



2024–25 iJAG Strategic Plan

Forward from President and Chief Executive Officer

Dear Stakeholders,

We are excited to share our updated strategic plan, which outlines our vision and commitment to driving impactful progress across five foundational pillars. This plan integrates our previous strategies with the Jobs for America's Graduates model standards into an actionable framework designed to foster growth, enhance efficiency, and deliver exceptional outcomes.

Effective Resource Management affirms our belief in being excellent stewards of resources. We aim to implement a diversified fund development approach, secure targeted funding sources, and optimize our financial management practices. Our goals include increasing the amount of private funds in our overall budget to blend effectively with public funding, which will enhance our financial stability and capacity to support our mission.

Place Where People Want to Work and Grow reflects our dedication to attracting, retaining, and developing a talented team. We are focused on reducing attrition, fostering professional growth, and enhancing employee engagement and well-being. Our commitment includes improving internal processes and implementing innovative people practices to boost operational effectiveness.

Consistent Student Experience is at the heart of our strategy and underscores our commitment to providing high-quality, impactful student programs. We are focused on enhancing recruitment practices, promoting competency attainment, and ensuring robust follow-up and transition services. Our goal is to offer a consistent, engaging experience that prepares students to successfully enter the workforce and meet the needs of local economies.

Engaged and Impactful Partnerships highlights our approach to building strong relationships with schools, employers, and communities. We are dedicated to enhancing communication, cultivating meaningful partnerships, and engaging stakeholders to support our mission and vision.

Innovation drives our commitment to exploring new strategies and expanding our program offerings to meet the needs of communities across Iowa. We are focused on scaling pilot programs, diversifying revenue streams, and establishing innovative partnerships that enhance classroom and work-based learning experiences.

This plan represents our roadmap for growth and excellence. We are grateful for your continued support and partnership as we work together to achieve our goals and make a lasting impact for *Every Student, No Matter What!*

Sincerely,

Wendy Mihm-Herold
iJAG President/CEO



Vision: Empowering Iowa's youth to succeed, thrive, and become future-ready leaders.

Mission: iJAG ensures a future Iowa where youth are resilient and well-prepared with skills, purpose, and opportunities. Through collaborative partnerships and innovative approaches, we bridge the gap between education and employment to build strong communities and unlock the potential of *Every Student, No Matter What!*

Culture of Care

At iJAG, we create a culture that prioritizes the well-being, growth, and development of each stakeholder and the communities we serve. iJAG is genuinely committed to the following values:

- **Accountability:** Upholding strong ethical standards in all organizational activities, ensuring transparency, accountability and responsible stewardship of resources.
- **Adaptability and Innovation:** Being responsive to changing needs and staying nimble to adjust organizational practices to best support all stakeholders.
- **Community Engagement:** Actively engage with the community to ensure ongoing support and contribution.
- **Dignity and Respect:** Treating everyone with respect, valuing their perspectives, and honoring their dignity with internal and external relationships.
- **Inclusivity and Belonging:** Fostering an environment where individuals from various backgrounds feel valued and respected.
- **Open Communication:** Encouraging open and honest communication, where individuals express their thoughts, concerns and ideas.
- **Professional Development:** Providing opportunities for skill development, training, and growth to help employees reach their full potential.
- **Supportive Leadership:** Leaders and management demonstrate empathy, understanding and support for their team both personally and professionally.
- **Wellness and Health:** Building partnerships to support staff and students to focus on their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Promoting a healthy balance between work and personal life, recognizing the importance of overall well-being.

Strategic Pillars Overview

Effective Resource Management

- Implement an intentional and diversified fund development strategy
- Develop and execute a clear program growth plan
- Utilize data and technology efficiently and effectively

Place Where People Want to Work and Grow

- Maximize efforts to attract and retain the most talented individuals
- Develop high-performing employees
- Enhance employee experience, health, and wellbeing
- Continuous improvement of operational effectiveness

Consistent Student Experience

- Enhance student student recruitment (want, need, and benefit)
- Cultivate relationships through student onboarding and assessment
- Promote competency attainment and mastery
- Advance student voice, choice, and leadership
- Accelerate the drive to jobs
- Ensure follow up and transition for all students

Engaged and Impactful Partnerships

- Enhance marketing and communications
- Cultivate and steward stakeholder relationships
- Board development

Innovation

- Enhance and implement pilot programs to meet identified needs
- Cultivate partnerships to enhance classroom learning
- Deploy a fee for service structure



