Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: 281—Chapter 37
"Extracurricular Athletic Activity Conference for Member Schools"

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 280.13D as enacted by 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 783

State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code section 280.13D as enacted by 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 783

Public Hearing

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

September 9, 2025 1 to 2 p.m.	Room B-50 Grimes State Office Building Des Moines, Iowa

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, General Counsel
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 implements the requirements of 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 783 (House File 783), establishing a committee for alignment and membership of extracurricular activities conferences. The proposed rules add additional operational detail to House File 783.

Analysis of Impact

1. **Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:**

- **Classes of persons that will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking:**

It is assumed that the members of the committee established by Iowa Code section 280.13D as enacted by House File 783 will bear their own expenses or will be reimbursed by their employers.

- **Classes of persons that will benefit from the proposed rulemaking:**

Schools and athletes will benefit from the clarity of this proposed rulemaking.

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 quantitative impact noted.

- **Qualitative description of impact:**

Those governed by this proposed rulemaking will be qualitatively benefited by increased clarity.

3. **Costs to the State:**

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

It is assumed that the members of the committee established by Iowa Code section 280.13D as enacted by House File 783 will bear their own expenses or will be reimbursed by their employers.

- **Anticipated effect on State revenues:**

There is no effect noted or anticipated.

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

Rulemaking is required to implement this legislation.

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

The circumstances require rulemaking.

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

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

Not applicable.

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

The circumstances require rulemaking.

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 anticipated impact on small business.

Text of Proposed Rulemaking

ITEM 1. Rescind 281—Chapter 37 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 37
EXTRACURRICULAR ATHLETIC ACTIVITY
CONFERENCE FOR MEMBER SCHOOLS

281—37.1(280) General. It is the policy of the state of Iowa that each school desiring to be a member of a conference providing extracurricular athletic contests and competitions for students is granted this opportunity. For purposes of this chapter, "member school" means a nonpublic school or school district granted such status by any corporation, association, or organization registered with the state department of education pursuant to Iowa Code section 280.13 and includes associate members. For purposes of this chapter, "school district" includes a public charter high school.

37.1(1) *Initial responsibility.* The initial authority and responsibility for conference development, membership, and alignment rests with the board of directors of each public school district and the authorities in charge of each nonpublic school.

37.1(2) *Definitions.* For purposes of this chapter, the definitions in Iowa Code section 280.13D(1) as enacted by 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 783 (House File 783), apply.

37.1(3) *Policies.* Each organization subject to this chapter will establish policies to implement Iowa Code section 280.13D as enacted by House File 783.

281—37.2(280) Conference realignment committee.

37.2(1) *General.* A conference realignment committee (committee) is established pursuant to Iowa Code section 280.13D as enacted by House File 783.

37.2(2) *Duties and powers.* The committee has the duties and powers specified in Iowa Code section 280.13D as enacted by House File 783.

37.2(3) *Membership.* The committee will have the membership described in Iowa Code section 280.13D(2)*"a"*(2) as enacted by House File 783. Each area education agency, according to boundaries existing on July 1, 2025, will be represented by one superintendent of a school district or equivalent leader of a nonpublic school and one activities director. Members serve four-year terms and are eligible for reappointment once.

37.2(4) *Appointment of members.* The executive directors of the two organizations make appointments to the committee, including filling vacancies. The executive directors of the two organizations will initially divide committee memberships into two cohorts and alternate making appointments to each cohort every four-year cycle. Each cohort will contain at least one representative of a nonpublic school.

37.2(5) *Committee operations.*

a. The executive directors of the two organizations will provide staffing support to the committee, including recommendations on committee agenda items.

b. The committee is subject to Iowa Code chapters 21 and 22.

c. A quorum for the committee is ten members.

d. The committee may adopt bylaws consistent with this chapter.

281—37.3(280) Appeal to the director of the Iowa department of education. A member school may appeal a committee's decision to the director of the Iowa department of education within 60 days of the date of the decision. The director will receive the records of the committee, and no new evidence will be permitted, except for good cause shown. The committee's decision is presumed correct, and the appellant has the burden of demonstrating the committee's decision is based on a failure to follow the processes and standards set out in Iowa Code section 280.13D as enacted by House File 783, on factual findings that have no evidentiary basis, or on legal conclusions that are manifestly erroneous. The director may refer the matter to an administrative law judge for a proposed decision. The director's decision is due within 60 days of the date of the appeal.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 280.13D as enacted by House File 783.