July 27, 2012
Contact: Diana Gonzalez, (515) 281-3934

Announcement of Public Hearings and Meeting
Iowa Education Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Iowa School for the Deaf

The Iowa Education Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IESBVI) and Iowa School for the Deaf (ISD) have scheduled two public hearings on increasing efficiencies and effectiveness in their service to Iowa students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired or deafblind, including services provided at the state’s two special schools (the Iowa School for the Deaf and Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School). Interested parties are invited to participate in the hearings, either in person or through written comments. Sign language interpreters will be present at each hearing.

The first public hearing will be held on Monday, July 30, 2012, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium of Old Main at the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School in Vinton.

The second public hearing will be held on Monday, August 27, 2012 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Lied Multipurpose Complex on the Iowa School for the Deaf campus in Council Bluffs.

The hearings are meant to gather input from the public. Those wishing to provide input at the hearings should register upon arrival. Comments will be limited to three minutes. Participants should not expect their comments or questions to be addressed by school officials at the time of the hearings.

Individuals preferring to provide comments in writing to have them read publicly should submit them to khintz@iowa-braille.k12.ia.us or cangeroth@iowaschoolforthedefaf.org. Mailed comments should be addressed to Kathy Hintz, Iowa Braille School, 1002 G Ave., Vinton, IA 52349 or Cindie Angeroth, Iowa School for the Deaf, 3501 Harry Langdon Blvd, Council Bluffs, IA 51503.

Each hearing will be preceded by a meeting of the Feasibility and Planning Study Committee, which is open to the public. The Committee has been charged with examining the structure for future effective statewide services to the Iowa student population described above. The July 30 Committee meeting will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Room 1 of Old Main at the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School in Vinton. Individuals wishing to submit comments for consideration by the Study Committee at this meeting (aside from the public hearings) should e-mail or mail them to any of the addresses listed above.

A component of the Feasibility and Planning Study includes Iowa Code 270.10 which requires such a study to occur before merging the special schools or closing either school. The Study Committee is working toward an early winter deadline to submit recommendations to the Department of Management, which may present the findings to the Iowa General Assembly. Comments from the public hearings will be summarized and presented at the Feasibility Study Committee meeting scheduled for September 24.