Application Information for

GRANT WOOD AEA

CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR

Grant Wood Area Education Agency, located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, seeks an individual with strong leadership and expertise in special education, service-for-a-fee programs, organizational improvement and statewide educational collaboration.

Grant Wood AEA Seeks a Chief Administrator Who:

- **Puts students first** and leads high-quality, evidence-based services that improve outcomes.
- **Champions special education** as a core component of Agency strategy and service excellence.
- **Uses data and research** to drive decisions, measure impact, and promote continuous improvement.
- **Partners effectively with the Board,** providing clear, timely, and strategic direction and results.
- **Turns the AEA System Strategic Plan into action,** aligning priorities, resources, and accountability.
- **Builds strong partnerships** through visibility, responsiveness, and trust with those served.
- **Communicates the value of AEA services** and their impact on students, educators, and schools.
- **Leads service-for-fee programs strategically,** balancing customer needs, quality, impact, and sustainability.
- **Builds a culture of collaboration and accountability** grounded in the Agency's core values.
- **Develops strong leaders and staff** through clear expectations, coaching, growth, and accountability.
- **Aligns people and organizational structures** with Agency priorities and available resources.
- **Stewards Agency resources responsibly,** ensuring fiscal, operational, and organizational sustainability.
- **Strengthens Iowa's AEA system** through collaboration, innovation, and shared solutions.
- **Leads with vision and adaptability**, anticipating legislative, financial, and educational change.
- **Demonstrates a record of strong leadership outcomes and meaningful impact** in previous leadership roles.

Deadline to apply:

NOV. 29, 2026

AREA EDUCATION AGENCIES

Iowa's AEA system was created by the 1974 Iowa Legislature to ensure all children have equal educational opportunities. In 2024, HF2612 significantly retuned Iowa's AEA system which included direct oversight by the Iowa Department of Education and funding modificiations to special education, media, technology and educational services.

ABOUT GRANT WOOD AEA

Grant Wood AEA employs over 400 employees who support:

- 32 public school districts
- 39 accredited non-public schools
- 2 Charter Schools
- 250 school administrators
- 5,800 teachers, counselors, teacher librarians, nurses, and paraeducators

Grant Wood Area Education Agency is one of nine AEAs in the state of Iowa. Grant Wood AEA provides programs and services designed to support quality education for all students by improving teaching and learning. These services support more than 74,000 students in public and approved non-public schools in a seven county area served by Grant Wood AEA. This service area is over 4,900 square miles and includes Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn and Washington counties.

OUR COMMUNITY

Grant Wood AEA is centered in the heart of Iowa's Creative Corridor, the largest population region in the state. The Corridor is home to 30 Fortune 500 companies, more than a dozen international organizations, multiple higher education facilities, and has a combined population of 500,000.

GRANT WOOD AREA EDUCATION AGENCY

Grant Wood Area Education Agency extends equal opportunities in its employment practices, educational programs and services, and does not discriminate on the basis of color, gender, race, national origin, religion, creed, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability, veteran status or as otherwise prohibited by law. If you believe you or your child has been discriminated against or treated unjustly, please contact the Agency's Equity Coordinator, Melissa Ford, at 319-399-6464, Grant Wood AEA, 4401 Sixth St SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The final salary range of $210,000-$230,000 for the successful candidate will be negotiated and determined based upon proven experience, qualifications and within state code.

QUALIFICATIONS

REQUIRED

- Master's or specialist degree in educational administration or a related field; doctorate preferred.
- Appropriate Iowa licensure, including Superintendent/AEA administrator endorsement and evaluator approval, as required by law.
- Demonstrated successful and progressive administrative leadership experience in PK-12 education, an AEA, or a closely related educational organization.
- Extensive knowledge and demonstrated experience in special education, including law, programming, service delivery, compliance, and evidence-based practices.
- Demonstrated understanding of Iowa's educational system and the role of Area Education Agencies.
- Demonstrated experience in organizational, fiscal, personnel, and change leadership.

PREFERRED

- Experience leading a complex educational organization.
- Experience leading or overseeing service-for-fee programs or services.
- Experience with strategic planning, continuous improvement, and organizational change.
- Experience collaborating across organizations and working with state agencies, policymakers, or other external stakeholders.

TIMELINE

Stakeholder Survey: October 16 - 30, 2026

Application Window: October 15 - November 29, 2026

Candidate Presentation: November 30, 2026, 5:00 p.m.

Screening Interviews: December 7, 2026, 5:00 p.m.

Final Interviews: January 5, 2027 (January 7, 2027 snow date)

SEARCH CONSULTANTS

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Our Mission:

To deliver high-quality, evidence-based, and strategic services to our educational partners that meet the diverse needs of Iowa's Learners (birth-21), educators, and school communities.

GRANT WOOD
AREA EDUCATION AGENCY

www.gwaea.org

APPLY ONLINE AT:
https://tinyurl.com/GrantWoodAEAChiefApplication

APPLICATION PERIOD:
Oct. 15 - Nov. 29, 2026

The agency has three offices centrally located in Coralville and Cedar Rapids.

Coralville Facility

Sixth Street Facility

33rd Avenue Facility