

Unlike the 1980s, when educators battled hard times, the challenges of the '90s will go beyond money issues. The new initiatives: How to put technology to work in the classroom; how to bring the world to Iowa students; how better to serve communities.

# Schools to change at a furious pace

By LINDA LANTOR

Register Staff Writer

Sporting maroon and gold uniforms, colors of the Ankeny High School Hawks and Hawkettes, students pedal gleaming stationary bicycles in physical education class, hardly noticing the adults among them working up a sweat.

They're sharing the nation's first YMCA attached to a high school. The \$3.7 million athletic complex opened this fall, a harbinger of the additional services schools will be expected to provide, often in partnership with their communities.

A few miles away in Ankeny is another example: The after-school care for children the Boys and Girls Club of Des Moines provides in space rented from the school district.

In Storm Lake, meanwhile, Buena Vista College students can chat with the likes of broadcast executive Ted Turner via satellite teleconferences. The college is considering offering more advanced courses in the Japanese and Chinese languages. Administrators there are struggling to attract minority faculty and students while sensitizing the mostly white enrollment to racial issues.

## One in a series

As Iowa moves into the 1990s, many of its schools and colleges are leading at such dazzling speed that it seems even the chalkboard soon will be obsolete.

After a grim 10 years in which Iowa's elementary and secondary schools lost more than 63,000 students and colleges frantically sought new markets, educators are about to tackle a decade

that promises to be the busiest for education in the 20th century.

"Probably too busy," said Thomas Berg, a University of Northern Iowa professor who fears elementary and secondary schools, especially, will be asked to do too much. "The demands are constant and relentless and one wonders how far you can stretch the resources of any institution."

Others see the coming decade as one of opportunity.

"I think the '90s will be a powerfully positive time for education in Iowa," said William Lepley, Iowa Department of Education director.

Lepley envisions Iowa schools as being open 24 hours a day by the year 2000, offering services such as child care, adult education classes and health clinics. Since many high school students will work, schools will offer flexible schedules with courses in the mornings, afternoons and evenings. Classrooms will have one computer for

## What's ahead in education

- ✓ Iowa schools will be open 24 hours a day by the year 2000.
- ✓ Schools will offer even more community-wide services.
- ✓ Public school enrollment will keep dropping.
- ✓ Higher education will increase emphasis on international studies.

EDUCATION

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# Educators face busy, challenging decade

## EDUCATION

Continued from Page One

every five students, connecting them to a worldwide information network. Every teacher will have a telephone so he or she can talk to parents when ever necessary.

"It's not a pipe dream," he said.

### Competitive Institutions

The 1990s also promise to be keenly competitive as institutions vie for students while scrambling to offer educations that are increasingly technological and international. The schools will be under strong pressure to help solve social problems, from child care to economic development.

As the 1980s draw to a close, Iowa's elementary and secondary schools still are reeling from a host of reform initiatives, including the state's open enrollment law, designed to let parents choose their child's school district regardless of where they live. A new school finance law, a new teacher pay plan and new education standards also passed the Legislature in recent years.

"It's good to be in the limelight," Ankeny School Superintendent Ben Norman said. "But it also brings about a very large workload."

Over the last 10 years, the number of school districts decreased from 443 in 1980 to 431 this fall, mostly through consolidation. The practice of sharing classes and activities among school districts skyrocketed.

### District Reorganization

Lepley expects more reorganization in the coming decade. "We can't support the number of school districts that we have," he said.

Meanwhile, enrollment mushroomed in the 1980s at Iowa's higher education institutions, as a growing share of high school graduates sought post-secondary educations. Colleges also reached out more to older adults.

Iowa's three state universities grew, but they also spent much of the late 1980s under scrutiny, both from campus committees and an outside consultant, in a drive for focus and academic excellence.

"I look forward to the '90s," said Marvin Pomerantz, president of the Iowa Board of Regents. "I believe it can be a golden era in Iowa for higher education."

That means the University of Iowa becoming one of the nation's top 10 public universities; Iowa State University achieving recognition as the first- or second-best land-grant university in the country; and UNI becoming one of the best four-year public universities, he said.

The state's 15 community colleges grew from 498,061 students in 1980 to

574,808 in 1989. The state education department is studying ways to make them more effective and efficient.

