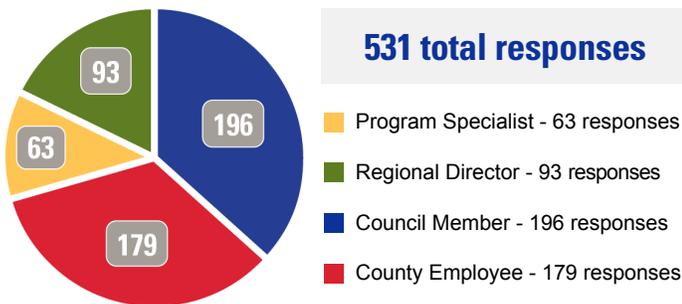October 21, 2021

Dear extension colleagues and council members,

We have made it through the first year of our new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and we thank you for your feedback in the spring-summer Two-Way Scorecard Communication Tool survey. We set a goal to open communication and we have made great progress.

This report summarizes statewide data. Your county's individual report includes a link to a CyBox folder with scores and comments specific to your county.
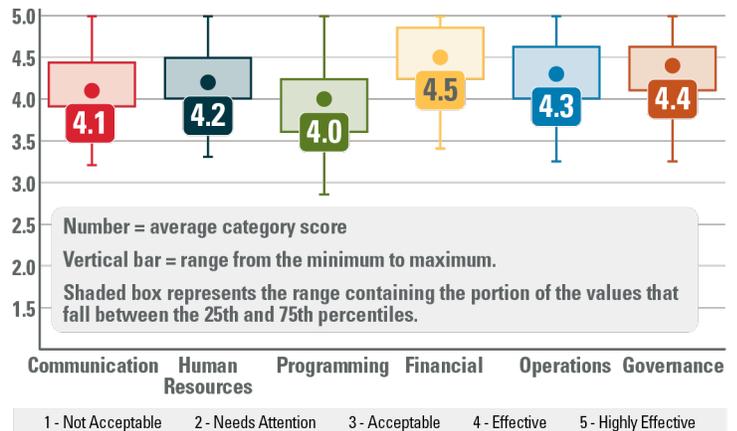
Figure 1

Number of survey responses by respondent type

*An individual may have responded more than once (e.g., a staff member may have responded for multiple counties).*

531 total responses

- Program Specialist - 63 responses
- Regional Director - 93 responses
- Council Member - 196 responses
- County Employee - 179 responses

Figure 2

Category Average

Number = average category score

Vertical bar = range from the minimum to maximum.

Shaded box represents the range containing the portion of the values that fall between the 25th and 75th percentiles.

Communication | Human Resources | Programming | Financial | Operations | Governance

| 1 - Not Acceptable | 2 - Needs Attention | 3 - Acceptable | 4 - Effective | 5 - Highly Effective |

Figure 3

The four tiers are based on population in **Figure 3**. Use **Figures 4** and **7** to compare your score with counties similar in population.

- Tier 1 (83,000 and up)
- Tier 2 (30,000 - 82,999)
- Tier 3 (12,000 - 29,999)
- Tier 4 (3,600 - 11,999)
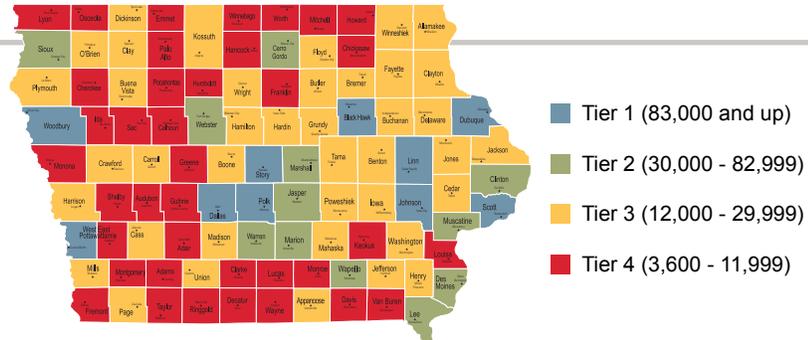
Figure 4

