



# VITAL SIGNS

# IOWA

**B**usiness leaders in Iowa cannot find the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) talent they need to stay competitive. Students' lagging performance in K-12 is a critical reason why. The good news is that the nation's most effective STEM education programs can help turn the tide.

Student performance in K-12 math and science has not moved far since 2003, and large racial and ethnic achievement gaps persist, as in all states. Not enough students get the chance to learn rich and challenging content that prepares them for college and careers, and few eighth graders--least of all students of color--have teachers with an undergraduate major in math or science.

Programs in STEMworks, CTEq's honor roll of STEM education programs that have proven their effectiveness, have the potential to address these and other challenges in the state.

## IOWA NEEDS MORE STEM TALENT

### STEM fields are growing in Iowa

Between 2014 and 2024:

STEM jobs will grow

Non-STEM jobs will grow

16%

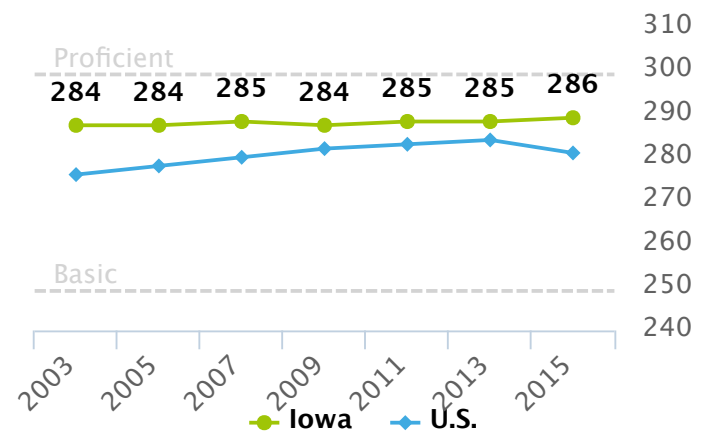
12%

## THE IOWA STEM SKILLS SHORTAGE STARTS EARLY

### Performance in math has been flat

Iowa has made little progress in eighth-grade math.

Trends in 8th grade math scores, 2003-2015



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 2015

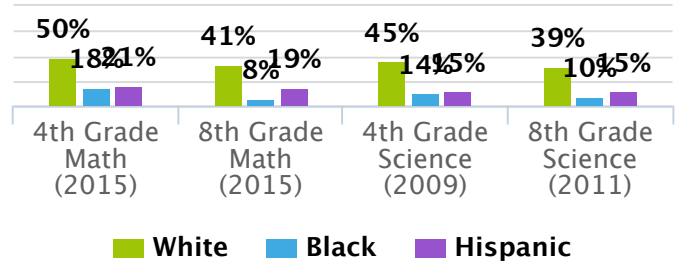
### Students of color lag farthest behind

Closing achievement gaps must remain a priority.

### Percentage of Iowa students at or above proficient, by race/ethnicity



For the complete state report, methodology, and sources, see [vitalsigns.changetheequation.org](http://vitalsigns.changetheequation.org)  
 ([vitalsigns.changetheequation.org](http://vitalsigns.changetheequation.org))



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 2009–2015

\*Data not available or reporting requirements not met.

### The state must plug the gaps in the STEM pipeline

The Iowa STEM pipeline loses young people at every level of the education system. Some fail to graduate from high school and many do not finish college, which narrows the pipeline of students who can gain advanced STEM skills. The 2-year college graduation rate is particularly low. Of those students who do graduate, few get a post-secondary degree in STEM.

**What percentage of high school students graduates? (2013-2014)**

**Of high school graduates who enter a 4-year degree program, what percentage graduate? (2012-2013)**

**Of high school graduates who enter a 2-year associate's degrees program, what percentage graduate? (2012-2013)**

**What percentage of certificates and degrees is in STEM fields? (2012-2013)**

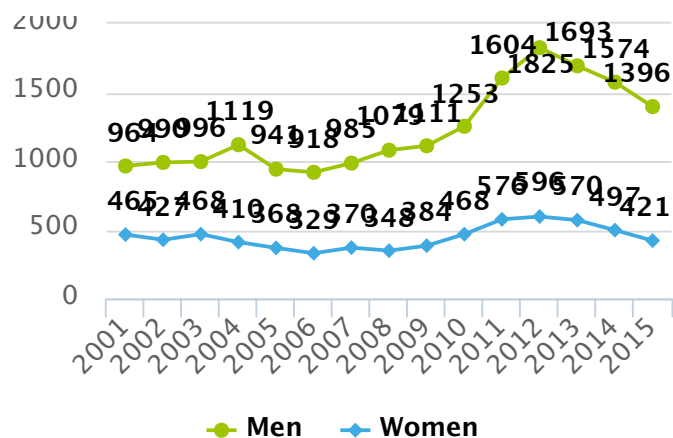
## TAP IOWA'S FEMALE AND MINORITY TALENT

Together, females and minorities make up more than half of Iowa's population, yet they are much less likely to earn STEM degrees or become STEM professionals. Closing these gaps can pay big dividends in the state.

