

Iowa Valley Community College District 2021 Legislative Updates

By Cindy S. Schulte, IVCCD Director of Governmental Affairs



Legislative Week 3

Iowa's Unemployment Rate Declines

In December, the Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) reported that Iowa's unemployment rate fell to 3.1%, in comparison to, 3.8% reported in November. The number of Iowans unemployed dropped to 50,800 in December, in comparison to, 60,800 unemployed Iowans reported in November. In December 2019, the IWD reported that Iowa's jobless rate was at 2.8%. The IWD reported that 64,000 jobs were posted on the IowaWORKS.gov website.

Active Legislation

Senate Study Bill 1114 – Relates to the definition of meeting and public notice requirements under the Iowa Open Meetings law. The bill was filed by the Iowa Public Information Board and amends the definition of a meeting to include any deliberations or actions (including recommendations) taken by a **governmental body** as defined in the open meetings law, that are within a governmental body's budgetary duties. SSB 1114 provides that reasonable notice of a meeting shall include providing notice to any person, and not just the news media, if the person has filed a request for notice. SSB 1114 also excludes weekend days and paid holidays as specified in Iowa Code Section 1C.2 when determining the 24-hour time

period for purposes of public notices under the open meetings law. The bill was referred to the Senate State Government subcommittee of Guth, Jochum, and Johnson.

House File 222 – Provides for the reduction of certain funding and budgets for public schools, **Community Colleges**, and Regent institutions following the use of specified curriculum. The bill was filed by Representative Wheeler (R- Sioux) and was referred to the House Education subcommittee of Wheeler, Salmon, and Smith on 1/29. HF 222 addresses findings made by the General Assembly that the recently developed United States history curriculum derived from a project by the NY Times, known as the "1619 Project", attempts to deny or obfuscate the fundamental principles upon which the United States was founded and that the General Assembly has a strong interest in promoting an accurate account of this nation's history through public schools and forming young people into knowledgeable and patriotic citizens.

HF 222 provides that if a **merged area (Community College)** has utilized any United States history curriculum during the previous fiscal year that in whole or in part is derived from a project called the "1619 Project" then the state board shall reduce the **merged area's** total budget by an amount

proportionate to the number of days during that fiscal year that the curriculum was used.

House Study Bill 162 – Provides that public postsecondary institutions are prohibited from requiring their students or employees to wear face masks or social distance off campus and only accredited private institutions that do not require students or their employees to wear face masks or social distance off campus can qualify for the Iowa Tuition Grant program. HSB 162 directs the **Community College Board of Directors** to prohibit their **Community College** from requiring students and employees who are off campus to wear a face mask for the purpose of blocking or reducing respiratory droplets or to social distance by maintaining a physical distance of at least 6 feet from any other infectious disease. The bill goes into effect upon enactment. HSB 162 was referred to the House State Government subcommittee of Mitchell, Bohannon, and Nordman.

For more information about the activity during the 2021 legislative session, please contact:
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