



IOWA COLLEGE AID

AGENCY PERFORMANCE REPORT

State Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021)

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Introduction

The annual agency performance report for Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) is compiled to meet the agency's commitment to manage for results and to be open and accountable to citizens. The information is provided in accordance with the Accountable Government Act to improve decision-making and increase accountability to stakeholders and citizens. This report contains performance information on the agency's three core performance plan functions.

Agency Overview

Iowa College Aid helps students and their families plan, prepare, and pay for college. Iowa College Aid administers Iowa General Fund appropriations for scholarships, grants, and loan repayment assistance and advocates on behalf of Iowa students in public policymaking. In addition, Iowa College Aid offers services directly to students, families, educators, and the general public. These services include college and career planning, community engagement support, professional training for educators, regulatory oversight of postsecondary education in the state, and postsecondary education research.

Agency Mission

We advocate for and support Iowans as they explore, finance, and complete educational opportunities beyond high school to increase family and community success.

Agency Motto

Because college changes everything.

Agency Vision

All Iowans can achieve an education beyond high school.

Agency Strategic Goals

- Be a trusted source of information for Iowa residents and higher education stakeholders on postsecondary education access, affordability, success, and completion.
- Align programs and services with the postsecondary needs of Iowa residents and key stakeholders.
- Increase and align resources to support agency programs and services.

Agency Core Functions

The agency's services, products, and activities relate to the following core functions:

- Education through the administration of scholarship, grant, and loan repayment programs.
- Resource Management to ensure effective and efficient administration of financial aid for postsecondary education.
- Research Analysis and Information Management to support policy development and advocacy for higher education student aid.

Agency Annual Report

Iowa College Aid's annual report can be accessed at <https://www.iowacollegeaid.gov/AnnualReports>.

Results: Services, Products, and Activities

Iowa College Aid provides a number of services, products, and activities that support the Future Ready Iowa goal that 70 percent of Iowans will have some postsecondary education by 2025. These include:

- **Administration of over \$90 million a year in state-funded grants, scholarships, and loan repayment programs**—For FY22, \$90,182,674 is budgeted for 12 programs. In FY21, 29,369 awards went to 22,895 students, representing all 99 Iowa counties.
- **GEAR UP Iowa (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs)**—Iowa College Aid administers a statewide \$22.4 million federal GEAR UP grant from the U.S. Department of Education, serving more than 9,000 students in 26 schools in 12 low-income districts. GEAR UP Iowa follows students from seventh grade through the first year of college to improve academic performance and preparation, raise high school graduation rates, and build student and family awareness of college options, preparation, and financing. During FY21, most GEAR UP Iowa students were in their first year of college. GEAR UP Iowa partnered with nine colleges awarding College Partner Grants to provide student transition and first-year supports.
- **Local College Access Networks (LCANs)**—The LCAN initiative began in 2015 with a College Access Challenge grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Now funded by Iowa College Aid, LCANs represent communities across the state that are dedicated to engaging in the Collective Impact model—bringing together different sectors of the community—to increase college attainment. LCANs are awarded a four-year grant series and are provided dedicated technical assistance to seed locally driven collaborative measures and set the stage for long-term sustainability of community-wide efforts to improve college attainment. In FY21, 12 communities and population-specific networks in Iowa received grants totaling \$599,850.
- **Course to College**—The Course to College program works with all Iowa high schools to increase college enrollment and attainment by providing resources, tools, guidance, and support to school counselors and staff in support of all students on their path to postsecondary education. In FY21, 121 high schools participated, with 55 making the additional commitment to serve as partner sites. The program also expanded student-level FAFSA data sharing to 353 high schools in the state, representing all public high schools in the state as well as some virtual and private schools.

