# Summary of Enacted Legislation
# 2026 Session of the 91st Iowa General Assembly

*Updated: October 1, 2026*
*Substantive changes to the document will be differentiated, noting date of change.*

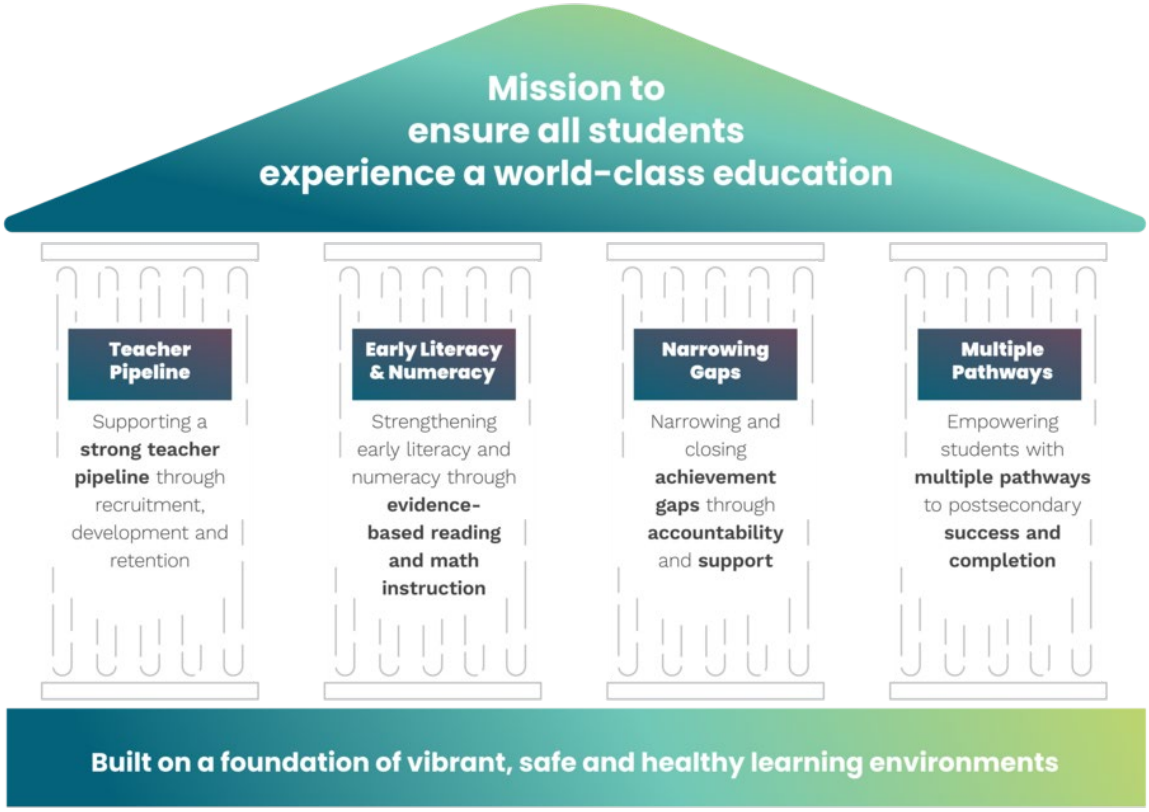
*All legislation is effective on July 1, 2026, unless otherwise specified.*

The Iowa Department of Education's (Department) "letter to the field" summarizing legislation enacted through the 2026 Session of the 91st Iowa General Assembly is organized by Iowa's state education system priorities:

I. Supporting a Strong Teacher Pipeline
II. Strengthening Evidence-Based Literacy and Math Instruction
III. Narrowing and Closing Achievement Gaps through Accountability and Support
IV. Empowering Students with Multiple Pathways to Postsecondary Success
V. Promoting Vibrant, Safe, and Healthy Learning Environments

The "letter to the field" also includes summaries of:

VI. Appropriations
VII. Related Legislation
VIII. Vetoed Legislation




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## Round 3 Significant Implementation Resources (October 1, 2026):

### Instructional Quality

- SF2220: Gifted and Talented Programs, Funding and Uses FAQs (NEW)

### Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression

- SF2231: Sample Board Policy on Religious Expression (NEW)

### School Choice Omnibus

- HF2754: Extracurricular Activities and Driver Education FAQs (NEW)

### Student Discipline Regarding Violent or Nonviolent Disruptions, Professional Development

- SF2428: Least Restrict Environment Professional Development (NEW)

## Round 2 Significant Implementation Resources (September 15, 2026):

### Instructional Quality

- SF2220: Guidelines for Gifted and Talented Program Plan (NEW)

### Student Discipline Regarding Violent or Nonviolent Disruptions

- SF2428: Application of State and Federal Law regarding Nonviolent and Violent Disruptions FAQ (see FAQs 39-48) (UPDATED)

### Open Enrollment

- HF2591, SF176, HF2754: Open Enrollment Handbook (UPDATED)

### School Funding

- SF2201: FY27 LEA/AEA Payment Schedule (NEW)

### Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program

- HF2754: Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Community-Based Provider (CBP) Application (NEW)
- HF2754: Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Community-Based Provider (CBP) FAQ (NEW)
- SF2231: Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Frequently Asked Questions (UPDATED)

### Civics Seal of Excellence

- HF2231: Iowa Seal of Civic Excellence Guide (NEW)

### Physical Education and Nutrition Instruction

- HF2670: Health Education FAQ (UPDATED)
- HF2670 Health Education Review Tools (Grades 5-6; 7-8; 9-12) (UPDATED)

# Round 1 Significant Implementation Resources (July 2, 2026):

### Instructional Quality

- SF 2220: Advanced Mathematics Pathways and Automatic Enrollment FAQ

### Iowa Make America Healthy Again Act

- HF2676: Student Instructional Technology FAQ
- HF2676: Sample Board Policy Implementing Iowa Code Section 279.89 (As Enacted By 2026 Iowa Acts, House File 2676)

### Student Discipline Regarding Violent or Nonviolent Disruptions, Professional Development; IEP Team Meetings; Special Education and Behavior Pilot Program

- SF2428: Application of State and Federal Law regarding Nonviolent and Violent Disruptions FAQ
- SF2428: Special Education and Behavior Pilot Program Application Instructions
- SF2428: Special Education and Behavior Pilot Program Application Rubric

### Property Tax Reform

- SF2472: Unspent Balance Carryforward Maximum Factsheet
- SF 2472: Updated Unspent Authorized Budget Report hosted on the Department of Management School Resources webpage

### Open Enrollment, Student Transfers, and Interscholastic Athletic Eligibility Requirements

- HF2591: Chapter 36, "Extracurricular Interscholastic Competition" Adopted & Filed Emergency Rules and Notice of Intended Action

### Exempt Student Absences

- Senate File 2219:
  - Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism Summary for Schools 2026-27,
  - 2026-27 Attendance Coding and Technical Assistance, and
  - Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism FAQs

# I. Supporting a Strong Teacher Pipeline through Recruitment, Development and Retention

## 1. House File 2230 - Educator Quality and Preparation *(Department Pre-filed Bill)* - Special Education and English Learner Teacher Preparation Program Accreditation Standards and Candidate Clinical Experience; End-of-Program Assessment to Improve Candidate Preparation and Programs; Self-Paced Special Education Course

### *Special Education and English Learner Teacher Preparation Program Accreditation Standards and Candidate Clinical Experience (Section 1 and 2)*

This legislation establishes minimum statewide training expectations for all teacher candidates in English-language instruction and special education, including hands-on practicum experience focused on differentiating instruction and support for special populations.

The Iowa State Board of Education will adopt practicum and clinical standards for teacher candidates, and the Department will establish a process to review educator preparation programs' implementation of these new requirements.

- Clinical experiences for all teacher candidates must include a minimum of 15 practicum hours focused on differentiation of instruction and supporting English learners, special education experiences and instructional implementation and progress monitoring applicable to individualized education programs (IEPs).
- Clinical experiences for students seeking an endorsement in English learner instruction must include a minimum of 40 practicum hours, including methods of teaching English to English learners in elementary and secondary school settings.

Clinical experiences and preparation are required starting July 1, 2027.

### *End-of-Program Assessment to Improve Candidate Preparation and Programs (Section 1)*

This legislation requires teacher preparation programs to administer a state-selected end-of-program assessment starting July 1, 2027. Assessment results will be used for program improvement and targeted remediation and support for teacher candidates. Passing the end-of-program assessment is not required for graduation, licensure or for current teachers.

Starting July 1, 2027, this legislation directs the Department to identify and distribute the end-of-program assessment required for each endorsement area to institutes of higher education providing practitioner preparation programs. It also authorizes the Department to establish a minimum score for each assessment that will be used to determine mastery of content by a student enrolled in the program. The legislation requires institutes of higher education providing a practitioner preparation program to report to the Department program-level data related to students meeting the minimum score for the assessment.

No later than Aug. 1, 2028, the Department must publish information on program-level data for students meeting the minimum score for each assessment; efforts made by the Department to support institutes of higher education in the implementation of curriculum improvements, remediation techniques and program evaluation; and examples of program remediation and assessment plans provided by institutes of higher education to students who scored below the minimum score.

### *Self-Paced Special Education Course (Section 3)*

The Department is developing a self-paced special education course for those applying for a special education provisional license. Staff must complete the course as a condition of receiving the license.

This legislation builds upon the 2024 Literacy Changes Lives Act (HF2618) and the 2025 Math Counts Act (HF784) advancing systemic improvement in pre-service educator preparation, including:

- Implementation of new educator preparation program accreditation standards,
- Self-assessment workbooks and targeted professional learning and technical assistance to support teacher preparation programs aligning to revised standards,
- Comprehensive and tiered educator preparation continuous improvement supports, mirroring the embedded partnership structures in ESEA and IDEA school and district improvement structures, and
- Foundations of Reading test for teacher candidates.

This legislation also builds upon significant state investments empowering in-service teachers with evidence-based professional learning to differentiate instruction for students with disabilities and students who are English learners, responding to the articulated needs of future teachers and their supervisors.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Additional information will be posted on the Department's Practitioner Preparation webpage once available.

**Points of Contact:**

- Division Administrator Jay Pennington - Teacher Quality and Innovation - jay.pennington@iowa.gov, 515-326-1017
    - Administrative Consultant Maryam Rod Szabo - Educator Quality - maryam.rodszabo@iowa.gov, 515-360-7369

## 2. House File 2724 - Board of Educational Examiners Endorsements - Establishing Fine Arts, Mathematics and Science Authorizations and Affixed Endorsements; Clarifying K-12 Strategist II Endorsement; Expanding Activities Administration Endorsement

This legislation directs the Board of Educational Examiners to adopt rules for the following:

### *Establishing Fine Arts, Mathematics and Science Authorizations and Affixed Endorsements (Section 1)*

- Establishing additional prekindergarten through grade 12 authorization and affixed endorsements for instruction in the high-need teaching areas of fine arts, mathematics and science, with a minimum requirement that applicants for such endorsements hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. *(Recall Content Specialist authorization has a minimum requirement that applicants for such endorsements hold a graduate degree from an accredited college or university.)* These legislative provisions sunset effective July 1, 2030.

### *Clarifying K-12 Strategist II Endorsement (Section 1)*

- Clarifying that a kindergarten through grade 12 instructional strategist II endorsement does not require an applicant to possess a master's or doctoral degree as a condition for obtaining the endorsement. *(Recall no such BOEE requirement exists, but requirements may exist in an educator preparation program.)*

### *Expanding Activities Administration Endorsement (Section 1)*

- Expanding an activities administration authorization, with a minimum requirement that applicants for such an authorization hold a bachelor's degree or higher in *any* academic field (rather than requiring a field-specific degree).

