together with data which would support the contention that the merger or closing will be more efficient and effective than continuation of the existing facilities.

   The analysis shall include a detailed study of the educational implications of the merger or closing, the impact on the students, and the opinions and research of nationally recognized experts in the field of the education of visually impaired and deaf students. The comprehensive plan shall further include a study relating to the programming, fiscal consequences, and political implications which would result if either a merger or an agreement under chapter 28E should be implemented between the school for the deaf in Council Bluffs and comparable state programs in the state of Nebraska.

2. The general assembly has studied the plans, programs, and fiscal analysis and has reviewed their impact on the programs.

3. The general assembly has enacted legislation authorizing either the closing or the merger to take effect not sooner than two years after the enactment of the legislation."

The Department of Management was responsible for establishing the Feasibility Study and Planning Committee. The Committee included appropriate agency and stakeholder representatives. (Attachment A) The Department of Management was aware of the selection of the nationally recognized expert(s) in the field of sensory impairments who informed the discussion of the Feasibility Study and Planning Committee.

The Committee met on the following dates - June 25, 2012, July 30, 2012, August 27, 2012, September 24, 2012, October 22, 2012, and November 26, 2012. Three public hearings were held on July 30, 2012, August 27, 2012, and October 22, 2012. Public notice was given for all of the meetings. Members of the public and the media attended the meetings regularly.

Study process: The Committee received, examined, and considered information and materials related to the education of students who are deaf and blind from a national, state, and school perspective. The process included the following steps.

- Guiding questions. The Committee used the following guiding questions to formulate its work:
  1. What might be the advantages and disadvantages of a regional model or centers to serve students? Regional centers may be in four or five locations in the state within an hour drive to receive services.
  2. If Iowa had regional centers, what would be the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining the campuses at Council Bluffs and/or Vinton? Would their location allow for them to be used as regional centers?
  3. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of continuing to provide services for students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind on the campus in Council Bluffs and services for students who are blind, visually impaired, or deafblind from the campus in Vinton?
  4. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of providing services for students who are deaf, blind, visually impaired, hard of hearing, or deafblind on a single campus?
  5. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of a single campus being located centrally in the state?
  6. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of a single campus located on the current Iowa Braille School campus in Vinton?
  7. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of a single campus located on the current Iowa School for the Deaf campus in Council Bluffs?
  8. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of centralizing the administration and coordination of services for students who are deaf, blind, hard of hearing, visually impaired, or deafblind?

- Regional programs. To provide for the needs of students statewide, the Committee considered the creation of regional programs or centers to enhance the continuum of services for students who are deaf or blind. The following are features of regional programs.
  - ⇨ Located within an hour from where students reside.
  - ⇨ Will be an addition to the continuum of services for students who are deaf or blind
    - ☑ Will add classroom-based options for students who are deaf or blind.
  - ⇨ Designed to specifically meet the needs within the geographic area.
  - ⇨ Operates in conjunction with the local school district and area education agency (AEA) where the regional center is located.
  - ⇨ Operates in partnership with the AEAs to include support services such as an audiologist and speech and language pathologists.

- ⇨ Includes endorsed teachers of the visually impaired, teachers of deaf and hard of hearing, licensed interpreters, and specially trained paraprofessionals.
- ⇨ Coordinates with other providers and agencies for services such as Department for the Blind, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and teacher training programs.
- ⇨ Provides leadership to services for students who are deaf or blind for a specific area of the state, including:
  - ☑ Personnel recruitment, assignment, supervision, professional development.
  - ☑ Student Individual Education Programs (IEPs), Individual Family Services Plans (IFSPs), and Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) services.
  - ☑ Parent and family involvement.

◈ Prior Coordinating Councils and Committees. The work and recommendations of two coordinating councils and a study regarding residential services at Iowa Braille School preceded the work of the Feasibility Study and Planning Committee and set the required framework to provide a preferred future for services to students who are blind or deaf in Iowa.