### Women have lost ground in computing

The available talent in computer science would rise dramatically if the state simply closed the gender gap in these subjects.

**Number of computing degrees/certificates in Iowa**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 2009-2015

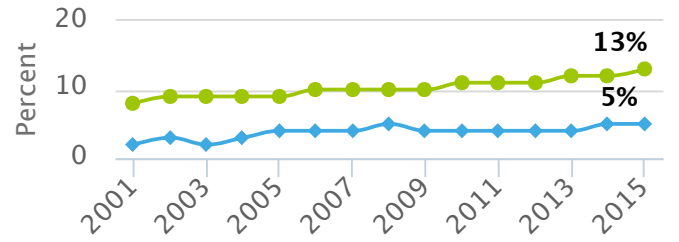
### People of color have gained little ground in engineering degrees

It is critical to prepare and inspire many more students of color to pursue STEM subjects such as computer science and engineering.

### Underrepresented minorities in Iowa earning engineering degrees/certificates



For the complete state report, methodology, and sources, see [vitalsigns.changetheequation.org](http://vitalsigns.changetheequation.org)  
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● As a percentage of the college-age population  
◆ As a percentage of degrees/certificates

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 2009–2015

\*Data not available or reporting requirements not met.

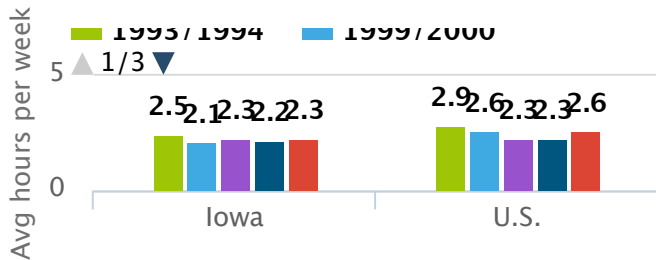
# IOWA VITAL SIGNS

## GIVE IOWA STUDENTS ACCESS TO BETTER STEM LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Lack of access to such opportunities severely limits young people's college and career prospects.

**The state should make time for elementary science**

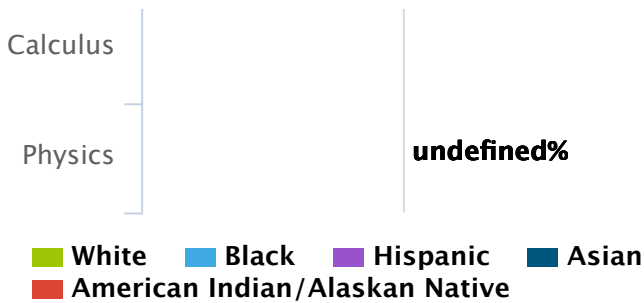
Hours per week spent on science, grades 1-4



**The state should improve access to advanced courses**

Many students lack access to such courses.

Students in Iowa schools that do not offer challenging math and science courses, 2009/10



Success in Advanced Placement courses can put more students on a path to STEM careers.

Of the high school graduating class of 2015 in Iowa:

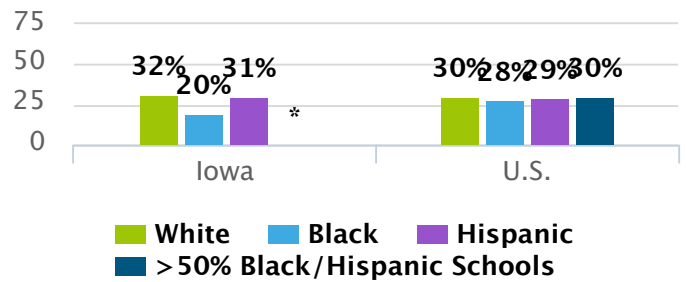
	Took AP Math Exam	Scored 3+ on AP Math Exam
All Students	6%	4%
White	6%	4%
Black	3%	1%
Hispanic	3%	1%

## DEVELOP AND RETAIN TALENTED STEM TEACHERS IN IOWA

Research shows that teachers' content knowledge and teaching experience can affect student performance

