

IA.A.E. NEWSLETTER

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A Message from the President

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I would like to thank the alternative educators from throughout Iowa for giving me this opportunity to lead the Iowa Association of Alternative Education. The board you have put in place is a cohesive team that is interested in promoting alternative education, not only in Iowa, but throughout the United States.



IAAE President Brian Galusha

As the State of Iowa works through their budget woes, we all wonder how our school districts will deal with the reduction of funds. As school districts look to make cuts, we need to promote the benefits of alternative education and let

people know what is alternative about our alternative programs. Please feel free to use the research materials provided, the blogs, and the mail list on the IAAE website to collaborate with other teachers in alternative education throughout the state.

As we go through the school year, remember to always ask yourself, "What is in the best interest of our students?"

- Brian Galusha, IAAE President

Rockefeller Students Receive All Iowa Opportunity Scholarships

Two NICC Rockefeller Alternative High School Program students were awarded the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship for the 2009-2010 academic school year. Dustin Baumler and Trista Stepan graduated in May of 2009 through the Rockefeller Alternative High School program at NICC.



Dustin Baumler

Dustin is an Ossian native and was enrolled in the Rockefeller Program through the South Winneshiek High School. Trista lives in Decorah and was enrolled through the Decorah High school. Both students are enrolled at NICC's Calmar campus.

Students received notification and official congratulations from Iowa Governor Chet Culver and Lieutenant Governor Patty Judge.

The All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship (Opportunity Scholarship) is a state-funded program that will provide scholarships to students who do well in high school and demonstrate financial need. The Opportunity Scholarship is administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission.



Trista Stepan

Students attending eligible Iowa colleges and universities may receive awards of up to the average tuition and fee rate established for students attending a Regent university for the 2009-2010 academic year. Priority is given to students who participated in the federal TRIO programs, graduated from alternative high schools and to homeless youth.

For more information about the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarships, visit the website for the Iowa College Student Aid Commission or follow this link: <http://www.aie.org/scholarships/detail.cfm?id=2008920>.

Conference Notes



2010 IAAE State Conference Update

Continue to watch the IAAE newsletter for updates on conference speakers and presenters for this spring's 2010 IAAE State Conference. As of the release of this newsletter, Mr. Patrick Kerr from the U.S. Department of Education and Judy Jeffries of the Iowa Department of Education have been secured as featured speakers. Keynote speakers will be announced as soon as contracts are negotiated. Rest assured that they will provide wisdom, insight, and inspiration to all.

With budget cuts tightening Iowa school districts' budgets, it is more important than ever for alternative educators to arm themselves with knowledge about current legislation and core requirements. In many districts, teacher professional days have been slashed, and that means being more selective about which conferences to attend this school year. Your IAAE State Conference provides you with the most comprehensive collection of alternative educators with which to collaborate.

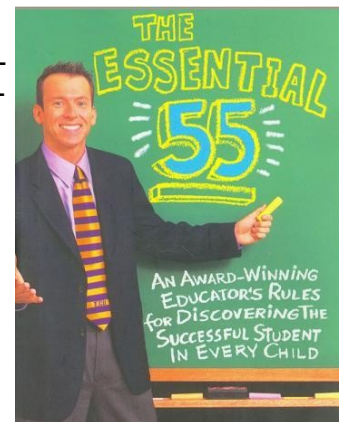
Watch the IAAE website for links that will allow educators to hook up with others who wish to share expenses at the conference. The rooms at the Embassy Suites accommodate several people.

Risky Business XXII Recap

Over 400 alternative school/program educators, administrators, counselors and other educational professionals gathered in Des Moines for the annual fall Risky Business conference which was held on Monday, September 28, 2009 at the Airport Holiday Inn Conference Center. This marked the 22nd consecutive year that the conference has been held. The Iowa Association of Alternative Education, along with the Des Moines Public Schools Scavo Campus and the Des Moines Area Community College Youth Consortium, sponsored the event.

Conference attendees were treated to an outstanding morning keynote by Ron Clark, the 2000 Disney Teacher of the Year and the author of the highly acclaimed "The Essential 55." Clark delighted the audience with stories of his many experiences of working with at risk youth during his years in education. He continues to teach today at The Ron Clark Academy, an innovative inner-city Atlanta school which he founded.

Following the morning keynote, three concurrent sessions were held with nearly 40 breakout presentations available for conference goers to attend. The IAAE board would like to thank the staffs from DMPS Scavo Campus and the DMACC Youth Consortium for their help in the coordination of this event.



