

Primary and Secondary Education

Iowans place a very high value on education and government's role in supporting schools. Yet while Iowa still ranks well among states in the percentage of the adult population completing high school, Iowa now has a much lower percentage of college graduates among its adult population than the country as a whole. While historically, Iowa has been a leader among states in overall fourth and eighth grade student reading and mathematics scores, today Iowa ranks in the bottom half of states, particularly among its white, nonhispanic student population. Students preparing for the 21st century economy require much higher skills than in the past, and this requires a world class educational system.

As Governor, what will you do to ensure Iowa students acquire the skills they need for the 21st century economy?



BRANSTAD: We need to have high expectations for our students. We need state standards, and to give local schools the freedom to have strategies to achieve those standards. We

should have uniform assessments, then recognize and reward good schools and good teachers. We should make necessary changes for those not getting the job done. I believe we need to reinstate funding that rewards teachers on the basis of performance.



CULVER: I support education because as a former teacher I know the real-life challenges that teachers and students face in the classroom. Iowa, through the Iowa Core Curriculum, is one

of the few states to identify the 21st century skills necessary for students to achieve as a required element of our education programs. Through investments in teacher pay and professional development and the pathway set out by our Race to the Top Application, we can give Iowa students a world class education by increasing student achievement overall, decreasing achievement gaps among student subgroups, increasing the number and percentage of students of color who graduate, increasing college enrollment and the number of students who complete at least the equivalent of one year of college credit that can be applied toward a degree, and increasing undergraduate enrollment in STEM majors in Iowa's institutions of higher education.