CHAPTER 279

DIRECTORS — POWERS AND DUTIES

Referred to in §55.1, 256.103, 256.157, 256.161, 256F.4, 260C.14, 260C.39, 261E.9, 274.3, 284.3

For student search restrictions, see chapter 808A

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279.1 Organization — student improvement oversight.

1. The board of directors of each school corporation shall meet and organize at the first regular meeting or at a special meeting called by the secretary of the board to organize the board in advance of the first regular meeting after the canvass for the regular school election at some suitable place to be designated by the secretary. Notice of the place and hour of the meeting shall be given by the secretary to each member and member-elect of the board.

2. Organization of the board shall be effected by the election of a president from the members of the board. The president shall serve for one year and shall be entitled to vote as a member. During nonelection years, the president shall be elected to serve for one year at a regular meeting held not less than one year, nor more than thirteen months, after the prior organizational meeting.

3. A school corporation is entrusted with public funds for the purpose of improving student outcomes, including but not limited to student academic achievement and skill proficiency, and the board of directors of the school corporation is responsible for overseeing such improvement.

[C51, §1119; R60, §2036; C73, §1721, 1722; C97, §2757; SS15, §2757; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4220;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.1]

87 Acts, ch 224, §47; 90 Acts, ch 1238, §37; 2010 Acts, ch 1033, §39; 2019 Acts, ch 148, §56; 2021 Acts, ch 25, §3; 2021 Acts, ch 139, §23; 2022 Acts, ch 1021, §54

Referred to in §275.37

279.2 Special meetings.

Such special meetings may be held as may be determined by the board, or called by the president, or by the secretary upon the written request of a majority of the members of the

board, upon notice specifying the time and place, delivered to each member in person, or by registered letter, but attendance shall be a waiver of notice.

[C51, §1121; R60, §2036; C73, §1722; C97, §2757; SS15, §2757; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4221;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.2]

279.3 Appointment of secretary and treasurer.

1. The board shall appoint a secretary who shall not be a teacher employed by the board but may be another employee of the board. The board shall also appoint a treasurer who may be another employee of the board. However, the board may appoint one person to serve as the secretary and the treasurer.

2. These officers shall be appointed from outside the membership of the board and the appointment and qualification shall be entered of record in the minutes of the secretary. They shall qualify within ten days following appointment by taking the oath of office in the manner required by section 277.28 and filing a bond or obtaining an insurance policy as required by section 291.2 and shall hold office until their successors are appointed and qualified.

[C51, §1119; R60, §2035; C73, §1721; C97, §2757; SS15, §2757; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4222;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.3; 82 Acts, ch 1012, §1]

85 Acts, ch 28, §1; 2001 Acts, ch 47, §1; 2003 Acts, ch 180, §30; 2024 Acts, ch 1074, §5

Referred to in §291.2

279.4 Quorum.

A majority of the board of directors of any school corporation shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a less number may adjourn from time to time.

[C51, §1120; R60, §2037, 2038, 2079; C73, §1730, 1738; C97, §2758, 2771, 2772; S13, §2758, 2771, 2772; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4223;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.4]

279.5 Temporary officers.

The board shall appoint a temporary president or secretary, in the absence of the regular officers.

[C51, §1120; R60, §2037, 2038, 2079; C73, §1730, 1738; C97, §2758, 2771, 2772; S13, §2758, 2771, 2772; C24, §4223; C27, 31, 35, §4223-a1; C39, §**4223.1;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.5]

279.6 Vacancies — qualification — tenure.

1. *a.* Except as provided in paragraph *"b"* and subsection 2, vacancies occurring among the officers or members of a school board shall be filled by the board by appointment. A person so appointed to fill a vacancy in an elective office shall hold office until a successor is elected and qualified at the next regular school election, unless there is an intervening special election for the school district, in which event a successor shall be elected at the intervening special election, in accordance with section 69.12. To fill a vacancy occurring among the members of a school board, the board shall publish notice in the manner prescribed by section 279.36, stating that the board intends to fill the vacancy by appointment but that the electors of the school district have the right to file a petition requiring that the vacancy be filled by a special election conducted pursuant to section 279.7. The board may publish notice in advance if a member of the board submits a resignation to take effect at a future date. The board may make an appointment to fill the vacancy after the notice is published or after the vacancy occurs, whichever is later.

