

Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

March 13, 2026

Agenda Item: FY27 Central Rivers Area Education Agency Budget Review

State Board Goal: All

State Board Role/Authority: Iowa Code section 273.3(12) requires the State Board to review the proposed budget of each area education agency (AEA) by March 15 and either grant approval or return an unapproved budget with comments. An unapproved budget shall be resubmitted to the State Board for final approval before May 1.

Presenters:

Angelisa Fynaardt, Administrator
Division of Special Education – Regional Team

Tina Wahlert, Administrator
Division of PK-12 Learning

Kassandra Cline, Chief
Bureau of School Business Operations

Stan Rheingans, Chief Administrator
Central Rivers AEA

Jennifer Coombs, School Business Official
Central Rivers AEA

Attachment(s): One

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board approve the Central Rivers AEA budget.

Background: Iowa Code section 273.3(12) requires the State Board to review the proposed budget of each AEA by March 15 and either grant approval or return an unapproved budget with comments. An unapproved budget shall be resubmitted to the State Board for final approval before May 1.



FY27 Central Rivers AEA Budget Request & Report

Submitted by:

Stan Rheingans, Central Rivers AEA Chief Administrator and Jennifer Coombes, Central Rivers AEA Chief Financial Officer

Due: February 27, 2026

Board of Directors:

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Dr. Debra Rich, Sumner, Director District 2

Dr. Mary Stevens, Marshalltown, Director District 3

Dr. Tony Reid, Cedar Falls, Director District 4

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Dr. Cynthia Phillips, Independence, At-Large

Dr. Theron Schutte, Marshalltown, At-Large

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Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of Central Rivers AEA's financial position, staffing, services and operational priorities, including fiscal year FY27 budget requests and projections. Iowa's AEAs are educational partners embedded in Iowa schools. We exist to create a thriving educational landscape where all learners and educators have access to high-quality, evidence-based and strategic supports and services, collaboratively provided within districts, to help all learners achieve their full potential.

Iowa's AEAs support accredited schools, educators and learners from birth through age 21 through special education support services, educational services, media services and centralized statewide initiatives. These services help strengthen educator effectiveness, expand access to high-quality instruction and improve academic outcomes for Iowa learners.

The FY27 budget request and financial projections align with Iowa's Area Education Agencies Strategic Plan 2025–2030, which focuses on excellence, accountability, collaboration and sustainability. AEAs continue to prioritize evidence-based practices, coordinated statewide service delivery and data-driven decision-making. The [Iowa AEA Strategic Plan's](#) mission, vision and the goals are aligned to the State Board of Education Goals. A copy of the plan is included in Appendix A.

This report also outlines organizational structure, staffing, capital assets, administrative expenditures and program changes. The report includes administrative cost management, operational efficiency and strategic allocation of resources to directly support schools, educators and learners. Fiscal comparisons across multiple years show funding trends, expenditure management and responsible planning for FY27 and beyond.

Central Rivers AEA remains committed to delivering high-quality services that strengthen Iowa's educational system. The FY27 budget request reflects a continued focus on sustainability, accountability and measurable outcomes, ensuring AEAs continue to effectively serve Iowa's students, educators and districts/schools.

AEA Overview

Information relating to those served by the AEA, programs offered, location details, and a general description of capital assets is provided below.

Served

[Enter a summary description of the different groups (e.g., districts, charter schools, nonpublic schools, students, teachers, and others) served by the AEA.]

Central Rivers AEA partners with public and accredited non-public schools across our region to provide comprehensive educational programs and direct services for over 68,000 students from birth to age 21. These services include evaluations, assessments, and therapies for both general and special education, as well as Early ACCESS for early intervention in infants and toddlers. Teachers benefit from specialized professional development, consultation, and coaching, while district administrators, superintendents, curriculum directors, and other education professionals receive tailored support through structured learning, implementation, and sustainability phases. This integrated approach ensures that all stakeholders are equipped with the tools and guidance necessary to enhance educational outcomes.

Districts

[Enter information about the districts served by the AEA. Identify any districts served that are located outside the AEA. Also identify any districts that are not served by the AEA but that are located within the AEA.]

Public Districts (53)

AGWSR	Forest City	North Butler
Alden	GHV	North Iowa
Aplington-Parkersburg	Gladbrook-Reinbeck	North Tama
BCLUW	GMG	Northwood-Kensett
Belmond-Klemme	Grinnell-Newburg	Osage
BGM	Grundy Center	RRMR
CAL	Hampton-Dumont	South Tama
Cedar Falls	Hubbard-Radcliffe	St. Ansgar
Central Springs	Hudson	Sumner-Fredericksburg
Charles City	Independence	Tripoli
Clarksville	Iowa Falls	Union
Clear Lake	Janesville	Wapsie-Valley
Denver	Jesup	Waterloo
Dike-New Hartford	Lake Mills	Waverly-Shell Rock
Dunkerton	Marshalltown	West Fork
East Buchanan	Mason City	West Hancock
East Marshall	Montezuma	West Marshall
Eldora-New Providence	Nashua-Plainfield	

Accredited Non-Publics (29)

Blessed Maria Assunta Pallotta Middle School
Cedar Ridge Christian School
Central Iowa Christian School
Clear Lake Classical School
Clear Lake Classical School-Ventura
Columbus Catholic High School
Community Lutheran School
Diamond Star Academy
Don Bosco High School
Immaculate Conception-Gilbertville
Immaculate Conception School
Liberty Christian School
Lighthouse Christian Academy
Marshalltown Christian School
Newman Catholic Elementary School

Newman Catholic High School
North Iowa Christian School
Royal Legacy Christian Academy
Saint Edward Elementary School
St. Athanasius School
St. Francis Catholic School
St. John Elementary School
St. Patrick School
St. Paul's Lutheran School-Latimer
St. Paul's Lutheran School
Tama Toledo Christian School
Timothy Christian School
Valley Lutheran School
Waverly Christian School

Charter Schools (2)

Choice Charter School
Future Frontiers Charter School

Students

[Enter information about the students who are served by the AEA.]

Central Rivers AEA partners with public and accredited non-public schools to provide educational programs, services, and resources designed to support quality education and improve learning outcomes for all children ages birth-21. Agency services support more than 68,000 students in schools across an 18-county region. This area includes: Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Floyd, Franklin, Grundy, Hardin, Hancock, Marshall, Mitchell, Poweshiek, Tama, Winnebago, Worth, and Wright.

Central Rivers AEA serves children in general education and special education. Some services are evaluation and assessment and some are direct services (e.g., occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language services).