**Implementation Resources:**

- The rulemaking process will be initiated in fall 2026. Additional information will be posted on the Board of Educational Examiner's Newsletters & Updates webpage once available.

**Point of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief and Executive Director Mike Cavin - Board of Educational Examiners - mike.cavin@iowa.gov, 515-281-4810

# II. Strengthening Early Literacy and Numeracy through Evidence-based Reading and Math Instruction

## 3. Senate File 2220 - Instructional Quality *(Department Pre-filed Bill)* - Science Assessment Administration, Gifted and Talented Program Plans; Advanced Mathematics Pathways; Acceleration and Automatic Enrollment

### *Advanced Mathematics Pathways (Section 3)*

This legislation requires, starting with the school year beginning July 1, 2027, each school district to develop middle school advanced mathematics pathways designed to enable students to be prepared for, enroll in and master Algebra I as early as the beginning of middle school and by the end of 9th grade at the latest.

### *Acceleration and Automatic Enrollment (Section 4)*

Beginning July 1, 2027, this legislation provides that any student in grade 4 or higher who scores in the advanced performance level/exceeds grade-level expectations on the statewide summative assessment in English Language Arts and/or mathematics will be automatically enrolled in the next most rigorous course ***or*** program, with the ability for families to opt-out of accelerated coursework.

In order to prepare for implementation beginning July 1, 2027, districts and schools should begin developing their advanced mathematics pathways and automatic enrollment in advanced courses or programs in the fall of 2026. Once state summative assessment results are released late fall 2026, districts should begin determining eligible students. Advanced courses should be established for the 2027-2028 school year in late winter/early spring in order to be available to students during course scheduling for the subsequent school year.

With a focus on supporting high-achieving 4-12 students, this legislation builds upon the 2024 Literacy Changes Lives Act (HF2618) and the 2025 Math Counts Act (HF784) focused on K-6 students who are off-track to meet grade level expectations, as well as the Department's administrative actions, including:

- Establishing rigorous academic standards with aligned assessments and High-Quality Instructional Materials selection and implementation supports,
- Ensuring K-6 universal screening and biweekly progress monitoring supported by an Embedded State Early Warning System,
- Providing Personalized Reading and Math Plans for K-6 students who are off-track to meet grade level expectations with evidence-based statewide intervention supports,
- Empowering in-service educators with rigorous, evidence-based literacy and math instruction professional learning and advancing systemic improvement in pre-service educator preparation, and
- Supporting parent-teacher partnership through family-centered resources (e.g. decodables and *Math Moments That Matter*), requiring parent/guardian engagement within two weeks of a child's identification of persistently at-risk (below benchmark on two, consecutive screeners), and Personalized Reading and Math Plans developed in consultation with families.

*See provisions regarding Science Assessment Administration and Gifted and Talented Program Plans in Narrowing and Closing Achievement Gaps.*

**Implementation Resources:**

- Please see SF2220: Advanced Mathematics Pathways and Automatic Enrollment FAQ.
- Additional information will be posted on the Department's Gifted and Talented Programs webpage once available.

**Points of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief Tom Wood - Academics and Learner Supports - tom.wood@iowa.gov, 515-326-2147
    - Education Program Consultant Molly McConnell - Academics and Learner Supports - molly.mcconnell@iowa.gov, 515-326-0260

# III. Narrowing and Closing Achievement Gaps through Accountability and Support

## 4. Senate File 2220 - Instructional Quality *(Department Pre-filed Bill)* - Science Assessment Administration, Gifted and Talented Program Plans; Advanced Mathematics Pathways; Acceleration and Automatic Enrollment

### *Science Assessment Administration (Section 1)*

Informed by educator feedback, this legislation moves the state summative assessment for high school science (Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP)) from grade 10 to grade 11 to ensure students receive instruction in all tested science concepts.

NOTE: Science is assessed three times, with the elementary assessment in grade 5 at the end of elementary school and the middle assessment in grade 8 at the end of middle school.

### *Gifted and Talented Program Plans (Section 2)*

This legislation strengthens minimum requirements for school district gifted and talented plans to ensure:

- Consistently comprehensive K-12 identification procedures based on multiple data sources, including local comparisons within the school district, so that all students are evaluated for, and no single criteria eliminates a student from, participation in a gifted and talented program; and
- Program quality across districts, including consistently high-quality gifted and talented services provided to identified students that are aligned to the student's identification data and that correspond to the student's academic strengths and interests and promote academic growth

Any student enrolled in an accelerated course is also permitted to take the statewide student assessment that corresponds to the content and level of the course in which the student is enrolled.

*See provisions regarding Acceleration and Advanced Mathematics Pathways and Automatic Enrollment in Strengthening Evidence-Based Literacy and Math Instruction.*

**Implementation Resources:**

- *Update (September 15):* Please review the Guidelines for Gifted and Talented Program Plan guidance available on the Department's website.
- *Update (October 1):* Please review the Gifted and Talented Programs, Funding and Uses FAQs.

**Points of Contact:**

- **Gifted and Talented Program Plans:** Bureau Chief Tom Wood - Academics and Learner Supports - tom.wood@iowa.gov, 515-326-2147
    - Education Program Consultant Molly McConnell - Academics and Learner Supports - molly.mcconnell@iowa.gov, 515-326-0260
- **Assessment**: Division Administrator Jay Pennington - Teacher Quality and Innovation - jay.pennington@iowa.gov, 515-326-1017

## 5. House File 2670 - Education Matters - Social Studies Assessment; Suicide Prevention and Postvention; Standards Review; First Amendment Free Speech Training and Equity Coordinators; Multi-cultural, Gender-fair, Global Perspectives; Physical Education and Nutrition Instruction; Agriculture for Mathematics Credit; Counseling Programs; School District Noncompliance Enforcement; Charter School Requirements

***Social Studies Assessment (Section 1 and 2)***

This legislation expands the state summative assessment (Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP)) administered in partnership with the Iowa Testing Program at the University of Iowa to include a social studies assessment in grades 8 and 11, effective for the school year beginning July 1, 2027. It also establishes a set of core academic indicators for social studies in grades 8 and 10.

***Suicide Prevention and Postvention (Section 3)***

The legislation maintains the requirement for school districts to adopt suicide prevention and postvention protocols but removes the requirement that protocols include procedures for identifying adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and strategies to mitigate toxic stress responses.

> NOTE: All nine AEAs continue to be funded by the Children's Mental Health School-based Training and Support appropriation to provide statewide access to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) training at no cost to schools or districts.

***Standards Review (Section 4)***

This legislation clarifies that task forces – including the standards revision teams, standards review teams, and performance standards panels – review the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) standards and assessments used by other states to identify standards considered as best practices by recognized experts, rather than specific councils and associations.

***First Amendment Free Speech Training and Equity Coordinators (Section 5)***

It maintains the requirement for the Department to develop and distribute a training program on free speech under the First Amendment to be used by school districts to meet the requirement under Iowa Code section 279.75. Additionally, it strikes the requirement for the Department to develop and distribute standards of practice for equity coordinators employed by a school district.

***Multi-cultural, Gender-fair, Global Perspectives (Section 6)***

It strikes the requirement that the administrative rules adopted by the State Board of Education ensure that the required education program (offer-and-teach) be taught from a multi-cultural and gender-fair approach. It also strikes the requirement that global perspectives be incorporated into all levels of the education program.

***Physical Education and Nutrition Instruction (Section 7, 8, 9, and 10)***

The legislation modifies the health curriculum in grades 1-6 to include characteristics of communicable diseases, physical fitness and nutrition. In addition, it modifies the kindergarten health curriculum by removing the topics of healthy emotional and social habits and human growth and development.

It modifies the health curriculum in grades 7 and 8 to include age-appropriate and research-based information regarding the characteristics of sexually transmitted diseases, physical fitness and nutrition.

The legislation modifies the health curriculum in grades 9-12 to include physical fitness, food and nutrition and personal health. The curriculum may include instruction related to all of the following:

- Environmental health
- Safety and survival skills
- Consumer health
- Family life
- Age-appropriate and research-based human growth and development that incorporates the standards established under Iowa Code section 279.50, subsection 3, paragraph b
- Substance use disorder and nonuse
- Health resources
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
- Prevention and control of disease, including age-appropriate and research-based information regarding sexually transmitted diseases.

### *Agriculture for Mathematics Credit (Section 10)*

The legislation allows for the use of agriculture courses to meet the offer-and-teach requirement for two additional units of mathematics. The agriculture courses may also be used to meet the minimum offer-and-teach requirements for CTE.

### *Counseling Programs (Section 11)*

The legislation specifies that the counseling program shall be designed to ensure collaboration between the school counselor and a student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

### *School District Noncompliance Enforcement (Section 12)*

It modifies the State Board of Education's enforcement actions for findings of noncompliance with federal education laws – noting, if permissible, an opportunity to correct – from may to shall do one of the following within 30 days:

- Impose conditions on funding provided to a school district, including directing the use of school district funds and designating the school district a high-risk grantee under 2 C.F.R. §200.207.
- Withhold payment of state or federal funds to a school district, in whole or in part, until noncompliance is corrected. Initial withholding of state funds is at the discretion of the director for a period of sixty calendar days, after which it is subject to approval of the state board every sixty calendar days. Withholding of federal funds is subject to the governing federal statute or regulation. *(Iowa Code section 256.11(10)(c)(2))*

### *Charter School Requirements (Section 14)*

It specifies that charter schools are subject, without waiver, to the requirements for kindergarten programs under Iowa Code section 256.11, subsection 2, the educational standards for health curriculum and the use of agriculture units to meet the requirement for two additional units of mathematics.

### Implementation Resources:

- Please see the Department's 2026-27 Required Student Assessments and Training document.
- *Update (September 15):* Please review the updated Health Education FAQ and optional Review Tools.

**Points of Contact:**

- **Social Studies Assessment:** Division Administrator Jay Pennington - Teacher Quality and Innovation - jay.pennington@iowa.gov, 515-326-1017
- **Physical Education and Nutrition Instruction:** Bureau Chief Tom Wood - Academics and Learner Supports - tom.wood@iowa.gov, 515-326-2147
- **First Amendment Free Speech Training and Equity Coordinators:** Bureau Chief Joanne Tubbs - School Improvement - joanne.tubbs2@iowa.gov, 515-339-4122
- **Agriculture for Mathematics Credit; Counseling Programs:** Bureau Chief Cale Hutchings - Career and Technical Education - cale.hutchings@iowa.gov, 515-975-8193

## 6. House File 2493 - Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program - Eligibility, Funding, and Compulsory Attendance

This legislation modifies the eligibility criteria for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) by allowing children to participate in the program who:

- Are 4 years old on or before Sept. 15 of a school year.
- Turn 5 years old on or after March 15, but on or before Sept. 15, of the calendar year in which the school year begins.

It establishes a definition of "young child" to describe a child eligible to participate in SWVPP and makes conforming changes throughout the statute.

The legislation specifies that a child previously enrolled in, and counted for, funding under SWVPP shall not be counted for state funding purposes in a subsequent year of participation.

In addition, it modifies Iowa's compulsory attendance statute under Iowa Code chapter 299 to include children who have reached the age of 5 and are enrolled in SWVPP.

**Implementation Resources:**

- The State Board of Education is required to adopt rules, which will follow the standard rulemaking process beginning fall 2026.
- Additional information will be posted on the Department's Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program webpage once available.

**Point of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief Kimberly Villotti - Early Childhood - kimberly.villotti@iowa.gov, 515-339-5519

## 7. House File 2754 - School Choice Omnibus - Charter Schools; Funding and Area Education Agency Services; Extracurricular Activities; Driver Education; IPERS; Charter School Facilities Revolving Loan Program; Education Savings Accounts; Independent Accreditation; Schedule of Teacher Trainings and Licensure Renewal Requirements; Statewide Preschool Program; School Tuition Organizations – Preschool Startup Costs; Miscellaneous Provisions; Private Instruction

This act is effective upon enactment as of May 12, 2026.

