

Statewide System for Vision Services Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School

History of Service Delivery

An extensive State study was recently completed, of vision services for youth that are blind or visually impaired, through the work of the Iowa Braille School Task Force and the Coordinating Council for Visually Impaired.

This study led to the recommendation for a Statewide System for Vision Services. In 2008 a cooperative agreement was entered into between the Department for the Blind, Department of Education, the association of Area Education Agencies and the Iowa Board of Regents to:

- Provide for equitable high quality services across the State,
- Enhance supervision, recruitment, retention and development of personnel,
- Eliminate duplication of services,
- Provide for a full continuum of services.

The State appropriation supports over four hundred birth to twenty-one year old children who are blind or visually impaired across the State as well as the services on the campus of Iowa Braille School.

The allocation of State resources has shifted from fiscal year 2005 when 23% of the appropriation was used for State level services to fiscal year 2009 with 45% being used for State level services.

Budget Reduction

1. Freeze or minimal salary increases
2. Offering an early retirement benefit
3. Reduction in travel expenditures for professional development
4. Reduction in operating expenditure including delaying expenditures for one time costs (examples include; repairs, improvements, equipment, vehicles)
5. Furloughs for all employee groups
6. Staff reduction through attrition
7. Not filling vacant position(s)
8. Staff reduction through downsizing with contract for some services.

Budget Consideration

Align Iowa's special schools appropriation with an increase equivalent to K-12 allowable growth 2% increase for fiscal year 2010.

Maintain the funding included in the Regents Salary Funding Bill for teacher quality.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.