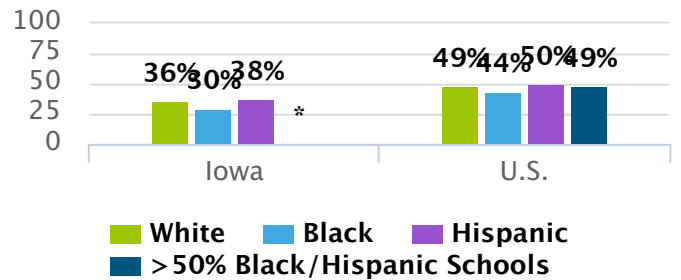
**Boost teachers' content knowledge**

Eighth-graders whose math teachers have an undergraduate major in math, 2015



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education 2015

Eighth-graders whose science teachers have an undergraduate major in science, 2011



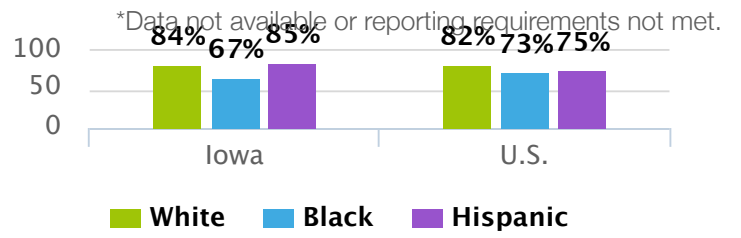
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education 2015

**Retain excellent teachers**

Minority students are most likely to have inexperienced teachers

Eighth-graders whose teachers have 5+ years of experience teaching their subject

Asian American	19%	14%
Indian/Alaskan Native	4%	1%



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education 2015

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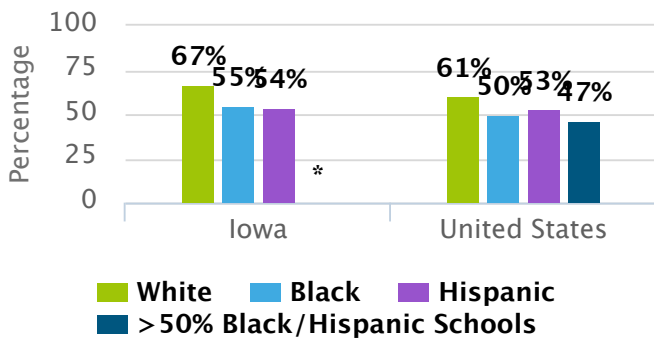
## VITAL SIGNS

### GIVE IOWA SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS THE RESOURCES THEY NEED

Teachers in Iowa need better resources, facilities, and teaching materials to succeed.

#### Too many teachers lack the tools of their trade

**Eighth-graders whose science teachers say they have all or most of the resources they need, 2011**

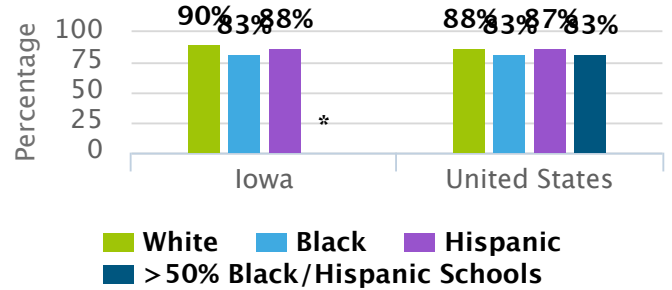


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 2011

\*Data not available or reporting requirements not met.

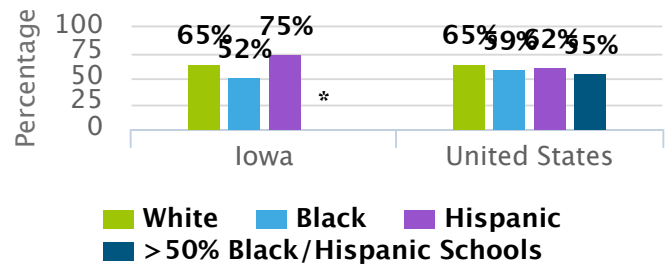
#### The state should improve access to science resources

**Eighth-graders whose schools have science labs, 2011**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 2011

**Eighth-graders whose schools report that supplies or materials for science labs are available "to a large extent," 2011**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 2011

For the complete state report, methodology, and sources, see [vitalsigns.changetheequation.org](http://vitalsigns.changetheequation.org) ([vitalsigns.changetheequation.org](http://vitalsigns.changetheequation.org))

## STEMWORKS

### Turn to STEMworks for proven solutions

Iowa's children and youth need immediate help to reach their potential. Change the Equation's STEMworks honor roll of proven STEM education programs features programs that have been rigorously vetted for effectiveness and address critical issues as diverse as teacher training, school curriculum, and summer camp.



Improving teaching and learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)

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