Early ACCESS is Iowa's early intervention system (IDEA Part C) for infants and toddlers under three years old who are not developing as expected or who have a medical condition that can delay typical development. Families and Early ACCESS staff work together to identify, coordinate and provide needed services and resources that help families assist their infants and toddlers in their growth and development.

The agency operates three facilities located in Cedar Falls, Clear Lake, and Marshalltown. However, nearly 80% of agency staff are assigned to specific schools as part of a regional team to serve students. They work directly with children and educators as an integral part of the local school staff. Others serve schools on a consultant or itinerant basis, offering courses or workshops, or link schools with other individuals, agencies or materials that meet their needs.

Teachers

[Enter information about the teachers who are served by the AEA.]

Central Rivers AEA supports over 6,000 educators with both general and special education services. Special education teachers receive support from building-based AEA staff (e.g., school social workers, school psychologists and special education consultants).

Through Educational and Media/Technology Services, teachers may access AEA content experts to support teaching and learning in classrooms. Those content experts design, deliver and support professional learning for teachers who engage in offerings from the AEA. Additionally both physical and digital resources are available to support classroom instruction.

Districts have the option to purchase AEA time and services. From specialized professional learning to personalized consultation and coaching, AEAs ensure that districts receive the tailored support they need to meet their diverse needs.

Learning Support

In the learning phase, services focus on equipping educators with the knowledge, skills and strategies necessary to enhance their teaching practices and improve student outcomes.

Implementation Support

In the implementation phase, services focus on putting educational plans and strategies into action.

Sustainability Support

In the sustainability phase, services aim to maintain and build upon the progress achieved during implementation.

Others Served

[Enter information about others who are served by the AEA.]

- Administrators
- Curriculum Directors
- Head Start Programs
- Paraeducators
- Principals
- Special Education Directors
- Substitute Teachers
- Superintendents
- Technology Coordinators

Programs

[Highlight the general programs offered by the AEA as well as the programs offered that differentiate this AEA from others.]

Central Rivers AEA delivers [professional development](#) offerings that support the implementation and continuous improvement of Iowa's strategic priorities and services that align with the [strategic plan of Iowa's AEA's](#).

Services Unique to Central Rivers AEA

- **Facility Rental Services**

Rooms at Central Rivers AEA are available for use by educational or community organizations and include large conference rooms and smaller meeting rooms in Cedar Falls, Clear Lake, and Marshalltown.

- **School Communication Support**

Effective school communication and parent engagement is more than social media posts and newsletters. Our Creative Services team will work with district leaders to identify specific goals and customize services to meet district needs.

- **Social Studies Support**

Social Studies provides students with the skills and knowledge necessary to help make a positive impact on the future. Central Rivers AEA is dedicated to providing educators with the most current, research-based resources. Effective social studies involves asking deep questions, using diverse sources for informed answers, thinking creatively, factual evidence, communication, and building skills for college, career and civic life.

- **Shared Curriculum Coordinator**

The Shared Curriculum Director is a member of the administrative team and is not solely responsible for the school improvement efforts. School districts have an obligation to ensure teachers are implementing agreed-upon improvement initiatives with fidelity. This position provides support for district efforts to ensure increases in student achievement for all learners in the general education context.

- **Shared Special Education Director**

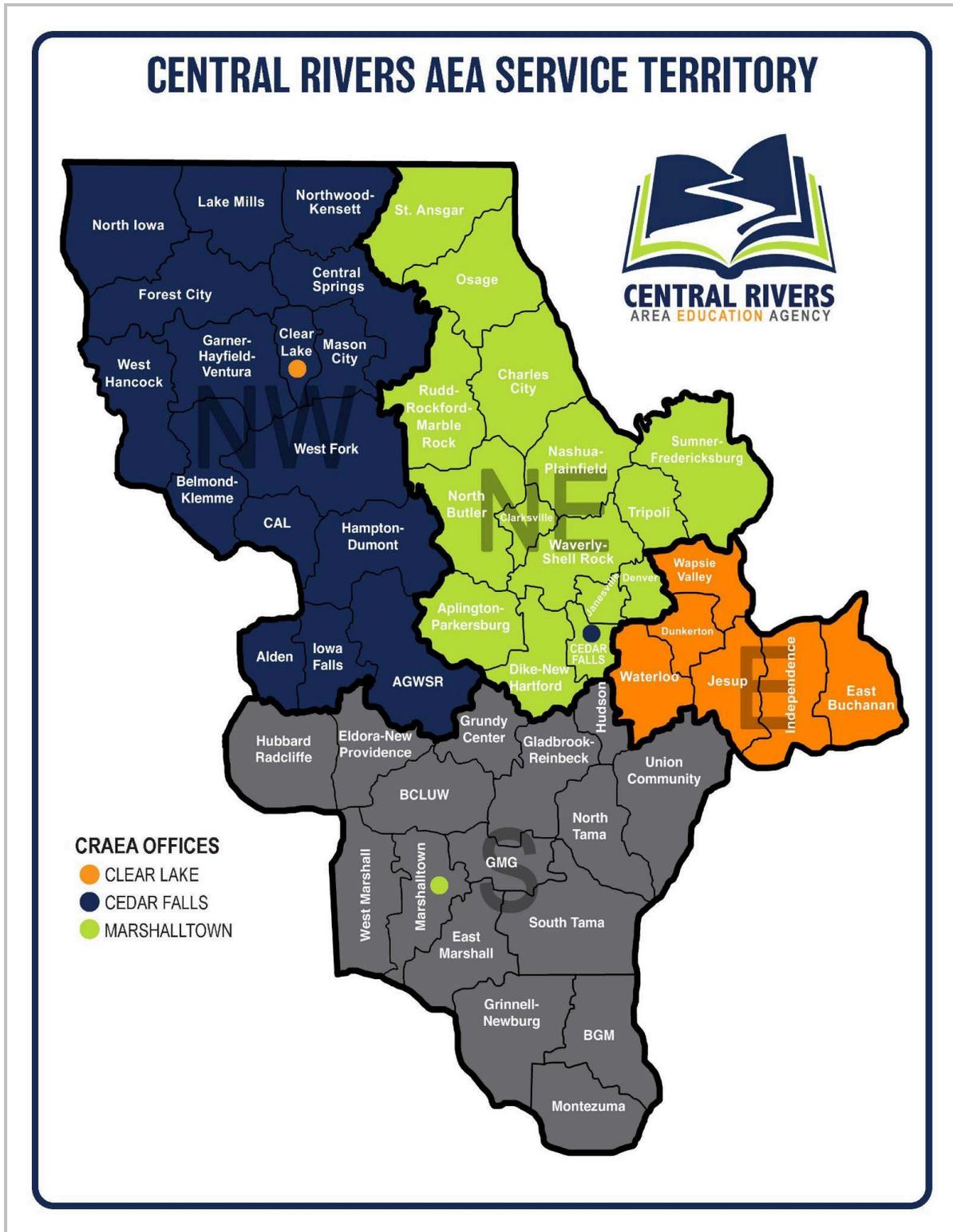
The Shared Special Education Director is a member of the administrative team and is not solely responsible for the special education program. School districts have an obligation to ensure teachers are implementing IEPs as expected in IDEA. This position provides support for district efforts to ensure compliance and positive outcomes for students with disabilities.