b. (1) If within fourteen days after publication of a notice required pursuant to paragraph *"a"* for a vacancy that occurs more than one hundred eighty days before the next regular school election, or after the filing period closes pursuant to section 277.4, subsection 1, for the next regular school election, there is filed with the secretary of the school board a petition requesting a special election to fill the vacancy, an appointment to fill the vacancy is temporary until a successor is elected and qualified, and the board shall call a special election pursuant to section 279.7, to fill the vacancy for the remaining balance of the unexpired term.

(2) If within fourteen days after publication of a notice required pursuant to paragraph *"a"* for a vacancy that occurs one hundred eighty days or less but more than forty days before

the next regular school election there is filed with the secretary of the school board a petition requesting to fill the vacancy by election, an appointment to fill the vacancy is temporary until a successor is elected and qualified, and the school board shall require that the remaining balance of the unexpired term be filled at the next regular school election.

(3) For a petition to be valid under this paragraph *"b"*, the petition must be signed by eligible electors equal in number to not less than one hundred or thirty percent of the number of voters at the last preceding regular school election, whichever is greater.

(4) Notwithstanding any requirement of this paragraph to the contrary, when the board is reduced below a quorum, the secretary of the board, or if there is no secretary, the area education agency administrator, shall call a special election in the district, subdistrict, or subdistricts, as the case may be, to fill the vacancies.

c. A person appointed to fill a vacancy in an appointive office shall hold such office for the residue of the unexpired term and until a successor is appointed and qualified. Any person so appointed shall qualify within ten days thereafter in the manner required by section 277.28.

2. A vacancy shall be filled at the next regular school election if a member of a school board resigns from the board not later than forty-five days before the election and the notice of resignation specifies an effective date at the beginning of the next term of office for elective school officials. The president of the board shall declare the office vacant as of the date of the next organizational meeting. Nomination papers shall be received for the unexpired term of the resigning member. The person elected at the next regular school election to fill the vacancy shall take office at the same time and place as the other elected school board members.

[C51, §1120; R60, §2037, 2038, 2079; C73, §1730, 1738; C97, §2758, 2771, 2772; S13, §2758, 2771, 2772; C24, §4223; C27, 31, 35, §4223-a2; C39, §**4223.2;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.6]

2002 Acts, ch 1134, §91, 115; 2015 Acts, ch 140, §56, 58, 59; 2016 Acts, ch 1121, §9; 2017 Acts, ch 120, §10

Referred to in §275.25, 275.41, 277.30, 279.7

279.7 Vacancies filled by special election — qualification — tenure.

1. If a vacancy or vacancies occur among the elective officers or members of a school board and the remaining members of the board have not filled the vacancy within thirty days after the vacancy occurs or if a valid petition is submitted to the secretary of the board pursuant to section 279.6, subsection 1, or when the board is reduced below a quorum, the secretary of the board, or if there is no secretary, the area education agency administrator, shall call a special election in the district, subdistrict, or subdistricts, as the case may be, to fill the vacancy or vacancies. The county commissioner of elections shall publish the notices required by law for special elections, and the election shall be held not sooner than thirty days nor later than forty days after the thirtieth day following the day the vacancy occurs. If the secretary fails for more than three days to call an election, the administrator shall call it.

2. An appointment by the board to fill any vacancy in an elective office on or after the day notice has been given for a special election to fill such vacancy as provided in this section shall be null and void.

3. In the case of a special election as provided in this section to fill a vacancy occurring among the elective officers or members of a school board before the expiration of a full term, the person so elected shall qualify within ten days from the final canvass of the election by the county board in the manner required by section 277.28 and shall hold office for the residue of the unexpired term and until a successor is elected, or appointed, and qualified.

