

## Need

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As Iowa continues to prepare high school students to be college and career ready it has become increasingly evident that students need additional support of career awareness, exploration and training. Iowa's current College and Career Transitions Counselor (CCTC) model has helped provide high school juniors and seniors with the additional career-based services needed to be successful after high school graduation along with reducing barriers and expanding access to career and academic opportunities for students.

## Model

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The College and Career Transition Counselor program started in Iowa in 2017 as a partnership among Eastern Iowa Community College, Louisa Muscatine, and Columbus Community Schools, with Mississippi Bend AEA providing support through its Future Ready division. For the 2025-2026 school year, over 60 CCTCs are housed in 12 of Iowa's community colleges and will support students in over 100 Iowa high schools.

College and Career Transition Counselors (CCTCs) work directly through the community college and secondary schools to support college transition and career exploration through targeted connections with students and families during crucial time frames, including preparation, transition to enrollment and persistence through their postsecondary experience. The CCTCs work closely with students in grades 11 and 12 in partner high schools, throughout the summer after high school graduation and as part of the first-year support system for students coming out of this program at the coordinating community college. The positions are hosted at the community college and partner with at least one school district.

The College and Career Transitions Counselors (CCTCs) work as a liaison between the community college and secondary schools to ensure students are supported in their career exploration and receive proper assistance in transitioning into additional training which can include apprenticeships, military opportunities, two-year colleges, four-year colleges and the world of work. CCTCs provide additional targeted support to school counseling programs in the college and career domain and work with a variety of stakeholders, including the Iowa Intermediary Network and work-based learning coordinators. Currently, the preferred education requirement for a CCTC is a master's degree with a license or endorsement in school counseling, followed by a related master's with a minimum requirement of a bachelor's degree.



## Current Partnerships

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### Des Moines Area Community College:

Knoxville and Prairie City Monroe  
Colo-Nesco and Ballard  
Ames and Collins-Maxwell  
Southeast Polk  
Des Moines Public  
Interstate 35 and Van Meter  
Johnston and West Des Moines Valley  
Boone and Ogden  
Ankeny  
Adel DeSoto Minburn and Urbandale  
Waukee and Waukee Northwest  
Earlham and Panorama  
North Polk and Bondurant

### Iowa Central Community College:

Fort Dodge and St. Edmond  
Clarion-Golfield-Dows, Webster City and South Hamilton  
Newell-Fonda, Sioux Central and Pocahontas Area  
Alta-Aurelia, Storm Lake and Storm Lake St. Mary's  
Eagle Grove, Manson Northwest Webster, South Central Calhoun and Southwest Valley  
East Sac, Greene County, Humboldt and Paton Churdan

### Iowa Valley Community College:

Grinnell and East Marshall

### Iowa Western Community College:

Avoca, Treynor, Riverside and Underwood  
Harlan, Lewis Central and Woodbine  
Logan Magnolia, Missouri Valley, Tri-Center and West Harrison

### North Iowa Area Community College:

Mason City  
Charles City and North Butler  
Newman Catholic and Central Springs  
Rockford, Lake Mills and Northwood-Kensett  
Garner-Hayfield-Ventura  
West Hancock  
Belmond-Klemme, West Fork and Clear Lake  
Osage and Saint Ansgar

### Eastern Iowa Community College:

Calamus-Wheatland and Central Dewitt  
Maquoketa and Bellevue  
Camanche and Northeast  
Wilton and West Liberty  
Clinton and Easton Valley  
Muscatine  
Louisa Muscatine and Columbus Community  
North Scott and Durant

### Hawkeye Community College:

Aplington-Parkersburg  
Independence

### Iowa Lakes Community College:

Algona and Emmetsburg  
Esterville Lincoln, Spencer and Okoboji

### Indian Hills Community College:

Ottumwa, Cardinal and Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont  
Oskaloosa and North Mahaska  
Centerville and Moravia  
Davis County, Moulton-Udell and Gateway High School  
Van Buren and Pekin

### Southwestern Community College:

Clarke and Mormon Trail

### Kirkwood Community College:

Solon  
Linn-Mar  
Iowa City City High  
Washington Cedar Rapids  
Prairie

### Northeast Iowa Community College:

Oelwein, Starmont and West Central  
Waukon  
Cascade, Western Dubuque and Dyersville Beckman  
Central Elkader and Edgewood Colesburg  
Dubuque Hempstead and Dubuque Senior  
Crestwood  
Maquoketa Valley and West Delaware  
Eastern Allamakee  
MFL MarMac, North Fayette Valley, Postville and South Winneshiek

## Funding

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The Department of Education, Bureau of CTE and Post Secondary Readiness, awards small start-up grants through the Perkins Reserve Fund that help to fund college and career transition counselor positions. Each grant recipient receives funding to help offset program costs for a total of 3 years.

The grant funding is intended to support and expand the College and Career Transitions Counselors (CCTC) model across the state. School districts may also be able to access operational sharing dollars, institutional resources and federal grant funds to support this position.

**Timeline:**

- **Year 1 initial Iowa Department of Education grant funding:** Perkins incentive support (up to \$40,000 per position\*). Estimated cost of a shared counselor is \$65,000-75,000. *\*Funding amounts are subject to change.*
- **Year 2 Iowa Department of Education grant funding:** Perkins support (\$7,500).
- **Year 3 Iowa Department of Education grant funding:** Perkins support (\$2,500).

In years 2 & 3, eligible districts may use operational sharing dollars as an additional funding source.

For Fall 2026, the Department is soliciting applications for round six, year one of the CCTC grants. Additional funding support would serve as a catalyst to start-up partnerships that would be sustained long-term through other funding streams.

**For any questions about this information, please contact Karey Hawkins ([karey.hawkins@iowa.gov](mailto:karey.hawkins@iowa.gov)) or Cale Hutchings ([cale.hutchings@iowa.gov](mailto:cale.hutchings@iowa.gov)).**