Risky Business XXII
Keynoter Ron Clark



Save the Dates

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|-------------------------|--|
| December 4, 2009 | IAAE Board of Directors Meeting |
| January 21, 2010 | Administrative Networking Meeting |
| January 29, 2010 | IAAE Board of Directors Meeting |
| March 11, 2010 | Administrative Networking Meeting |
| March 8, 2010 | Legislative Day |
| April 7, 2010 | IAAE Board of Directors Meeting— State Conference |
| April 7-8, 2010 | IAAE State Conference - Embassy Suites in Des Moines |

Organizational News

Legislative Day 2010

The Iowa Association of Alternative Education and the DMACC Youth Consortium will again be hosting an "Alternative Education Legislative Day" at the State Capitol Building in Des Moines. The event is scheduled for Monday, March 8, 2010. The entire Capitol Rotunda area and adjoining wings have been reserved by the IAAE from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM for school and program displays. Staff and students from Iowa's alternative schools and programs are encouraged to take part in this yearly event. A noon pizza feed will also be provided courtesy of the IAAE for students and staff who attend and take part in the day's events.



Last year nearly 30 schools and programs and almost 300 staff and students from across Iowa participated in the Legislative Day event. The day not only serves as a great learning experience and an opportunity to promote the great work accomplished in alternative education, but it also provides those in attendance the chance to meet and interact with state lawmakers and other staff and students from Iowa's alternative schools and programs.

Alternative School/Program Administrator's Networking Meetings

The first of three scheduled Alternative School/Program Networking meetings was held on Monday, November 2, 2009 on the Des Moines Area Community College Ankeny campus. Around 30 administrators and coordinators of alternative schools and programs attended the event sponsored by the Iowa Association of Alternative Education and the DMACC Youth Consortium. Lunch was provided courtesy of Education 2020.

The program for the day started with introductions and IAAE updates, followed with presentations by: Dr. James R. Veal on "The Costs of Dropping Out of School in Iowa: Update for 2009," Dr. Carrie Petruncola on "New Affordable Online Courses for At Risk Students" and Erin Stoen on "Future Pathways: Progressive Teaching and Learning."

The intent of the networking meetings is to provide administrators and coordinators of alternative schools and at-risk programs the opportunity to receive information that is relevant to their particular work environment, as well as provide an opportunity for networking and information sharing. Future meetings are scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2010 and Thursday, March 11, 2010. The meetings will be held on the DMACC Ankeny campus. For more information, please contact Greg McCullough at gmmccullough@dmacc.edu.

More Networking Opportunities for Alternative Educators



Want to make some changes in your alternative school or program, but don't know what will work? Wondering what other schools are doing about the Highly Qualified Teacher requirement? Looking to share stories with other people who understand what it's like to educate alternatively? Here's your chance!

Anyone working in an alternative school or program can network with other alternative educators. It's easy!

Go online : http://mail.iaae.net/mailman/listinfo/maillist_iaae.net.

Subscribe by entering your email address and choosing a password

Send a message by clicking: "maillist@iaae.net."

Opportunities for IAAE Members

Awards and Grants: Nominations Now Being Accepted

Newcomer of the Year

The Newcomer of the Year Award is presented annually at the state conference to an alternative educator who has less than five years of alternative education experience. The purpose of the award is to recognize Iowa's outstanding teachers who are new to the field of alternative education. The award may be presented to a teacher, supervisor, administrator or counselor who is currently employed in an alternative education setting. This award will honor a person who is enthusiastic about alternative education, promotes a positive atmosphere in the school setting, and is an advocate for students. A selection committee will review all nominations and select the Newcomer of the Year award recipient. Each nominee will receive a certificate, and the finalist will receive a framed certificate.



Process: Submit no more than 5 letters detailing the individual's contribution to alternative education. More than one nomination is required for an individual to be considered. Nominations can come from supervisors, coworkers, students, or community members in support of the nominee. All nominations considered must be received in one complete packet of letters. Be as specific as possible about the contributions and efforts that should be recognized as an educator worthy of being awarded this recognition. Please include the number of years the nominee has been in alternative education. Detail activities beyond his/or her designated responsibilities with which this person has been involved.

