Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

November 18, 2026

Agenda Item:	Rules – Notice of Intended Action – Chapter 19 (Amend)
Priority:	Goal 1
State Board Role/Authority:	This rulemaking is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code section 256E.4(2).
Presenter(s):	Thomas A. Mayes General Counsel & Rules Coordinator
Attachment(s):	One
Recommendation:	It is recommended that the State Board of Education amend Chapter 19.
Background:	This proposed rulemaking implements several provisions of 2026 Iowa Acts, House File 2754. This proposed rulemaking addresses the addition of the University of Northern Iowa as a charter school authorizer and elimination of a legacy Iowa Code chapter. References to Iowa Code chapters 256E and 256F are to those chapters as amended by House File 2754. A hearing on a regulatory analysis was conducted on November 17, 2026.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT[281]

Notice of Intended Action

The State Board of Education hereby proposes to amend Chapter 19, "Charter Schools," Iowa Administrative Code.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code section 256E.4(2).

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, 2026 Iowa Acts, House File 2754.

Purpose and Summary

This proposed rulemaking implements several provisions of 2026 Iowa Acts, House File 2754. This proposed rulemaking addresses the addition of the University of Northern Iowa as a charter school authorizer and elimination of a legacy Iowa Code chapter.

References to Iowa Code chapters 256E and 256F are to those chapters as amended by House File 2754.

A hearing on a regulatory analysis was conducted on November 17, 2026.

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the state of Iowa. The Fiscal Note for Division I of House File 2754 found that the underlying legislation has an unknown fiscal impact.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

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Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the State Board for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 7—Chapter 2504.

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit comments concerning this proposed rulemaking. Written comments in response to this rulemaking must be received by the State Board no later than 4:30 p.m. on December 29, 2026. Comments should be directed to:

Thomas A. Mayes
Grimes State Office Building
400 East 14th Street Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Phone: 515.281.8661
Email: thomas.a.mayes@iowa.gov

Public Hearing

A public hearing at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

December 19, 2026 8 to 9 a.m. Room B50 Grimes State Office Building
Online at meet.google.com/rzj-vjoq-xzy
Phone: 1-216-800-7069 (PIN: 779 738 530#)

Persons who wish to make oral comments at the public hearing may be asked to state their names for the record and to confine their remarks to the subject of this proposed rulemaking.

Any persons who intend to attend the hearing and have special requirements, such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments, should contact the State Board and advise of specific needs.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request

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by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its regular monthly meeting or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

The following rulemaking action is proposed:

ITEM 1. Amend rule 281—19.1(256E) as follows:

281—19.1(256E) General. All charter schools in Iowa are a part of the state's program of public education. Charter schools established on or after July 1, 2021, are subject to Iowa Code chapter256E, subchapter I, and Division I of this chapter. Charter schools established prior to July 1, 2021, continue to operate under and are subject to the provisions of Iowa Code chapter ~~256F~~ 256E, subchapter II, and Division II of this chapter. The department monitors the effectiveness of charter schools and implements the applicable provisions of this chapter.

ITEM 2. Amend rule 281—19.2(256E) as follows:

281—19.2(256E) Establishment of charter schools. A charter school may be established by either of the following methods: a school board-state board model, pursuant to Iowa Code section 256E.4, or a founding group-state board model, pursuant to Iowa Code section256E.5. The state board of education and the University of Northern Iowa are the only authorizers of charter schools in the state. The state board of education is the only authorizer of charter schools under this division. Charter schools authorized by the University of Northern Iowa are governed by such rules the university may establish.

ITEM 3. Amend paragraph **19.14(1)"e"** as follows:

e. Student achievement, including annual academic growth and proficiency, including data from the Iowa ~~statewide~~ summative assessment ~~of student progress (ISASP) data,~~ administered

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pursuant to 281—paragraph 12.8(1)*"h,"* other assessment data, and aggregate assessment test scores.

ITEM 4. Amend rule 281—19.15(256E) as follows:

281—19.15(256E) Operation of existing charter schools. Charter schools established pursuant to Iowa Code chapter ~~256F~~ 256E, subchapter II, continue to operate pursuant to that ~~Iowa Code chapter~~ subchapter and are not subject to the requirements of this division or Iowa Code chapter 256E, subchapter I.

ITEM 5. Rescind the implementation sentence in **281—Chapter 19**, division I.

ITEM 6. Amend rule 281—19.16(256F) as follows:

281—19.16(~~256F~~ 256E) Definitions. The definitions in Iowa Code section ~~256F.2~~ 256E.21 apply to this division. In addition, "advisory council" means a council appointed by the school board of a charter school. With respect to a charter school, no more than one member of the council may be a member of the school board; a district's school improvement advisory committee may also serve as its advisory council. All advisory councils are subject to the provisions of Iowa Code chapters 21 and 22.

"Family unit" means a household in which resides one or more students enrolled at the existing public school that is the subject of a charter school application.

ITEM 7. Amend rule 281—19.17(256F) as follows:

281—19.17(~~256F~~ 256E) Operating requirements. Charter schools are governed by Iowa Code sections ~~256F.4(2) through (8), 256F.6, and 256F.7~~ 256E.23(2) through 256E.23(8), 256E.25, and 256E.26.

ITEM 8. Amend rule 281—19.18(256F) as follows:

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281—19.18(~~256F~~ 256E) Ongoing review by the department. The department periodically reviews each charter school to ensure continuing compliance with the charter school's contract. The department may schedule mandatory meetings with the administrators of all charter schools at the department's sole discretion. Iowa Code section ~~256F.10~~ 256E.29 governs necessary reports under this division.

ITEM 9. Amend rule 281—19.19(256F) as follows:

281—19.19(~~256F~~ 256E) Renewal of charter. The school board that established the charter school, in the absence of revoking the charter pursuant to rule 281—19.20(~~256F~~ 256E), takes affirmative action to renew a charter school contract after the initial four-year contract for a charter school and at the end of each renewal period. The school board shall hold a public hearing on the issue of renewal and submit to the department a copy of the minutes of the public hearing showing that a majority of the school board members voted in favor of renewal of the charter. Any action to renew a charter specifies the number of years, which may only be four years or less, for which the charter was renewed by the school board.

A school board will submit a new application to the department if the board modifies any of the terms of the original charter.

ITEM 10. Amend rule 281—19.20(256F) as follows:

281—19.20(~~256F~~ 256E) Revocation or nonrenewal of charter. Iowa Code sections ~~256F.8 and 256F.9~~ 256E.27 and 256E.28 govern revocation or nonrenewal of a charter under this division.

ITEM 11. Amend rule 281—19.21(256F) as follows:

281—19.21(~~256F~~ 256E) Transition—operation of existing charter schools. Charter schools established pursuant to this division and Iowa Code chapter ~~256F~~ 256E, subchapter II, prior to

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July 1, 2021, may continue to operate pursuant to those terms and are not subject to Iowa Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, or Division I of this chapter. No new charter ~~or innovation zone~~ school may be created under this division.

ITEM 12. Amend **281—Chapter 19**, implementation sentence, as follows:

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter ~~256F~~ 256E, subchapter II.

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