The number of part-time students at the schools will soar during the 1990s as more Iowans seek to upgrade employment skills, said Drew Allbritten, executive director of the Iowa Association of Community College Trustees.

Enrollment at Iowa's private four-year colleges ballooned to 44,887 students in 1989 from 37,252 in 1980, including part-timers who may have taken just one class. New freshmen, however, decreased to 7,874 in fall 1989 from 8,478 in fall 1980.

### "Non-traditional Students"

"I think colleges will work harder to attract more of the traditional high school graduates to post-secondary education and they will continue to provide opportunities for non-traditional students," said John Hartung, executive director of the Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. "There will be an increased emphasis on graduate education because there is a greater demand within the job market for people with more advanced degrees."

To pay for that, states are going to be asked to do more to help students afford college in the 1990s, with less support expected from the federal government, said Gary Nichols of the Iowa College Aid Commission. Families will feel more pressure to save for higher education, he predicted.

Perhaps nothing symbolizes the gigantic expectations for schools and colleges in the 1990s more than the recent call by state policy makers, educators and business leaders for a "world-class" education system.

In this quest for quality in the 1990s, schools and colleges plan to reach out to Iowans across the state as never before.

### Child Care

School superintendents say they expect to serve more 3- and 4-year-olds in schools.

"There is such a tremendous need on the part of families for young children to be in quality child care," said Sue Donielson, a state education department official. "You're going to see combination day care and preschool experiences."

State grants became available last January to help public schools and private agencies provide appropriate programming for young children, she said.

The Webster City School District is one of those already providing child care, for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The program is in its second year.



Sue Kluever, an Ankeny High School student, adjusts the seat on an exercise bike, left, while Weldon Cox, an Ankeny resident, pedals through a workout at the YMCA. Students share gym time with regular YMCA members.

"I see schools being more involved in early childhood education in the future and I just feel we are on the forefront of that, maybe a year or two ahead of what other schools are going to be involved in," Webster City Superintendent William Garner said.

### Parents in School

Community colleges will offer more child-care services in the 1990s to make it easier for parents to attend school, Allbritten of the community college association said.

Colleges are making it easier for Iowans to further their educations in other ways, too.

Grand View College in Des Moines will begin a trimester system in January to allow working adults to quickly complete certain degrees, such as a bachelor's in business administration, by taking evening and weekend courses only.

"Adult students who are the coming market for higher education are interested in completing their degrees at an accelerated pace, and our program is an attempt to help them do that," said Ferol Menzel, a Grand View College official.

### Minority Students

Iowa colleges also will continue their efforts to attract more minority students and faculty in the 1990s, educators said. They also will step up programs to help minority children in elementary and secondary schools.

"All of our schools are committed to better service for minority students," Hartung said. "We don't have a very big population in Iowa so we're going to have to do a better job of attracting minority students from outside the state."

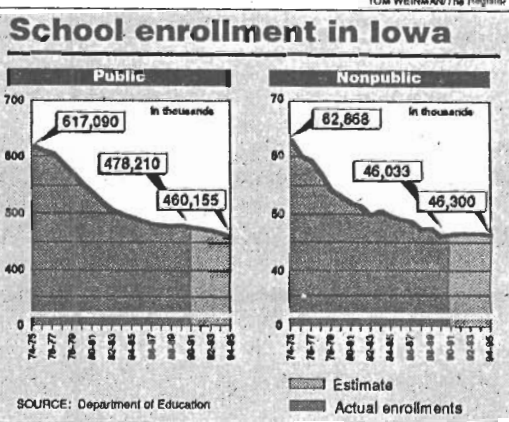
Minority enrollment at the state universities is about 5 percent, with a goal of 8.5 percent in 1991, said R. Wayne Richey, the regents' executive director.

Des Moines Area Community College in Ankeny is supervising a program for minority youths in Des Moines schools which involves black students from DMACC, Drake University in Des Moines and Grand View acting as mentors, said Kevin Thomas, a DMACC official. About 120 high school students are involved and DMACC hopes to reach more in the 1990s, he said.

### Reach Out

Technology is another way schools and colleges will reach out to Iowans in the next decade, with some already far ahead of others.