### *Charter Schools (Division I)*

This legislation consolidates Iowa Code chapters 256E (charter schools, school board and founding group models) and 256F (charter schools and innovation zone schools) and strikes references to innovation zone schools.

It also establishes the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) as a charter school authorizer in addition to the State Board. UNI is authorized to review and approve a founding group or school board model application; enter into, maintain and if necessary, revoke a contract with an approved charter school; and monitor the performance and provide oversight of a charter school with which it has established a contract.

The legislation requires a charter school to open no later than the beginning of the second school year following execution of the charter contract, unless the State Board or UNI approves an earlier opening based on demonstrated readiness. A charter school may open in the immediately subsequent school year if adequate preparation is demonstrated by the charter school to the State Board or UNI.

In addition, it designates an approved charter school as a local education agency for purposes of receiving federal funds.

### *Funding and Area Education Agency Services (Division II)*

It adds the teacher salary supplement state cost per pupil generated by the resident district to the funding paid to a charter school for each resident student enrolled in the charter school.

The legislation directs the Iowa Department of Management to calculate and distribute to each Area Education Agency (AEA) the amount of media and educational services funding attributable to the number of students enrolled in a charter school located within a school district. It directs an AEA to provide media and educational services to students enrolled in a charter school.

It specifies that the sections of the Act regarding the transfer of the teacher salary supplement state cost per pupil and the calculation of educational and media services for students enrolled in a charter school are applicable to the school budget year beginning July 1, 2026.

### *Extracurricular Activities (Division III)*

The legislation permits a student enrolled in a charter school to participate in extracurricular interscholastic athletics and/or extracurricular activities provided by the school district in which the student resides, or by a school district that is contiguous to the school district in which the student resides, pursuant to terms of an agreement between the board of directors of a school district and the governing board of a charter school, in accordance with the conditions specified in the Act are satisfied.

NOTE: This legislation expands on an existing provision applicable to students enrolled in a nonpublic school. The Act adds a reference to extracurricular activities, including theater, show choir and band, allowing students enrolled in a nonpublic school or charter school to access those activities through the process described above.

ALSO NOTE: A student enrolled in a charter school who receives instruction primarily over the internet may participate in two cocurricular or extracurricular activities offered by the student's resident district during a school year, per Iowa Code section 256E.13. The student may participate in more than two cocurricular or extracurricular activities if allowed by the resident district. The resident district may charge up to $200 per activity to the charter school.

### *Driver Education (Division IV)*

In addition, it requires a charter school to offer or make available to all students attending the charter school an approved course in driver education, which may include a course offered through the school district. It specifies that a charter school is responsible for all the school district's costs associated with providing the driver education course to charter school students.

### *Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (Division V)*

The Act adds charter schools to covered employment within the Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System.

### *Charter School Facilities Revolving Loan Program (Division VI)*

It also establishes an unfunded charter school facilities revolving loan program under the purview of the Iowa Finance Authority.

### *Education Savings Accounts (Division VII)*

This legislation establishes a second application period under the Students First Education Savings Account (ESA) program which allows a parent or guardian to submit an application between Oct. 15 and Nov. 15. If approved, it permits payment into the ESA of an amount equal to 50% of the regular program state cost per pupil for the same school budget year in which the application was submitted. The payment shall be used for the semester immediately following the second application period.

### *Independent Accreditation (Division VIII)*

The legislation specifies that a nonpublic school deaccredited by an independent accreditation agency shall not seek accreditation from an independent accreditation agency for a period of three years from the date the school lost accreditation. A nonpublic school deaccredited by an independent accreditation agency, however, may immediately seek state accreditation.

It specifies that the provisions for independent accreditation under Iowa Code section 256.11 are not to be construed in a manner specified in the Act.

### *Schedule of Teacher Trainings and Licensure Renewal Requirements (Division IX)*

The legislation directs the Department to convene a task force to study the training programs teachers must complete pursuant to state law and the requirements associated with renewing a teaching license. The Department is to submit findings and recommendations to the General Assembly by Dec. 31, 2026. The task force's report must include specific recommendations for how to change current law to create a more manageable training program schedule and licensure renewal requirement schedule for teachers.

### *Statewide Preschool Program (Division X)*

It establishes a process for community-based providers to directly participate in the SWVPP, distinct from a community partner that operates within a school district's approved local program.

The Act directs the State Board to adopt rules applicable to community-based providers approved to directly participate in the preschool program including:

- Methods of demonstrating readiness to implement high-quality instruction,
- Data collection and performance measurement processes and
- Professional development planning and delivery.

It establishes a funding process for community-based providers approved to directly participate in the preschool program, including requirements that funding be used for any purpose determined by the community-based provider to meet standards for high-quality instruction and that directly or indirectly benefit students enrolled in the local program, with prohibition of facility construction costs and limits on administrative costs. The legislation specifies that preschool foundation aid shall be paid to a community-based provider approved to directly participate in the preschool program in monthly installments beginning Sept. 15 of a budget year and ending by June 15.

In addition, it authorizes the State Board to adopt emergency rules to implement the statutory provisions related to community-based providers directly approved to participate in the preschool program.

### *School Tuition Organizations – Preschool Startup Costs (Division XI)*

The bill permits a school tuition organization representing schools within the service area defined in the Act to provide funding to a nonpublic preschool, meeting the definition established in the Act, for costs up to those incurred during its first year of operation.

### *Miscellaneous Provisions (Division XII)*

This legislation permits a student enrolled in a charter school to access concurrent enrollment coursework through the school district in which the charter school is located. A student enrolled in a charter school and primarily receiving online instruction may access concurrent enrollment coursework through the school district in which the student resides.

It requires a school district's board of directors or the superintendent of a school district authorized by the school board to approve open enrollment applications, or to document the reason for denying a request for open enrollment. The reason for the denial shall be reported to the Department in a manner prescribed by the Department. The required information collection applies to the upcoming 2026-27 school year and includes the reason for denial from the open enrollment period which ended March 1, 2026.

### *Private Instruction (Division XIII)*

This legislation amends the definition of "independent private instruction" by striking requirements to enroll not more than four unrelated students and not charging tuition, fees or other remuneration for instruction. It specifies that the students receiving independent private instruction need not be related to the primary instructor.

It also stipulates that a diploma, final transcript or other written documentation issued by a parent, guardian, legal custodian or instructor responsible for providing a program of secondary education under competent or independent private instruction shall be accepted in the same manner as a high school diploma, final transcript or other written documentation issued by a school district or accredited nonpublic school.

The Act specifies that a parent, guardian or legal custodian of a child of compulsory attendance age has the authority to execute documents to verify the placement of a child under competent or independent private instruction, the child's full- or part-time status under private instruction, the grades obtained by a child under private instruction and any other required educational information.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Additional information relevant to charter schools is available on the Department's Charter School webpage.
- Information about concurrent enrollment can be found on the Department's Senior Year Plus webpage.
- Information about changes to independent accreditation will be posted on the Department's Independent Accreditation webpage once available.
- Information about changes to independent private instruction will be posted on the Department's Homeschooling (Private Instruction) webpage once available.
- *Update (September 15):* Please review the Department's updated Open Enrollment handbook.
- *Update (September 15):* Please review the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Community-based Provider Application and FAQ.
- *Update (September 15):* Please review the updated Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program FAQ.
- *Update (October 1):* Please review the Activities and Driver Education FAQ.

**Points of Contact:**

- **Charter Schools:** Division Administrator Tina Wahlert - PK-12 Learning - tina.wahlert@iowa.gov, 515-326-0162
    - Executive Officer Barbara Ohlund - PK-12 Learning Division - barbara.ohlund@iowa.gov, 515-681-2310
- **Funding; Education Savings Accounts:** Bureau Chief Kassandra Cline - School Business Operations - kassandra.cline@iowa.gov, 515-326-2242
- **Teacher Trainings and Licensure Renewal; Open Enrollment Reporting:** Division Administrator Jay Pennington - Teacher Quality and Innovation - jay.pennington@iowa.gov, 515-326-1017
- **Independent Accreditation; Private Instruction:** Bureau Chief Joanne Tubbs - School Improvement - joanne.tubbs2@iowa.gov, 515-339-4122
- **Statewide Preschool Program; Preschool Startup Costs:** Bureau Chief Kimberly Villotti - Early Childhood - kimberly.villotti@iowa.gov, 515-339-5519
- **Concurrent Enrollment:** Division Administrator Amy Gieseke - Higher Education - amy.gieseke@iowa.gov, 515-858-2234

# IV. Empowering Students with Multiple Pathways to Postsecondary Success and Completion

## 8. House File 2610 - Pathways Matter *(Department Pre-filed Bill)* - Career and Technical Education (CTE) Content Area Alignment; High-skill, High-wage, High-demand Occupation Definitions; Aligning RPP Expenditures to H3 Definitions; Community College General Education Framework; Common Course Numbering; Corequisite Remediation; and Implementation Study

***Career and Technical Education (CTE) Content Area Alignment (Sections 1-5, 7-8, 13)***
It aligns CTE service areas with the current National Career Clusters Framework.

***High-skill, High-wage, High-demand Occupation Definitions and RPP Expenditure Alignment (Sections 6, 9, 12)***
The legislation develops a consistent, comprehensive statewide definition of “high-demand, high-skill and high-wage” (H3). It also requires regional planning partnerships to plan, budget and distribute funds to promote secondary CTE programs aligned to H3 careers.

The legislation also requires the Department, in consultation with the Iowa Workforce Development Board, to adopt rules regarding the process of selecting H3 occupations for purposes of implementing government agency and statewide programs.

***Community College General Education Framework and Common Course Numbering (Section 10)***
This legislation establishes a community college common course numbering system to be implemented by the Department, in coordination with Iowa community colleges and in consultation with the Iowa Board of Regents. The common course numbering system must assign a consistent course alphanumeric prefix and number based on subject area and level, identify equivalent courses across institutions and be used in all course catalogs, registration systems and transcripts.

It also requires a statewide lower division general education framework, inclusive of a common set of general education learning requirements, to be implemented by the Department, in coordination with Iowa community colleges and in consultation with the Board of Regents. The statewide lower division general education framework is effective for the school year beginning July 1, 2027.

***Corequisite Remediation (Sections 11, 14)***
In addition, it establishes a statewide definition of “corequisite remedial coursework” and requires community colleges to offer corequisite remedial coursework with integrated academic support in mathematics and English beginning fall of 2028.

***Implementation Study (Section 15)***
The Act requires the Department, in consultation with the Board of Regents and stakeholders, to conduct a comprehensive study on the systemic implementation considerations of statewide lower division general education framework and common course numbering systems across public institutions of higher education.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Additional information will be posted on the Department's Community College webpage once available.

**Points of Contact:**

- **CTE Content Areas:** Bureau Chief Cale Hutchings - Career and Technical Education - cale.hutchings@iowa.gov, 515-975-8193
- **H3**: Division Administrator Amy Gieseke - Higher Education - amy.gieseke@iowa.gov, 515-858-2234
    - **Regional Planning Partnerships:** Education Program Consultant Heather Meissen - Career and Technical Education - heather.meissen@iowa.gov, 515-326-5378
- **Common Course Numbering and General Education Framework:** Education Program Consultant Derreck Callkins - Community Colleges - derreck.calkins@iowa.gov, 515-238-9758
- **Corequisite Remediation:** Education Program Consultant Kelly Friesleben - Community Colleges - kelly.friesleben@iowa.gov, 515-868-2847
- **Implementation Study:** Division Administrator Amy Gieseke - Higher Education - amy.gieseke@iowa.gov, 515-858-2234

## 9. House File 703 - State and Federal Student Loan Information - Student Loan Information; Analysis of Student Loan Information; Online Statement; Information Required in Offers of Financial Aid

***Student Loan Information (Section 1-3)***

This legislation requires the Iowa Student Loan Liquidity Company (Corporation) to provide information to the Department's Iowa College Aid Bureau of Financial Aid, State Authorization and Evaluation (Bureau) as specified in the Act, including an estimate of the annual percentage rate (APR) of the federal Direct PLUS loan and the assumptions used in determining the estimate and information on the possible APRs of the College Family Loan and Partnership Loan offered by the Corporation.

