

CHAPTER 31
SCHOOL START DATE
S.F. 227

AN ACT relating to the school start date and to exception and penalty provisions and including effective date provisions.

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

Section 1. Section 257.17, Code 2015, is amended to read as follows:

257.17 Aid reduction for early school starts.

1. State aid payments made pursuant to section 257.16 for a fiscal year shall be reduced by one one-hundred-eightieth for each day of that fiscal year for which the school district begins school before the earliest starting school start date specified in section 279.10, subsection 1. ~~However, this~~

2. This section does not apply to a school district attendance center that has received approval from the ~~director of the~~ department of education under section 279.10, subsection 4 ~~2~~, to ~~commence~~ maintain a year around school calendar that commences classes for regularly established elementary and secondary schools in advance of the starting school start date established in section 279.10, subsection 1. The department of management shall prorate the reduction made pursuant to this section to account for an attendance center in a school district that is approved to maintain a year around school calendar under section 279.10, subsection 2.

Sec. 2. Section 279.10, subsections 1 and 2, Code 2015, are amended to read as follows:

1. The school year for each school district and accredited nonpublic school shall begin on July 1 and ~~each regularly established elementary and secondary school the school calendar shall begin no sooner than a day during the calendar week in which the first day of September falls but August 23 and no later than the first Monday in December. However, if the first day of September falls on a Sunday, school may begin on a day during the calendar week which immediately precedes the first day of September.~~ The school calendar shall include not less than one hundred eighty days, except as provided in subsection 3,¹ or one thousand eighty hours of instruction during the calendar year. The board of directors of a school district and the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school shall determine the school start date for the school calendar in accordance with this subsection and shall set the number of days or hours of required attendance for the school year as provided in section 299.1, subsection 2, but the board of directors of a school district shall hold a public hearing on any proposed school calendar prior to adopting the school calendar. If the board of directors of a district or the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school extends the school calendar because inclement weather caused the school district or accredited nonpublic school to temporarily close during the regular school calendar, the school district or accredited nonpublic school may excuse a graduating senior who has met district or school requirements for graduation from attendance during the extended school calendar. A school corporation may begin employment of personnel for in-service training and development purposes before the date to begin elementary and secondary school.

2. The board of directors of a school district and the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school may apply to the department of education for authorization to maintain a year around school calendar at an attendance center or school for students in prekindergarten through grade eight. However, a board shall hold a public hearing on any proposal relating to the authorization for a year around school calendar prior to submitting # an application under this subsection to the department of education for approval.

a. The initial application for a year around school calendar shall be submitted to the department of education not later than November 1 of the preceding school year. The department shall notify the board or the authorities of the approval or denial of an application not later than the next following January 15. The application may be approved for one or two

¹ See chapter 138, §40 herein

years at a time. A board or the authorities in charge may reapply to renew an authorization by November 1 of the year prior to expiration of the authorization.

b. An attendance center or school authorized to maintain a year around calendar must serve all students attending the school and shall not be limited based on student achievement or based on the trait or characteristic of the student as defined in section 280.28.

c. An attendance center or school authorized to maintain a year around school calendar under this subsection shall provide at least ten days of instruction or the hourly equivalent during eleven of the twelve months of the school year. The period of time between instructional days shall not exceed six weeks.

d. A year around school calendar authorized pursuant to this subsection is exempt from the school start date specified in subsection 1.

Sec. 3. Section 279.10, subsections 3 and 4, Code 2015, are amended by striking the subsections.

Sec. 4. 2015-2016 YEAR AROUND SCHOOL CALENDAR APPLICATION DEADLINE. Notwithstanding section 279.10, subsection 2, paragraph "a", for the school year beginning July 1, 2015, a school district or accredited nonpublic school may submit an application for authorization to maintain a year around school calendar in accordance with section 279.10, subsection 2, not later than thirty days following the effective date of this Act, and the department of education shall approve or deny an application submitted pursuant to this section not later than fifteen days following receipt of a timely submitted application.

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE UPON ENACTMENT. This Act, being deemed of immediate importance, takes effect upon enactment.

Approved April 10, 2015