4. Nomination petitions shall be filed in the manner provided in section 277.4, except that the petitions shall be filed not less than twenty-five days before the date set for the election.

[C51, §1120; R60, §2037, 2038, 2079; C73, §1730, 1738; C97, §2758, 2771, 2772; S13, §2758, 2771, 2772; C24, §4223; C27, 31, 35, §4223-b1; C39, §**4223.3;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.7]

87 Acts, ch 48, §1; 89 Acts, ch 136, §65; 93 Acts, ch 67, §1; 2010 Acts, ch 1033, §40; 2015 Acts, ch 140, §57 – 59; 2016 Acts, ch 1121, §10; 2019 Acts, ch 148, §57

Referred to in §275.25, 275.41, 277.30, 279.6

279.7A Interest in public contracts prohibited — exceptions.

1. A member of the board of directors of a school corporation shall not have an interest, direct or indirect, in a contract for the purchase of goods, including materials and profits, and the performance of services for the director's school corporation. A contract entered into in violation of this section is void.

2. This section does not apply to contracts for the purchase of goods or services which benefit a director, or to compensation for part-time or temporary employment which benefits a director, if the benefit to the director does not exceed twenty thousand dollars in a fiscal year, and contracts made by a school board, upon competitive bid in writing, publicly invited and opened.

3. This section does not apply to a contract that is a bond, note, or other obligation of a school corporation if the contract is not acquired directly from the school corporation, but is acquired in a transaction with a third party, who may or may not be the original underwriter, purchaser, or obligee of the contract, or to a contract in which a director has an interest solely by reason of employment if the contract is made by competitive bid in writing, publicly invited and opened, or if the remuneration of employment will not be directly affected as a result of the contract and the duties of employment do not directly involve the procurement or preparation of any part of the contract.

4. The competitive bid qualification of this section does not apply to a contract for professional services not customarily awarded by competitive bid.

90 Acts, ch 1209, §2; 91 Acts, ch 258, §40; 2000 Acts, ch 1187, §1; 2001 Acts, ch 53, §2; 2003 Acts, ch 36, §1; 2019 Acts, ch 74, §1; 2022 Acts, ch 1006, §2, 3

Referred to in §277.27, 298A.15

Sale of textbooks and supplies prohibited, see §301.28

279.8 General rules — bonds of employees.

1. The board shall make rules for its own government and that of the directors, officers, employees, teachers and pupils, and for the care of the schoolhouse, grounds, and property of the school corporation, and shall aid in the enforcement of the rules, and require the performance of duties imposed by law and the rules. The board shall include in its rules provisions regulating the loading and unloading of pupils from a school bus stopped on the highway during a period of reduced highway visibility caused by fog, snow or other weather conditions. The board shall have the authority to include in its rules provisions allowing school corporation employees to use school credit cards to pay for the actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of work-related duties.

2. Employees of a school corporation maintaining a high school who have the custody of funds belonging to the corporation or funds derived from extracurricular activities and other sources in the conduct of their duties, shall be required to furnish suitable bond indemnifying the corporation or any activity group connected with the school against loss, and employees who have the custody of property belonging to the corporation or any activity group connected with the school may be required to furnish such bond. Said bond or bonds may be in such form and penalty as the board may approve and the premiums on same shall be paid from the general fund of the corporation.

[R60, §2037; C97, §2772; S13, §2772; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4224;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.8]

84 Acts, ch 1315, §35

Referred to in §279.9, 279.9B, 279.22, 808A.1

279.8A Traffic and parking.

1. The board may make necessary rules to provide for the policing, control, and regulation of traffic and parking of vehicles and bicycles on school grounds. The rules may provide for the use of institutional roads, driveways, and grounds; registration of vehicles and bicycles; the designation of parking areas; the erection and maintenance of signs designating prohibitions or restrictions; the installation and maintenance of parking control devices; and assessment, enforcement, and collection of reasonable penalties for the violation of the rules.