- **Career-Connected Learning**

Career-Connected learning offerings include a menu of services related to internships, work experiences, career exploration and more.

Location

[Insert a map of the AEA, map of the AEA building locations, and provide a narrative surrounding each.]



Central Rivers Area Education Agency Facilities:

- **1521 Technology Parkway, Cedar Falls, Iowa (Main Office)**
 - Conference rooms used for hosting professional development events for agency staff and the educators we serve. By reservation, many outside entities use these rooms outside of agency office hours.
 - Drop-in work space for agency stakeholders.
 - Monthly board meetings are held at this facility.
 - Administrative offices including Human Resources, Business, and Technology and those serving surrounding districts.
 - Offices for ACHIEVE data leads/data techs.
 - Staff distribution center (early ACCESS equipment and special education assessment materials).
 - Creative Services - Includes a large area for printing (small and large format), graphic design, laminating, cutting, etc.
 - Professional Learning Office.
 - Technology Help Desk.
 - Staff offices and workspaces- many areas are available for staff to work independently or collaboratively. Large monitors and small meeting rooms available for teams to use.
 - Hearing Booth.
 - SLP Services Room.

- **9184 265th Street, Suite B, Clear Lake, Iowa**
 - Conference rooms used for hosting professional development events for agency staff and the educators we serve. By reservation, outside entities may use these rooms outside of agency office hours.
 - Drop-in work space for agency stakeholders.
 - Administrative offices for our administrators who serve our northern districts and have their office assigned to this facility for proximity.
 - Warehouse- This space is used for storage for special ed equipment, including OT/PT equipment, etc.
 - Staff work spaces- The entire facility is designed for individual and small teams to work either in small rooms or individually in workstations.
 - Hearing Booth.
 - North Iowa Area Community College usage for flight simulators.
 - Office space for ACHIEVE data entry personnel.

- **909 South 12th Street, Marshalltown, IA**
 - Conference rooms- used for hosting professional development events for agency staff and the educators we serve. By reservation, outside entities may use these rooms outside of agency office hours.
 - Drop-in work space for agency stakeholders.

- Administrative offices for our administrators who serve our southern districts and have their office assigned to this facility for proximity.
 - Media library - physical collection that includes professional books as well as book sets that can be checked out by districts.
 - Staff work spaces- The entire facility is designed for individual and small teams to work either in small rooms or individually in workstations.
 - Creative Services - Graphic Design and laminating.
 - Hearing Booth.
 - Swimming Pool. (Note that costs associated with the pool are underwritten by a community foundation. The pool was originally installed in the building before Central Rivers AEA took ownership and is specially designed for therapeutic purposes for those children and adults with disabilities.)
 - Office space for ACHIEVE data entry personnel.
- **River Hills School, 2700 Grand Blvd, Cedar Falls**

River Hills serves as an extension of local district special education programs, partnering with districts to expand their continuum of services. The school provides individualized educational programming for approximately 90 students, ages 5–21, with significant intellectual disabilities, representing 30 school districts within the Central Rivers AEA. River Hills includes 23 classrooms, each staffed by a licensed Strat II:ID special education teacher and paraprofessional to ensure high levels of support and instruction. Placement at River Hills is determined by a student’s IEP team and is based on whether the required services can be provided within the home district or another integrated setting. The role of River Hills is to support districts by providing the least restrictive environment specialized services that help ensure each student receives a free and appropriate, individualized education.

Capital Assets

[Provide a summary description of the AEA’s capital assets. For this purpose, capital assets should include buildings, land, vehicles, and other large assets; it does not include inventory.]

- Properties/Offices
 - 1521 Technology Parkway, Cedar Falls - Main office
 - 9184 B 265th Street, Clear Lake (structure owned by the agency, land leased from the Mason City Airport Commission) - Regional Office
 - 909 South 12th Street, Marshalltown - Regional Office
 - 2700 Grand, Cedar Falls - River Hills School
- Vehicles, including (6) Media delivery vans, (4) maintenance pickups with plow, snow blower, sweeper, and lawn care tractors and equipment.

Summary of Capital Assets

[Provide a summary description of the AEA’s capital assets.]

- Properties/Offices
 - 1521 Technology Parkway, Cedar Falls - Main office

- 9184 B 265th Street, Clear Lake (structure owned by the agency, land leased from the Mason City Airport Commission) - Regional Office
- 909 South 12th Street, Marshalltown - Regional Office
- 2700 Grand, Cedar Falls - River Hills School
- Vehicles, including (6) Media delivery vans, (4) maintenance pickups with plow, snow blower, sweeper, and lawn care tractors and equipment.
- Print Shop equipment, including black and white and color printers, laminators, and finishing equipment (bindery), etc.
- Media Kits and equipment, including iPads, robots, OT/PT equipment, reality welding

Changes or Planned Changes in Capital Assets

[Identify any changes in capital assets from FY25 to FY26 and planned changes for FY27.]

The Agency traded in four delivery vans for new in FY25. In FY26 one truck was traded in for new. FY27 has budgeted equipment in the printshop in the event a replacement is needed. There are no other capital asset changes planned for FY27.

Staff

Information about the AEA's organizational structure, including specific positions, staff changes from FY25 to FY27, and administrative expenditures is provided below.