- ⇨ In Spring 2006, the **Coordinating Council for Vision Services** submitted its recommendations for a "Preferred Future for Vision Services in Iowa." The Preferred Future Plan, which was approved by the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents, became the blueprint for developing a statewide system of excellence to provide educational services to Iowa students who are blind or visually impaired. This included establishing a Management Team for Blind and Visually Impaired Services to provide leadership in implementing the preferred future recommendations. The goals of the preferred future plan included the following:
  - ☑ Provide equitable access to a continuum of high quality services for all students in Iowa who are blind and visually impaired, including those with multiple disabilities;
  - ☑ Assure an adequate supply of highly trained teachers and orientation and mobility specialists;
  - ☑ Assure adequate and professional supervision, ongoing professional development and equitable job assignments for professional working with blind and visually impaired students;
  - ☑ Eliminate duplication in service delivery by creating a seamless coordinated system of services to blind and visually impaired students across multiple funding sources and agencies responsible for this population;
  - ☑ Maintain a center of excellence in Iowa for discipline specific expertise.

- ⇨ In Fall 2009, the **Coordinating Council for Hearing Services** submitted its recommendations for a "Preferred Future for Hearing Services in Iowa." The Preferred Future Plan, which was approved by the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents, became the blueprint for developing a statewide system of excellence to provide educational services to Iowa students who are deaf or hard of hearing. This included establishing an Executive Team for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services to provide leadership in implementing the preferred future recommendations. The Executive Team identified the following priorities for action:
  - ☑ Create a consistent and standardized referral process for children across Early Access, as well as medical, educational, and transition services. Inform families of full range of services.

- ☑ Support a statewide model for parent learning support and advocacy.
- ☑ Ensure statewide access to language and communication enriched programs with a focus on literacy, core, and expanded core curriculum.
- ☑ Provide to stakeholders updated information on access to a full continuum of services statewide specific to the individual's communication and language needs from Early Access through post-secondary education.
- ☑ Ensure that professional development opportunities are provided regarding hearing loss, technological advances, services, and educational practices to ensure quality services.
- ☑ Improve the attraction and retention of professional personnel statewide.
- ☑ Improve equitable access to high quality services.

⇨ In August 2010, the **Legislative Study Committee Report on Residential Services on the Campus of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School** was submitted to the Board of Regents. The 2010 Iowa Legislature (HF 2531) directed the Board of Regents to study the residential components of the Statewide System for Vision Services to determine the need for residential services on the campus in Vinton. The Board approved the following recommendations submitted by the Legislative Study Committee:

- ☑ The Iowa Legislature shall continue to appropriate fiscal resources at or above the current level.
- ☑ The Statewide System for Vision Services shall provide educational services as near to each student's home as possible.
- ☑ The Statewide System for Vision Services shall strengthen the availability of intense services in each region of the state through the reallocation of residential costs using three mechanisms:
  - Employment of additional teachers of the visually impaired, orientation and mobility specialists, special education consultants, and others, as appropriate.
  - Development and implementation of "Magnet" opportunities in partnership with other providers for the provision of regional intensive expanded core curriculum short-term programs.
  - Building capacity, expanding visibility, and increasing understanding of the Statewide System for Vision Services.
- ☑ The Statewide System for Vision Services shall develop and implement a process for determining and meeting the long-term residential needs of students who are blind or visually impaired.
- ☑ The Statewide System for Vision Services shall partner with other providers for the provision of long-term residential services for students with additional needs.
- ☑ The Board of Regents shall continue to operate the Vinton campus for the following operations:
  - Direct Services. A facility will be needed for short-term programs for students, e.g., weekend, weeklong, summer, in this region of the state and some statewide student short-term services. The site will serve as the center for services such as consultation, assistive technology, and low vision.

- Administrative Services. The Vinton site will be used as the center for administrative services with the Statewide System for Vision Services. The site will continue to operate in partnership with AmeriCorps NCCC programs with lease revenue to be used to offset a substantial portion of the costs to operate the facility.

☑ The Board of Regents shall recommend to the legislature changing the name of the Statewide System for Vision Services and Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School to Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

◈ Quality services for students who are deaf, blind, visually impaired, hard of hearing, or deafblind. The Feasibility Study and Planning Committee examined the criteria for quality services with particular emphasis on its importance in developing and implementing the Individual Education program (IEP) for children and students age 3 to 21 and the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) for children age 0-3. The National Agenda for the education of students who are blind or visually impaired, the Iowa Teacher and Leadership Standards and Criteria, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) were examined to understand quality service criteria.

⇨ Quality services are dependent upon the delivery of specially designed instruction that is based on the core and expanded core curriculum and adherence to quality standings in planning, delivery, and monitoring of instruction and learning.