2. Rules made under this section may be enforced under procedures adopted by the board. Penalties may be imposed for violation of the rules, including but not limited to a

reasonable monetary penalty. The rules made under this section may also be enforced by the impoundment of vehicles and bicycles for violation of the rules. The board shall establish procedures for the determination of controversies in connection with the imposition of penalties. The procedures must require giving notice of the violation and the penalty prescribed and providing the opportunity for an administrative hearing.

3. The board may contract with a city or county to enforce rules made under this section by ordinance of the city or county, and shall consult with local government transportation officials to ensure that rules made pursuant to this section are not in conflict with city or county parking and traffic ordinances.

96 Acts, ch 1219, §70; 2017 Acts, ch 54, §76

279.8B Petition — school board meeting agenda — public comment.

1. Upon petition signed by eligible electors of a school district equal in number to at least ten percent of the persons who voted in the last preceding election of school officials under section 277.1, or five hundred eligible electors, whichever is less, the board of directors of the school district shall place the proposal specified in the petition on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the school board or on the agenda of a school board meeting held within thirty days of receipt of the petition filed in accordance with this subsection. If the proposal relates to curriculum, the school district may halt use of the subject instructional materials until the school board holds the board meeting at which the proposal is presented and discussed. The meeting notice shall include a brief description of the proposal.

2. The board of directors of the school district shall provide sufficient time to receive public comment on the proposal. The board shall allow each interested member of the public to speak at the meeting regarding the proposal, but may impose a time limit on the amount of time a member of the public is allowed to speak if the time limit is the same for each speaker and necessary due to the amount of people wishing to speak.

2021 Acts, ch 170, §31
Referred to in §279.77

279.9 Use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or controlled substances.

The rules adopted under section 279.8 shall include rules prohibiting the use of tobacco and the use or possession of alcoholic liquor, wine, or beer or any controlled substance as defined in section 124.101, subsection 5, by any student of the schools. The board may suspend or expel a student for a violation of a rule described under this section.

[S13, §2772; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4225;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.9]

94 Acts, ch 1131, §2; 2021 Acts, ch 80, §150
Referred to in §260C.14, 279.9A, 808A.1

279.9A Student transfers — information sharing.

The rules referred to in section 279.9 shall provide that upon the request of school officials of a school to which the student seeks to transfer or has transferred, school officials of the sending school shall provide an accurate record of any suspension or expulsion actions taken, and the basis for those actions taken, against the student under sections 279.9, 280.19A, 280.21B, 282.3, 282.4, and 282.5. The designated representative shall disclose this information only to those school employees whose duties require them to be involved with the student. For purposes of this section, *"school employees"* means persons employed by a nonpublic school or school district, or any area education agency staff member who provides services to a school or school district.

94 Acts, ch 1131, §3; 2013 Acts, ch 90, §68

279.9B Reports to juvenile authorities.

The rules adopted under section 279.8 shall require, once school officials have been notified by a juvenile court officer that a student attending the school is under supervision or has been placed on probation, that school officials shall notify the juvenile court of each unexcused absence or suspension or expulsion of the student.

97 Acts, ch 126, §37

279.10 School year — beginning date — exemption.

1. The school year for each school district and accredited nonpublic school shall begin on July 1 and the school calendar shall begin no sooner than August 23 and no later than the first Monday in December. The school calendar shall include not less than one hundred eighty days or one thousand eighty hours of instruction during the calendar year, of which not more than five days or thirty hours of instruction may be delivered primarily over the internet except as otherwise provided in section 256.43 or in rules adopted by the state board of education pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 32. 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-round school calendar at an attendance center or school for students in prekindergarten through grade twelve. However, a board shall hold a public hearing on any proposal relating to authorization for a year-round school calendar prior to submitting an application under this subsection to the department of education for approval.

a. The initial application for a year-round 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 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-round 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, Code 2024.

c. An attendance center or school authorized to maintain a year-round 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-round school calendar authorized pursuant to this subsection is exempt from the school start date specified in subsection 1.