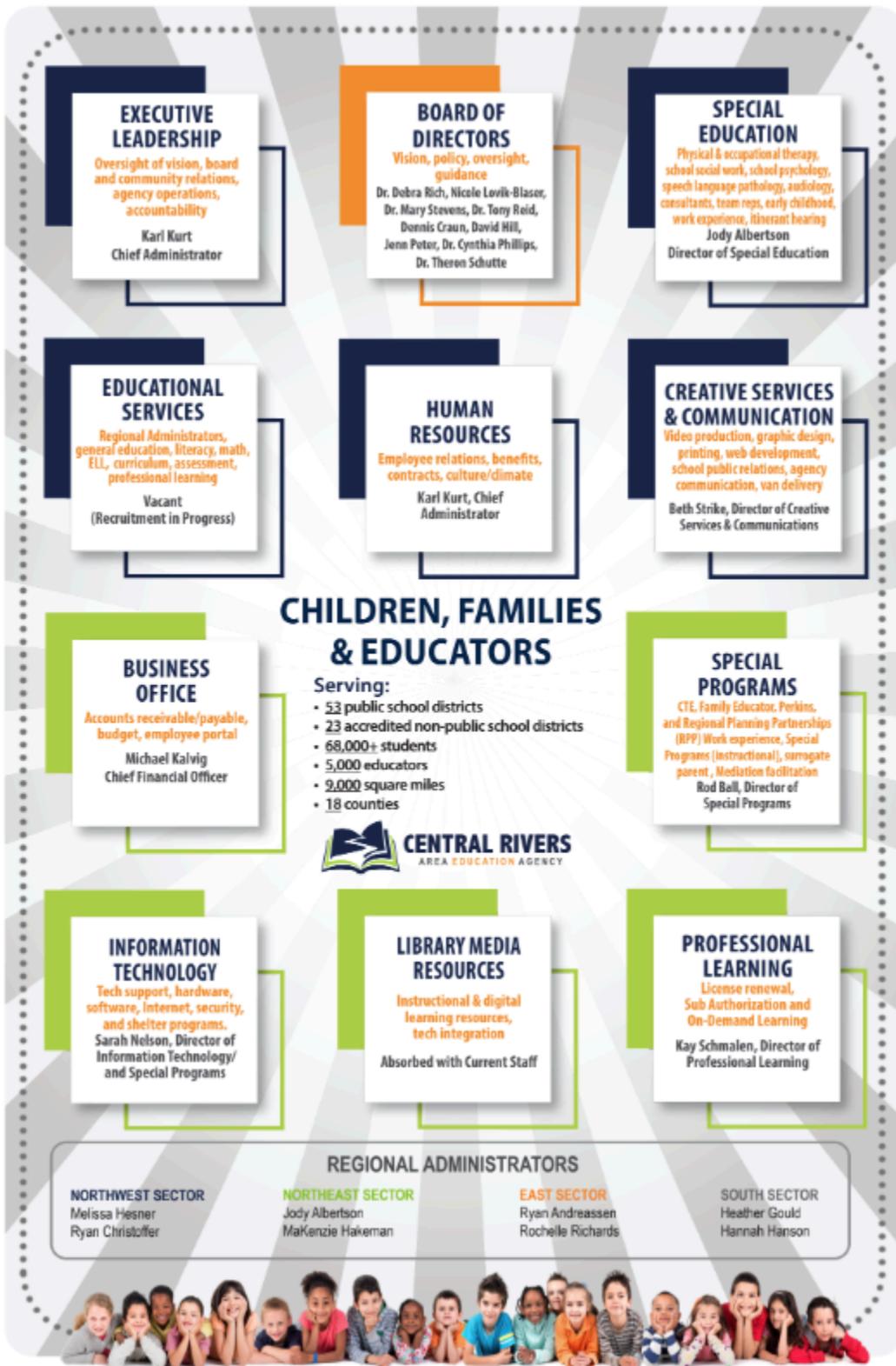
Iowa's AEAs are committed to employing highly qualified staff who offer and provide services and supports to students, educators, districts and families. AEAs are working as a statewide system to ensure all those we serve have access to services, regardless of the location of their district or the AEA in which they reside.

Organizational Chart

[Insert an organizational chart and enter a related narrative.]

Central Rivers Area Education Agency will meet the mandated 30% reduction in administrative expenditures by July 1, 2026, as required by House File 2612. Our agency has implemented strategic cost-cutting measures and streamlined operations to ensure compliance while working hard to attempt to maintain high-quality service delivery to our stakeholders.

This organizational chart provides an overview of our agency leadership for 2026-27.



BEDS Position Codes

[Complete the table below and enter a narrative related to variances for staff.]

Table Name: AEA BEDS Position Codes - All Staff

Position Name	Position Code	FY25 FTE Count	FY26 FTE Count	FY27 FTE Count	Variance FY25 to FY27
AEA Chief Administrator	510	0.5	0.5	1	0.5
School Business Official	612	0.5	0.5	1	0.5
Operations and Maintenance	181	6.5	7	7	0.5
Principal	513	1	1	1	0
Special Education Director	515	5.1	6	6	0.9
AEA Regional/Zone Coordinator	533	8	8	10	2
Other Administrator	550	4	4	3	-1
Juvenile Home Teacher	746	2		0	-2
Special Education Consultant	616	59.9	49.8	49.8	-10.1
Content/Curriculum Consultant	618	19.2	10.9	10.9	-8.3
Social Worker	624	15.45	14.95	14.95	-0.5
Director/Coordinator/Department Head	633	13.8	10.8	10.8	-3
Special Ed Support	660	154.45	164.1	164.1	9.65
Nurse	698	1	1	1	0
Itinerant Teacher	731	6.6	6.6	6.6	0
Early Childhood Sp Ed Teacher	736	15	16	16	1
Early Childhood Reg Ed Teacher	737	3	3	3	0
Special Education Teacher	745	40.4	34	34	-6.4
Paraprofessionals/Aides	101	50.86	58.86	58.86	8
Library Media Associate	104	4	4	4	0
Student Support	106	24.8	24.6	24.6	-0.2
Other Support	107	5	4	4	-1
Board Secretary	112	1	1	1	0
Technology	121	8	11	11	3
Records Transfer Staff	130	1.5	4.5	4.5	3
School Business Officials - Other	133	2	1.6	1.6	-0.4
Other Professional	137	3.85	2	2	-1.85
AEA Supervisors/Managers	138	1	1	1	0
Supervisor - Non-Licensed	139	1	1	1	0

Technology Support	141	5	5	5	0
Other Technical	142	2	2	2	0
District Wide Administrative Support	152	12.5	10.5	10.5	-2
School Administrative Support	153	1	0	0	-1
Operations Director	168	1	0	0	-1
Regular Education Teacher	728	6	7	7	1
HR/Personnel Manager	134	0	1.4	1.4	1.4
Teacher Librarian/Media Specialist	722	0	0.25	0.25	0.25
Juvenile Home Teacher	746	0	2	2	2
					0
Total FTE		486.91	479.86	481.86	-5.05

FY25 to FY26 Staff Changes

Staff changes from FY25 to FY26 are detailed below for each position in the following programs: special education support services, educational services, and media services.

Special Education Support Services Program

[Complete the table below and enter a narrative related to variances for staff in the special education support services program, including identification of fee-based programs and services.]

