

## **InIowa - Creativity, Collaboration, Innovation and Imagination**

“Empower learners who are striving to transform education.”

Administrators representing districts looking to transform education in the state of Iowa have organized and crafted a common vision and name. “InIowa” is continuing the work that began over two years ago and seeks to be a catalyst in promoting 21st Century Skills and the five characteristics for effective instruction outlined in the Iowa Core.

The group, which was born from districts doing one-to-one computer initiatives will be actively participating in a state-wide professional development day April 20, 2011, in Des Moines, at the Polk County Convention Center hosted by the Center for the Advanced Study of Technology Leadership (CASTLE). Regional and State dates for the calendar year 2011-2012 have been scheduled.

The week of September 19, 2011 will see five regional dates in the Northwest, Northeast, Central, Southeast and Southwest parts of the states. April 11 will be the third year for the state wide one-to-one conference. More information will follow.

“We want to provide support and networking opportunities for districts who are at various stages of implementation with one-to-one initiatives,” Dominic Giegerich, Principal at CAM High School in Anita, IA said. “InIowa’ has recognized that it goes way beyond the technology and is rooted in quality, innovative and engaging instruction.”

The vision of InIowa is - “Empower learners who are striving to transform education.” A strong belief is that the five traits of effective instruction, outlined in the Iowa Core, provide instructional leaders the blueprint for a model of instruction that needs to be seen in all their classrooms.”

“We are in a “printing press” moment in the history of mankind. The Gutenberg press made books and the Bible available to all, changed thinking and learning and disrupted the systems of that day. Digital technologies, Internet access, laptop computers, and smart phones, are doing the same thing in our present time. The world is changing before our eyes”. John C. Carver, Van Meter Superintendent of Schools

“21st century skills is a term being used across the nation. Students are entering into a new workforce that is connected in an ever changing way. The Iowa Core Curriculum has five characteristics of effective instruction that cover: Student Centered Classrooms, Teaching for Understanding, Assessment for Learning, Rigorous and Relevant, and Teaching for Learner Difference. The premise behind InIowa is to provide a network or connection to help reform the face of education. InIowa looks to help district leaders and staff members become connected to share information and best practices. We look to grow by using resources not only from across the state, but the nation to help our students become world leaders,” Chris Richards Graettinger-Terril School District.

Providing and developing quality content and coursework that can be accessed 24/7 by the

students of Iowa is an important issue and one that has been moving forward rapidly. InIowa supports the work of individuals and organizations that have been working feverishly to strengthen Iowa's virtual offerings.

Nick Sauers, who works for CASTLE and Iowa State University, was involved from the start and is InIowa's Chairperson. In organizing this winter's meeting he sent out the following -

"In the last year, the number of one-to-one schools in Iowa exploded. It climbed from approximately 15 to 42 schools, and I anticipate that number to approach and maybe surpass 100 by the beginning of the next school year! This growth is amazing, but like any growth it is creating some challenges."

"For the last two years, one-to-one educators knew each other personally and worked together on a regular basis. They connected using email, Twitter, phone conversations, and face-to-face meetings and were able to make group decisions through those connections. Those connections certainly won't be lost with more schools, but we also need to consider ways to strengthen the connections among all of our one-to-one schools. These connections have the potential to strengthen teaching practice throughout Iowa. Because of the growth in the number of technology-progressive districts, it is becoming more difficult to move forward as a group of connected educators. This organization is aimed at helping schools and educators stay connected with other forward thinking educators."

If you would like to become involved with InIowa, please provide us with some basic contact information at <http://bit.ly/iniowa>.