[R60, §2023, 2037; C73, §1724, 1727; C97, §2773; S13, §2773; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4226;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.10]

83 Acts, ch 17, §1, 3, 4; 85 Acts, ch 6, §1, 2; 86 Acts, ch 1245, §1467; 88 Acts, ch 1087, §1; 88 Acts, ch 1259, §1; 90 Acts, ch 1272, §68; 94 Acts, ch 1020, §1; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §180; 2013 Acts, ch 121, §81, 82, 85; 2014 Acts, ch 1003, §2; 2015 Acts, ch 31, §2, 3, 5; 2015 Acts, ch 138, §40, 52, 161; 2016 Acts, ch 1011, §44; 2020 Acts, ch 1107, §9; 2023 Acts, ch 90, §12; 2025 Acts, ch 64, §1; 2025 Acts, ch 114, §1

Referred to in §256.7, 256.11, 256E.7, 256F.4, 257.17, 299.1
Subsection 2, unnumbered paragraph 1 amended
Subsection 2, paragraph b amended

279.11 Number of schools — attendance — terms — classroom assignment.

1. The board of directors shall determine the number of schools to be taught, divide the corporation into such wards or other divisions for school purposes as may be proper, determine the particular school which each child shall attend, and designate the period each school shall be held beyond the time required by law.

2. *a.* A parent or guardian of siblings may request of a school principal that the siblings be placed in the same classroom or in separate classrooms if the siblings are in the same grade level academically for kindergarten through grade five. The school principal in consultation with the siblings' classroom teachers for the prior school year, may recommend classroom placement to the parent or guardian. The school principal shall provide the placement requested by the parent or guardian, unless the school principal makes a classroom placement determination as provided under paragraph *"b"* or if the placement would require the school district to add an additional class at the siblings' grade level. A request made by a parent or guardian under this paragraph must be submitted to the school principal at the time of registration for classes or, if the siblings are enrolled in the school district after the school year commences, within fourteen days after the siblings' first day of attendance during the school year.

b. At the end of the initial grading period following the siblings' placement in the same classroom in accordance with paragraph *"a"*, if the school principal, in consultation with the siblings' classroom teacher and parent or guardian, determines that placement in the same classroom is disruptive to the class, the school principal may assign one or more of the siblings to a different classroom.

c. For purposes of this subsection, *"disruptive to the class"* includes classroom placement of the siblings where it is determined that a sibling's behavior or actions are detrimental to other students' academic achievement or substantially interferes with other students' abilities to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

d. A parent or guardian may appeal the assignment of siblings made by a school principal under this subsection to the board of directors of the school district.

[R60, §2023, 2037; C73, §1724, 1727; C97, §2773; S13, §2773; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4227;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.11]

2019 Acts, ch 72, §1; 2020 Acts, ch 1062, §41

279.12 Contracts — teachers — insurance — educational leave.

1. The board shall carry into effect any instruction from the regular election upon matters within the control of the voters, and shall elect all teachers and make all contracts necessary or proper for exercising the powers granted and performing the duties required by law, and may establish and pay all or any part thereof from school district funds the cost of group health insurance plans, nonprofit group hospital service plans, nonprofit group medical service plans, and group life insurance plans adopted by the board for the benefit of employees of the school district, but the board may authorize any subdirector to employ teachers for the school in the subdirector's subdistrict; but no such employment by a subdirector shall authorize a contract, the entire period of which is wholly beyond the subdirector's term of office.

2. The board may enter into an agreement pursuant to chapter 28E with another school district or an area education agency for the purpose of jointly procuring a group health insurance plan, nonprofit group hospital service plan, nonprofit group medical service plan, or group life insurance plan for the benefit of the districts or agencies which are parties to the agreement. Such plan may include a cafeteria plan as defined in 26 C.F.R. §1.125-2T. An agreement entered into pursuant to this subsection shall not be construed to establish a multiple employer welfare arrangement as defined in section 3 of the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, 29 U.S.C. §1002, paragraph 40.