Table Name: AEA BEDS Position Codes - Special Education Support Services Program

Position Name	Position Code	FY25 FTE Count	FY26 FTE Count	FY27 FTE Count	Variance FY25 to FY27
AEA Regional/Zone Coordinator	533	6.48	5.24	5.24	-1.24
Director/Coordinator/Department Head	633	1.95	0.85	0.85	-1.1
District Wide Administrative Support	152	5.16	5.35	5.35	0.19
Early Childhood Sp Ed Teacher	736	15	16	16	1
Itinerant Teacher	731	6.6	6.6	6.6	0
Nurse	698	1	1	1	0
Operations and Maintenance	181	2	0	0	-2
Operations Director	168	1	0	0	-1
Other Administrator	550	1	1.5	2	1
Other Professional	137	3.85	2	2	-1.85

Other Support	107	4	3	3	-1
Other Technical	142	2	2	2	0
Paraprofessionals/Aides	101	43.86	58.86	58.86	15
Principal	513	1	1	1	0
Records Transfer Staff	130	1.5	3.5	3.5	2
School Administrative Support	153	1	0	0	-1
Social Worker	624	15.48	14.45	14.45	-1.03
Special Ed Support	660	154.44	164.1	174.1	19.66
Special Education Consultant	616	59.9	49.8	49.8	-10.1
Special Education Director	515	5.1	6	6	0.9
Special Education Teacher	745	40.4	34	34	-6.4
Student Support	106	24.8	24.6	24.6	-0.2
Content/Curriculum Consultant	618	0	1.14	1.14	1.14
Juvenile Home Teacher	746	1	2	2	1
					0
					0
Total FTE		398.52	402.99	413.49	14.97

The Special Education FTE increase from FY25 to FY26 of 4.47 FTE was due to our ability to recruit and fill vacancies from FY25. There was an increase in paraprofessionals due to an inability to hire SLPs and to support an increase in telepractice SLPs. We are actively hiring to replace retirements/resignations and have budgeted for an additional 10 FTE from FY26 to FY27. Total projected change from FY25 to FY27 is a 14.97 FTE increase. FTE variances from our fall BEDS submission are 'point-in-time' differences. A sharing agreement for SE Administrator with Keystone will end at the end of FY26. Fee-based program enhancement services, that includes allocated FTE are 3.2 SE Director FY 26. We anticipate a similar FTE for FY27.

Educational Services Program

[Complete the table below and enter a narrative related to variances for staff in the educational services program, including identification of fee-based programs and services.]

Table Name: AEA BEDS Position Codes - Educational Services Program

Position Name	Position Code	FY25 FTE Count	FY26 FTE Count	FY27 FTE Count	Variance FY25 to FY27
Content/Curriculum Consultant	618	19.2	9.76	9.76	-9.44
AEA Regional/Zone Coordinator	533	0.88	2.76	2.76	0
Director/Coordinator/Department Head	633	9.4	9.95	9.95	0.55
District Wide Administrative	152	12.5	5.15	5.15	-7.35

Support					
Early Childhood Reg Ed Teacher	736	3	0	0	-3
Other Administrator	550	1.5	1.5	0.5	-1
Regular Education Teacher	728	6	7	7	1
Other Support	107	0	1	1	1
Records Transfer Staff	130	0	1	1	1
Social Worker	624	0	0.5	0.5	0.5
Early Childhood Reg Ed Teacher	737	0	3	3	3
					0
Total FTE		52.48	41.62	40.62	-13.74

The Educational Services FTE decrease from FY25 to FY26 of 10.86 was primarily due to a decrease in content/curriculum consultants and district wide administrative support staff. We anticipate a decrease of one FTE for FY27 resulting in an overall decrease of 13.74 FTE from FY25 to FY27. A sharing agreement is in place for the Educational Services Administrator with Keystone which will end in FY26. FTE variances from our fall BEDS submission are 'point-in-time' differences. All educational services are fee based and FTE dedicated specifically to shared positions for FY26 is 2.1 FTE and we anticipate a similar FTE for FY27.

Media Services Program

[Complete the table below and enter a narrative related to variances for staff in the media services program, including identification of fee-based programs and services.]

Table Name: AEA BEDS Position Codes - Media Services Program

Position Name	Position Code	FY25 FTE Count	FY26 FTE Count	FY27 FTE Count	Variance FY25 to FY27
Director/Coordinator/Department Head	633	1	0	0	-1
AEA Regional/Zone Coordinator	533	0.64	0	0	-0.64
Library Media Associate	104	4	4	4	0
Other Support	107	1	0	0	-1
Teacher Librarian/Media Specialist	722	0	0.25	0	0
Technology	121	11	11	11	0
Total FTE		17.64	15.25	15	-2.64

The Media Services FTE decrease from FY25 to FY26 of 2.39 is due to staff resignations. A sharing agreement for the Media Administrator is in place with Keystone and will end in FY26. We anticipate other media staffing to stay stable for FY27. The total decrease of 2.64 FTE from FY25 to FY27 has been through attrition. FTE variances from our fall BEDS submission are

'point-in-time' differences. Media services are fee based with the exception of our trial AT/OT/PT equipment library. There are no fee based contracted positions in Media.

Administrative Expenditures

Administrative expenditures include costs related to administration and administrators, as defined by HF2612 Sec. 17 (Iowa Acts 2024), which includes chief administrators, directors and department heads, regional administrators, regional and zone coordinators, district coordinators, and human resources and personnel managers. This section includes FY24 actual, FY25 actual, FY26 re-estimated, and FY27 proposed administrative staff levels and administrative expenditures.

Administrative Staff by FTE

[Complete the table below and enter a narrative related to FTE variances from FY24 to FY26.]

In FY24 Central Rivers began sharing a CFO for a portion of the year. In FY25 an additional three sharing agreements for Chief Administrator, Director of Special Education and Director of Education Services with Keystone AEA were entered as well as four RA's resigned. In FY26 the Director of Media resigned and Central Rivers shared a .25 Media Director with Keystone AEA. Our Professional Development Director began work with the entire AEA system and .50 FTE will be billed to IAEEA.

Table Name: AEA Administrative Staff by FTE FY24-FY26

Administrative Staff	FY24 Actual	FY25 Actual	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY24-FY26 Variance Amount	FY24-FY26 Variance Percent
Chief Administrator	1	.50	.5	-.5	-50%
Directors and Department Heads	7	6.0	4.75	-2.25	-32%
Regional Administrators	12	8.0	8.0	-4.0	-33%
Regional and Zone Coordinators	0				
District Coordinators	0				
Human Resources	1	1.0	1.0		0%
Other Administrative Positions	.75	.50	.5	-.25	-33%
Total FTE	21.75	16.00	14.75	-7.0	-32%

Administrative Staff by FTE: FY26-FY27

[Complete the table below and enter a narrative related to FTE variances from FY26 to FY27.]