***Analysis of Student Loan Information (Section 4)***

It requires the Department to provide the information submitted by the Corporation to the Iowa Division of Banking superintendent, who is to review the information and report their findings to the Bureau concerning the accuracy and validity of the information submitted by the Corporation.

***Online Statement (Section 5)***

The legislation directs the Department to publish information on the Supplemental Student Loan Program, including the College Family Loan and Partnership Loan, if the APRs of those loans are lower than that of the federal Direct PLUS loan.

***Information Required in Offers of Financial Aid (Section 6)***

It also directs the Department to develop language, as specified in the Act, and provide this language to each Iowa institution of higher education eligible to receive funds through the College Family Loan and Partnership Loan by October 1. Each institution of higher education shall include the language provided by the Bureau in all offers of financial aid sent to prospective students or their families.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Additional information is posted on the Department's College Family Loan or Parent Partnership Loan webpage. Required language for schools to include with financial aid offers is distributed to financial aid offices through established communication channels and will be incorporated into guidance provided in the Iowa Financial Aid Guide.

**Point of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief Ryan Zantingh - Financial Aid & State Authorization - ryan.zantingh@iowa.gov, 515-210-7670

## 10. House File 2231 - Seal of Civics Excellence Program

This legislation requires the Department to develop and administer a Seal of Civics Excellence Program to recognize students graduating from high school who have demonstrated proficiency in civics. The Department is required to establish criteria for determining civics proficiency, including knowledge of American government and participation in civic and community activities.

The Department is required to produce a seal that may be affixed to a student's high school transcript, a certificate awarded to the student or noted on their transcript to recognize the student has achieved excellence in civics.

Participation in the program by a school district or accredited nonpublic school is voluntary. A school district or accredited nonpublic school choosing to participate in the program shall provide to the Department the names of each student meeting the requirements to earn the Seal of Civics Excellence in a manner prescribed by the Department.

**Implementation Resources:**

- *Update (September 15):* Please review the Iowa Seal of Civic Excellence Guide.

**Points of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief Tom Wood - Academics and Learner Supports - tom.wood@iowa.gov, 515-326-2147
    - Administrative Consultant Stefanie Wager - Academics and Learner Supports - stefanie.wager@iowa.gov, 515-419-2876

## 11. Senate File 2086 - Elective Junior Firefighter Programs - Firefighter I Certification; 11th and 12th Grade Elective Program; Junior Fire Fighter Program Requirements

***Firefighter I Certification (Section 1)***

This legislation allows a student who has successfully completed the elective Junior Firefighter Program, submitted all necessary certification registration and local verification forms and paid all applicable registration fees, to sit for the Firefighter I certification testing. A certification may not be issued prior to a student turning 18 years of age.

***11th and 12th Grade Elective Program (Sections 2 and 3)***

This legislation allows a school district or accredited nonpublic school to offer an elective Junior Firefighter Program to students in grades 11 or 12.

***Junior Fire Fighter Program Requirements (Section 4)***

This legislation requires an agreement between the board of directors of the school district or authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school with a local fire department that includes the following:

- How students participating in the program will be supervised.
- Activities in which Junior Firefighter students may participate.
- Activities in which Junior Firefighter students are prohibited from participating.
- The school district's or accredited nonpublic school's responsibilities related to providing medical and liability insurance coverage for all students participating in the program.

The Act specifies that the program must be taught by Fire Service Training Bureau personnel or an instructor who has been approved by the Fire Service Training Bureau. It also requires the same procedure for background investigations and termination for these instructors as established in Iowa Code section 279.69 for school employees.

The program must utilize a curriculum approved by the Fire Service Training Bureau that prepares students to sit for certification testing from the Fire Service Training Bureau for Firefighter I certification. In addition, it specifies the experiences and activities that a student participating in the program is to have access to during a specified period of time within a day.

The legislation specifies the activities in which a student under 18 years of age is prohibited from participating and activities in which all students are prohibited from participating. The Act clarifies requirements and responsibilities related to waiver-of-liability, employment, employer-employee relationship and the provision of medical and liability insurance.

It allows a school district to use the elective Junior Firefighter Program to meet CTE offer-and-teach requirements within the Human Services content area or to offer it as an extracurricular activity.

> NOTE: Nothing in this legislation impacts the ability of a school district to partner with a community college to offer a comparable program.

**Implementation Resources:**

- If the course is offered for CTE credit within the Health Care content area, the applicable SCED code is 14055 - Emergency Medical Technology.
- A CTE authorization is required if Perkins V funding is used to support the program.

**Points of Contact:**

- School districts should contact their local fire department, which will work with the Fire Safety Training Bureau on curriculum and approved instructors.
- Bureau Chief Cale Hutchings - Career and Technical Education - cale.hutchings@iowa.gov, 515-975-8193

## 12. Senate File 2168 - Apprenticeships and Other Career Training - Career Training Physical Expansion Program Fund; Apprenticeship Training in Schools; Last Dollar Scholarship Program; Secondary CTE Authorizations

***Iowa Apprenticeship Act (Division III)***

This legislation increases the maximum amount to be transferred into the Workforce Development Fund from employers through the Industrial New Jobs Training Program from $7,750,000 to $9,250,000 annually.

***Career Training Physical Expansion Program (Division IV)***

It establishes the Career Training Physical Expansion program under Iowa Workforce Development to provide financial assistance for construction of new facilities and procurement of equipment that will expand the capacity of community colleges and apprenticeship programs to provide education and training for workers in high-demand fields.

It also creates a Career Training Physical Expansion program fund administered by Iowa Workforce Development.

> NOTE: The Fiscal Year 2027 Education Appropriations bill, House File 2783, specifies that $3.5 million of the $6 million Accelerated Career Education program appropriation is to be deposited into the Career Training Physical Expansion program fund.

***Apprenticeship Training in School Districts (Division V)***

The legislation establishes new Iowa Code section 279.89 which encourages school districts to establish or expand quality pre-apprenticeship opportunities, youth apprenticeship programs, and work-based learning programs in secondary schools, reaffirming the Department's statewide prioritization of work-based learning outcomes in its 2024 unified school accountability system and its 2025 Perkins accountability system.

The bill also encourages school districts:

- to partner with apprenticeship sponsors and the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship,
- to align existing skilled-trades coursework with registered apprenticeship requirements,
- to support skilled-trades facilities or extension centers for WBL, and
- to establish recognized WBL programs with trained and credentialed staff and pursue partnership and funding opportunities.

***High-Demand Jobs and Scholarship Eligibility (Division VI)***

It requires the list of high-demand jobs created by the State Workforce Development Board to be updated at least every three years. The list of high-demand jobs is used for determining eligible programs under the Future Ready Iowa Last Dollar Scholarship program.

The Act states a job must offer a competitive entry-level wage to be eligible for inclusion on the list of high-demand jobs. Previously, a job was required to offer a minimum salary of $14 per hour.

It also modifies Future Ready Iowa Last Dollar Scholarship student eligibility by removing the statutory Student Aid Index (SAI) cap and authorizing staff from the Department's Bureau of Financial Aid & State Authorization (commission) to set criteria for financial need for the program annual basis.

### *Career and Technical Secondary Authorization (Division VII)*

The legislation reduces minimum work experience hours without any degree for the Career and Technical Secondary Authorization to 3,000 hours (rather than 6,000 hours without any degree in current rules) and requires a completed ethics training.

### Points of Contact:

- **Career Training Physical Expansion Program Fund:** Division Administrator Amy Gieseke - Higher Education - amy.gieseke@iowa.gov, 515-858-2234
- **Apprenticeship Training in Schools:** Bureau Chief Cale Hutchings - Career and Technical Education - cale.hutchings@iowa.gov, 515-975-8193
- **Last Dollar Scholarship Program:** Bureau Chief Ryan Zantingh - Financial Aid & State Authorization - ryan.zantingh@iowa.gov, 515-210-7670
- **Secondary CTE Authorizations:** Bureau Chief and Executive Director Mike Cavin - Board of Educational Examiners - mike.cavin@iowa.gov, 515-281-4810

# V. Promoting Vibrant, Safe and Healthy Learning Environments

## 13. Senate File 273 - Mandatory Reporting to the BOEE of Licensed School Employees Who Engage in Grooming Behavior Toward Students *(Department Pre-filed Bill, 2024 Legislative Session)* - Definition of Grooming

This legislation modifies the definition of "grooming" within the Iowa Board of Education Examiner's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics, to read as follows:

> "Grooming behavior" means any pattern of behavior, which in light of all relevant circumstances, constitutes actions to entice or entrap a student with the intent to take advantage of such student for the benefit of the individual engaging in the pattern of behavior, including but not limited to by engaging in a sex act with the student.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Additional information will be posted on the Board of Educational Examiner's Newsletters & Updates webpage once available.

**Point of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief and Executive Director Mike Cavin - Board of Educational Examiners - mike.cavin@iowa.gov, 515-281-4810
    - Attorney Beth Myers - Board of Educational Examiners - beth.myers@iowa.gov, 515-419-3679

## 14. House File 2598 - Human Trafficking Prevention Training for Initial CDL

This legislation requires the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), in collaboration with the Department and the State Board of Education, to approve human trafficking prevention training materials regarding recognition, prevention and reporting of human trafficking.

It requires an applicant for initial issuance of a class A, B or C commercial driver's license to certify to the DOT that the applicant has successfully completed a human trafficking prevention course of instruction.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Human trafficking prevention training materials will be made available by the DOT.

**Points of Contact:**

- Employers of prospective school bus drivers seeking a CDL should contact the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding licensure requirements. Additional information is available on the DOT's CDL webpage.
- Bureau Chief Kassandra Cline - School Business Operations - kassandra.cline@iowa.gov, 515-326-2242

## 15. House File 2676 - Iowa Make America Healthy Again Act - School Foods and Beverages; Epinephrine Delivery Systems; Student Instructional Technology Standards; Working Group on the Impact of Technology on Cognitive Learning; Presidential Physical Fitness Test; Student Physical Activity Requirements

### *School Foods and Beverages (Division V)*

This legislation prohibits a public, nonpublic or charter school participating in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs and receiving state funding from serving a meal to students, or selling to students, any food or beverage item on the school campus during the school day that contains the ingredients specified in the Act:

- Blue dye 1
- Blue dye 2
- Green dye 3
- Potassium bromate
- Propylparaben
- Red dye 40
- Yellow dye 5
- Yellow dye 6

It specifies that an employee or contracted vendor is prohibited from providing any food or beverage to a student during the school day that contains the specified ingredients. These provisions are effective July 1, 2027.

### *Epinephrine Delivery Systems (Division VI)*

The Act changes terminology in statute from “epinephrine auto-injectors” to “epinephrine delivery system.”

### *Student Instructional Technology Standards (Division VIII)*

In addition, it limits digital instruction for students in kindergarten through grade 5 to no more than 60 minutes per school day, subject to the exemptions specified in the Act. It defines “digital instruction” as “lessons, assignments, assessments or instructional activities delivered through instructional technology.” It defines “instructional technology” as a “laptop, tablet, computer, smart device, software platform or other similar device or platform used for student learning.”

