CHAPTER 63

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION — RECOGNITION OF CREDENTIALS AND CERTIFICATIONS

H.F. 316

AN ACT relating to career education, including middle school career exploration and industry-recognized credential seals and certificates for high school students.

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

Section 1. Section 256.9, Code 2025, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

NEW SUBSECTION. 69. *a.* Develop and make available on the department's internet site a list of industry-recognized credentials or certifications that are attainable by students enrolled in grades nine through twelve and that are aligned with career and technical education service areas.

b. Develop and distribute to school districts a seal aligned to the list of industry-recognized credentials or certifications described in paragraph *"a"* to be affixed to high school transcripts or certificates pursuant to section 279.87.

Sec. 2. Section 256.11, subsections 3 and 4, Code 2025, are amended to read as follows:

3. *a.* ~~The~~ All of the following areas shall be taught in grades one through six:

(1) English-language arts~~, social~~.

(2) Social studies~~, mathematics, science, health, physical~~.

(3) Mathematics.

(4) Science.

(5) Health. The health curriculum shall include the characteristics of communicable diseases.

(6) Physical education~~, traffic~~.

(7) Traffic safety~~, music, visual~~.

(8) Music.

(9) Visual art~~, and, subject~~.

(10) Subject to section 279.80, age-appropriate and research-based human growth and development.

(11) In grades five and six, career planning and pathways. The career planning and pathways curriculum shall include career investigation, career connections, and career intentions to help such students understand career opportunities in order to fully utilize the individualized career and academic plan developed pursuant to section 279.61.

b. Computer science instruction incorporating the standards established under section 256.7, subsection 26, paragraph *"a"*, subparagraph (4), shall be offered in at least one grade level commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2023. ~~The health curriculum shall include the characteristics of communicable diseases.~~

c. The state board as part of accreditation standards shall adopt curriculum definitions for implementing the elementary program.

4. *a.* ~~The~~ All of the following shall be taught in grades seven and eight:

(1) English-language arts~~; social~~.

(2) Social studies, including instruction related to civics~~; mathematics; science; health;~~.

(3) Mathematics.

(4) Science.

(5) Health. The health curriculum shall include age-appropriate and research-based information regarding the characteristics of sexually transmitted diseases.

(6) Age-appropriate and research-based human growth and development~~; career~~.

(7) Career instruction, exploration, and development~~; physical~~, which shall include career investigation, career connections, and career intentions.

(8) Physical education~~; music; and visual~~.

(9) Music.

(10) Visual art.

b. Computer science instruction incorporating the standards established under section 256.7, subsection 26, paragraph *"a"*, subparagraph (4), shall be offered in at least one grade level commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2023. Career exploration and development shall be designed so that students are appropriately prepared to create an individual career and academic plan pursuant to section 279.61, incorporate foundational career and technical education concepts aligned with the six career and technical education service areas as defined in subsection 5, paragraph *"h"*, incorporate relevant twenty-first century skills to facilitate career readiness, and introduce students to career opportunities within the local community and across this state. ~~The health curriculum shall include age-appropriate and research-based information regarding the characteristics of sexually transmitted diseases.~~

c. The state board as part of accreditation standards shall adopt curriculum definitions for implementing the program in grades seven and eight. ~~However, this~~

d. This subsection shall not apply to the teaching of career instruction, exploration, and development in nonpublic schools.

Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. **279.87 Industry-recognized credentials or certifications — recognition.**

1. A school district shall report to the department of education the identity of a student enrolled in the school district who attains an industry-recognized credential or certification that is aligned to the student's career and technical education program of study and that is on the list described in section 256.9, subsection 69, paragraph *"a"*, and the specific credential or certification the student attained. The report shall be confidential and shall not be a public record subject to disclosure under chapter 22.

2. A school district shall recognize high school graduates who, prior to graduation, have attained an industry-recognized credential or certification that is aligned to the student's career and technical education program of study and that is on the list described in section 256.9, subsection 69, paragraph *"a"*, by doing one of the following:

a. Affixing the seal described in section 256.9, subsection 69, paragraph *"b"*, to the student's high school transcript.

b. Providing the student with a certificate to which the seal described in section 256.9, subsection 69, paragraph *"b"*, is affixed.

Sec. 4. STATE MANDATE FUNDING SPECIFIED. In accordance with section 25B.2, subsection 3, the state cost of requiring compliance with any state mandate included in this Act shall be paid by a school district from state school foundation aid received by the school district under section 257.16. This specification of the payment of the state cost shall be deemed to meet all of the state funding-related requirements of section 25B.2, subsection 3, and no additional state funding shall be necessary for the full implementation of this Act by and enforcement of this Act against all affected school districts.

Approved May 6, 2025