The five Course to College steps are:

- Prepare
 - Apply
 - Finance
 - Decide
 - Go
- **College Access and Success AmeriCorps**—AmeriCorps members provide college-access and college-success assistance to high school and college students in Iowa. In FY21, the College Access program placed 37 members in 33 high schools across the state. AmeriCorps members provided one-on-one

assistance with completing all steps required to prepare, enroll, and succeed in college and capacity building for college access programming, specifically around Iowa College Aid's Course to College Program. The program also supports the Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship and expanded to include school counselors as FAFSA Associates supporting student summer transition. Iowa College Aid partnered with four community colleges and recruited 10 AmeriCorps members as success coaches to guide and support recipients of the Last-Dollar Scholarship throughout the academic year, reaching 2,971 students. The Virtual College Coach program was also expanded with Iowa College Aid hosting a dedicated member for virtual assistance, in addition to Virtual College Coach Texting. Launching in January 2020, the Virtual College Coach Texting assisted college-bound and new college students through personalized, timely text messages. In FY21, 2,056 students were served, and a total of 57,915 messages were sent. Success coaches and the virtual coach, together with Future Ready Iowa mentors, make up the three levels of mentor support for Future Ready Iowa initiatives.

- **Iowa College and Career Readiness Academy**—The academy is a suite of Iowa-specific online courses for college access and success professionals developed by Iowans for Iowa. Academy graduates help their schools and districts develop practices that lead to postsecondary access and success, ensuring that all students—especially low-income and first-generation—have access to postsecondary opportunities. In FY21, the academy provided 15 course offerings, including the launch of targeted courses for K-5 and systems-involved youth. Since its start in 2018, the program has had 647 participants. Participants earn certificates with 40 earning the College Access Professional and 18 the College Access Specialist, as well as earning license renewal or graduate credit.
- **Postsecondary School Authorization**—Iowa College Aid provides oversight of out-of-state degree-granting institutions that offer programs to Iowa residents and provisions of consumer protections for Iowa resident students. Iowa College Aid ensures in-state postsecondary institutions comply with consumer protection policies. Throughout FY21, the team authorized 241 institutions to operate in Iowa and to offer postsecondary education programs to Iowans, whether from a physical location in Iowa or via distance education. Of these institutions, 170 were based in Iowa and 71 were based out of state. In addition to postsecondary school authorizations, the team vetted 31 Iowa student dispute cases
- **Research**—In addition to evaluation of agency programs, the Iowa College Aid research team provides analytics and insight for higher education stakeholders, the media, and the general public. In FY21, the team released several reports as well as individual district dashboards for every state legislator. Specifically, the team produced reports on FAFSA verification, summer melt, enrollment in Iowa, FAFSA filing in Iowa, and GEAR-UP Iowa.

Agency Performance Plan

Outcome Measure(s)		2021 Target	2021 Outcome	2022 Target
Core Function: Education				
Families will have access to student financial aid	Number of students completing the Iowa Financial Aid Application	7,350	7,282	6,464
	Number of students completing the FAFSA	148,713	144,881	145,194
	Pell Grant—total dollars awarded to students in Iowa	\$242,922,170	\$219,120,411	\$221,318,365
	Number of awards for four major state aid programs:			
	1. Iowa Tuition Grant	9,272	9,291	8,633
	2. Iowa Tuition Grant Proprietary	362	363	211
	3. Iowa Vocational-Technical Tuition Grant	2,616	2,548	2,455
	4. Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship	--	7,864	8,300
	Average scholarship, grant, and work-study assistance per student (Average state aid per recipient in major aid programs)	\$4,072	\$4,088	\$4,523
Core Function: Resource Management				
Maintenance of federal grant funding to support localized services	Total federal grant dollars awarded to support postsecondary education goals	\$3,165,025	\$2,749,531	\$3,153,981
	Total partner and in-kind match funding provided to support postsecondary education goals	\$3,005,000	\$5,656,880	\$2,959,408

Core Function: Research Analysis and Information Management				
Provide value-added informational resources related to postsecondary access and affordability in Iowa	Number of postsecondary education institutions providing educational opportunities to students in Iowa	2,400	2,354	2,375
	Number of postsecondary education institutions registered in Iowa to provide educational opportunities to students	43	41	43
	Number of postsecondary education institutions offering educational opportunities to students that are either not required to register (out-of-state schools) or are Iowa-originating institutions operating under an approved exemption from registration	135	112	125

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