Exemptions from the restriction include:

- Use required pursuant to an IEP or a plan developed pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- Assistive or adaptive technology used to provide a student access to instruction or to accommodate differing student abilities.
    - NOTE: Iowa Administrative Code rule 281—41.5 defines “assistive technology device” as “any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted or the replacement of such device.” [Please note adaptive technology is a subset of assistive technology that is specifically designed for individuals with disabilities.]
- Teacher-directed demonstrations using a projector, smartboard or similar display device when students are not individually operating a digital device.
- State assessments, screening, progress monitoring and local diagnostic assessments that require use of a one-to-one digital device (e.g. personalized reading tutoring assistant, Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAPs)).

- Dedicated computer science and technology curriculum.

The legislation requires the board of directors of a school district to adopt and publish on each elementary school's website a policy that includes:

- The district's daily digital instruction limits.
- Notice of a parent's or guardian's right to request additional reductions in their child's digital instruction.
- A statement that instructional technology shall support, and not supplant, foundational learning.
- A prohibition on the use of digital devices during recess.
    - NOTE: Districts *may* include other limits on non-instructional time, including other times of the day, consistent with other board policies.
      It also stipulates that a charter school is subject to the student instructional technology requirements, without waiver.

It requires the board of directors of a school district to complete a technology adoption checklist prior to adopting or renewing a one-to-one digital device program for any grade level. The checklist is to include:

- The instructional purpose of the device.
- The age appropriateness of the device and associated software.
- Content-filtering limitations and the district's capacity to mitigate those limitations.
- Whether student data is collected, stored or shared and the nature of such data practices.
    - NOTE: Districts *may* include affirmation of the evidence base of technology tools, as well as the number of technology tools and devices across the district and its schools.

The technology adoption checklist is to be retained by the board of directors and made available to the Department upon request for auditing or compliance purposes.

The Act specifies that limitations on the use of digital instruction do not apply to students enrolled in an online learning program or the use of online instruction to meet minimum school calendar requirements under Iowa Code section 279.10.

### *Department of Education Working Group on the Impact of Technology on Cognitive Learning (Division VIII, Section 19)*

The legislation directs the Department, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services, to convene a working group to examine research related to the impact of school-provided technology on the cognitive function and academic performance of students in grade 6-12. By Dec. 31, 2026, the working group shall submit its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly focused "on best practices related to the use of school-provided technology in educational contexts with a focus on ways to mitigate possible negative impacts on the social and behavioral development, attention span, mental concentration, and learning ability of students in grades six through twelve."

### *Presidential Physical Fitness Test (Division IX)*

In addition, it requires schools to assess the physical fitness of students who are physically able, using the Presidential Physical Fitness Test as part of the physical education program for students in kindergarten through grade 12.

### *Student Physical Activity Requirements (Division X)*

It increases state accreditation standards applicable to school districts, charter schools and state-accredited nonpublic schools for the minimum physical activity requirement for students in kindergarten through grade 4 to

at least 40 minutes per school day for school districts, charter schools and state-accredited nonpublic schools. It also maintains existing minimum physical activity requirements for students in grades 5-12.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Refer to the White House Presidential Physical Fitness Test website and Physical Fitness and Physical Activity FAQ. The implementation date for Iowa schools is for the 2026-27 school year.
- Please see HF2676: Student Instructional Technology FAQ and Sample Board Policy Implementing Iowa Code Section 279.89 (As Enacted By 2026 Iowa Acts, House File 2676).

**Points of Contact:**

- **School Foods and Beverages:** Bureau Chief Kala Shipley - Nutrition and Health Services - kala.shipley@iowa.gov, 515-681-2307
- **Epinephrine Delivery Systems:** Bureau Chief Barbara Lacina - Central Special Education Accountability, Data and Finance - barbara.lacina@iowa.gov, 515-606-4208
    - Administrative Consultant Melissa Walker - Central Special Education Accountability, Accreditation, Data, and Finance - melissa.walker@iowa.gov, 515-864-6701
- **Working Group on the Impact of Technology on Cognitive Learning:** Division Administrator Tina Wahlert - PK-12 Learning - tina.wahlert@iowa.gov, 515-326-0162
- **Student Instructional Technology Standards, Presidential Physical Fitness Test:** Bureau Chief Tom Wood - Academics and Learner Supports - tom.wood@iowa.gov, 515-326-2147
    - Administrative Consultant Lyn Jenkins - Academics and Learner Supports - lyn.jenkins@iowa.gov, 515-664-6732

## 16. Senate File 176 - Open Enrolled Virtual Student Participation in Cocurricular and Extracurricular Activities

This legislation specifies that a student who is open enrolled into a school district and primarily receives online instruction may participate in co- and extracurricular activities offered by the district of residence to students in the same grade or age group, provided the school district attendance center delivering the online instruction does not sponsor those activities.

It also modifies current law to allow a student receiving online instruction to participate in not more than two co- or extracurricular activities per academic term, rather than per school year.

**Implementation Resources:**

- *Update (September 15):* Please review the Department's updated Open Enrollment handbook.

**Points of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief Joanne Tubbs - School Improvement - joanne.tubbs2@iowa.gov, 515-339-4122
    - Education Program Consultant Sara Nickel - School Improvement - sara.nickel@iowa.gov, 515-971-7558

## 17. Senate File 2218 - Verification of the Identity and Employment Eligibility of Individuals by the BOEE, School Districts, Accredited Nonpublic Schools and Charter Schools - Education-Related Provisions (Work Authorization Evidence at Issuance of Licensure); Immigration Status - Employment and Licensure (School Districts Required Use of E-Verify and Required Reporting)

***Education-Related Provisions (Work Authorization Evidence at Issuance of Licensure) (Division I)***

This legislation requires all applicants for licensure (including initial, renewal, extension, conversion, etc.) through the Board of Educational Examiners to produce evidence of the applicant's legal authorization to work in the United States. It requires all practitioners not subject to renewal requirements to produce evidence of the practitioner's legal authorization to work in the United States every five years as a condition of remaining licensed.

The Act directs the Board to accept as proof the following:

- A document establishing employment authorization and identity under 8 U.S.C. §1324a(b)(1)(B), including:
    - A United States passport;
    - A resident alien card, alien registration card, or other document designated by the Attorney General, if the document:
        - contains a photograph of the individual and such other personal identifying information relating to the individual as the Attorney General finds, by regulation, sufficient for purposes of this subsection;
        - Is evidence of authorization of employment in the United States; and
        - contains security features to make it resistant to tampering, counterfeiting, and fraudulent use.
- A document that evidences employment authorization (per 8 U.S.C. §1324a(b)(1)(C)), including:
    - A social security account number card (other than such a card which specifies on the face that the issuance of the card does not authorize employment in the United States); or
    - Other documentation evidencing authorization of employment in the United States which the Attorney General finds, by regulation, to be acceptable for purposes of this section.

- AND a document that establishes the identity of the applicant (per 8 U.S.C. §1324a(b)(1)(D)), including:
    - A driver's license or similar document issued for the purpose of identification by a State, if it contains a photograph of the individual or such other personal identifying information relating to the individual as the Attorney General finds, by regulation, sufficient for purposes of this section; or
    - In the case of individuals under 16 years of age or in a State which does not provide for issuance of an identification document (other than a driver's license) referred to in clause (i), documentation of personal identity of such other type as the Attorney General finds, by regulation, provides a reliable means of identification.

***Immigration Status - Employment and Licensure (School Districts Required Use of E-Verify and Required Reporting) (Division III)***

Consistent with Executive Order 15 requiring state government's use of E-Verify (employment) and SAVE (legal presence in the United States), it requires the board of directors of a school district and the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school to use the E-Verify system maintained by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to confirm employment eligibility for newly hired employees.

It also requires transmitting the results of the E-Verify system check to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement or other appropriate federal immigration agencies if the check shows the subject of the check does not have legal status to be present in the United States, subject to the appeal procedures to be established by the Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing under Iowa Code section 10A.114.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Additional information will be posted on the Board of Educational Examiners' Newsletters & Updates webpage once available.

**Points of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief and Executive Director Mike Cavin - Board of Educational Examiners - mike.cavin@iowa.gov, 515-281-4810
    - Attorney Beth Myers - Board of Educational Examiners - beth.myers@iowa.gov, 515-419-3679

## 18. Senate File 2219 - Exempt Student Absences

This legislation requires the board of directors of each school district and the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school to adopt a policy granting a student an exempt absence if the absence is due to a student's involvement in a school-sponsored activity, program, competition or project. The policy shall allow for a student who is absent for such reasons to make up any classwork the student was not able to complete due to this absence.

In addition, it specifies a charter school is subject to such protocols regarding student absences for participation in a school-sponsored activity, program, competition or project, without waiver.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Information and resources are available on the Department's Attendance & Chronic Absenteeism webpage, including:
    - Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism Summary for Schools 2026-27,
    - 2026-27 Attendance Coding and Technical Assistance, and
    - Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism FAQs

**Point of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief Joanne Tubbs - School Improvement - joanne.tubbs2@iowa.gov, 515-339-4122
    - Administrative Consultant Greg Feldmann - School Improvement - greg.feldmann@iowa.gov, 515-661-7067

## 19. Senate File 2428 - Student Discipline - Regarding Violent or Nonviolent Disruptions, School District Professional Development Plans; IEP Team Meetings; Special Education and Behavior Pilot Program - LRE Training; Accreditation, Monitoring and Enforcement; Schools for Students Requiring Special Education or Students with Behavioral Issues - Pilot Project; Charter School Applicability; Policies Regarding the Discipline of Students Who Make Threats or Cause Incidents of Violence; Discipline of Students Who Cause Nonviolent or Violent Disruptions; Teacher Authority to Request a Meeting of the Student's IEP Team; IEP and Section 504 Plan Requirements; Teacher Professional Development

***Least Restrictive Environment training (Section 1)***

This legislation requires the Department to develop and distribute a training program and materials for Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams regarding the requirements under federal and state law for instruction within the least restrictive environment.

***Accreditation, Monitoring and Enforcement (Section 2)***

This legislation specifies that a component of the Department's school review and accreditation process is to include consideration of the timeliness and accuracy of the information a school district or nonpublic school provides to the Department, including the potential underreporting or late reporting of data related to school discipline and school safety.

***Schools for Students Requiring Special Education or Students with Behavioral Issues - Pilot Program (Section 3)***

This legislation establishes a pilot program administered by the Department for one rural school district and one urban school district to establish an attendance center to be used to provide educational services, including special education services, to eligible students enrolled in the selected school districts. The Department shall determine:

- The rural and urban school districts that will participate in the pilot, provided that the identified school district gives notice indicating that it has the ability to fully fund the pilot program or the Department fully funds the pilot program using funds appropriated by the General Assembly for this purpose.
    - NOTE: The Department did not receive an appropriation by the General Assembly for this purpose.
- The courses of study and curriculum to be provided to students participating in the pilot.
- The instructional facilities that will be used by the participating school districts to provide educational services to eligible students participating in the pilot.

It requires annual reporting by the participating school districts to the Department on or before June 1 annually in regards to the specified data elements. The Department is to consolidate and report the information to the General Assembly by June 30 annually.

***Charter Schools and the Discipline of Students Who Cause Nonviolent or Violent Disruptions (Section 4 and 5)***

This legislation specifies that charter schools established under either Iowa Code chapter 256E or 256F must comply with section 279.65B that is established by the Act.

### *Policies Regarding the Discipline of Students Who Make Threats or Cause Incidents of Violence (Section 6)*

This legislation specifies that the policies adopted by a school district under Iowa Code section 279.65A regarding the discipline of students who make threats of or cause incidents of violence are to comply with section 279.65B that is established by the Act.

