

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT[281]

Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: 281—Chapter 12
“General Accreditation Standards”

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 256.7 and 256.11
State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code section 256.11

Public Hearing

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

August 11, 2026
9 to 10 a.m.

Room B50
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa
Via videoconference:
meet.google.com/qjc-zbv-u-pmx
Or dial: (US) +1 410.995.8223
PIN: 697 039 136#

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written or oral comments concerning this Regulatory Analysis, which must be received by the Department of Education no later than 4:30 p.m. on the date of the public hearing. Comments should be directed to:

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

Purpose and Summary

This proposed rulemaking conforms the requirements to offer and teach fine arts at the secondary level to the enabling statutory text and modernizes language regarding reporting for students based on demographic groups.

Analysis of Impact

1. **Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:**
 - **Classes of persons that will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking:**
School districts, nonpublic schools, and the Department will bear any costs.
 - **Classes of persons that will benefit from the proposed rulemaking:**
Schools and families will benefit from the clarity this proposed rulemaking will provide.
2. **Impact of the proposed rulemaking, economic or otherwise, including the nature and amount of all the different kinds of costs that would be incurred:**

- **Quantitative description of impact:**

There is no known quantitative impact.

- **Qualitative description of impact:**

There is an unquantifiable qualitative impact associated with increased rule clarity.

3. **Costs to the State:**

- **Implementation and enforcement costs borne by the agency or any other agency:**

The Department will bear routine enforcement costs (e.g., the costs of monitoring and enforcing any school law).

- **Anticipated effect on State revenues:**

No effects were noted or anticipated.

4. **Comparison of the costs and benefits of the proposed rulemaking to the costs and benefits of inaction:**

The statute requires rules, so no comparison is necessary.

5. **Determination whether less costly methods or less intrusive methods exist for achieving the purpose of the proposed rulemaking:**

The statute requires rules, so no determination was made.

6. **Alternative methods considered by the agency:**

- **Description of any alternative methods that were seriously considered by the agency:**

The statute requires rules, so no alternatives were considered.

- **Reasons why alternative methods were rejected in favor of the proposed rulemaking:**

The statute requires rules, so no alternatives were considered.

Small Business Impact

If the rulemaking will have a substantial impact on small business, include a discussion of whether it would be feasible and practicable to do any of the following to reduce the impact of the rulemaking on small business:

- Establish less stringent compliance or reporting requirements in the rulemaking for small business.

- Establish less stringent schedules or deadlines in the rulemaking for compliance or reporting requirements for small business.

- Consolidate or simplify the rulemaking's compliance or reporting requirements for small business.

- Establish performance standards to replace design or operational standards in the rulemaking for small business.

- Exempt small business from any or all requirements of the rulemaking.

If legal and feasible, how does the rulemaking use a method discussed above to reduce the substantial impact on small business?

There is no known impact on small business.

Text of Proposed Rulemaking

ITEM 1. Rescind the definition of "Subgroups" in rule **281—12.2(256)**.

ITEM 2. Adopt the following **new** definition of "Student groups" in rule **281—12.2(256)**:

"Student groups" (formerly known as "subgroups") means a subset of the student population that has a common characteristic. Student groups include but are not limited to gender, race, students with disabilities, and socioeconomic status.

ITEM 3. Amend paragraph **12.5(5)“g”**, introductory paragraph, as follows:

g. *Fine arts (two units)*. Fine arts instruction ~~will~~ may include ~~at least two~~ any of the following:

ITEM 4. Amend subparagraph **12.8(1)“b”(5)** as follows:

(5) Annual improvement goals. The board, with input from its school improvement advisory committee, will adopt annual improvement goals based on data from at least one districtwide assessment. The goals will describe desired annual increase in the curriculum areas of, but not limited to, mathematics, reading, and science achievement for all students, for particular ~~subgroups~~ student groups of students, or both. Annual improvement goals may be set for the early intervention program as described in subrule 12.5(18), other state indicators, locally determined indicators, locally established student learning goals, other curriculum areas, future student employability, or factors influencing student achievement.

ITEM 5. Amend paragraph **12.8(2)“a”** as follows:

a. State indicators. A school or school district will collect data on the following indicators for reporting purposes:

(1) The percentage of all ~~fourth~~ fourth-, ~~eighth~~ eighth-, and ~~eleventh-grade~~ eleventh-grade students achieving proficient or higher reading status using at least three achievement levels and by gender, race, socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, and other ~~subgroups~~ student groups as required by state or federal law.

(2) The percentage of all ~~fourth~~ fourth-, ~~eighth~~ eighth-, and ~~eleventh-grade~~ eleventh-grade students achieving proficient or higher mathematics status using at least three achievement levels and for gender, race, socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, and other ~~subgroups~~ student groups as required by state or federal law.

(3) The percentage of all ~~eighth~~ eighth- and ~~tenth-grade~~ tenth-grade students achieving proficient or higher science status using at least three achievement levels.

(4) The percentage of students considered as dropouts for grades 7 to 12 by gender, race, students with disabilities, and other ~~subgroups~~ student groups as required by state or federal law.

(5) to (7) No change.

ITEM 6. Amend subparagraph **12.8(2)“b”(1)** as follows:

(1) Baseline data on at least one districtwide assessment for the state indicators described in subrule 12.8(3). Every year thereafter the school or school district will compare the annual data collected with the baseline data. A school or school district is not to report to the community about ~~subgroup~~ student group assessment results when a ~~subgroup~~ student group contains fewer than ten students at a grade level. A school or school district will report districtwide assessment results for all enrolled and tuitioned-in students.