3. The board may approve a policy for educational leave for licensed school employees and for reimbursement for tuition paid by licensed school employees for courses approved by the board. The board of directors of a community college may approve a policy for educational leave for its instructors and for reimbursement for tuition paid by its instructors for courses approved by the board. For the purpose of this section, *"educational leave"* means a leave granted to an employee for the purpose of study including study in areas

outside of a teacher's area of specialization, travel, or other reasons deemed by the board to be of value to the school system.

[C73, §1723, 1757; C97, §2778; SS15, §2778; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4228;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.12]

89 Acts, ch 265, §40; 95 Acts, ch 22, §1; 2002 Acts, ch 1047, §13, 20; 2017 Acts, ch 54, §76
Referred to in §256.103, 256.160, 273.22, 275.33

279.13 Contracts with teachers — automatic continuation — initial background investigations.

1. *a.* Contracts with teachers, which for the purpose of this section means all licensed employees of a school district and nurses employed by the board, excluding superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, and assistant principals, shall be in writing and shall state the number of contract days, the annual compensation to be paid, and any other matters as may be mutually agreed upon. The contract may include employment for a term not exceeding the ensuing school year, except as otherwise authorized.

b. (1) Prior to entering into an initial contract with a teacher who holds a license other than an initial license issued by the board of educational examiners under chapter 256, subchapter VII, part 3, the school district or accredited nonpublic school shall initiate a state criminal history record check of the applicant through the division of criminal investigation of the department of public safety, submit the applicant's fingerprints to the division for submission to the federal bureau of investigation for a national criminal history record check, and review the sex offender registry information under section 692A.121 available to the general public, the central registry for child abuse information established under section 235A.14, and the central registry for dependent adult abuse information established under section 235B.5 for information regarding the applicant for employment as a teacher.

(2) The school district or accredited nonpublic school may charge the applicant a fee not to exceed the actual cost charged the school district or accredited nonpublic school for the state and national criminal history checks and registry checks conducted pursuant to subparagraph (1).

c. The contract is invalid if the teacher is under contract with another board of directors to teach during the same time period until a release from the other contract is achieved. The contract shall be signed by the president of the board, or by the superintendent if the board has adopted a policy authorizing the superintendent to sign teaching contracts, when tendered, and after it is signed by the teacher, the contract shall be filed with the secretary of the board before the teacher enters into performance under the contract.

2. The contract shall remain in force and effect for the period stated in the contract and shall be automatically continued for equivalent periods except as modified or terminated by mutual agreement of the board of directors and the teacher or as modified or terminated in accordance with the provisions specified in this chapter. A contract shall not be offered by the employing board to a teacher under its jurisdiction prior to March 15 of any year. A teacher who has not accepted a contract for the ensuing school year tendered by the employing board may resign effective at the end of the current school year by filing a written resignation with the secretary of the board. The resignation must be filed not later than the last day of the current school year or the date specified by the employing board for return of the contract, whichever date occurs first. However, a teacher shall not be required to return a contract to the board or to resign less than twenty-one days after the contract has been offered.

3. If the provisions of a contract executed or automatically renewed under this section conflict with a collective bargaining agreement negotiated under chapter 20 and effective when the contract is executed or renewed, the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement shall prevail.

4. For purposes of this section, sections 279.14, 279.15, 279.16, 279.19, and 279.27, unless the context otherwise requires, the following individuals employed by a community college are "*teachers*":

a. (1) An instructor or faculty member who provides instruction to students enrolled in the community college that results in community college credit hours for the students and such instruction constitutes more than one-half of the instructor's or faculty member's

workload, but does not include an adjunct instructor, a continuing education instructor, or a noncredit instructor.

(2) For purposes of this paragraph:

(a) *"Continuing education instructor"* means an individual employed by the community college who provides instruction that is primarily targeted toward adult learners or learners who are pursuing a community college education for a career or trade, including workforce development, job skills, personal enrichment, high school equivalency programs, and professional certification.