Effective Resource Management

Goal	Measures (KPIs)
Implement an intentional and diversified fund development strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funders with renewals in 2024-25 ● New funders - individual* ● New funders - corporate* ● New funders - foundation* ● Secure new targeted funding sources* (1 federal, 1 state, and 1 major funder over \$50,000) ● Meet or exceed individual funding goals* ● Meet or exceed corporate funding goals* ● Meet or exceed foundation funding goals* ● Funders with minimum 7 points of contact*
Develop and execute a clear program growth plan through 2027; leveraging financial data and maintaining internal controls to ensure resources are managed effectively and efficiently*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase or maintain state appropriation ● Increase the percentage of private funding in overall budget ● Maintain at least four months of cash reserve funding* ● Increase utilization of expansion reserve funding* ● Refine optimal cost per student* ● Implement internal control policies required by 2 CFR Part 200*
Utilize data and technology efficiently and effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a data governance framework and internal data quality system ● Maximize use of technology to ensure we have standards and continuous improvement practices in place

* New or updated



Place Where People Want to Work and Grow

Goal	Measures (KPIs)
Maximize efforts to attract and retain the most talented individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce attrition ● Fill non-Specialist positions with internal candidates ● Reduce the time-to-fill rate of iJAG Career Education Specialist positions*
Develop high-performing employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leadership team members meet or exceed their individual and team performance goals* ● Specialists meet or exceed their individual and team performance goals* ● Leadership team members achieve the minimum training hours (40) annually* ● Specialists achieve the minimum training hours (35) annually* ● Employees are educated on critical compliance topics fostering a safe and ethical workplace* ● Specialists and Program Supervisors achieve at least 15 hours of work-based learning professional development/ training hours annually*
Enhance the employee experience through a culture of employee engagement, wellness, and belonging, that leads to overall employee well-being, productivity and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employees complete annual stay-interview ● Employees enroll in iJAG benefits ● Add at least one new employee benefit focused on wellbeing by 7/1/2025* ● Employee engagement with monthly all-staff calls* ● Employee engagement with fireside chats*
Be agile and innovative in our people practices, policies, processes and structures to improve operational effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policy & practice changes integrated as a result of staff feedback ● Quantify the cost savings resulting from innovations/implementation of people practices, policies, processes or structures ● Executive leadership team positions with developed succession/sustainability plan*

* New or updated



Consistent Student Experience

Goal	Measures (KPIs)
Enhance student recruitment practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programs operating at ideal roster size ● Average barriers at start of year and end of year
Cultivate meaningful relationships and purpose through student onboarding and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students with completed IDP ● Students with IDP updated monthly
Promote competency attainment and mastery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement improved project based learning rubrics and student self-assessment practices*
Advance student voice, choice, and leadership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Career Association chapters meeting at least once per month ● Career Association chapters making progress on an established plan of work*
Accelerate the drive to jobs through exploration, exposure, and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programs with at least one employer engagement per month ● 11th and 12th grade students in earn and learn (employer partner certification)* ● 11th and 12th grade students earning a career credential* ● 11th and 12th grade students in immersion job shadows* ● 11th and 12th grade students in internships* ● 11th and 12th grade students in pre-apprenticeships* ● 11th and 12th grade students in registered apprenticeships* ● Students currently employed ● Students with work experience
Ensure quality follow-up and transition services for all students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● JAG National 6 of 6 + Iowa goals ● JAG National 5 of 5

* New or updated



Engaged and Impactful Partnerships

Goal	Measures (KPIs)
Enhance communication with our stakeholders to clarify and communicate mission, vision, and brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social media engagements ● Website visits ● External email campaigns open rate
Establish processes to cultivate and steward meaningful relationships with schools, employers, and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program growth plan achieved (MOU secured) ● Program health ● Engagement of legislators in iJAG classrooms ● Engagement of civic and community leaders in iJAG classrooms* ● Increase volunteer hours in iJAG classrooms*
Recruit, support, and develop the Board of Directors to effectively guide overall organizational implementation efforts, performance, and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board members attend biannual meetings with CEO for ongoing education and support* ● Board members actively engaged in organizational activities, committee meetings, and student events*

* New or updated



Innovation*

Goal	Measures (KPIs)
<p>Enhance and implement pilot programs (concurrent enrollment, regional academies, out of school youth, and college success) and explore strategies to scale programming statewide</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of students served in concurrent enrollment program model ● Number of students receiving community college credit ● Number of students served in regional academy program model ● Number of students placed in Tier 3 opportunities aligned with career pathway ● Number of students served in out of school time program model (charter schools, shelter/residential, and after school) ● Number of students served in college success program model ● Number of students retained post-secondary education ● Diversify/ braid revenue to sustain programs
<p>Cultivate innovative partnerships and collaborations that enhance project-based learning and work-based learning opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of students engaged with Franklin Covey curriculum ● Number of students who complete Kuder Career Navigator assessment and profile ● 11th and 12th grade students who complete and show competence in financial literacy ● 11th and 12th grade students who complete and earn a Junior Achievement microcredential for employability/ durable skills ● Develop and implement five new dedicated partnerships centered on innovation priority areas of brain health, STEM, and design thinking
<p>Deploy a fee for service structure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish at least one earned income revenue opportunity aligned with areas of organizational expertise ● Explore legal ramifications and opportunities for iJAG to market our services to other entities.

* New or updated