Beginning in FY27, Central Rivers will transition from shared leadership positions to full-time roles for the Chief Administrator, Director of Special Education, and Chief Financial Officer. The resulting cost increases are reflected in the FY26 to FY27 variance. The Chief Administrator position will be filled by the current HR Administrator, and the Director of Special Education role

will be assumed by a current Regional Administrator. In addition, the agency anticipates recruiting and adding one Regional Administrator during FY27 to support program and service needs.

Table Name: AEA Administrative Staff by FTE FY26-FY27

Administrative Staff	FY26 Re-Estimat ed	FY27 Proposed	FY26-FY2 7 Variance Amount	FY26-FY27 Variance Percent
Chief Administrator	.5	1	.50	100%
Directors and Department Heads	4.75	4.5	-.25	-5%
Regional Administrators	8.0	9	1	13%
Regional and Zone Coordinators				
District Coordinators				
Human Resources	1.0	0	-1	-100%
Other Administrative Positions	.50	1	.5	100%
Total FTE	14.75	15.5	.75	5%

Total Administrative Expenditures: FY24 Actual, FY25 Actual, and FY26 Re-Estimated

Total administrative expenditures, detailed below by administration and administrative staff, are required to be reduced by at least thirty percent by July 1, 2026.

[Complete the table below and enter the narrative comparing FY24, FY25, and FY26 expenditures, including whether or not the thirty percent statutory reduction to administrative expenditures was met.]

Table Name: Administrative Expenditures – Administration and Administrative Staff: FY24 Actual, FY25 Actual, and FY26 Re-Estimated

Part A: Expenditures: Administration (Obj. 300 & Over)	FY24 Actual	FY25 Actual	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY24 to FY26 Reduction Amount	FY24 to FY26 Reduction Percent
General Administration (Func. 2300-2399)	318,419	311,216	294,063	-24,356	-8%
School Administration (Func. 2400-2499)	113,920	97,030	77,300	-36,620	-32%
Business and Central Administration (Func. 2500-2519, 2540-2599)	555,637	397,238	397,950	-157,687	-28%
Purchasing, Distributing, Printing (Func. 2520-2539)	382,989*	153,995	62,400	-320,589	-84%
Part A: Total Expenditures: Administration	1,370,965	959,479	831,713	-539,252	-39%
Part B: Expenditures: Administrative Staff (Obj. 100-299)	FY24 Actual	FY25 Actual	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY24 to FY26 Reduction Amount	FY24 to FY26 Reduction Percent
Chief Administrator	313,324	149,031	175,882	-137,442	-44%
Directors and Department Heads	1,368,366	1,175,769	1,062,596	-305,770	-22%
Regional Administrators	2,391,160	1,644,703	1,612,461	-778,699	-33%
Regional and Zone Coordinators					
District Coordinators					
Human Resources	259,836	264,304	267,259	7,423	3%
Other Administrative Positions	161,358	117,967	127,230	-34,128	-21%
Other Positions	2,564,846	2,235,433	2,208,028	-356,818	-14%

Sub-Total Expenditures: Administrative Staff	7,058,890	5,587,207	5,453,456	-1,605,434	-23%
Less Sharing Revenue (Sources: 1952, 1953, 1954, 1957)	55,540	195,658	119,330	63,790	115%
Less Other Revenues	415,533	463,940	762,939	347,406	84%
Part B: Total Expenditures: Administrative Staff	6,587,817	4,927,609	4,571,187	-2,016,630	-30.6%
	FY24 Actual	FY25 Actual	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY24 to FY26 Reduction Amount	FY24 to FY26 Reduction Percent
Total Administrative Expenditures					
Part A: Total Expenditures: Administration	1,370,965	959,479	831,713	-539,252	-39%
Part B: Total Expenditures: Administrative Staff	6,587,817	4,927,609	4,571,187	-2,016,630	-31%
Total Administrative Expenditures	7,958,782	5,887,088	5,402,900	-2,555,882	-32.1%

*Note change to the benchmark FY24. This is a result of an audit adjustment of \$109K to creative services inventory.

Total administrative expenditures decreased from \$7,958,782 in FY24 to \$5,402,900 in FY26, a reduction of \$2,555,882 (32.1%), exceeding the 30% statutory requirement effective July 1, 2026. This decrease is primarily attributable to shared administrative staffing arrangements, including three positions with Keystone AEA, one with Mississippi Bend AEA, and one with IAEEA. Regional Administrator FTEs were reduced from 12 to 8 between FY24 and FY26, and administrative support staffing declined through attrition.

Revenue generated through shared business services agreements, Creative Services operations, and van delivery services has further helped offset administrative costs.

Total Administrative Expenditures: FY26 Re-Estimated and FY27 Proposed

[Complete the table below and enter the narrative for FY26 re-estimated and FY27 proposed expenditures, including an explanation regarding the variance.]

Table Name: Administrative Expenditures – Administration and Administrative Staff: FY26 Re-Estimated and FY27 Proposed

Part A: Expenditures: Administration (Obj. 300 & Over)	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY27 Proposed	FY26 to FY27 Variance Amount	FY26 to FY27 Variance Percent
General Administration (Func. 2300-2399)	294,063	256,535	-37,528	-13%
School Administration (Func. 2400-2499)	77,300	79,619	2,319	3%
Business and Central Administration (Func. 2500-2519, 2540-2599)	397,950	409,889	11,939	3%
Purchasing, Distributing, Printing (Func. 2520-2539)	62,400	114,272	51,872	83%
Part A: Total Expenditures: Administration	831,713	860,315	28,602	3%
Part B: Expenditures: Administrative Staff (Obj. 100-299)	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY27 Proposed	FY26 to FY27 Variance Amount	FY26 to FY27 Variance Percent
Chief Administrator	175,882	279,990	104,108	59%
Directors and Department Heads	1,062,596	1,015,237	-47,359	-4%
Regional Administrators	1,612,461	1,800,224	187,763	12%
Regional and Zone Coordinators				
District Coordinators				
Human Resources	267,259	0	-267,259	-100%
Other Administrative Positions	127,230	193,636	66,406	52%
Other Positions	2,208,028	2,280,348	72,320	3%
Sub-Total Expenditures: Administrative Staff	5,453,456	5,569,435	115,979	2%

Less Sharing Revenue (Sources: 1952, 1953, 1954, 1957)	119,330	120,672	1,342	1%
Less Other Revenue	762,939	785,130	22,191	3%
Part B: Total Expenditures: Administrative Staff	4,571,187	4,663,633	92,446	2%
	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY27 Proposed	FY26 to FY27 Variance Amount	FY26 to FY27 Variance Percent
Total Administrative Expenditures				
Part A: Total Expenditures: Administration	831,713	860,315	28,602	3%
Part B: Total Expenditures: Administrative Staff	4,571,187	4,663,633	92,446	2%
Total Administrative Expenditures	5,402,900	5,523,948	121,048	2.24%

Administrative expenditures are projected to increase from \$5,402,900 in FY26 to \$5,523,948 in FY27 (2.24%), primarily due to the transition of shared leadership roles to full-time positions. This increase also reflects a 2.5% salary adjustment and a 3% inflationary factor incorporated into the FY27 proposed budget. Also budgeted for FY27 is \$50K for equipment in the printshop.

