



Heartland AEA: Improving Services

Organizational Changes

Volume 1 Issue 1

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide information about the current improvement efforts at Heartland AEA 11. For more information, please contact Steve Jones, Communication Specialist at 515-270-9030 or 800-255-0405.

What is the current structure of Heartland AEA 11?

Service delivery from Heartland and other AEAs has historically been organized by divisions. The three divisions include a Division of Special Education, a Division of Media Services, and a Division of Educational Services. There is a fourth entity, central administration, which provides support services. Within Heartland there are several workgroups that currently function agency-wide rather than within these divisional structures. These are the Assessment Services Team, the Technology Team, and Professional Development.

Why is Heartland restructuring?

Heartland is restructuring in order to continue to meet the needs of our schools and children of AEA 11. Heartland is in the third year of a long-range planning effort to align programs and services with the Iowa AEA accreditation standards. These standards require that AEAs provide services in nine core areas and organize their services to work toward a small number of agency-wide goals. Through this planning process it became evident that implementing this plan would be more effective by organizing services differently. Also, the scope and number of services that AEAs are required to provide have been expanded through the requirements in Chapter 12, Chapter 72, and with passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind). Heartland recognized the need to organize to meet these challenges.

What are some anticipated benefits of restructuring?

Some of the anticipated benefits of restructuring to improve services to schools will include:

- Improved capacity to support schools in meeting the requirements of Chapter 12 and No Child Left Behind.
- Efficient planning and delivery of services.
- Increased coordination of services to schools.

What are some of the features of the new structure?

The new structure focuses on providing unified services and service delivery to meet the needs of our clients. This includes coordination of agency services to each district. Additionally there will be a continued agency focus on meeting local district needs. The team serving a district will provide the same range of services currently being provided by both special education personnel and school improvement consultants. Media services will also continue to be available and enhanced. Finally, services will be organized around the nine areas required through AEA accreditation rules -- provided by one combined staff working collaboratively.

Will services to districts diminish or will local district staff assignments change due to this restructuring effort?

No! Services to districts will not only remain at the level currently being provided, but will be enhanced and improved as Heartland uses resources more effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of schools and children. There has been no discussion about changing assignments of practitioners and consultants currently assigned to their respective districts.