### *Discipline of Students Who Cause Nonviolent or Violent Disruptions (Section 7)*

This legislation establishes a new Iowa Code section 279.65B regarding the discipline of students who cause nonviolent or violent disruptions in public and charter schools. It also establishes definitions of "nonviolent" and "violent" disruption:

"**Nonviolent disruption**" includes but is not limited to a disruption to classroom instruction that is a result of any of the following:

- Disorderly conduct.
- Abusive or profane language.
- Bullying, as defined under section 280.28. *(See FAQs.)*
- Repeatedly disruptive behavior.

"**Violent disruption**" includes but is not limited to a disruption to classroom instruction that is a result of a threat of violence or an incident of violence that results in any of the following:

- Injury.
- Property damage.
- Assault, as defined under section 708.1. *(See FAQs.)*

This legislation authorizes that a teacher may remove a student who causes a **nonviolent** disruption from the classroom and place the student under the supervision of the principal or the principal's designee for a minimum of 30 minutes, as determined by the principal or the principal's designee.

- It requires consultation between the teacher who removed the student and the principal prior to the student returning to the classroom for students enrolled in kindergarten through grade five.
- A student in grade 6 through grade 12 that is removed for a nonviolent disruption is to be removed from that classroom until at least the immediately subsequent school day.
- For a student removed from a classroom multiple times for a nonviolent disruption, the legislation requires a meeting to establish a behavior plan and course of discipline to correct the student's behavior to include the teacher(s) who removed the student from the classroom, the building principal, guidance counselor, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) if not an emancipated minor, and the student.

It requires a teacher to remove a student who causes a **violent** disruption from the classroom and place the student under the supervision of the principal or the principal's designee.

- It requires consultation between the teacher who removed the student and the principal prior to the student returning to the classroom.
- A student in grade 6 through grade 12 that is removed for a violent disruption is to be removed from that classroom until at least the immediately subsequent school day.
- A student shall not under any circumstance be readmitted to a teacher's classroom if all of the following criteria are satisfied:
    - The teacher removed the student from the teacher's classroom because the student caused a violent disruption that included the student assaulting the teacher.
    - The teacher does not consent to allowing the student to return to the teacher's classroom.

The legislation designates the principal as responsible for the following:

- Discipline of a student removed from a classroom for causing a nonviolent or violent disruption in accordance with school district policies.
    - It directs a principal who imposes discipline on a student removed from a classroom for a nonviolent disruption to inform the teacher who removed the student of such disciplinary action as soon as reasonably possible.
    - For a student removed from a classroom two or more times during a semester, or the trimester or quarter equivalent, it requires the principal to either assign the student to an in- or out-of-school suspension or recommend to the superintendent that the student be located in an alternative learning environment.
    - For a student removed from a classroom because the student's conduct, statements, or other actions were severe or pervasive, and, if requested by the teacher, it requires the principal to impose the maximum amount of punishment applicable to the conduct as specified under school district policy.
- Making available a mental health professional, guidance counselor or behavior interventionist to students, teachers or other school employees to address immediate trauma associated with a nonviolent or violent disruption, upon the request of a teacher. It also requires parental or guardian consent prior to a student under the age of 18, unless an emancipated minor, receiving services from a mental health professional, guidance counselor or behavior interventionist.
- All manifestation determination review meetings as required under federal law.
- Performing functional behavior assessments as needed.
- Adjusting behavior intervention plans as needed.

It requires creation of an Oversight Review Committee within each attendance center of a school district to develop a policy regarding when a student removed from a classroom for causing a nonviolent or violent disruption may be readmitted to the classroom, consistent with the protocols established in the Act. The committee may also make recommendations related to when any student who was removed from a teacher's classroom should be readmitted to the teacher's classroom.

The legislation establishes procedures for a teacher to appeal to the school board the decision of a principal to refuse to allow a student to be removed from a classroom, or a principal's readmission of a student prior to the time specified for readmittance following an incident of nonviolent or violent disruption. It requires a school board to immediately grant a teacher a leave of absence for physical recovery with full pay for not more than three days if the teacher is injured due to a student's violent disruption, which may be more if a physician indicates additional leave is necessary.

In addition, it requires a meeting of a student's IEP team if a student with an IEP is removed by a teacher from a classroom for causing a nonviolent or violent disruption that is immediately subsequent to the removal. In addition to the IEP team, the teacher who removed the student from the classroom, any teacher providing instruction to the student, and any other employee of the school district involved in the incident of nonviolent or violent disruption shall participate in the meeting. The IEP team meeting is to discuss:

- The appropriateness of the student's current educational programming.
- Whether adjustments need to be made to the student's IEP to address the student's behaviors.
- Whether the student's current placement or an alternative learning environment would best provide the student with a free appropriate public education.
- The accommodations, modifications and adaptations that are required to allow the student to be successful in a general education setting; what supports are needed to assist the teacher and other school district employees in providing those accommodations, modifications, and adaptations; and

whether it is possible for the school district to provide those supports, accommodations, modifications and adaptations.
- Whether and to what extent the provision of special education services and activities in the general education environment will impact the student and the other students in the classroom.

### *Teacher Authority to Request a Meeting of the Student's Individualized Education Program Team (Section 8)*

New Iowa Code section 279.89 is established to authorize a teacher to request a meeting of a student's IEP team by submitting a request to an administrator. An administrator may deny the request provided that the denial is written and describes why it is not required by federal law.

### *Individualized Education Programs and Section 504 Plan Requirements (Section 9)*

The board of directors of each school district shall ensure:

- Each student's IEP is accessible to each school district employee who is responsible for the implementation of the student's IEP, including general education teachers, special education teachers, and any other service providers.
- Each school district employee who is responsible for the implementation of a student's IEP, including general education teachers, special education teachers, and any other service providers, reads all changes to the accommodations or modifications described in the student's IEP.
- Each teacher and service provider described above is informed of:
    - The teacher's or service provider's specific responsibilities related to implementing the student's IEP.
    - The specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the student in accordance with the student's IEP.
    - After a general education teacher has read the most recent changes to the accommodations or modifications described in a student's IEP, as required above, the general education teacher shall provide written notice to the special education teacher who is on the student's IEP team indicating that the general education teacher has read the most recent changes to the accommodations or modifications.

Each teacher employed by the school district who teaches a student who has a **plan under section 504** of the federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. §794, shall read the plan. After the teacher has read the plan, the teacher shall provide written notice to any special education teacher who provides special education services to the student, or to the principal of the attendance center, indicating that the teacher has read the plan.

At least one paraeducator or other employee of the school district who assists a teacher in providing classroom instruction to a student who has an IEP or to a student who has a plan under section 504 shall attend all meetings related to the student's IEP or plan under section 504. If practicable, meetings related to a student's IEP or plan under section 504 that a paraeducator or other employee is required to attend pursuant to this subsection shall take place during normal business hours.

The board of directors of each school district shall provide training to all members of a student's IEP team related to the least restrictive environment requirements under the IDEA, that is based on the training program and training materials distributed by the Department, which explains state and federal legal requirements.

### *Teacher Professional Development (Section 10)*

This legislation modifies requirements for school district professional development plans under Iowa Code section 280.6 by requiring programs and offerings for all teachers to support serving students with disabilities.

This shall include providing a free appropriate public education, the provision of supports and services through an IEP and providing instruction in the least restrictive environment.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Please see SF2428: Application of State and Federal Law regarding Nonviolent and Violent Disruptions FAQ.
    - *Update (September 15):* see FAQs 39-48.
- Please also see SF2428: Special Education and Behavior Pilot Program Application Instructions and SF2428: Special Education and Behavior Pilot Program Application Rubric.
- Regarding teacher professional development, please see the Department's Policy & Practice webpage related to special education services, including Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), FAPE-Special Requests, and Least Restrictive Environment.
    - To support professional learning beyond educators and staff to include all IEP team participants, the Department is also developing and distributing a LRE training program and training materials focused on parents, advocates, community partners and related service providers.
- *Update (October 1):* Please view the new training Least Restrict Environment (LRE): Training for IEP Teams to Meet Requirements of SF2428.

**Points of Contact:**

- **Student Discipline Regarding Violent or Nonviolent Disruptions, School District Professional Development Plans; IEP Team Meetings; Special Education and Behavior Pilot Program:** Division Administrator Leisa Breitfelder - Special Education Central Division - leisa.breitfelder@iowa.gov, 515-689-4073
    - Regional Special Education Director Matt Cretsinger - Heartland - matt.cretsinger@iowa.gov, 515-975-1438
    - Education Program Consultant Rose Cartee - Special Education Evaluation, Instruction and Services - rose.cartee@iowa.gov, 515-330-0582
- **Student Discipline Regarding Violent or Nonviolent Disruptions:** Bureau Chief Joanne Tubbs - School Improvement - joanne.tubbs2@iowa.gov, 515-339-4122

## 20. Senate File 2474 - Cardiac Response Data Collection; Dyslexia Council

This legislation directs the Department to prepare a report, to be submitted to the General Assembly by Jan. 15, 2027, that includes the following information gathered from all school districts and charter schools:

- The number of schools that have adopted and implemented a cardiac emergency response plan.
- The number of automated external defibrillators owned by each school, regardless of whether any such automated external defibrillator is in good working order and where each automated external defibrillator is located on the school's property.

For purposes of this report, "cardiac emergency response plan" means:

> A written document that establishes the specific steps to be taken by employees or contractors of a school to respond to incidents involving an individual experiencing cardiac arrest or a similar life-threatening emergency on school property, during physical education, during an extracurricular athletic activity or contest, during practice associated with an extracurricular athletic activity or contest, or during a school-sponsored activity, and to reduce the likelihood of the individual's death from cardiac arrest or a similar life-threatening emergency.

It also extends the repeal date for the Dyslexia Council to July 1, 2032.

**Implementation Resources:**

- The Department will gather the required information through the Fall Basic Education Data Survey (BEDS). Additional information will be provided closer to the release of the Fall BEDS staff survey.

**Point of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief Adam Enter - Performance and Analytics - adam.enter@iowa.gov, 515-419-9988

# VI. Appropriations

## 21. House File 2770 - Justice System Appropriations - Attorney Loan Repayment Program - Court Filing Fees

***Attorney Loan Repayment Program – Court Filing Fees (Division III)***

This legislation establishes an Attorney Loan Repayment Program to be administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Commission) staff.

Eligible applicants include those who graduated from an accredited law school within five years of their application and who are actively practicing law in Iowa. It establishes terms of an agreement that must be executed between the applicant and the Commission.

The legislation authorizes an individual who maintains eligibility under the program to receive loan repayment assistance in an amount up to $10,000 per year for up to six years. Priority for awards is shown to those living and practicing in rural areas.

In addition, it establishes an Attorney Loan Repayment Program fund under control of the Commission. The Act specifies that a portion of certain fees collected by a district court and remitted to the state court administrator are to be deposited into the Attorney Loan Repayment Program fund.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Please refer to the Legislative Services Agency's Notes on Bills and Amendments for HF2770.
- Additional Information will be posted on the Department's Loan Repayment & Income Bonus webpage once available.

**Point of Contact:**

- Bureau Chief Ryan Zantingh - Financial Aid, State Authorization and Evaluation - ryan.zantingh@iowa.gov, 515-210-7670

## 22. House File 2783 - Education Appropriation legislation for FY 2027 from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 - Iowa Department of Education, Standing Appropriations, State Program Allocation, Iowa Tuition Grants, Iowa Special Education Council – Repeal , Reporting Requirements Related to Antibullying Programming, Board of Educational Examiners – Fees

This legislation establishes FY27 funding for the:

- Iowa Department for the Blind (Division I),
- Iowa Department of Education (Division II),
- State Board of Regents (Division III),
- Standing Appropriations (Division IV), and
- State Formula Allocations (Division V).

