



School Leader Update

Iowa Department of Education
Iowa School Leaders

Wednesday, December 1, 2004

Resources for

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Leading the way in addressing and resolving differences

Conflicts between families and educators are to be expected, but that doesn't necessarily make them welcome. The Iowa Department of Education recognizes this and is committed to helping educators and family members learn and use the skills they need to get differences addressed and resolved as early as possible. We believe this will strengthen working relationships between families and educators, and ultimately improve student learning.

Iowa is ranked No. 1 in the nation for having the lowest number of special education hearings, complaints, and mediations when examining the data per 10,000 special education students. There are many reasons for this. One is that educators and parents across the state are taking [mediation and conflict resolution](#) training, paid for by the Bureau of Children, Family and Community Services, and using the new skills they learn to address and resolve differences before they escalate to unhealthy levels.

Since 1995, the Department has contracted with the Conflict Resolution Center of Iowa (formerly the Iowa Peace Institute) to provide training in introductory and advanced mediation skills for educators, creating solutions for parents, and the newest offering, RESPECT (Recognizing Everyone's Strengths by Peacebuilding, Empathizing, Communication and Trustbuilding), for IEP and related team members. Costs to participants are minimal. There is no training fee, though sponsoring agencies often ask participants to pay the cost for meals and breaks. Participants or their agencies are responsible for their own travel expenses.

Several training programs (listed below) have been scheduled for 2004-05. Additional trainings can be scheduled when school districts and/or AEAs request them. Note that enrollment is based on availability:

Creating Solutions for Parents and Educators (a one-day program for parents)

January 27 in the Des Moines Area

Sponsored by Heartland AEA 11 Parent-Educator Connection Program

Contact Kari Paulsen at 1-800/362-2720

Space is currently reserved for Heartland PEC Program staff

RESPECT (a four-day program for educators and parents)

Nov. 23, 2004, Dec 14, 2004 and Jan 18 and Feb 8, 2005 in Cedar Rapids

Sponsored by Grant Wood AEA 10

Registration information at www.aea10.k12.ia.us/profdev/speced.html

Two units of graduate credit available

RESPECT

Mar 1 and 22, Apr 12 and May 3, 2005 in Le Mars
Sponsored by Western Hills AEA 12 and AEA 4
Contact Linda Appleby, AEA 12 at 1/800-352-9040

For further information on how your agency can secure Department of Education funding for a conflict resolution training program at your location, or for an electronic brochure describing the various programs please contact Dee Ann Wilson, 515/281-5766, Deeann.wilson@iowa.gov.

For addition information on the training or to schedule a program, contact the Conflict Resolution Center of Iowa (CRCI). If districts want to offer the training, the district should contact its AEA, with the AEA submitting the required paperwork. Contact CRCI president Greg Buntz at 641/236-3939, buntz@iowatelecom.net or by mail at PO Box 925, Grinnell 50112.