



# Career and Academic Planning Overview

## Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP)

The Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP), as outlined in HF2392, is a series of high quality, career-related activities that provide a platform for students to engage in the development of self-reflection, career research and exploration of postsecondary opportunities to allow students to apply this learning to support their personalized postsecondary path. Through connection to the ICAP each year in grades 8-12, each Iowa student is encouraged to design, reflect and consider the steps needed to achieve their postsecondary goals. The holistic nature of the ICAP process ensures continuous feedback between internal and external stakeholders and provides a framework to develop students who exhibit highly marketable employability skills and are prepared to successfully transition into higher education, training programs or directly into the workforce. Iowa's career planning vision focuses on graduating students who are career and college ready with the academic, technical and employability skills to meet employer needs. With greater intention since the initial ICAP implementation in 2016, this process continues to grow and develop to support all of Iowa's public school district students 8-12.

The outlined ICAP requirements ensure that each student achieves the following:

- Prepare the student for successful completion of the core curriculum developed by the state board of education by the time the student graduates from high school.
- Identify the coursework and work-based learning needed in grades nine through twelve to support the student's postsecondary education and career options.
- Prepare the student to successfully complete, prior to graduation and following a timeline included in the plan, the five essential components.
- Prior to graduation, advise the student how to successfully complete the free application for federal student aid (FAFSA).

## The District Career and Academic Plan (DCAP)

The district plan is a roadmap for implementation of the career and academic planning process outlined in statute in 281-Iowa Administrative Code chapter 49.5(279). The district plan provides a living context for how each district supports their student's ICAP process. A student's individual career and academic planning (ICAP) process happens within the framework established by the district plan. Districts are encouraged to work to build and maintain strong relationships with external partners such as business and industry as well as postsecondary institutions to increase high-quality career planning exposure and support for students. The District Plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure individual student planning (ICAP) is implemented by the established District Career and Academic Planning Team.

At a minimum, the district plan shall include the following components:

- The activities to be undertaken in each grade level (8-12) to achieve the ICAP requirements
- Integration of the district plan with the district's comprehensive school improvement plan and school counseling program plan;
- Designates a team of educational practitioners to establish, implement, review, coordinate activities and regularly consults with representatives of employers, state and local workforce agencies, higher education institutions and postsecondary training programs to ensure activities are relevant and aligned with the labor and workforce needs of the region and state.

## The District Team

Each district should have an established district team that has developed a written career and academic plan that is reviewed and revised annually. Teams must include, but are not limited to, an administrator, school counselor and teachers, including career and technical education teachers, special education educators, and individuals responsible for coordinating work-based learning activities.

The team ensures the district is using an approved Career Information System (CIS) and helps to determine what ICAP activities will be completed in each grade level to achieve the requirements of IAC 281-49.3.

Each year, the district team will submit the district plan to their Regional Planning Partnership (RPP) for review. The submission deadline is set by the individual RPP and is connected to the RPP funding for the year.

## Updated DCAP Template

For the 2022-2023 school year, DCAP teams are encouraged to use the updated district template linked below. The updated template provides greater clarification as well as the new additions to the ICAP requirements.

[District Plan Template 2022](#)

## ICAP Additions for the 2022-2023 School Year: Work-Based Learning and FAFSA Advisement

At the close of the 2022 Legislative session, steps were taken to add two additional components to the State of Iowa's Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) requirements. The change to Iowa Code mandates school districts to include work-based learning and advisement to students on how to successfully complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) into their District Plan to ensure that each 8-12 student continues to develop and grow in their ICAP process.

As part of the district review process for DCAP, districts will need to consider how WBL and FAFSA advisement will be incorporated to best serve students' ICAP as well as how these additions will be tracked for CASA reporting for fall 2023.

Work-based learning's inclusion into the ICAP requirements is an update to the ICAP process and will continue to move Iowa forward as we work to support students in the postsecondary planning process. Work-based learning includes a continuum of structured activities utilizing the partnership between industry and education to engage student learning and is highly connected to the ICAP process with hands-on application of each student's learning that surrounds the ICAP essential elements.

With the inclusion of FAFSA advisement into the ICAP requirements, Iowa joins several other states to promote FAFSA completion in an effort to support the many puzzle pieces of matching college intent with enrollment in pursuit of additional training and educational opportunities beyond high school.

## Questions

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