ARC 9808C

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT[281]

Adopted and Filed

Rulemaking related to civics examination

The State Board of Education hereby amends Chapter 12, "General Accreditation Standards," and Chapter 32, "High School Equivalency Diploma," Iowa Administrative Code.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code sections 256.7 and 259A.5.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, 2025 Iowa Acts, Senate File 369.

Purpose and Summary

This rulemaking implements the civics examination as a graduation requirement beginning on July 1, 2026.

Public Comment and Changes to Rulemaking

Notice of Intended Action for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on October 1, 2025, as **ARC 9599C**. A public hearing was held on the following date(s):

- October 21, 2025

Two individuals attended the hearing as observers. No public comments were received. No changes from the Notice have been made.

Adoption of Rulemaking

This rulemaking was adopted by the State Board on November 19, 2025.

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

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

Waivers

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 281—Chapter 4.

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 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).

Effective Date

This rulemaking will become effective on January 14, 2026.

The following rulemaking action is adopted:

ITEM 1. Amend subrule 12.5(5) as follows:

12.5(5) *High school program, grades 9 through 12.* In grades 9 through 12, a unit is a course or equivalent related components or partial units taught throughout the academic year as defined in subrule 12.5(13). The following will be offered and taught as the minimum program as referenced in Iowa Code section 256.11(5). All students in schools and school districts shall satisfactorily complete requirements as referenced in Iowa Code sections 256.7(26), 256.11(5)*"b"* and *"g,"* and 256.11(6)*"c,"* and, for the school year commencing July 1, 2026, section 280.9A(1A) as enacted by 2025 Iowa Acts, Senate File 369, in order to graduate. It is locally determined how to incorporate the content specifications into relevant standards and benchmarks.

In implementing the high school program standards, the following curriculum standards apply:

a. to *l.* No change.

ITEM 2. Amend rule **281—32.1(259A)**, definition of "High school equivalency diploma," as follows:

"High school equivalency diploma" means the credential granted by the department to adults who did not graduate from high school and are unable to receive a high school diploma through traditional means but who are able to demonstrate attainment of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are equivalent to those that would be attained in a high school program of study pursuant to this chapter. Commencing July 1, 2026, an adult must pass the examination described in Iowa Code section 280.9A(1A) as enacted by 2025 Iowa Acts, Senate File 369, to receive this credential.

[Filed 11/19/25, effective 1/14/26]
[Published 12/10/25]

EDITOR'S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 12/10/25.