Educator of the Year

The Educator of the Year Award is presented annually at the state conference to an alternative educator who is making a significant contribution to alternative education in Iowa. The purpose of the award is to recognize Iowa's outstanding alternative educators. Any alternative education teacher, supervisor, administrator, or counselor may be nominated. It will be at the discretion of the Committee to interview nominees, and the finalist will receive a certificate and a trophy. The school/program of the winner will receive \$50.00 "bagel bucks" for a celebration for the staff.

Process: Submit no more than 5 letters detailing the individual's contribution to alternative education. More than one nomination is required for an individual to be considered. Nominations can come from supervisors, coworkers, students, or community members in support of the nominee. All nominations considered must be received in one complete packet of letters. Be as specific as possible about the contributions and efforts that should be recognized as an educator worthy of being awarded this recognition. Please include the number of years the nominee has been in alternative education. Detail activities beyond his/or her designated responsibilities with which this person has been involved. Describe the creative curriculum or other programs this person has developed.

Lifetime Achievement

In 2005, the Board of Directors voted to re-name the Lifetime Achievement award to honor the memory of Jim Fenton, a pioneer in alternative education and a past President of IAAE. The Jim Fenton Lifetime Achievement Award is presented annually at the state conference to alternative educators who have made a major contribution to the area of alternative education during their professional career. The purpose of the award is to honor individuals who have spent a minimum of 15 years in education as an alternative education professional. A teacher, counselor, supervisor, administrator or any alternative educator that has met the above criteria may be nominated. The nominated individual's contribution could include, but is not limited to, any of the following: improved services for students through innovative and creative thinking, advising and counseling methods, administrative leadership and consistent work that has demonstrated improvements in alternative programming. A selection committee will review all nominations and select the recipients of this award. Each award nominee will receive a copy of the letters submitted, and recipients will receive a framed certificate and a trophy.

Process: Submit no more than 5 letters detailing the individual's contribution to

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alternative education. More than one nomination is required for an individual to be considered. Nominations can come from supervisors, coworkers, students, or community members in support of the nominee. Be as specific as possible about the contributions and efforts that should be recognized as an educator worthy of being awarded this recognition. Please include the number of years the nominee has been in alternative education. Detail the achievements this person has made in regard to improved services for students through innovative and creative thinking, advising and counseling methods, administrative leadership and consistent work that has demonstrated improvements in alternative programming.

Hall of Fame Award

The Hall of Fame Award is presented annually at the state conference to alternative educators who have made a major contribution to the area of alternative education during their professional career. The purpose of the award is to induct alternative educators into the Iowa Alternative Education Hall of Fame. Inductees must have made a major contribution to the area of alternative education during their professional career, and must have provided leadership, vision and momentum toward excellence in the field of alternative education. A teacher, counselor, supervisor, administrator or any alternative educator that has met the above criteria may be nominated. The nominated individual's contribution could include, but is not limited to, any of the following: improved services for students through innovation, consistent work that has demonstrated improvements in alternative programs, contributing to the body of knowledge through research and/or publication of books, articles, and/or journals that raise the level of professionalism within the field, refining existing programs to a higher level, or an engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues, and the community. A selection committee will review all nominations and select the recipients of this award. Each award nominee will receive a copy of the letters submitted, and recipients will receive a framed certificate and a trophy.

Process: Submit no more than 5 letters detailing the individual's contribution to alternative education. More than one nomination is required for an individual to be considered. Nominations can come from supervisors, coworkers, students, or community members in support of the nominee. Be as specific as possible about the contributions and efforts that should be recognized as an educator worthy of being awarded this recognition. Please include the number of years the nominee has been in alternative education. Detail the achievements this person has made, including: improved services for students through innovation, consistent work that has demonstrated improvements in alternative programs, contributing to the body of knowledge through research and/or publication of books, articles, and/or journals that raises the level of professionalism within the field, refining existing programs to a higher level, or an engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues, and the community.

All nominations are due by March 22, 2010.

2010 Vincent C. Scavo Grants

In 1995, the Board of Directors voted to re-name the grants offered to members to honor the memory of Vince Scavo, one of the founders and a past President of IAAE. Each year, IAAE offers grants to members who wish to provide innovative programs for the students with whom they work. The IAAE Awards Committee will determine the number of grants awarded and the amount per award. No more than \$750 will be awarded to any one school or program. Grants have a project period of one calendar year. Recipients are required to document expenses and evaluate the project's success, including submission of an article suitable for publication. The article must be submitted within one year of the award date.