	Population*	Number of Counties	Percentage of Iowa's Population	AVERAGE Communication	AVERAGE Human Resources	AVERAGE Programming	AVERAGE Financial	AVERAGE Operations	AVERAGE Governance
Tier 1	83,000 and up	10	52.2%	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.5	4.2	4.3
Tier 2	30,000 - 82,999	12	14.9%	4.0	4.2	3.9	4.3	4.2	4.2
Tier 3	12,000 - 29,999	40	22.4%	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.4	4.2	4.3
Tier 4	3,600 - 11,999	38	10.5%	4.2	4.4	4.0	4.5	4.4	4.4

using 2019 estimated census data

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

Iowa Extension Council Association

OBSERVATIONS AND COMMON THEMES

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM SURVEY FOUR

- All categories averaged in a narrow range from 4.0 to 4.5 on a five-point scale.
- Programming category scored lowest and had the widest range of scores.
- Financial category scored highest with the least variation.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM THE TWO-WAY SCORECARD, 2020-2021

Figure 5

Average Scores by Category for Councils and County Staff across Four Surveys

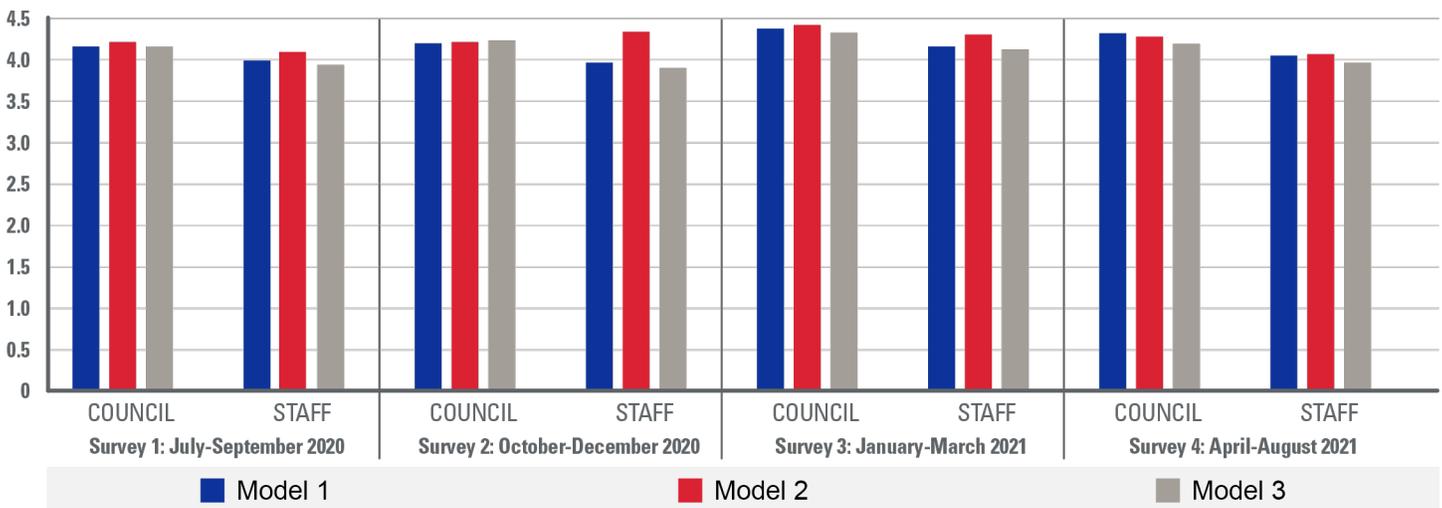| Survey	Communication		Human Resources		Programming		Financial		Operations		Governance		Overall	
	Council	Staff	Council	Staff	Council	Staff	Council	Staff	Council	Staff	Council	Staff	Council	Staff
1	4.09	3.79	4.11	3.89	3.96	3.84	4.17	4.12	4.33	4.14	4.22	3.99	4.15	3.96
2	4.15	3.82	4.21	3.97	4.01	3.60	4.28	4.28	4.26	3.96	4.28	4.02	4.20	3.94
3	4.25	3.94	4.31	4.16	4.12	3.92	4.50	4.39	4.46	4.23	4.45	4.28	4.35	4.14
4	4.18	3.79	4.17	4.03	4.04	3.68	4.46	4.35	4.31	4.07	4.39	4.14	4.26	4.01