Total Administrative Expenditures: Reduction

[Provide narrative for progress made toward administrative expenditure reduction.]

Significant expenditure reductions were achieved across multiple administrative functions, with overall administrative expenditures estimated to decline 32.1%, exceeding the statutory requirement of HF2612.

Total administrative expenditures decreased from \$7,958,782 in FY24 to \$5,402,900 in FY26, a 32.1% reduction. These reductions are largely attributable to a 33% reduction in Regional Administrator costs since FY24 and shared cabinet-level positions, including three positions with Keystone AEA and one with Mississippi Bend AEA. The Chief Administrator, Executive Director of Special Education, and Executive Director of Educational Services are each shared at 0.50 FTE with Keystone AEA, while the Chief Financial Officer is shared at 0.50 FTE with Mississippi Bend AEA. Beginning in FY26, .50 FTE Professional Development Director will be shared with IAAEA as she's doing work across the AEA system. The four shared positions with Keystone and Mississippi Bend AEA will sunset at the end of FY26.

Additional savings were realized through attrition of other AEA administrative support staff as well as mindful considerations of all agency expenditures, including those that fall into administrative categories.

Revenue enhancements also contributed to improved administrative efficiency, including increased sales of services including communications and van delivery, as well as revenue generated by sharing one business office position and one professional development position.

Services

[Insert a table and a narrative description of services provided, the recipients of those services, and associated cost to the entity purchasing the service (e.g., rates, fee schedule), if applicable, and the cost to the AEA to provide the service.]

See Appendix B to find the report delivered to the Iowa Department of Education in December 2025 that outlines a detailed description of the services available for purchase at Central Rivers AEA and the associated cost for the entity purchasing the service.

Iowa's AEA system has partnered with Iowa's Public Libraries to facilitate the delivery of inter-library loans.

Centralized Services

[Include a narrative to describe the AEA's centralized and shared services, which are defined for this purpose as staff and services that are centralized and shared with other AEAs.]

This list of centralized services demonstrates Central Rivers AEA's efforts to support increased and improved statewide consistency and efficiency in practices. This list is not exhaustive of services being considered for efficiency, rather includes the services we are currently engaged in sharing with one or more agencies.

Centralized Service	Originated From	Shared With
Braille	Heartland AEA	Systemwide
Canvas User Network	Heartland AEA	Systemwide
Curriculum Network	Heartland AEA	Systemwide
Cybersecurity Support	Heartland AEA	Systemwide
Ed Tech Network	Heartland AEA	Systemwide
TAG Consultant	Heartland AEA	Systemwide
Talented & Gifted/Extended Learning Network	Heartland AEA	Systemwide
Tech Network	Heartland, Northwest, Central Rivers, Grant Wood AEA's	Systemwide
Hearing screenings in sound booth	Systemwide	Systemwide
Regionalized technology services	Heartland & Green Hills AEA's Keystone & Central Rivers AEA's Grant Wood, Mississippi Bend & Great Prairie AEA's Northwest & Prairie Lakes AEA's	Systemwide
Van delivery	Systemwide	Systemwide
Communications team	Systemwide	Systemwide
Statewide Print Collaborative/Creative Services	Systemwide	Systemwide
Teacher Librarian Network	GHAEA & GWAEA	Systemwide
Data Analytics	MBAEA and Great Prairie	Systemwide
Audiology Services	Systemwide	Systemwide
Powerschool Supports	Grant Wood	Systemwide
English Learners Network	Grant Wood	Systemwide

PD Registrar	Heartland and Central Rivers	Systemwide
Counseling Network	Grant Wood	Systemwide
Special Education Nurse	Northwest	Systemwide
Data	Keystone	Systemwide
Dietician	Systemwide	Systemwide
ACHIEVE Data Team	Keystone	Central Rivers
Assistive Tech Support	Central Rivers	Keystone

Centers of Excellence

[Include a narrative to describe the AEA’s centers of excellence, which are defined for this purpose as content expertise and capacity in a targeted special education service area with statewide impact.]

Iowa AEAs are committed to collaborate with each other as a statewide system to establish additional Centers of Excellence, which will bring additional efficiencies and effectiveness to the system.

Center of Excellence (CoE)	Lead AEA	Partnering AEAs	Implementation Date
Recruitment, Retainment, Onboarding, Mentoring & Professional Learning for AEA Special Education Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iowa AEA School Psychologist 	Heartland AEA	Systemwide	July 1, 2025
Iowa AEA Early ACCESS	Keystone/Central Rivers AEA	Systemwide	July 1, 2025
Assistive Technology Support for Learners with Disabilities	Green Hills AEA/Heartland AEA	Systemwide	July 1, 2026
Leadership for Closing the Achievement Gap for Learners with Disabilities	Mississippi Bend AEA	Systemwide	July 1, 2026
Explicit Instruction Practices for Learners with Disabilities	Prairie Lakes AEA	Systemwide	January 1, 2026
Assessment, Linkages, and Instructional Programming Practices for Successful	Grant Wood AEA	Systemwide	July 1, 2026

Post-Secondary Transition for Learners with Disabilities			
Instruction for Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities	Northwest AEA	Systemwide	July 1, 2026
Language and Literacy for Learners with Disabilities	Great Prairie AEA	Systemwide	January 1, 2026

Statewide Early ACCESS Implementation Plan

The Central Rivers and Keystone Center of Excellence for Early ACCESS serves Iowa’s Area Education Agencies (AEAs) by strengthening statewide systems, building staff capacity, and supporting consistent, high-quality early intervention services for infants, toddlers, and families. More details on the Early ACCESS Center of Excellence can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Fiscal Detail

[Enter narrative of information provided in the section.]

Below is information on historical revenues and expenditures over the past five fiscal years including fund balances, and the three year comparison of FY25 actual, FY26 reestimated budget and FY27 proposed budget.

