

SOE Weekly Newsletter

May 23, 2014

Dates to remember:

August 15: University Learning Symposium, Sheraton Hotel, West Des Moines

August 20: SOE Annual Faculty & Staff Meeting: 1:00 - 4:30 Legal Clinic, Drake Campus

August 22: All University Opening Convocation, afternoon in the Knapp Center

Of note:

At graduation on Sunday, May 19, there were:

20 SOE faculty and 214 students

54 SOE undergraduate students at 10 am

160 SOE graduate students, including 4 doctoral hoodings

Catherine Gillespie will be on vacation May 24-June 7. The newsletter will continue during the rest of the summer.

Thanks to **Shannon Odenbach** in student records, the degree audits for elementary education majors are now updated for students who fall under the new program, which started in Fall, 2011. This will be a real help for all concerned, as most of these students will graduate next year.

Throughout the summer, 36 buildings, including ours, will be reconfigured with card access. We understand there will be access questions as we implement this new system. Public Safety Director **Scott Law** has assured us that staff will be available to directly respond to our questions and concerns.

In case you missed this from BlueView: Free parking in the summer, but cars need to be registered. Tell students.

Joke of the week

Recently divorced, I moved back to my hometown hoping to start over again. A few weeks later, while making a dentist appointment, I was surprised to see I recognized the dentist's name as a good-looking boy from my high school 20 years ago. However, upon walking into the dentist's office, I quickly realized he must be someone else. He was bald, had a big beer belly, and looked a lot older than me. Just to be sure though, on my way out I asked him if he went to the high school that I had attended. "Yeah", he responded, "I graduated in 91." "Oh my gosh", I excitedly said "you were in my class." "Really", he said that's interesting, "what class did you teach?"

Read more at: [undefined | Great Clean Jokes](#)

Media: - 2 articles

1. Iowa schools see turnover with teachers

Some 10 percent of public schoolteachers won't return next fall

By Mike Wiser, Gazette-Lee Des Moines Bureau

Read more: <http://thegazette.com/subject/news/education/iowa-schools-see-turnover-with-teachers-20140518#ixzz326m9ZOBL>

DES MOINES — Children across Iowa will soon find themselves busy with summer camps, sports leagues, part-time jobs, work on the family business or any myriad ways they can find to pass the time over summer break. Most of the state's 478,000 public school students will return to the classroom in fall. But about 10 percent of the state's first-year public schoolteachers won't. Within the next five years — if averages first outlined in a 2010 Iowa Department of Education report hold — between 30 percent and 40 percent of the teachers who first entered the classroom for the 2013-14 school year will be gone. It's a sizable turnover for a profession that makes up about 2 percent of the state's work force, according to Iowa Workforce Development projections. "I don't think there's a magic number" for retentions, said Ryan Wise, deputy director at the Iowa Department of Education. "I think we can do better than we are."

Hard to compared

The most recent longitudinal study of first- and second-year teacher retention in Iowa found that by the 2006-07 school year, about 64 percent of the teachers who went on the job in 2001-02 were still there. By 2011-12, that percentage dropped to just less than 54 percent. Still, it's difficult to say if Iowa does better or worse at keeping teachers than other states. Some states, such as Texas, track retention very closely. Other states, such as Arizona, don't. National studies generally are done by universities or interest groups, but they're not always comparing the same things. "Certainly, turnover is an issue," said Kathy Christie, vice president of knowledge/information management and dissemination at the Education Commission for the States, based in Denver, Colo. "It's a topic that gets a lot of discussion, but the studies out there really emphasize best practices in keeping your best teachers." She said the "general consensus" is five years as a cutoff point, in that most teachers who are going to leave do so in the first five years. It's also generally accepted that schools in rural areas have more trouble keeping staff than their urban and suburban counterparts. The 2010 Iowa Department of Education report is an outlier in that sense. Its results show Iowa teachers tend to stay on the job about the same amount in urban, rural and small- to mid-sized towns while those working in mid-sized cities were slightly less likely to stay on the job in five years. The report also says elementary teachers tended to stay on the job longer than middle or high schoolteachers. "Do they leave the profession, or do they leave the state and we no longer track them? I think that's an area we have to look at," Iowa State Education Association Executive Director Mary Jane Cobb said. She said the Iowa figures show the five-year turnover rate in Iowa is about 30 percent, which is better than the 40 percent to 50 percent figures reported in some studies. She said the 2013 education reform package, which offered teachers an increase in base pay plus new ways to involve themselves in leadership roles, "could be a positive" for teacher retention.

A positive

In that respect, Cobb lines up with Linda Fandel, who serves as Gov. Terry Branstad's special adviser on education. "The package makes it possible for every school district to adopt a teacher leadership system over the next three years to better utilize the expertise of top teachers to improve instruction and raise student achievement," Fandel wrote in an email. "Through this system, teacher leaders will coach and co-teach with colleagues and analyze student academic data to better meet individual student needs." Iowa's turnover, she added, is a concern. "We'd like to see higher retention rates that assure every child has a highly effective teacher and reflect greater satisfaction with a teaching career," Fandel said. Wise, the deputy director, said allowing teachers to take on leadership roles makes sense to him. "I was a social studies teacher for five years, and my first year looked a lot like my third year looked a lot like my fifth year," he said. "Giving me the opportunity to do more in a leadership role would have made a difference."

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Read more: <http://thegazette.com/subject/news/education/iowa-schools-see-turnover-with-teachers-20140518#ixzz326m0h5Zt>

2. Iowa literacy initiative collaborates with colleges and universities (The Des Moines Register)

Education experts from around Iowa met in Des Moines Thursday for an unprecedented collaboration between the state and Iowa's colleges and universities to improve reading among third-graders. The Iowa Reading Research Center, which formed after Iowa legislators passed education reform in 2012 and operates under the Iowa Department of Education, is leading two days of workshops for educators who lead the state's teacher training programs. The goal is to equip future teachers with an understanding of the state's initiative to ensure children can read by the end of third grade. "This gives our universities and colleges an opportunity to be directly engaged," said Michelle Hosp, director of the Iowa Reading Research Center. "If we're really going to do this at a system level, this is part of the system." Out of 30 colleges and universities with elementary education programs, 22 are attending the workshops at Hy-Vee Hall Thursday and Friday -- including representatives from Iowa's three Regents universities. The education experts are being trained in the new Early Warning System, an assessment for Iowa's children that screen those who need help, and monitors their progress. "Never before in the history of Iowa have we had this magnitude of partnership with our colleges and universities working together toward specific literacy goals," said Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds, who addressed the educators at the start of the program. "I have great confidence that we're on the right path." Students who don't read proficiently in third grade are four times more likely to drop out of school, a 2011 study by the Annie E. Casey Foundation found. Roughly one in four Iowa fourth-graders that year scored below proficient on the state reading test, putting the academic and economic futures of nearly 9,000 young Iowans in jeopardy. Among low-income Iowa students - those who are eligible for free or reduced lunch -- 83 percent were below proficient. David Tilly, deputy director of the Iowa Department of Education, said the Early Warning System will identify which students can benefit from additional instruction. "We've got to intervene as early as possible - that's what this is about," Tilly said.