In the North Tama School District,



for example, every elementary teacher has a classroom computer that sends attendance to the office. Their students, working on computers, can quickly grasp the fine points of sentence structure with the help of a teacher who monitors their screens. The children and the teacher can ask each other questions and answer them electronically.

"Checking for understanding for each student can be done much more quickly that way than walking around the room," said Gary Croskrey, North Tama superintendent. "There's a natural attraction of technology for students. It makes it easy. As a result, kids don't mind writing."

### Education Standards

Lepley has proposed a \$24 million technology initiative for schools, including state and local money, for the 1990-91 school year to help districts get started.

The Iowa Educational Telecommunications Network, which is now being developed, will serve both educational and economic development interests by allowing the exchange of information quickly, Lepley said.

With two-way interactive television communication between students and teachers in schools around the state, access to courses such as Russian and higher mathematics will grow, said Chris Eller of Iowa Public Television, which is coordinating the massive undertaking. Students and teachers will be able to see and hear each other across long distances, he said.

College officials also have great hopes for technology.

"I think the next decade will be the one in which we fully realize the value of technology," Richey said. Computerization of libraries will be complete and Iowans should be able to take graduate courses all over the state via two-way interactive television, he said.

Expectations also are high for schools and colleges to be involved in economic development in the 1990s and to provide the kinds of employees businesses want to hire.

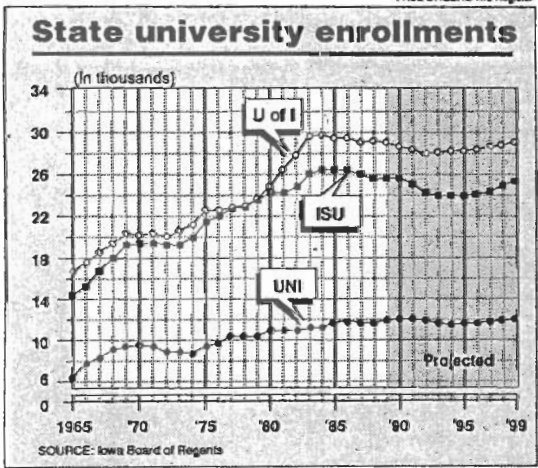
In Des Moines, the school district and area businesses have formed an alliance to study how to make the city's schools "world class" by the year 2000. A task force has been formed to analyze what job skills will be needed in the next decade.

### Real Estate

In response to interest from real estate businesses around the state, UNI is developing a real estate education program in its business college designed to produce professionals to work in many aspects of the industry, Mills said. Students will be able to earn a bachelor's degree in finance with a concentration in real estate starting in fall 1990, he said.

And schools and colleges will reach out to the rest of the world in the 1990s, even more than they are now.

Already, in the late 1980s, it is commonplace to find Soviet and Chinese citizens studying and teaching on Iowa's college and university campuses. In November, the regents



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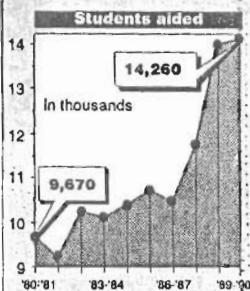
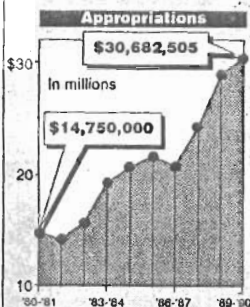
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LISA FRASIER/The Register

## Iowa tuition grants

From 1980 to 1989 aid from the Iowa tuition grant program to students attending private colleges has more than doubled. Here's a look at the figures:



SOURCE: Iowa College Aid Commission

approved the offering of a bachelor of arts degree in Soviet and Eastern European studies at the U of I. The university's new five-year strategic plan calls for more vigorous recruitment of students around the world.

### Global Education

The Iowa Peace Institute in Grinnell is working with the state education department and others to train elementary and secondary school teachers to introduce global education into the curriculum.

"Students need to understand how people around the world are linked with each other in order to be good citizens of the world," said Noa Davenport, the institute's education director.

Others say students will be seeking out such information. "I think we're going to see an enormous rebirth of curiosity about what's going on in the rest of the world," Berg, the UNI professor, said. "I think that will come to fruition in the '90s. Education will take on a more global focus."

**NEXT:** Iowa government will be called upon in the '90s to tackle problems that threaten Iowans' quality of life.