Grant applications are to include a narrative about the proposal, and a budget breakdown is required.

Process: Submit a narrative which includes the details listed below. Grants are judged using the following criteria:

- *Involvement of students
- *Interdisciplinary
- *Experientially based
- *Potential of expanding students' horizons
- *Innovative
- *Use of community

Please do not send grant requests through email at this time. Grant applications should be mailed to Lisa Demuth, Walnut Creek Campus, 815 8th Street, West Des Moines, Iowa 50265

Applications due April 2, 2010

News from the Schools

Ankeny Student ♥s Learning

Cindy Stull, a teacher in Ankeny Schools' Learning Center, shares a great story of student success. Like many programs for at-risk youth, the Learning Center works on building students' social, emotional and academic growth. Recently, Cindy helped students learn about the human heart by sponsoring a heart dissection project.

Student Jacob Chumbley, a 7th grader at Parkview Middle School, has this to say about the project, "Heart dissection is a great way to learn about all the parts of the heart. Mrs. Stull, my Learning Center teacher, helped me dissect a pig's heart. We had been studying about the circulatory system during science class, and when I was working on learning blood flow, Mrs. Stull talked to me about how great it would be to see a real heart. So she called Fareway and they ordered a couple of hearts for us. (Thanks Fareway for donating the hearts) The hearts were "clean" hearts, which means that the Superior Vena Cava, Aorta, Pulmonary Artery and Pulmonary Veins had been removed. I was able to see all of the other parts. It was cool to see the coronary arteries. Mrs. Stull talked to me about how heart attacks happen. If just one artery gets clogged, you have a heart attack. I won't complain anymore when I have to run the mile. It is important to keep the arteries cleaned out. I was surprised that the atriums were a lot smaller than the ventricles. The coolest part was feeling how thick the muscle was. I was surprised how strong the muscle in the heart was and also the valves. I liked doing the dissection."



Jacob's words represent the power of project-based learning. Cindy says, "Doing a project like this not only enhances what is being taught in the general education classroom, but it allows for hands on learning and a real feeling of accomplishment." Cindy sees projects like the heart dissection. Jacob not only dissected a pig's heart, he created a video as he did the heart dissection. The video is now a teaching tool for other students! "The rewards of doing this project with Jacob were numerous. Jacob became the class expert when it came to knowing the parts of the heart and blood flow. It allowed Jacob to look at Science in a whole new light!"

Pictured at left is Cindy's student, Jacob Chumbley. Congratulations to them both on a successful project!

Jones Regional Alternative: Moving On Up!

Things are "looking up" this year in Monticello! The Jones Regional Alternative Program has moved with Kirkwood Community College into the brand new Jones Regional Education Center. Students are enjoying their own suite of classrooms while gaining access to the many dual-credit programs offered in the building. Pictured at left are several students from the Jones Regional Alternative program.



Thoughts from Contributing Editor Jen Duncan

At the Risky Business Conference, many alternative educators shared stories about the current state of affairs in their schools and programs. Their words present a pretty bleak picture. The weak economy leaves us in a “catch-22” situation—there are more at-risk students, but there is less funding for school districts to use to help them.

In an effort to serve more students for less money, many school districts are opting for programming that is not necessarily student-centered. Money issues currently seem more important than student issues. We need to remind our administrators, school boards and community members why alternative education is important and what makes alternative education “alternative.”

Dr. Ray Morley, former consultant with Iowa Department of Education and Ex-Officio IAAE Board member, has a number of suggestions for reminding people about what alternative education is all about.

First, use this IAAE website. Many resources are available to help alternative educators prove that their programs are necessary and, in fact, required by law in Iowa. Check the links under “Research” on the left side of the home page to find studies to back your argument. Share this research with administrators, school boards and community members to show why alternative schools and programs are the best way to serve at-risk youth.

Second, revisit the Iowa Administrative Code at the Department of Education’s website: http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=727&Itemid=1388 This DE site defines alternative schools and programs, contains a link to describe what the Highly Qualified Teacher clause in NCLB means in an alternative education setting, and offers a list of characteristics that describe quality alternative programming.

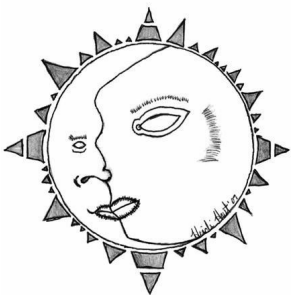
http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=418&Itemid=1389 This DE site explains the term “at-risk,” lists research-based strategies for dropout prevention, and explains weighted at-risk funding from allowable growth.

