

February 15, 2021

Dear extension colleagues and council members,

Thank you for your participation in the second quarter Two-Way Scorecard Communication Tool survey. We appreciate that you made time to complete the second quarter survey while you still may have been deciding how to implement changes from your first quarter report.

The scorecard is an outcome of Structured for Success. It is designed to improve communication and accountability as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and addendum between each county and Iowa State University. The quarterly timeframe is a starting point for the process that we will use this first year, which we will revisit as we move forward. The information we gain will help us to ensure our partnership is successful.

This quarter's scores are similar to the first quarter's scores. However, many variables affect our ability to connect the dots and identify trends between the first and second quarter results. For example, some questions were repeated and some were new, different people may have participated in each survey, and the number of responses varied. We are pleased with the response to the second survey, particularly considering the number of outgoing and newly elected council members, as well as the quick pace of our survey/report cycle this first year.

Figure 1

Number of survey responses by respondent type*

**doesn't represent different people*

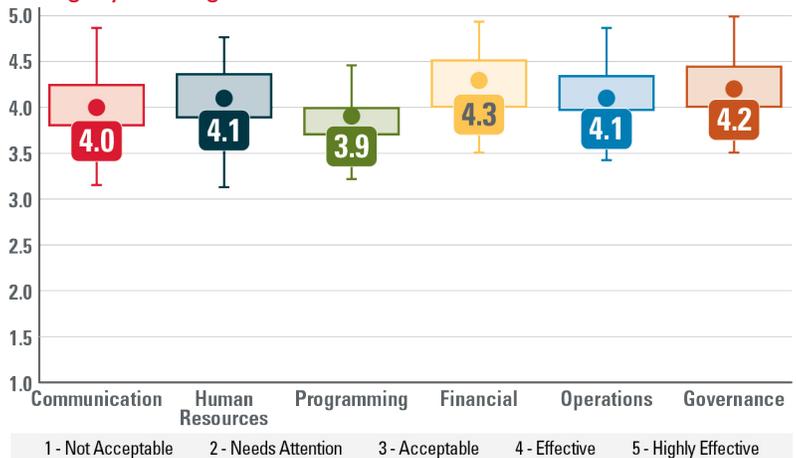


The scorecard is not a performance review, but rather a tool designed to help our entire system with communication and accountability. Your county's individual report includes a link to a CyBox folder with scores and comments specific to your county. We encourage you to read your county's feedback and compare your numbers to the statewide averages in this summary. The survey was completed by council members, program specialists, county staff, and regional directors as shown in **Figure 1**, and ranged from two to 17 responses per county.

Figure 2 shows a summary of the statewide data across the 100 individual county averages. The number is the average score for the category and the vertical bar is the range from the minimum to maximum. The shaded box represents the range containing the portion of the values that fall between the 25th and 75th percentiles.

Figure 2

Category Average



OBSERVATIONS AND COMMON THEMES

The lowest average score was again in the programming category:

- COVID-19 is still affecting operations.
- We will discuss the findings with the four program leaders.
- Initiative teams will work more closely with counties to prioritize program efforts.
- An updated program catalog is being developed that will link to program offerings.
- We need to encourage more communication between program specialists and counties. This should be an intentional, two-way communication effort.

Staff and councils continue to settle into new roles under the new extension structure:

- Further clarification of responsibilities and enhanced communication will benefit everyone.
- Resources like the HR Learning Hour will continue to improve human resources competencies.

Other challenges:

- We need to examine program marketing methods, options, and timeliness.
- Civil rights training for staff has been delayed. An updated online training for both staff and council members will be available later this year.

About the survey itself:

- The survey came around quickly; we will evaluate the frequency of the survey after the first year.
- Anonymity is important; respondent titles are not included in reports within CyBox.
- Comments were difficult to navigate in the spreadsheet; an easy-to-read document of comments is now in CyBox.

Figure 3

The four tiers are based on population in **Figure 3**. Use **Figure 4** to compare your score with counties similar in population.

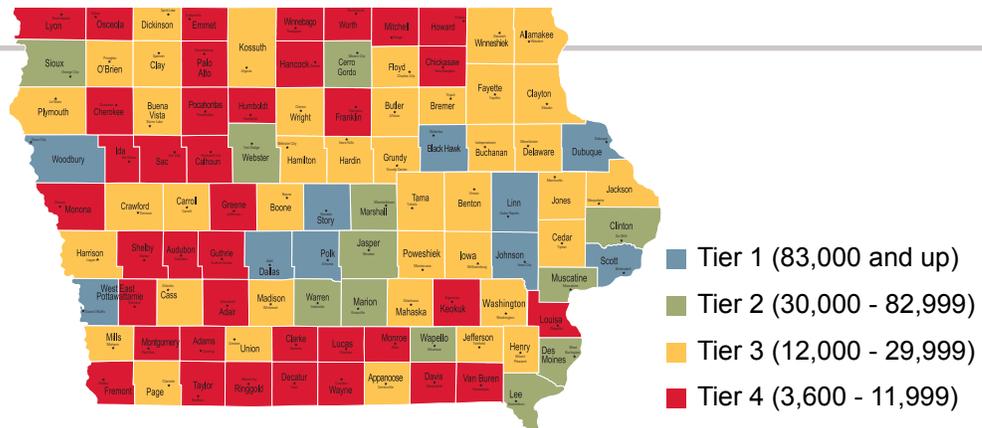


Figure 4

	Population*	Number of Counties	Percentage of Iowa's Population	AVERAGE					
				Communication	Human Resources	Programming	Financial	Operations	Governance
Tier 1	83,000 and up	10	52.2%	4.1	4.3	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.3
Tier 2	30,000 - 82,999	12	14.9%	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.2	4.3
Tier 3	12,000 - 29,999	40	22.4%	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	4.1	4.2
Tier 4	3,600 - 11,999	38	10.5%	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.3	4.2	4.2

*using 2019 estimated census data

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Within your county's CyBox, you will find your county report, raw data, and a Microsoft Word document of easy-to-read comments from your county. You will still be able to access last quarter's reports and data by clicking in the archive folder.

Debriefing guide

Use this Debriefing Guide to facilitate conversation and next steps when reviewing your Two-Way Scorecard Communication Tool county report. This optional worksheet is intended to help guide you through conversations with councils and staff as a continuous improvement process.

You can find the debriefing guide on the [County Services website](#) along with a list of resources for each category outlined in the survey. In addition, you can access the first quarter statewide report and survey questions asked in both quarters.

In general, 2020 continued to provide challenges in how we did business. As such, it is hard to gauge progress due to COVID-19. Our extension system is continuing to learn the new structure. We continue to emphasize that communication and mutual respect for our colleagues and councils are essential to success across our system. Use the resources and debriefing guide in your county discussions about the reports and to identify next steps.

For the first year, we are committed to the quarterly timeframe as laid out by the Two-Way Scorecard Communication Tool committee, which was made up of staff and council members. We will re-evaluate the frequency of the survey at the end of the fiscal year. The third quarter survey will be available the first two weeks of April.

Keep in mind, we've asked for your critical feedback through the scorecard so that together we can improve communication within our organization. Providing critical feedback doesn't necessarily mean finding fault. Instead it's an opportunity to carefully consider and evaluate how our organization is performing. Your response is important. Contact us if you have questions after reading your county report.

Sincerely,



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The planning and implementation of the Two-Way Scorecard Communication Tool included input from council members, county staff, program specialists, and regional directors, as well as a partnership with the Iowa Extension Council Association (IECA) to create the survey questions and final reports.