Figure 5 shows the average scores by category and the overall score for each round of the Two-Way Scorecard and compares the scores from council and county staff. Some observations:

- All average scores were above the average of a 1-5 scale.
- Across categories and surveys, councils provided higher scores than staff.

The scores were relatively stable across the four surveys. Survey 3 scores were the highest and in most, but not all, categories the last survey is higher than the first survey.

Figure 6

Overall Score: Council and Staff by Survey and Model Number

Survey 1: July-September 2020   Survey 2: October-December 2020   Survey 3: January-March 2021   Survey 4: April-August 2021
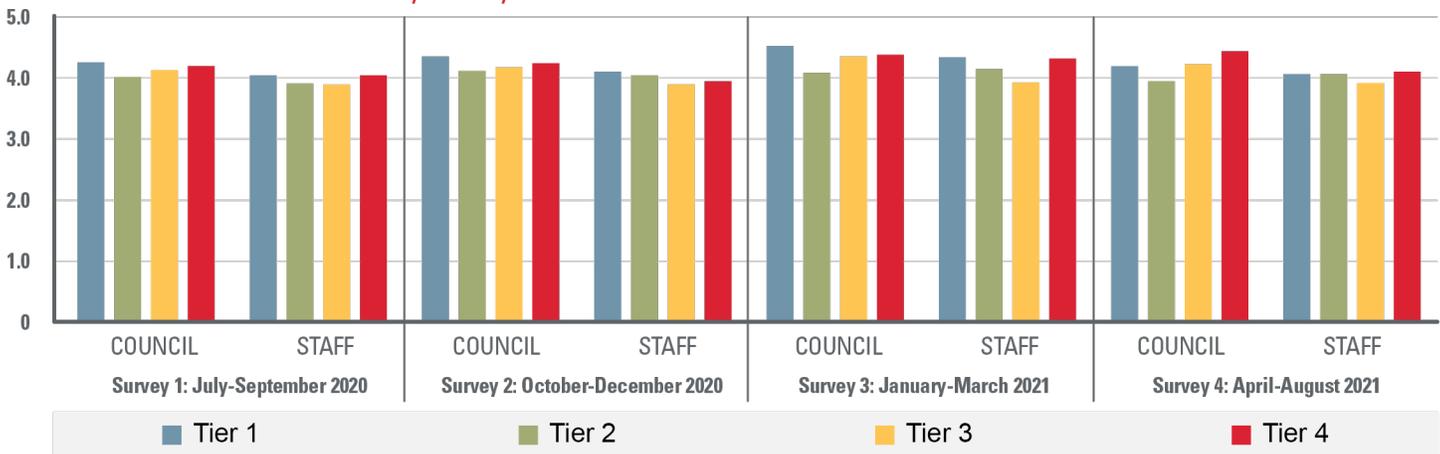
■ Model 1   ■ Model 2   ■ Model 3

Figure 6 shows the overall score by councils and county staff over time by model number. Currently, there are 57 Model 1, three Model 2, and 40 Model 3 counties. For reference, some counties changed their model over the year. In July 2020, there were 55 Model 1 counties, three Model 2, and 42 Model 3 counties.

There isn't a lot of difference in council scores across the three models and four surveys. Staff in Model 2 counties provided higher scores than staff in Models 1 and 3.

