Week of May 15th:

Community College Legislation Moves to Governor
On May 12, the Legislature approved two bills of importance to Iowa’s community colleges which pertain to Community College referendums and a distance education interstate reciprocity agreements/student refund policy.

SF 486 (Community College Referendum) was voted out of the Iowa House (95 – 3, 2 absent). SF 486 provides the board of directors at Iowa’s Community Colleges the authority to pass a resolution to impose the facility property tax levy and the equipment replacement and program sharing property tax levy at the same rate for a period not to exceed 10 years. A fiscal note was requested by members on the House Ways & Means Committee which identified an annual savings of $100,000 in election and promotion costs for Iowa’s Community Colleges. The levies would generate approximately $9.2 million in FY15 and $11.6 million in FY16.

SF 501 (Distance Education Interstate Reciprocity Agreements/Student Refund Policy/SARA) was approved by both chambers. (HF 663 was substituted for SF 501). The bill establishes a student refund account managed by the Iowa Attorney General’s Office which will provide students the refund they would have received under Iowa’s refund policy. During the 2014 session, Iowa Code chapter 261G was created to allow the Iowa College Student Aid Commission and Iowa’s colleges and universities to participate in a postsecondary registration interstate reciprocity agreement by the name of State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), which would provide a savings to postsecondary institutions nearly $5 million annually. A state mandated student refund policy will provide the Iowa application a greater opportunity to seek approval by SARA.

Both bills will be referred to the Governor’s Office for review and final approval.

Department of Education Releases Adult Literacy Report
On May 14, staff presented an Executive Summary to the Iowa State Board of Education on the Iowa Community Colleges Adult Education and Literacy Annual Report – Program Year 2014. The report highlights four questions that are required by the U.S. Department of Education of all states that receive federal funding through the Workforce Investment Act, Title II, and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. The report addresses Iowa’s needs and challenges through adult education and includes data (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014) on adults without a high school diploma and postsecondary education, Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations, unemployed Iowans of working age and labor force participation rates, and the identification of skill gaps. The report can be found at: https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/2015-05-14%20CC%20Adult%20Educ%20and%20Literacy%20Report%20Tab%20N.pdf

College Enrollment Report Released
On April 16, the U.S. Bureau and Labor Statistics released a national report on the school enrollment and work activity of the 2014 high school graduation class. The report is based on information collected monthly in the Current Population Survey (CPS), a nationwide survey of nearly 60,000 households. Every October, a supplement to the survey collects more detailed information on school enrollment. As of October 2014, 68.4 percent of the 2014 high school graduation class who were enrolled in a college or university in comparison to the graduating class of 2013 which was at 68.4 percent. Additional information in the report on the 2014 graduating class included:

- 9 out of 10 high school graduates were full-time students
- 12.3 million were enrolled in college
2015 Legislative Updates
By Cindy S. Schulte, IVCCD Director of Governmental Affairs

- 2 out of 3 were enrolled at 4-year colleges
- 31.6 percent participated in the labor force
- 49.1 percent were enrolled at 2-year colleges
- 575,000 students dropped out of high school
- 72.7 percent of the graduating class attending college were much more likely to be in the labor force

2015 Legislation
ACTIVE – SF 510 – Standings Bill – Voted out of Senate Appropriations on May 12 and voted out of the Senate on May 14.

ACTIVE – HF 663/SF 501 – An act relating to interstate student tuition agreements involving certain postsecondary educational institutions, creating a tuition refund fund, and appropriating money from the fund. SF 501 passed out of the Senate on May 12 and HF 663 passed out of the House on May 12. HF 663 was substituted for SF 501 in the House on May 12 and sent to the Governor’s Office.

ACTIVE – HF 650 – Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund (RIIF) Appropriations – Passed out of the Senate with Senate amendments 3176 and 3172 and House refused to concur with the Senate on May 11. Conference committee members are Senators McCoy, Bowman, Petersen, Kapucian and Chapman and Representatives Huseman, Maxwell, Stanerson, Cohoon and Dawson.

ACTIVE – SF 486/HSB 231 – An act relating to the approval and imposition of the facilities property tax levy and the equipment replacement and program sharing property tax levy for a merged area. HSB 231 was filed on March 31 and was voted out of the House Ways & Means subcommittee of Cownie, Byrnes, and Steckman on April 7. SF 486 was voted out of the House and sent to the Governor’s Office on May 12.

ACTIVE – HF 121/SF 258 – An act relating to the eligibility requirements for the GAP Tuition Assistance Program. HF 121 was referred back to the House Education Committee and SF 258 passed out of the Senate 49 – 1 on March 18 and was sent to the House for consideration. Language in both bills is included in SF 493 (Education Appropriations) which passed out of the Senate on April 29 and included in Senate Amendment – 3150 in HF 658 which is in a conference committee assignment.

NEW LAW – HF 167 – An act concerning access to documents during the competitive bidding process for public improvement contracts (involves government entities). Signed by the Governor on March 4.

NEW LAW - HF 421 – An act relating to the qualifications for community college career and technical education instructors. Signed into law by Governor on April 17.

NEW LAW - SF 130 – An act making changes to certain limitations within the Iowa National Educational Assistance Program. SF 130 was signed by the Governor on March 30.
NEW LAW – HF 205 – An act that extends reporting requirements of postsecondary educational institutions regarding Veterans to include certain members of the reserves and National Guard. Signed by the Governor on March 4.

FAILED FUNNEL – HF 387 – An act relating to interstate reciprocity agreements entered into, administered, or recognized by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission. HF 387 was referred back to House Education and failed the funnel. Language will be prepared by the Iowa Attorney General’s Office to create a fund that will provide refunds to students who cannot acquire refunds from certain post-secondary institutions and for-profit organizations. The language will be included as a leadership bill and incorporated in the final Standing Bill for the session. (See HF 663 and SF 501).

FAILED FUNNEL – SF 384 – An act relating to governmental bodies and advisory bodies and public notice requirements under the Iowa Open Meetings Law. SF 384 was referred to the House State Government subcommittee of Bacon, Branhagen and Berry on March 17.

ACTIVE – HSB 236/SSB 1178 – An act creating a student debt reduction organization tax credit available against the individual and corporate income tax, providing for the exclusion of student debt reduction grants from the individual income tax, and including retroactive and other applicability provisions. Filed by the Governor’s Office. HSB 236 was referred to the House Ways & Means subcommittee of Forristal, Baltimore and Steckman on April 15 and SSB 1178 was referred to the Senate Ways & Means subcommittee of Bolkcom, McCoy and Feenstra on February 12.

NEW LAW – HF 172 – An act relating to corporations’ powers and duties, document filings, meetings, mergers, voting procedures, and the functions of directors and officers. Signed by the Governor on April 17.

NEW LAW – Senate File 227 – An act relating to the school start date and eliminating the waiver. Signed by the Governor April 10.

Events of Importance


For more information about the final activity of the 86th General Assembly, contact: Cindy Schulte, Director of Governmental Affairs Cindy.Schulte@iavalley.edu or Cell: 641.485.4456 Office: 641.844.5602