



Why You Have Received This E-mail

As our partners in education, we want you to know more about what the AEAs do. We also want to hear from you regarding success stories of how the AEA has impacted your students' lives.

Eight years ago, the Iowa Department of Education began conducting an annual AEA customer survey. Data were broken down by individual AEAs as well as aggregated statewide. Both individually and collectively, the data revealed that teachers and school administrators value the services of their AEAs. Each year, feedback regarding the AEAs continues to be very positive.

For example, 92% of educators agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "Generally the AEA services that I have received or participated in met my professional needs." The statement, "The AEA services I have received have assisted in improving my instruction or job-related practices," generated an 83.9% level of agreement.

Iowa's Area Education Agencies have served schools and students in their service areas for nearly 35 years now. The AEAs were created in 1974 in response to the passage of 94-142, which ultimately became the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA). Nearly 80 percent of the funds the AEAs receive are dedicated in one way or another to providing support for students with physical or learning disabilities, their teachers, schools and parents. The remaining 20% of the funds go to providing professional development, school consultants, media services and the many other services you have come to expect from your AEA.

As our partners in education, school administrators have the in-depth knowledge about what the AEAs do. You know many stories about how the AEA has served your school(s). *Below is just one of countless success stories we know have occurred over the years. What are yours?*

Technology Solution Supports Immunity-Challenged Student

Daniel is a six-year-old boy who contracted meningitis at three months of age, resulting in a brain injury, which affected his vision, speech, and

hearing. It also caused other chronic medical conditions. He has a feeding tube, shunt, port, breathes through a tracheotomy, and uses a wheelchair.

Daniel's parents can't let him leave his house very often for fear that he will pick up an infection his immune system will not be able to fight. For this reason, Daniel could simply not attend school.

Daniel's AEA team consisting of an occupational therapist, physical therapist, special education teacher, vision teacher, speech-language pathologist, technology supervisor, and others worked with Daniel's local school district to find a solution to integrate him into the classroom despite his condition.

Results:

Thanks to his AEA team, Daniel uses Skype technology to tune into his kindergarten classroom and they are able to interact with him. Skype is a software program that allows users to make telephone calls over the Internet to other Skype users free-of-charge and it makes use of videoconferencing.

The AEA team and school district staff worked together to implement this technology in Daniel's home and the school. Since the interactive classroom was installed, Daniel is more alert—he has demonstrated active listening with his bright eyes, facial expressions, making noises (since he doesn't speak), and moving his upper body and arms.

When Daniel's mom talks about the opportunities and quality of life her son now has because of this arrangement, she gets emotional. Rightfully so. Not only is Daniel benefiting from this high-tech learning environment, so, too, are his fellow classmates. This graduation class of 2021 is learning life lessons that will shape them forever.

We invite you to share your success stories with us! To share success stories or experiences, please email them to: gheld@aea10.k12.ia.us

Visit our Web site at: <http://www.iowaaea.org/>