(b) *"Noncredit instructor"* means an individual employed by the community college who provides instruction in courses or programs that do not result in community college credit hours for students, including courses or programs related to workforce training, personal development, tutoring, or continuing education.

b. A librarian, including those denoted as being a learning resource specialist or a media specialist.

c. A counselor.

5. Notwithstanding the other provisions of this section, a temporary contract may be issued to a teacher for a period of up to six months. Notwithstanding the other provisions of this section, a temporary contract may also be issued to a teacher to fill a vacancy created by a leave of absence in accordance with the provisions of section 29A.28, which contract shall automatically terminate upon return from military leave of the former incumbent of the teaching position. Temporary contracts shall not be subject to the provisions of sections 279.15 through 279.19, or section 279.27. A separate extracurricular contract issued pursuant to section 279.19A to a person issued a temporary contract under this section shall automatically terminate with the termination of the temporary contract as required under section 279.19A, subsection 8.

[R60, §2055; C73, §1757; C97, §2778; SS15, §2778; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4229;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.13]

89 Acts, ch 265, §40; 2001 Acts, ch 159, §10; 2003 Acts, ch 19, §1; 2003 Acts, ch 180, §31; 2007 Acts, ch 108, §11; 2007 Acts, ch 215, §102; 2008 Acts, ch 1181, §35, 36; 2009 Acts, ch 119, §40; 2009 Acts, ch 133, §103; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §28, 29, 48, 49; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §2582; 2023 Acts, ch 100, §5; 2025 Acts, ch 145, §8, 9

Referred to in §256.103, 256.146, 256.160, 256.220, 256E.7, 273.3, 273.22, 275.33, 279.16, 279.19A, 279.19B, 279.23, 279.43, 279.69, 280.22, 284.2, 284.3A, 284.15, 284.16

Subsection 4, unnumbered paragraph 1 amended

Subsection 4, paragraph a amended

279.14 Evaluation criteria and procedures.

1. The board shall establish evaluation criteria and evaluation procedures.

2. The determination of standards of performance expected of school district personnel shall be reserved as an exclusive management right of the school board and shall not be subject to mandatory negotiations under chapter 20. Objections to the procedures, use, or content of an evaluation in a teacher termination proceeding brought before the school board in a hearing held in accordance with section 279.16 or 279.27 shall not be subject to any grievance procedures negotiated in accordance with chapter 20.

[C77, 79, 81, §279.14]

98 Acts, ch 1215, §41; 98 Acts, ch 1216, §24; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §47; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §30, 48, 49

Referred to in §256.103, 279.13, 279.16, 279.19B, 284.3

279.14A Professional development — notification.

If a school district requires an employee to participate in a particular professional development program, including a program that is included on the list developed by the department of education pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 67, the school district shall provide notice to the employee indicating the section of the Code, or rules adopted by the state board of education or the board of educational examiners, the school district determines requires the employee to participate in the professional development program.

2023 Acts, ch 96, §5

Referred to in §256.103, 279.16, 279.19B

279.14B Retaliation prohibition.

The board of directors of a school district shall not take any disciplinary action against an employee or contractor of the school district for disclosing information to any public official or law enforcement agency, including a disclosure to the ombudsman pursuant to section 2C.9, subsection 3, if the employee or contractor reasonably believes the information evidences a violation of law or rule, mismanagement, a gross abuse of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. For purposes of this section, "*disciplinary action*" includes termination of employment or the contractual relationship, suspension from employment, demotion, financial penalties, failing to take action regarding an employee's or contractor's promotion or proposed promotion, failing to provide an advantage in employment or the contractual relationship, and written or verbal reprimands.

2023 Acts, ch 96, §6

Referred to in §2C.9, 256.103, 256E.7, 279.16, 279.19B

279.15 Notice of termination — request for hearing.

1. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall notify the teacher not later than April 30 that the superintendent will recommend in writing to the board at a regular or special meeting of the board, held not later than May 15, that the teacher's continuing contract be terminated effective at the end of the current school year. However, if the district is subject to reorganization under chapter 275, the notification shall not occur until after the first organizational meeting of the board of the newly formed district.