***Iowa Department of Education (Division II)***

This legislation appropriates $335,000 from the General Fund for the Endorsement grant program to support teachers licensed by the Board of Educational Examiners to offset costs associated with obtaining an Advanced Dyslexia Specialist Endorsement. The Dyslexia Specialist endorsement will continue to be offered through approved institutions, including Grand View University and the University of Iowa, in accordance with

Iowa Code section 256.146(21). Eligible educators will apply for grant funding through the Iowa Financial Aid Application (IFAA), with awards contingent upon eligibility, satisfactory academic progress, and available funding until the $335,000 appropriation is expended.

NOTE: This legislation complements the Department's recently launched the Dyslexia Specialist Endorsement Program application to support Iowa educators who have earned this important endorsement. Established in 2025 through a Department proposal included in HF 890, the program provides eligible Iowa educators with a one-time stipend of $2,000.

This legislation also specifies $96,533 of the $1,045,248 appropriated for the Teach Iowa Scholar Program is to be allocated to grants for eligible applicants who teach in a school district located in a city in Iowa with a population of less than 26,000, located more than 20 miles from a city with a population of greater than 50,000.

NOTE: This criteria is modeled on the rural service commitment areas under the Rural Iowa Veterinarian Loan Repayment Program.

In this Division, Governor Reynolds vetoed a line-item $500,000 appropriation for procuring, implementing, and maintaining secure electronic mail gateway appliances to protect school district electronic mail systems from phishing, compromise, malware and other advanced cyber threats.

*See provisions regarding School District Electronic Mail Security in Vetoed Legislation.*

### *Standing Appropriations (Division IV)*

This legislation maintains the standing appropriation for At-Risk Children at $10,524,389. It also extends the suspension of the standing appropriation for the College Work Study Program in FY 2026 to FY 2027.

### *State Program Allocation (Division V)*

This legislation maintains the standing appropriation for the Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program for FY 2027.

### *Iowa Tuition Grants (Division VI)*

This legislation eliminates the for-profit Iowa Tuition Grant program and transfers the remaining funds to the Iowa Vocational-Technical Tuition Grant program. It expands institutional eligibility under the Iowa Voc-Tech Tuition Grant to include barber and cosmetology schools, and it increases the appropriation for the grant program to $1,863,099.

### *Iowa Special Education Council – Repeal (Division VII)*

It repeals the Iowa Special Education Council established under Iowa Code section 256.35B, which was duplicative of the existing Iowa Special Education Advisory Panel.

### *Department of Education – Reporting Requirements Related to Antibullying Programming (Division VIII)*

The bill moves the reporting requirement for the annual report summarizing the Department's antibullying programming and current and projected expenditures from the appropriation bill to Iowa Code section 279.51A.

### *Board of Educational Examiners – Fees (Division IX)*

It eliminates the requirement for the Board of Educational Examiners to transfer 25% of licensing fees into the state's general fund.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Refer to the Legislative Services Agency's Notes on Bills and Amendments for HF2783.
- Additional information for the Teach Iowa Scholars, Iowa Tuition Grant (for-profit) and the Vocational-Technical Tuition Grant will be posted on the Department's Financial Aid webpage and published in the Iowa Financial Aid Guide.

**Points of Contact:**

- **Appropriations:** Chief Financial Officer Sandra Hurtado-Peters - sandra.hurtado-peters1@iowa.gov, 515-250-3728
- **Advanced Dyslexia Specialist Endorsement; Teach Iowa Scholar Program; Iowa Tuition Grant/Vocational-Technical Tuition Grant Program:** Bureau Chief Ryan Zantingh - Financial Aid, State Authorization and Evaluation - ryan.zantingh@iowa.gov, 515-210-7670
- **Iowa Special Education Advisory Panel:** Division Administrator Leisa Breitfelder - Special Education Central Division - leisa.breitfelder@iowa.gov, 515-689-4073

## 23. House File 2800 - Standing Appropriations - Appropriations, Distributions, Transfers, and Expenditure Authority; AEA Quarterly Payments; Higher Education - Civic Proficiency; Incentives - School Districts

***Appropriations, Distributions, Transfers, and Expenditure Authority (Division I)***

This legislation continues the $8,997,0911 appropriation for nonpublic school pupil transportation claims reimbursement.

Consistent with the recurring AEA state aid reduction beginning twenty-three years ago on July 1, 2003, this legislation also strikes Iowa Code section 257.35, subsection 2 and establishes a permanent AEA state aid reduction of a total of $32,500,000. (This total reduction is the same reduction in FY 2024, 2025, 2026.) It strikes Iowa Code section 257.35, subsections 3-20 which codified previous AEA state aid reductions, dating back to July 1, 2003. Consistent with FY 2025, 2026, and 2027, it specifies that, beginning in FY 2028, $10 million of the amount reduced from AEA funding is to be used to support the Division of Special Education within the Department.
NOTE: These provisions simplify the standing appropriations bill and are not a substantive change from recent fiscal years.

***Area Education Agencies - Quarterly Payments - FY 2026-2027 (Division XVII)***

This legislation specifies AEAs will receive quarterly state aid payments in the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026.

***Higher Education - Civic Proficiency (Division XVIII)***

This legislation requires institutions of higher education under the Board of Regents to establish requirements for the completion of any general education requirements or core curricula for an undergraduate student to complete an introductory survey course in American history and an introductory survey course in American government.

***Incentives - School Districts (Division XX)***

The Act extends supplementary weighting for whole-grade and reorganization sharing to 2035.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Refer to the Legislative Services Agency's Notes on Bills and Amendments for HF2800.
- Quarterly and monthly payment dates will be posted on the Department's State Payment Information webpage when available.
- The Reorganization Incentives Technical Assistance document will be updated and posted on the Department's Reorganization, Dissolution & Sharing webpage.

**Points of Contact:**

- **Appropriations:** Chief Financial Officer Sandra Hurtado-Peters - sandra.hurtado-peters1@iowa.gov, 515-250-3728
- **School District Incentives:** Bureau Chief Kassandra Cline - School Business Operations - kassandra.cline@iowa.gov, 515-326-2242

## 24. Senate File 2201 - School Funding - State and Categorical Percents of Growth and Property Tax Replacement Payments; Transportation Equity and Funding; School District Budget Adjustment - FY2026-27; Education Support Personnel Salary Supplement; School District Enrollment and Budgeting

***State and Categorical Percents of Growth and Property Tax Replacement Payments (Division I)***

This legislation sets for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 a 2% state percent of growth and categorical state percent of growth for state supplemental aid.

***Transportation Equity and Funding (Division II)***

It establishes a maximum annual reimbursement of $1 million per school district for transportation equity payments.

***School District Budget Adjustment - FY2026-27 (Division III)***

In accordance with regular business practice, the department of management will add the amount of the school district's budget adjustment to the combined foundation base for the budget year, which is to be fully funded through the state foundation aid in the current FY2026.

***Education Support Personnel Salary Supplement (Division IV)***

It also provides a $7 million appropriation for education support personnel salary supplement (ESPSS). NOTE: This data will continue to be collected as part of the 2026 Fall BEDS staff collection. While the Department reopened 2025 Fall BEDS Staff in June 2026 to provide noncompliant districts a final opportunity to submit the "hourly wage" data collection, the Department will not do so in future years. Failure to submit statutorily required data to this collection by the due date may forfeit a district's appropriation for receipt of these funds moving forward.

***School District Enrollment and Budgeting (Division V)***

Starting next school year, this legislation enacted important changes to how student enrollment is counted and funded:

- **Two Count Dates**: Official Certified Enrollment counts will now occur twice a year on Oct. 1 and Jan. 15.
- **Funding Calculation**: Funding for the 2027-28 school year will be based on the average of these two count dates (Oct. 1, 2026 and Jan. 15, 2027).
- **Quarterly Payments**: The payment schedule for both school districts and AEAs will shift from a monthly distribution to quarterly, beginning for the 2026-27 school year.

- **Strict Department Release Timelines**: The Department is now legally required to release data within 30 days from the Oct. 15 deadline and 21 days from the Jan. 30 deadline.
- **Five-Day District Resolution Window**: Districts will have a strict five-day window from notification to voluntarily resolve disputes or discrepancies.
  NOTE: Because of these statutory expectations, districts must prioritize data cleanliness and accuracy prior to submission deadlines.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Refer to the Legislative Services Agency fiscal note for additional information.
- Student Reporting in Iowa trainings are expected to begin in September. Additional information and resources will be posted on the Department's Student Reporting in Iowa webpage once available.
- *Update (September 15):* Please review the FY2027 LEA/AEA State Payment Schedule.

**Points of Contact:**

- **Student Reporting in Iowa:** Bureau Chief Adam Enter - Performance and Analytics - adam.enter@iowa.gov, 515-419-9988
- **School Finance:** Bureau Chief Kassandra Cline - School Business Operations - kassandra.cline@iowa.gov, 515-326-2242

## 25. Senate File 2472 - Property Taxes - School Taxes; SAVE Fund; School District Unspent Balances - On-Time Funding and Modified Supplemental Amounts

***School Taxes (Division V)***

This legislation sets a foundation property tax for the school budget year beginning July 1, 2028, of $5.10 per $1,000 of assessed valuation on all taxable property within a school district. It sets a foundation property tax for the school budget year beginning July 1, 2029, and each succeeding school budget year of $4.90 per $1,000 of assessed valuation on all taxable property within the school district. The current property tax rate is $5.40 per $1,000 of assessed valuation.

It modifies the foundation property tax rate for a reorganized school district to be $1.00 less than the per $1,000 valuation rate for the applicable budget year. In succeeding school years, the foundation property tax levy is set as:

- $0.50 less than the per $1,000 valuation rate in the first succeeding year.
- $0.25 less than the per $1,000 valuation rate in the second succeeding year.
- The rate applicable to the budget year in the third succeeding year and each subsequent year.

***Secure an Advanced Vision for Education Fund (Division VI)***

This legislation extends the repeal date of the Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) fund from 2051 to 2071.

It also establishes the equity transfer percentage used to determine the amount of SAVE funds transferred into the Property Tax Equity and Relief fund by fiscal year.

- FY27: 12.5%
- FY28: 15%
- FY29: 17.5%
- FY30: 22.5%
- FY31 and thereafter: 25%

### *School District Unspent Balances - On-Time Funding and Modified Supplemental Amounts (Division X)*

It limits the amount of unspent balance a school district may carry forward to 35% of the preceding year's maximum authorized expenditures.

The legislation modifies the authority of the School Budget Review Committee from requiring approval to allowing the committee to decide to provide or deny approval of requests for modified supplemental amounts regarding increased enrollment.

It also requires school boards to adopt a policy that defines a targeted range and maximum amount of unspent balance for authorized expenditures, which is required to be reviewed annually.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Please refer to SF2472: Unspent Balance Carryforward Maximum Factsheet on the Department's School Finance Tools webpage, which explains the implementation of the law, provides examples, and includes a tool for the calculation.
- Please also see an updated Unspent Authorized Budget Report hosted on the Department of Management School Resources webpage

**Points of Contact:**

- **School Taxes; SAVE Fund:** Fiscal Analyst John Parker - Iowa Department of Management - john.parker@dom.iowa.gov, 515-281-8485
- **Unspent Authorized Balances and Modified Supplemental Amounts:** Bureau Chief Kassandra Cline - School Business Operations - kassandra.cline@iowa.gov, 515-326-2242

# VII. Related Legislation

## 26. House File 2490 - Public Meeting Notices - Public Notice; Supervision - Fees; Confidential Records; Injunction to Restrain Vexatious Requester

### *Public Notice (Section 1)*

This legislation modifies requirements for providing notice of the time, date and place of a meeting held by a governmental body. A governmental body must continue to give notice of the meeting by advising news media who have filed a request for notice. They must also post the notice in a prominent and conspicuous place, which must now be annually designated for such purposes by the governmental body, in a manner such that the notice is visible at all times.

