

Annual ICH Letter to the Governor (Comments Received for 2015 Letter)

Sandy Johnson, Iowa Dept. of Education Comments:

I am sending back a copy with a small, important edit.

I have adjusted the figure in the third bullet from 7000 to 5000 students living “doubled-up”. I have left my comments in the “edit” mode of this letter.

There are several ways to sort homelessness in our Iowa Department of Education data base. I have no doubt that the figure 7000 could come up somewhere/somewhat. However, our state makes a formal count and reports annually to the US DE through the Comprehensive State Performance Report (CSPR). I think the figure in this letter should match what the governor might see on our CSPR federal report for credibility sake.

Comment in the edit box:

The actual number reported on the Iowa DE state report to the feds (the annual CSPR) for the 2014-15 school year is 4881 students PK-12 living doubled up.

The total reported homeless PK-12 for 2014-15 is 7,095.

Also, do you want to clarify that this figure represents students enrolled PK-12 (this means there might be several child/youth that are not even reported if not enrolled for some reason).???

Julie Bockenstedt, ICH Member Comments:

On page 2, paragraph beginning "In 2014..." , what standards is the paragraph referring to? The statewide standards that were developed? Might be good to identify and clarify. Also, consider omitting the word "better" as it suggests poor work was being done initially (even if it's true, no need to point it out). Finally, I'm not at all sure what this overall paragraph is about, the paragraph as a whole doesn't make much sense to me, and in context it's an odd follow to the previous paragraph that simply praises gov't staff and ICA.

** next down the letter, I'm not sure the Governor would understand the 3rd bullet ("review the need for lawful...") - suggest clarifying.

** are the bullets in this list prioritized? Is there a reason we are asking for funding last instead of 2nd&3rd?

** for the graph, remove the orange bullet in the legend - it is simply identifying the data source (keep the data source identifier, just remove the bullet)

** following the graph, in the second bullet, substitute the word "and" for "however".

**move and clarify the definition for functional zero from that odd paragraph to the bullet under the graph that refers to functional zero.

** toward the end of the letter, omit "we would like to extend an invitation" the governor, and simply invite him, moving the date and time (in the middle of the paragraph) to the first sentence.

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** next, is the paragraph that talks about the legislature that uses the word "requires" and "in that spirit, please know" intended to sound like a warning or threat? Might be better to change the tone to something about being excited or looking forward to talking to the other branches of government with which the governor works....or something to that effect.

** Finally, I'd suggest getting specific by saying we "look forward to meeting with you in March 2016" instead of simply saying "next year".