Third, read the article “Principles in alternative Education” featured in this edition of the IAAE newsletter written by Ray Morley. There is also an excerpt from his article “What is Alternative About Your Alternative?” Use these articles to showcase the good work your school or program does for students. Use it to prove that students are the focus of alternative education—not funding, curriculum, or computer-based instruction.

Please contact the IAAE Board of Directors if you need more information. Their names and contact information can be found at: <http://www.iaae.net/site/?q=iaaeboard0910>



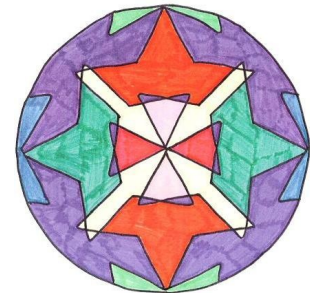
Jen Duncan, At-Large IAAE Board Member and Contributing Editor, IAAE Newsletter



The Mandala

The Mandala: Student Artists at Work

Don’t forget to take the opportunity to showcase your students’ art or literary work in the IAAE-sponsored publication called *The Mandala*. It’s a great way to help our alternative school students get some positive recognition for their talents. To view past editions of *The Mandala*, or for more information about this unique publication, follow this link: <http://www.iaae.net/site/?q=mandala>.



The Mandala

Short Notes by Raymond Morley

The following is a collection of “Primary Principles of Effective Alternative Education” published through various resources in a variety of journals, books and reports.

Question: Do you follow the following principles in the implementation of your alternative school or program?

1. Standards and benchmarks are honored in an alternative manner to traditional school practice. Options and flexibility to established student-centeredness are part of the expectations.
2. Students are the center of school/program management: Student-first, Curriculum-second mentality. Students choose to attend alternative.
3. Alternative Timelines: All students are not expected to be on the same timeline for graduation or to achieve identified education standards or benchmarks.
4. Utilization of legal age flexibility in law: Students are supported to remain in school/education to complete goals of the student up to and sometimes beyond age 21. Graduation by a certain age is not expected/communicated.
5. Whole Student Development: Goals of education balanced over personal-social development, career-vocational development and academic development.
6. Teachers are free to teach: Teachers are certified at the level of education (elementary/middle school/high school) presently in practice and may manage learning/education in areas outside their endorsed certification via coordinating with highly qualified teachers on curriculum and assessments. Teachers choose to be an alternative educator.
7. Separateness: Program/school is administered differently to accommodate student-centeredness. Policies and rules are identified for alternative.
8. Smallness: Staff/student ratios do not exceed 12 students per staff to maximize learning.
9. Student leadership: Students meet with staff as “family” to identify issues and manage learning opportunities/school.
10. Student responsibility: Students work with staff to develop personalized plan for school/education. Plan is used as guide to realize the goals of the student/school.
11. Staff as Counselors: All staff members are mentors and assume responsibilities for monitoring/guiding students. Students select preferred mentors.
12. Methodologies of teaching and learning vary based on student-centered interests/needs/research.



Dr. Raymond Morley

What is Alternative About Your Alternative? Ask Ray Morley...

What is alternative about your alternative? If you do not have a ready answer, you should because public education is fast becoming a system of options and not one school. The new recommendations from high school reform research are embracing the concepts born and supported within the growth of alternatives across the world over the past 100 years. Research in many areas supports the whole concept of alternatives/options and not “One size fits all.”

So can you answer the question what is alternative about your alternative and can you do it so your community can understand the value? If you can, you will continue to find a support for your pathway to the education goals of the community.

Read Dr. Morley’s full article at <http://iaae.net/site/?q=iowaschoolsandprogramsarticles>. Click on the link called *What is Alternative About Your Alternative?*

2009-2010 IAAE Board of Directors

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Southeast: Dr. Preston VanLoon, Associate Professor/Director of Academic Resource Center, Iowa Wesleyan College, 601 North Main Street, Mount Pleasant, IA 52641; 319-385-6376 or 800-582-2383, x 6376; Fax 319-385-6234; pvanloon@iwc.edu

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At-Large:

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Residential Education: Beth Martin, Iowa Residence Educators, 121 Parmer Drive, Des Moines, IA 50315, 515-771-6852 (note: since Beth's work site is changing next year, this is her home address and cell phone number.)

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