> NOTE: The annual designation requirement is new, and the "visible at all times" requirement is updated from "easily accessible." Internet posting agendas is allowable, but legally insufficient.

This legislation requires a posted tentative agenda that is modified within 24 hours of commencement of the public meeting to be marked as amended, with the amended items identified as such. After amending an agenda, the governmental body shall provide notice per the procedures described above.

### *Supervision - Fees (Section 2)*

The Act specifies that all reasonable expenses for the examination and copying of public records shall be paid by the person desiring to examine or copy the public record.

### *Confidential Records (Section 3)*

It also specifies that the following personal information in confidential personnel records of government bodies shall be considered public records:

- The last date the individual, who resigned from or was discharged by the government body, performed work or actively carried out essential functions of the position.
- The amount of moneys and public benefits provided to the individual for any continuation of pay, severance or other compensation or benefits in excess of the amounts owed for work performed by the individual prior to the individual's last day as an employee.

### *Injunction to Restrain Vexatious Requester (Section 4)*

It authorizes the district court to grant an injunction restraining the right of a person found to be a vexatious requester to examine public records from a specific government body, or may impose reasonable limitations on the manner, frequency or scope of such requests, if the petition for injunction meets the requirements of the act. The legislation defines "vexatious conduct" for purposes of public records requests and specifies that this conduct does not include solely a large volume of requests made by a person or a representative of the news media.

> NOTE: "Vexatious" refers to Open Records requests that significantly inhibit a governmental body's conduct of its other business.

**Point of Contact:**

- Iowa Public Information Board - IPIB@iowa.gov, 515-393-8339
    - General Counsel Thomas Mayes - thomas.mayes@iowa.gov, 515-281-5295

## 27. House File 2591 - Open Enrollment, Student Transfers, and Interscholastic Athletic Eligibility Requirements - Rules and Eighth Grade Eligibility; 140-Calendar Day Ineligibility Period

***Rules and Eighth Grade Eligibility (Section 1, 4, 5 and 6)***

This legislation directs the State Board of Education to adopt rules allowing eighth grade students to participate in extracurricular interscholastic athletics under the same eligibility framework that applies to students enrolled in grades 9-12. The provision allowing for eighth grade participation in extracurricular interscholastic athletics is effective upon enactment of the Act. Emergency rules adopted by the State Board of Education shall be effective no later than Aug. 1, 2026.

***140-Calendar Day Ineligibility Period (Section 2 and 3)***

It modifies the ineligibility period for student participation in varsity interscholastic athletics following open enrollment from 90 school days to 140 calendar days, unless the open enrollment meets one of the specified criteria for good cause. The ineligibility period modification is effective Aug. 1, 2026.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Please see Chapter 36, "Extracurricular Interscholastic Competition" Adopted & Filed Emergency Rules and Notice of Intended Action.
    - The State Board of Education approved emergency rules on June 18, 2026, which are effective on Aug. 1, 2026. The State Board of Education concurrently noticed administrative rules through the normal rulemaking process.
- Please also find information about athletic eligibility on the Department's Open Enrollment webpage.
- *Update (September 15):* Please review the Department's updated Open Enrollment handbook.

**Point of Contact:**

- **Rulemaking:** General Counsel Thomas Mayes - thomas.mayes@iowa.gov, 515-281-5295
- **Athletics:** Legislative Liaison Eric St Clair - eric.stclair@iowa.gov, 515-326-0274
- **Open Enrollment:** Bureau Chief Joanne Tubbs - School Improvement - joanne.tubbs2@iowa.gov, 515-339-4122

## 28. Senate File 274 - Extracurricular Interscholastic Athletic Contest or Competition Form of Entry Payment

This legislation requires a public school to accept legal tender as a form of payment into any extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition sponsored by the Iowa High School Athletic Association or Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union.

The requirement does not apply to an event taking place at a school that is not a member of either athletic association or at a venue that is not owned or operated by a member school or either of the athletic associations.

**Points of Contact**:

- Executive Director Tom Keating - Iowa High School Athletic Association - tkeating@iahsaa.org
- Executive Director Erin Gerlich - Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union - erin@ighsau.org

## 29. Senate File 579 - Iowa Civil Rights Act

This legislation specifies that a city or local government shall not enact any ordinance or other law which is broader or has different categories of unfair or discriminatory practices than those provided in the chapter.

Any complaint filed with the local agency or commission where a party is a political subdivision must be referred to the Iowa Office of Civil Rights for processing. Additionally, any complaint that has not been resolved within twelve months of the filing date must also be transferred to the Iowa Office of Civil Rights for processing.

Within three hundred days of the filing date of the complaint, a local agency or commission must send notice to all parties of the parties' rights to direct transfer and must notify the Iowa Office of Civil Rights upon the provision of the notice. They must also cross file a complaint with the Iowa Office of Civil Rights if the local agency or commission complaint arises from an alleged violation of a state law, rule, or regulation.

This Act was effective upon enactment on March 10, 2026.

**Implementation Resources:**

- Complaints may be filed with the Iowa Office of Civil Rights using this complaint form or by calling 515-281-4121.

**Point of Contact:**

- Questions should be directed to a school's legal counsel.

## 30. Senate File 2231 - Protected Speech and Expression Rights of Students; Eligibility and Participation Requirements for Certain Education Programs and Preschool Programs - Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression; SWVPP Community-Based Provider Partnerships; Other Provisions - Nonsectarian References

***Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression (Sections 1, 3, 4, 8)***

This legislation directs the Department to annually distribute the most recent version of the Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression produced by the U.S. Department of Education to each superintendent of a school district and principal of a charter school. The Department is to post a link to the most recent version of the guidance on the Department's website.

A superintendent is required to distribute the guidance to each member of the board of directors, principal and teacher employed by the school district. A principal of a charter school is required to distribute the guidance to each member of the governing board and teacher of the charter school.

The legislation requires the Department to develop and distribute a professional development training program regarding constitutionally protected prayer and religious expression in public elementary and secondary schools.

It establishes new Iowa Code section 279.89 regarding protected speech and expression. It also prohibits a school district from discriminating against a student for engaging in activities protected under the Act.

It directs the Department to create a model policy that, if adopted by the board of directors of a school district, would satisfy the requirement to adopt a policy on religious expression standards.
The Act requires a school district to:

- Adopt a policy ensuring compliance with federal religious expression standards.
- Annually notify each employee of the school district of the availability of the Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression.
- Offer professional development opportunities to each employee of the school district regarding constitutionally protected prayer and religious expression in public elementary and secondary schools.

It specifies that the provisions of the Act are not to be construed to prevent a school district from prohibiting, limiting or restricting expression or conduct that does not represent constitutionally protected prayer and religious expression.

The legislation specifies that a charter school is subject to the requirements of Iowa Code section 279.89.

***Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) (Section 2)***
This legislation requires a school district to enter into a contractual agreement under the SWVPP with a community-based provider upon request. It specifies that a community-based provider entering into a contractual agreement with a school district for SWVPP is subject to the teacher and program requirements established under Iowa Code section 256C.3.

It also specifies that the provisions for a community-based provider to contract with a school district for the SWVPP under Iowa Code chapter 256C clarifies requirements governing agreements between school districts and community-based providers participating in the SWVPP.

***Other Provisions - Nonsectarian References (Sections 5-7, 9-11)***
The Act strikes references to "nonsectarian" in several sections of statute.

**Implementation Resources:**
- Please see the U.S. Department of Education Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression.
- Additional information about the professional development training program and the model board policy for religious expression will be posted on the Department's School Improvement webpage once available.
- *Update (October 1):* Review the Sample Board Policy on Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression.

**Points of Contact:**
- **Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression:** Bureau Chief Joanne Tubbs - School Improvement - joanne.tubbs2@iowa.gov, 515-339-4122
- **SWVPP:** Bureau Chief Kimberly Villotti - Early Childhood - kimberly.villotti@iowa.gov, 515-339-5519

## 31. Senate File 2430 - Display of Flags at Half-staff on Public Buildings

This legislation requires the custodian and board of public officers of a public building in Iowa to have the flags of the United States of America and the state of Iowa flown at half-staff when so directed by a proclamation issued by the governor. It also establishes a definition of "public building," used for a public purpose by the state or a political subdivision of the state, including public schools, AEAs, public institutions of higher education, etc.

It authorizes reporting of alleged violations to the Office of the Attorney General, which may initiate an action in the name of the state, including but not limited to an action for injunctive relief.

A person may report an alleged violation to the attorney general. The attorney general may initiate an action in the name of the state, including but not limited to an action for injunctive relief, to obtain compliance.

**Points of Contact:**

- **Alleged Violation:** Office of the Attorney General - webteam@ag.iowa.gov, 515-281-5164

# VIII. Vetoed Legislation

## 32. Senate File 2299 - Concurrent Enrollment Reimbursement

This legislation would have allowed a district to seek reimbursement from a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) for the cost of a contracted concurrent enrollment course if the student failed or withdrew from the course.

Governor Reynolds vetoed this bill stating, "Introducing the possibility of financial liability may specifically discourage participation among economically disadvantaged students who often benefit most from these opportunities." Please note Iowa students with low-income backgrounds – for whom reimbursement requirements may be an exacerbated disincentive, causing a "chilling effect" on both participation and success – fail or withdraw from both online and face-to-face concurrent enrollment courses at more than double the rate of their peers.
Like SF2320, Governor Reynolds' veto statement also encourages future legislatures to "take a comprehensive look at the program as a whole rather than addressing individual issues one bill at a time" and to ensure "the program remains strong, sustainable, and accessible."

## 33. Senate File 2320 - Concurrent Enrollment Modality

This legislation would have required that a student participate in the in-person concurrent enrollment section, if the course was offered through both in-person and online modalities, unless authorized by the superintendent or designee to enroll in a version of the course offered through online instruction.

Governor Reynolds vetoed this bill stating it "creates a one-size-fits-all statewide requirement without addressing broader concerns related to course quality, cost and student access." While noting that "In-person instruction often provides a stronger educational experience for students," Governor Reynolds states, "Online coursework remains an important option in communities where course availability, scheduling conflicts, transportation challenges, and other circumstances may reduce access."

Like SF2299, Governor Reynolds' veto statement also encourages future legislatures to "take a comprehensive look at the program as a whole rather than addressing individual issues one bill at a time" and to ensure "the program remains strong, sustainable, and accessible."

> NOTE: In August, the Department will distribute a series of comprehensive surveys to school district personnel, community college staff, and the general public—with particular emphasis on gathering parental perspectives. These engagement opportunities seek to evaluate the current state of concurrent enrollment, while soliciting strategic recommendations to enhance program effectiveness and operational efficiency. The resulting insights will directly inform future, systemic concurrent enrollment policy reform efforts in Iowa.

## 34. House File 2783 - Education Appropriation legislation for FY 2027 from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 (in part) - School District Electronic Mail Security

Governor Reynolds vetoed a line-item $500,000 appropriation for procuring, implementing, and maintaining secure electronic mail gateway appliances to protect school district electronic mail systems from phishing, compromise, malware and other advanced cyber threats.

Governor Reynolds stated the line-item appropriation "constitutes a clear and unmistakable earmark — drafted, designed, and lobbied for by a specific information technology and cybersecurity firm. The provision allocates one-time state funding to incentivize school districts to subscribe to ongoing cybersecurity services… that will substantially and persistently exceed the limited one-time appropriation…"

Governor Reynolds further states, “In effect, this earmark uses a modest sum of taxpayer dollars as an inducement to lock Iowa school districts into long-term vendor relationships — shifting the true cost of this arrangement onto local budgets for years to come, with no guarantee of continued state support to offset it. Additionally, cybersecurity services of the type described in this provision are already accessible to every school district in Iowa through state-negotiated master agreements — contracts specifically designed to deliver quality services at discounted pricing, without directing public dollars to any single vendor.”