⇨ Quality services flow from evidence based practices and educational practices that facilitate active engaged learning.

⇨ Quality services are dependent upon collaboration with general education and other agency personnel as well as full involvement of parents and families.

⇨ Quality services are essential regardless of the model for providing services.

⇨ A standard of practice for quality services needs to be in place statewide.

◈ Student population. The Feasibility Study and Planning Committee examined the population of Iowa students who are deaf, blind, visually impaired, hard of hearing, and deafblind by program and location. The population distribution of students with visual or hearing disabilities reflects the population of the local school districts and AEAs. Students who are blind or visually impaired are served in approximately 47% of the local school districts; students who are deaf or hard of hearing are served in approximately 70% of the local school districts.

⇨ There are 506 children and students who are blind, visually impaired, or deafblind served by the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IESBVI) in partnership with 170 local school districts and nine area education agencies. Twenty percent are early childhood age, 45% are elementary school age, and 35% are middle and high school age.

⇨ There are 1,500 children and students who are deaf or hard of hearing who have an IEP or IFSP as a result of their disability and need for special education. Eleven percent are early childhood age, 36% are elementary school age, and 53% are middle and high school age.

☑ Of these children, 1,400 are served by 250 local school districts and nine AEAs.

☑ Approximately 100 Iowa students from across the state but primarily from the southwest and western parts of the state are served at the Iowa School for the Deaf (ISD).

- ☑ ISD also serves 10 students from Nebraska through contract for service agreements.

- A National Perspective. In response to the Iowa Code 270.10 requirement to consider a national perspective in the field of the education of visually impaired and deaf students, the Feasibility Study and Planning Committee sought input from the Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB) and the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools for the Deaf (CEASD), including Dr. Eugene McMahon and Mr. James Tucker.[1]

  - ⇨ Dr. Eugene McMahon is the Executive Director of the Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB), President of Limitless Vision Consulting, LLC, Consultant with McMahon Advocates Group and former Executive Director of the New York Institute for Special Education. Dr. McMahon has extensive experience with the education of students who are blind and visually impaired, has published and presented in the field and has an education doctorate in the Administration and Supervision of Special Education Programs from Columbia University.

    Dr. McMahon emphasized the importance of providing each child an appropriate education with location being secondary. He addressed the degree of specialization needed in the curriculum, personnel and environment as essential consideration for appropriate program and placement. Dr. McMahon addressed two reasons for residential consideration: (1) when it is not possible to provide for the child an appropriate education within the regular school; or (2) when the travel distance is too far.

    Dr. McMahon considered each of the eight guiding questions being examined by the Committee. He addressed the need for a residential program, the challenges of serving the deaf and blind populations on the same campus, and the importance of the parent perspective. Dr. McMahon addressed issues from both a student and personnel perspective. Dr. McMahon also pointed to New Mexico and Washington as models of services that he thought worthy of consideration.

  - ⇨ Mr. James Tucker provided a national perspective on the education of children who are deaf and hard of hearing. Mr. Tucker is the Superintendent of the Maryland School for the Deaf. He serves on the Board of Directors and is President-elect of the Conference of Educational Administrators of School and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD).

    Mr. Tucker addressed the need to examine services from a results driven standpoint and acknowledged that no state is doing so. He described the services offered at the Maryland School for the Deaf where they serve about 55% of the state's 500 students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The dormitory population is 30%; the day school population is 70% which is a significant change from 20 years ago when most students resided in the dorm. Mr. Tucker described the performance of the students to be above the state average. He also addressed the concern that students come to special schools two to six years below grade level.

    Mr. Tucker recommended the article *Reduction of Harm* regarding the importance of communication. Mr. Tucker stated that there are 11 schools serving deaf and blind in the country, joined for economic reasons and stated that he does not have experience with the operation of schools for deaf and blind. He recommended regional services through 8th grade with ISD serving high school students. Mr. Tucker reminded the committee of the importance of the deaf community as a resource.

[1] A detailed summary of Dr. McMahon's and Mr. Tucker's comments can be found in the minutes of the September 24, 2012 Committee meeting at http://www.iowa-braille.k12.ia.us/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/4fce48e78164b/Minutes%209-24-12.docx.

