

Investing in Iowa's Children

Governor Culver outlined his priorities saying that all Iowa children deserve a quality education from preschool through higher education in order to compete for jobs in today's global economy.

The Legislature has taken swift action already this week on three of the key initiatives outlined by Governor Culver. They were approved by the House Education Committee on just the second day of session.

Fund Commitment to Pre-School

The Governor stated one of his priorities is to continue to expand access to early childhood education. He cited past actions that have resulted in making preschool available to more than 12,000 Iowa children in 175 school districts across the state. His budget request will build on past accomplishments by asking for the final installment of \$15 million to complete the four-year, \$60 million commitment to funding preschool.

Race to the Top

The Governor expressed his desire for Iowa to compete in a new federal grant program, Race to the Top. This federal initiative has the potential of bringing Iowa \$60 million to \$175 million in federal money if Iowa's grant is accepted.

Legislation, required to be approved by the General Assembly, will make some changes in Iowa's education law allowing Iowa schools to be more innovative in the classroom, build the education infrastructure our students need, and turn around the lowest performing schools.

Cash Reserve Funds

The Governor asked lawmakers to pass legislation requiring school districts, facing budget constraints, to use their cash reserves rather than raising property taxes to fund shortfalls in their budgets.

State Aid to Schools

The Governor further showed his commitment to education by stating his intent to fully fund the two percent allowable growth for Iowa's public schools. This two percent will be paid to schools for the 2010-2011 school year.

Additional Funding

The Governor also asked the Legislature to dedicate at least \$100 million for Fiscal Year 2011 from the state's reserve funds to help restore some of the recent budget cuts to school districts.