



# STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR  
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KEVIN FANGMAN, ACTING DIRECTOR

DATE: December 30, 2010

TO: Community College Presidents  
Public School District Superintendents  
Area Education Agency Administrators

FROM: Kevin Fangman, Acting Director

Roger Utman, Administrator  
Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation

SUBJECT: **Senior Year Plus Proficiency Requirement: Alternative Assessment**

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In a letter dated March 19, 2010, the Iowa Department of Education (DE) responded to requests from school districts and community colleges regarding academic proficiency requirements for students who want to access college credit coursework through Senior Year Plus programs. The challenge expressed by educators and administrators was how to determine an alternate but equivalent measure of proficiency for students who were not proficient on the most recent administration of the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) or Iowa Tests of Education Development (ITED). While guidance on alternative measures of proficiency were requested specifically for students enrolling in career and technical education (CTE) coursework, alternative measures for determining student proficiency adopted by a district apply to any student who wants to take coursework through Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) or concurrent enrollment.

Due to the requests from school districts and community colleges to make fair proficiency determinations for students who were not proficient on the measures listed above, the DE had school districts work with community colleges to admit students taking CTE courses during the **2010-11 academic year only**, based on the probability of success for these students in the postsecondary course(s) for which they desire enrollment.

The DE has worked with school districts, community colleges, and others to develop guidelines, or more specifically a sample approach, for the determination of equivalent alternative measures of proficiency provided for in Iowa Administrative Code 281-22.2(2)(b)(1) that measures proficiency in reading, mathematics and science in order to achieve consistency across the state. While this sample is offered to address the request for an approved alternative assessment for **2011-12 and beyond**, districts may continue to use their own local school board approved alternative measure of proficiency if they have adopted one, along with ITED/ITBS scores. **If you have any questions about this change, please contact Jeremy Varner at [jeremy.varner@iowa.gov](mailto:jeremy.varner@iowa.gov).**