- Campus tours and meetings. In July 2012, the Committee met in Vinton on the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School campus and, in August, in Council Bluffs on the Iowa School for the Deaf campus. The purpose of these site based meetings was to ensure that committee members had an understanding of the services offered from each campus as well as the physical capacity and status of each campus. The visit to the ISD campus included opportunity for observation and interaction with students. The Committee had an opportunity to hear from the community because each site visit included a session for public input.
  - On the Vinton campus, the Committee learned about the (1) statewide model for services to students who are blind and visually impaired serving more than 500 students statewide from birth to age 21; (2) the assistive device center; (3) Braille and large print library; (4) the structure for administrative services that operate from the Vinton campus; (5) the technical assistance and professional development support of the six consultants for vision services in the area of literacy, mathematics, science, assistive technology, additional disabilities, deafblind, transition and family services; and (6) the agreement and shared campus with AmeriCorps NCCC.
  - On the ISD campus in Council Bluffs, the committee learned about (1) the full curriculum offerings from early childhood, elementary, middle, high school and 4+ program, an extension of high school transition program, for the 110 students served; (2) the service to 10 students from Nebraska under an interstate agreement; and (3) the academic, dormitory and extracurricular programs at ISD. The Committee reviewed the enrollment trends for the last decade; approximately two-thirds of the students stay in the dorm five nights per week and one third are served on a day basis.

- Strategic Initiatives. The Committee examined the strategic initiatives of the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Iowa School for the Deaf. They reviewed the six year strategic plan and the plan's relationship to the Board of Regents Strategic Plan.
  - The Committee reviewed the achievement goals of the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired in literacy and mathematics. Fewer than half of the students tested attained a proficient level whereas more than three-fourths of all students in Iowa achieved a proficient level. The gap in performance is somewhat greater in literacy than mathematics. However, it is necessary to eliminate the gap between students who are blind or visually impaired and all students in Iowa in both literacy and mathematics. The committee was informed of the initiatives geared toward reducing the gap in performance.

    The Committee also learned about the strategic initiate to strengthen and measure the acquisition of Braille skills. They examined baseline performance and strong one year performance gains from the first year of the plan. The Committee reviewed the plans for the Expanded Core Curriculum and for increasing independence in areas of the expanded core. The Committee learned about increased opportunities for statewide participation and increased participation in extended learning opportunities. The Committee discussed the transition initiative and the fact that almost 100% of IEPs meet the criteria related to living, working and preparing for adult life.

- ⇨ The Committee reviewed the achievement goals in literacy and mathematics for the Iowa School for the Deaf. They learned that fewer than one-fourth of the ISD students achieved a proficient level whereas more than three-fourths of all students in Iowa achieved a proficient level. Despite a significant gap, the initiatives appear to be leading to gains in both literacy and mathematics. The Committee learned that students performed better on the alternative measure of performance, especially in mathematics.

  The Committee also discussed the struggling readers' initiative in ISD's strategic plan. The first year of implementation of the strategies led to a gain of at least 1½ years of growth in one year for 40% of the struggling readers which is a significant accomplishment for struggling readers.

- ◈ Statewide services. The Committee received a presentation of the perspective of four practitioners serving students who are deaf or blind in Iowa, including an Educational Audiologist and Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing from AEA 10 and an Orientation and Mobility Specialist and Teacher of the Visually Impaired from Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired serving AEA 11.

  - ⇨ The Educational Audiologist and Teacher of the Hearing Impaired spoke about the improvements in newborn screenings leading to early identification. They informed the Committee of advances in technology leading to timely access to auditory information for children and emphasized the importance of auditory stimulation and brain development and the importance of environmental consideration to enhance the environment for better access to hearing. They discussed the use of communication plans as a part of the IEP and the changes associated with cochlear implants and early identification. They discussed the essential role of the family and the family's preference for services in the local school that their child would attend. They discussed the changing needs for educational interpreters and the importance of social opportunities of living, working and interacting with peers. They addressed the value of quality professional development and identified Carol Flexor as a nationally recognized audiologist.

  - ⇨ The Teacher of the Visually Impaired and the Orientation and Mobility Specialist discussed their roles serving students who are blind or visually impaired. They addressed the challenges of case loads and travel time for itinerant teachers. Although students learning Braille make up a small percent of the teacher's caseload, they receive a large percent of instructional time. The Committee was informed about the requirement and need for students to have instructional materials in the format required at the same time as their sighted peers; the Committee also learned about the value of extended learning programs for socialization and skill development. The Orientation and Mobility Specialist helps students become aware of the environment and move independently from home to classroom to community and college campus. Extended learning opportunities are offered in orientation and mobility including exploring urban environments because students in rural setting would not have an opportunity to learn these skills. Scheduling other curricular activities is a challenge for itinerant teachers.