Figure 7

Overall Score: Council and Staff by Survey and Tier Number

Survey 1: July-September 2020   Survey 2: October-December 2020   Survey 3: January-March 2021   Survey 4: April-August 2021

■ Tier 1   ■ Tier 2   ■ Tier 3   ■ Tier 4

Figure 7 compares the Overall Score by council and staff by tier (**Figure 4**) and survey. While there is not a lot of difference in the scores, Tier 2 councils provided lower scores than other tiers. Tier 4 councils generally increased scores over time and Tier 1, 2, and 3 councils increased through survey 3 before declining in the most recent survey. Similarly, staff in Tier 1, 2, and 3 counties provided lower scores in the last survey compared to the third survey.

EFFECTIVENESS AND FREQUENCY OF THE TWO-WAY SCORECARD

36% rated the Two-Way Scorecard as very or extremely useful and 36% as moderately useful.

50% of respondents preferred the Two-Way Scorecard twice a year, 34% annually, and 13% quarterly.

The survey will be offered twice a year in March and September beginning in 2022.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

Use the Debriefing Guide to facilitate conversation at council or staff meetings and to identify next steps when reviewing your Two-Way Scorecard Communication Tool county report. You will find the debriefing guide on the County Services website along with a list of resources for each category outlined in the survey.

HOW YOU CAN USE THE DATA AND COMMENTS FROM TWO-WAY SCORECARD TO STRENGTHEN ISU EXTENSION AND OUTREACH

Communication

- Be intentional and don't assume that everyone gets the same email or visits the website. We need to encourage more communication between program specialists and counties. This should be an intentional, two-way communication effort.
- Engage with your specialists. Put together a plan about who has which responsibilities.
- Specialists: make a point to reach out to counties. Counties: invite specialists to share updates at staff meetings at the regional or county level. The updates may be in person, video, or handout as schedules allow.
- Review county staffing structure (in MyExtension) to see if staff titles can align to improve communication across the organization.

Human resources

- Encourage supervisors to participate in HR Learning Hour, a monthly professional development opportunity.
- Address concerns quickly rather than letting things linger. Coaching and mentoring are ongoing functions, not annual events.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

Iowa
Extension Council
Association

Programming

- Specialists: make sure program offerings in MyData are up to date.
- Provide the extension council program committee information about program offerings and evaluation data from previous programming.
- Invite specialists to regional meetings of directors and coordinators to discuss programming routinely.
- Work together on a county action plan.

Financial

- Make the budget process open and transparent. Education needs to go beyond the extension council and finance committee. Staff needs to have input and understanding on budget.
- Continue to strengthen internal controls on managing public funds. Review exit conference and audit report for additional methods that improve compliance and security.
- Encourage the extension council finance committee to work with staff to look long-term and provide financial recommendations to council for future consideration.
- Regional directors: take time to educate as well as inform councils and staff about financials.
- Staff and councils: take time to review financial health and sustainability of county finances.

Operations

- Be aware that updated county websites will integrate with MyData to streamline operations that keep public pages up to date and current on program offerings, upcoming events, and members currently on the council.
- Review diversity, equity, and inclusion recruitment and retention activities among staff and program participants. Have dialogue during annual civil rights training about how you can implement new best practices.
- View safety videos to keep up-to-date on improving risk management. Keeping workspaces safe protects employees, reduces injuries, and improves accessibility.

Governance

- Review open meetings law and parliamentary procedure.
- Ensure that an individual is trained as Custodian of Public Record to manage record requests.
- Invest time in strategic planning with the regional director so the council can make better decisions that impact programming, staff, and finances.

"For the Two-Way Scorecard to be effective, there needs to be implementation of meetings with the players involved to discuss the areas that need attention and commend those on what is going well."

- COUNTY STAFF MEMBER

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.

The Two-Way Scorecard has been an opportunity to carefully consider and evaluate how our organization is performing. Your follow-through is important. Contact us if you have questions after reading your county report.

Sincerely,

John Lawrence
*ISU Vice President for
Extension and Outreach*
jdlaw@iastate.edu
515-294-6675

Andrea R. Nelson
*Assistant Vice President
County Services*
nelsonar@iastate.edu
515-294-0013

Jennifer Vit
*Executive Director
Iowa Extension Council Association*
jvit@iastate.edu
515-291-9186