

# Science Education in Iowa Law

Chapter 12 of the Iowa Administrative Code describes science instruction at grade levels 1-12, which includes the following [rule interpretations](#):

## Elementary (Grades 1-6)

[12.5\(3\) d.](#) Science. Science instruction is as referenced in Iowa Code section [256.7\(28\)](#).

- Science must be taught in each of grades 1-6.
- Not all content specifications (e.g., life, earth, and physical) listed for science need to be covered at each grade level 1-6, but all content specifications must be covered at some time. It is locally determined about how to incorporate the content specifications into science standards and benchmarks.
- The time allocated to science and its content specifications is locally determined.
- Science and its content specifications do not need to be separate “units” or “activities.”

## Middle School (Grades 7-8)

[12.5\(4\) d.](#) Science. Science instruction is as referenced in Iowa Code section [256.7\(28\)](#).

- Science must be taught in each of grades 7-8.
- Not all content specifications (e.g., life, earth, and physical) listed for science need to be covered at each grade level 7-8, but all content specifications must be covered at some time. It is locally determined about how to incorporate the content specifications into science standards and benchmarks.
- The time allocated to science and its content specifications is locally determined.
- Science and its content specifications do not need to be separate “units” or “activities.”

## High School (Grades 9-12)

[12.5\(5\) d.](#) Science (five units). Science instruction is as referenced in Iowa Code sections [256.7\(28\)](#) and [256.11\(5\)“a.”](#)

- Science must be annually offered and taught in grades 9-12.
- The minimum number of “units” for science must be offered and taught annually.
- Not all content specifications listed for a science (e.g., biological science, earth science, and physical science) need to be covered at each grade level 9-12, but all content specifications must be covered at sometime within those grade spans. It is locally determined about how to incorporate the content specifications into science standards and benchmarks.
- The time allocated to each science “content specification” listed is locally determined.
- Science courses may be labeled by the “content specifications” listed, but they do not have to be.
- Specific content taught for each content specification is locally determined.
- Physics and chemistry may be offered every other year.
- The five units of science may include not more than two units of instruction related to agriculture, which may be offered and taught through dedicated units of agriculture coursework or through units that also meet the requirements of the courses related to career and technical education in this service area.