

CHAPTER 1070
ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

H. F. 2425

AN ACT relating to the educational requirements of schools, by requiring that high school science courses teach about energy conservation and environmental awareness and by providing for a waiver of physical education requirements for certain students and a waiver of foreign language requirements under certain conditions.

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

Section 1. Section two hundred fifty-seven point twenty-five (257.25), subsections three (3) and four (4), Code 1979, are amended to read as follows:

3. The following areas shall be taught in the grades one through six: English-language arts, including reading, handwriting, spelling, oral and written English, and literature; social studies, including geography, history of the United States and Iowa, cultures of other peoples and nations, and American citizenship, including the study of national, state and local government in the United States; mathematics; science, including environmental awareness and conservation of natural resources and ~~environmental-awareness~~; health and physical education, including the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and poisons on the human body; the characteristics of communicable diseases; traffic safety, including pedestrian and bicycle safety procedures; music; and art.

4. The following shall be taught in grades seven and eight as a minimum program: Science, including environmental awareness and conservation of natural resources and ~~environmental-awareness~~; mathematics; social studies; cultures of other peoples and nations, and American citizenship; English-language arts which shall include reading, spelling, grammar, oral and written composition, and may include other communication subjects; health and physical education, including the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and poisons on the human body, the characteristics of communicable diseases, including venereal diseases and current crucial health issues; music; and art.

Sec. 2. Section two hundred fifty-seven point twenty-five (257.25), subsection six (6), paragraphs a, f and g, Code 1979, are amended to read as follows:

a. Four units of science including physics and chemistry; the units of physics and chemistry may be taught in alternate years. The units of science shall include instruction in environmental awareness and conservation of natural resources.

f. Two units of one foreign language; the units of foreign language may be taught in alternate years, provided there is no break in the progression

of instruction from one year to the next. However, the department may waive on an annual basis the foreign language requirement upon the request of the board of directors of a school district or the authorities in charge of a nonpublic school if the board or authorities are able to prove that a certificated teacher was employed and assigned a schedule that would have allowed students to enroll in a foreign language class, the foreign language class was properly scheduled, students were aware that a foreign language class was scheduled and no students enrolled in the class.

g. All students physically able shall be required to participate in physical education activities during each semester a student is enrolled in school except as otherwise provided in this paragraph. A minimum of one-eighth unit each semester shall be required, except that any ~~pup~~ student participating in an organized and supervised high school athletic program which requires at least as much time of participation per week as one-eighth unit may be excused from the physical education course during the time of his or her participation in the athletic program. In addition, a twelfth grade student who meets the requirements of this paragraph may be excused from the physical education requirement by the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled if the parent or guardian of the student requests in writing that the student be excused from the physical education requirement. A student who wishes to be excused from the physical education requirement must be enrolled in a cooperative or work-study program or other educational program authorized by the school which requires the student to leave the school premises for specified periods of time during the school day. The student must seek to be excused from the physical education requirement in order to enroll in academic courses not otherwise available to the student. The principal of the school shall inform the superintendent of the school district or nonpublic school that the student has been excused. Physical education activities shall emphasize leisure time activities which will benefit the student outside the school environment and after graduation from high school.

Approved May 20, 1980