General Fund: Historical Overview FY21-FY25

[Complete the table below. Enter narrative with a high-level explanation for the changes in revenue, expenditures, and balance.]

Table Name: General Fund - Historical Overview FY21-FY25

General Fund	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
Revenues	50,738,930	54,933,478	55,060,913	56,585,403	50,079,634
Expenditures	48,663,836	51,928,801	53,568,343	55,717,395	48,840,470
Balance	13,402,350	16,407,027	17,899,597	18,767,605	20,006,769

During FY22 and FY23, the agency received ARP (American Rescue Plan) funds, which contributed to increases in both revenues and expenditures during that period. In FY25, the agency experienced a reduction of 52.62 FTE, of which we have not fully rehired, accounting for the majority of the expenditure decrease from FY24 to FY25. Additionally, implementation of HF2612 resulted in a significant decrease in Educational Services and Media revenues, with reductions exceeding \$5 million.

General Fund Balance: FY25 Actual, FY26 Re-Estimated, and FY27 Proposed

[Include narrative to explain fund balance type (e.g., non-spendable, restricted, committed) reflected in the table below, including reasons for purposeful balances and plans for use.]

Table Name: General Fund Balance Detail - FY24 Actual, FY25 Re-Estimated, and FY26 Proposed

General Fund Balance Detail	FY25 Actual	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY27 Proposed
Non-Spendable Fund Balance, Special Education Support Services	66,792	70,000	70,000
Non-Spendable Fund Balance, Other	13,903	15,000	15,000
Restricted Fund Balance, Special Education Support Services	136,704	150,000	150,000
Restricted Fund Balance, Other	710,519	720,000	720,000
Committed Fund Balance, Special Education Support Services	4,420,879	4,420,879	4,420,879
Committed Fund Balance, Other	857,759	857,759	857,759
Assigned Fund Balance, Special Education Support Services	221,371	225,000	225,000
Assigned Fund Balance, Other	0	0	0
Unassigned Fund Balance, Special Education Support Services	2,952,391	3,000,000	1,250,000
Unassigned Fund Balance, Other	10,626,451	11,513,630	11,533,231
Total General Fund Balance	20,006,769	20,972,268	19,241,869

Central Rivers AEA's non-spendable fund balance relates to inventory and prepaid expenditures. The Agency has fund balances restricted for TSS, TQ professional development, media resources and various restricted grants. Committed balances reflect funds committed for debt service, building repairs and infrastructure.

Three-Year Comparison for Budgeted Funds: FY25 Actual, FY26 Re-Estimated, and FY27 Proposed

[Include narrative of the budget detail. Summarize the FY27 proposed budget assumptions mentioned earlier in the report (e.g., districts served, programs offered). Explain the assumptions used to estimate revenues and expenditures. Additionally, include any

assumptions used to generate the budget that were not already covered in the report narrative above (e.g., types of contracts for services, programs, sharing agreements, capital purchases).

Central Rivers AEA's FY27 budget is based on a 0% SSA increase and the continuation of the \$32.5 million statewide AEA reduction. The agency anticipates continuing to receive 90% of special education funding flowing through to districts. No increases are expected in IDEA federal, Title I, or Title III grant funding, and IDEA flowthrough funding will no longer be administered through AEA's.

Educational Services and Media Services will continue to be offered to districts on a fee-for-service basis, with revenue projections developed through direct conversations with districts regarding their anticipated FY27 needs.

Expenditures include a 2.5% salary and benefit increase which includes an 8% health insurance increase, as well as a 3% inflationary factor applied to most non-salary costs. The FY27 budget also reflects planned hiring to address several vacant positions, with the expectation of a successful recruitment cycle. All current shared Cabinet positions will sunset after FY26 and have been budgeted accordingly for FY27. Additionally, the agency maintains outstanding certificates of participation, and the associated annual debt service is incorporated into the budget.

Table Name: Resources, Expenditures & Financing Uses, and Funds Balance FY25 Actual, FY26 Re-Estimated, and FY27 Proposed

Resources: Revenues, Other Financing Sources, and Beginning Funds Balance	FY25 Actual	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY27 Proposed
Taxes (Controlled Funding)	8,919,106	5,563,628	5,982,146
Tuition/Transportation	140,215	115,000	115,000
Earnings on Investments	997,108	800,000	800,000
Nutrition Program Sales	0	0	0
Student Activities & Sales	0	0	0
Other Revenues from Local Sources	10,467,044	12,788,636	11,885,836
Intermediate Revenues	0	0	0
State Aid (Controlled Funding)	14,858,265	13,049,339	15,519,969
Juvenile Home Tuition Aid	1,428,379	1,576,917	1,642,229
Other State Revenues	3,587,825	3,613,226	3,603,896
IDEA Federal Grant	15,481,642	14,194,137	14,194,137
Other Federal Revenues	562,218	679,610	562,610
Long-Term Debt Proceeds	173,964	0	0
Interfund Transfers In	999,125	488,729	486,729
Proceeds of Fixed Asset Dispositions	0	0	0
Other Financing Sources	0	0	0
Beginning Funds Balance	18,974,455	20,006,769	20,972,268
Total Resources	76,589,346	72,875,991	75,764,820
Expenditures & Other Financing Uses	FY25 Actual	FY26 Re-Estimated	FY27 Proposed

Appendix A

Iowa's Area Education Agencies

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030

Our Mission

To deliver high-quality, evidence-based, and strategic services to our educational partners that meet the diverse needs of Iowa's learners (birth-21), educators, and school communities.

Our Vision

Iowa's Area Education Agencies are educational partners embedded in Iowa schools. We exist to create a thriving educational landscape where all learners and educators have access to high-quality, evidence-based and strategic supports and services, collaboratively provided within districts, to help all learners achieve their full potential.

Our Core Values

				
C	A	R	E	S
Collaboration	Accountability	Relationships	Excellence	Sustainability
Emphasizing the importance of working together with schools and districts to achieve common educational goals.	Prioritizing strategies that create measurable impact (using analytics) and being accountable for outcomes.	Driving positive change through the power of strong partnerships. We partner with educators to create a shared vision for student success.	Striving for excellence in all aspects of service delivery, including the quality, evidence-based nature and strategic alignment of supports and services.	Committing to ongoing reflection, learning and improvement to ensure the sustainability and impact of effective services.

Our Goals

Goal 1 Promote safe, orderly, and welcoming learning environments.	Goal 2 Promote equity in education by closing achievement and opportunity gaps.	Goal 3 Implement measures to ensure consistent quality in the delivery of AEA services to Iowa's accredited schools.
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Appendix B

[AEA Annual Service and Cost Report](#)

Appendix C

[Early ACCESS CoE one-pager](#)