The Committee reviewed performance data of students who are deaf and hard of hearing who are served in their local school districts. Statewide assessments of these students revealed that reading proficiency was somewhat less than 50% whereas reading proficiency for all students was greater than 75%. Mathematics proficiency for students who are deaf or hard of hearing was greater than 50%.

Graduate outcome data were presented by the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Iowa Association for the Deaf. Although some data were available, there is a need for a more systematic approach for follow-up data.

- Public hearings and public comments. Three public hearings were held during the Feasibility Study.
  - The first public hearing was held in July 2012 on the Vinton campus; the second public hearing was held in August 2012 on the ISD campus; and the third public hearing was conducted on the Iowa Communications Network and included seven sites statewide.
  - More than 400 people attended the three public hearings. The public comments were summarized and presented to the Committee. The committee also sought written comments. All comments were posted on the websites of the Board of Regents, Iowa School for the Deaf, and Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
  - Approximately 100 individuals provided comments during the public hearings. A significant number of comments reflected the importance of keeping the Iowa School for the Deaf open and continuing to provide a residential program at ISD as a part of the continuum of services in the state. Comments described challenging mainstream experiences, feelings of social isolation, bullying, and lack of peers and professionals for direct communication. Comments also included concern about the availability of qualified personnel statewide, especially licensed educational interpreters. The availability of extracurricular activities at ISD was especially stressed.
  - To a lesser extent, there was concern about closing the Vinton campus and in particular about losing a service center in a community that is experienced and equipped to meet the needs of students who are blind or visually impaired. A number of comments expressed support to maintain the Vinton campus as a regional program. There was concern about the loss of services for children who are blind or visually impaired if services were merged with those for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
  - Community members expressed concern about the economic impact of closing either campus. A number of comments focused on the need to expand services statewide through programs such as regional centers and in particular to preserve the existing campuses.

- Special schools budgets. The Committee reviewed the financial structure supporting the two special school programs.
  - The Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired operates with a total budget of approximately $8 million dollars of which $3.7 million is from state appropriations, $3.3 million is from sales and service contracts, $380,000 is from federal support, and just over $600,000 is from lease income. Approximately 74% of the budget is for statewide services, 13% is for institution support, and 14% is for plant operations.

- ⇨ The operational budget for the Iowa School for the Deaf is slightly more than $9.3 million. More than 95% comes from state appropriations; the remaining 5% comes from other sources. The educational and residential program accounts for more than 69% of expenditures; institutional support accounts for 13%; and plant operations and maintenance is less than 18% of the expenditures.

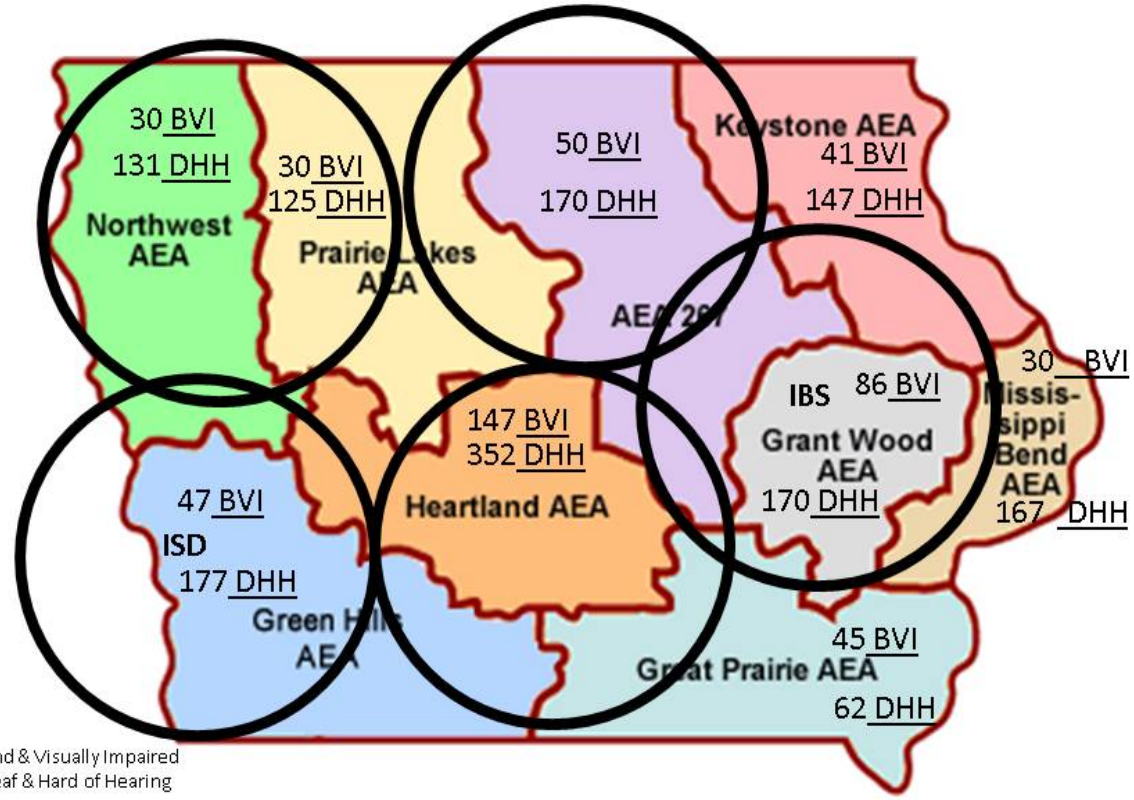
- ◈ Financial implications of eight options. The Committee received and discussed a summary of budget implications for each of the eight guiding questions/options shown below in the table. This analysis was based on the same criteria for use of personnel and space at each site even though it was recognized that population size and need would lead to differences. More specific cost analyses will emerge as planning proceeds with the recommended model.

Guiding Questions	Cost Savings	Additional Costs
1. Five new regional centers	$2,444,415	
2. Regional model a. ISD a regional center + 4 new centers b. IBS as a regional center + 4 new centers c. ISD and IBS + 3 new centers		 $3,863,452 $3,707,268 $3,270,442
3. ISD and IBS with other service		$285,472
4. Single campus (5, 6, 7)		
5. New single campus centrally located		$18,897,954
6. Single campus at IBS		$5,724,944
7. Single campus at ISD	$644,518	
8. Central administration	$287,928	

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

MEMBER	TITLE	AGENCY
Ms. Shelly Bosovich	Director of Special Education	Des Moines Independent CSD
Ms. Maria Cashman	Director of Special Education	Grant Wood AEA
Mr. Patrick Clancy	Superintendent	IBSSS and ISD
Mr. Mark Draper	Director of Special Education	Green Hills AEA
Mr. Dave Fardal		Iowa Department of Management
Ms. Polly Fullbright	Community professional who is deaf	
Dr. Bruce Gantz	Professor and Chair – Department of Otolaryngology	University of Iowa
Dr. Diana Gonzalez	Chief Academic Officer	Board of Regents
Ms. Susan Hagarty	Parent of deaf student	
Dr. Marty Ikeda	Bureau Chief – Student and Family Support Services	Iowa Department of Education
Ms. Tracy Isaacson	Parent of ISD student	
Ms. Kenda Jochimsen	Bureau Chief – Rehabilitation Services	Iowa Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
Mr. Charles Levine	Rehabilitation Services	Iowa Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
Ms. Stephanie Lyons	Consultant	Iowa Department of Human Rights
Ms. Kathy Miller	President	Iowa Association for the Deaf
Mr. Lennis Mitts	Vice President	Iowa Association for the Deaf
Mr. Brook Nolin	Parent of blind student	
Ms. Tammy O'Hollearn	Coordinator	Iowa Department of Health
Ms. Sandra Ryan	Community professional who is blind	Federation of the Blind in Iowa
Ms. LauraBelle Sherman-Proehl	Administrative Consultant	Iowa Department of Education
Mr. Richard Sorey	Director	Iowa Department for the Blind
Mr. Robert Spangler	President	Council of the United Blind in Iowa

REGIONAL CENTERS USING ISD AND ISB
DECEMBER 2012



BVI-Blind & Visually Impaired
DHH-Deaf & Hard of Hearing