2. *a.* Notification of recommendation of termination of a teacher's contract shall be in writing and shall be personally delivered to the teacher, or mailed by certified mail. The notification shall be complete when received by the teacher. The notification and the recommendation to terminate shall contain a short and plain statement of the reasons, which shall be for just cause, why the recommendation is being made. The notification shall be given at or before the time the recommendation is given to the board.

b. As a part of the termination proceedings, the teacher's complete personnel file of employment by that board shall be available to the teacher, which file shall contain a record of all periodic evaluations between the teacher and appropriate supervisors.

c. Within five days of the receipt of the written notice that the superintendent is recommending termination of the contract, the teacher may request, in writing to the secretary of the board, a private hearing with the board. The private hearing shall not be subject to chapter 21 and shall be held no sooner than twenty days and no later than forty days following the receipt of the request unless the parties otherwise agree. The secretary of the board shall notify the teacher in writing of the date, time, and location of the private hearing, and at least ten days before the hearing shall also furnish to the teacher any documentation which may be presented to the board at the private hearing and a list of persons who may address the board in support of the superintendent's recommendation at the private hearing. At least seven days before the hearing, the teacher shall provide any documentation the teacher expects to present at the private hearing, along with the names of any persons who may address the board on behalf of the teacher. This exchange of information shall be at the time specified unless otherwise agreed.

[R60, §2055; C73, §1757; C97, §2778; SS15, §2778; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4229;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.13; C77, 79, 81, §279.15]

86 Acts, ch 1239, §4; 91 Acts, ch 174, §7; 92 Acts, ch 1227, §18; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §180; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §31, 48, 49

Referred to in §256.103, 256.160, 260C.39, 273.22, 275.33, 279.13, 279.16, 279.19, 279.19B, 279.27, 284.8

279.16 Private hearing — decision — record.

1. The participants at the private hearing shall be at least a majority of the members of the board and their legal representatives, if any, and the witnesses for the parties. The superintendent, the superintendent's designated representatives, if any, the teacher's immediate supervisor, the teacher, and the teacher's representatives, if any, may participate in the hearing as well. The evidence at the private hearing shall be limited to the specific

reasons stated in the superintendent's notice of recommendation of termination. A participant in the hearing shall not be liable for any damages to any person if any statement at the hearing is determined to be erroneous as long as the statement was made in good faith. The superintendent shall present evidence and argument on all issues involved and the teacher may cross-examine, respond, and present evidence and argument in the teacher's behalf relevant to all issues involved. Evidence may be by stipulation of the parties and informal settlement may be made by stipulation, consent, or default or by any other method agreed upon by the parties in writing. The board shall keep a record of the private hearing. The proceedings or any part thereof shall be transcribed at the request of either party with the expense of transcription charged to the requesting party.

2. The presiding officer of the board may administer oaths in the same manner and with like effect and under the same penalties as in the case of magistrates exercising criminal or civil jurisdiction.

3. The board shall not be bound by common law or statutory rules of evidence or by technical or formal rules of procedure, but it shall hold the hearing in such manner as is best suited to ascertain and conserve the substantial rights of the parties. Process and procedure under sections 279.13 through 279.15, this section, and sections 279.18 and 279.19 shall be as summary as reasonably may be.

4. If the teacher fails to timely request a private hearing or does not appear at the private hearing, the board may proceed and make a determination upon the superintendent's recommendation. The board shall convene in open session and by roll call vote determine the termination or continuance of the teacher's contract and, if the board votes to continue the teacher's contract, whether to suspend the teacher with or without pay for a period specified by the board or issue the teacher a one-year, nonrenewable contract.

5. Within five days after the private hearing, the board shall, in executive session, meet to make a final decision upon the recommendation and the evidence as herein provided.

6. *a.* The record for a private hearing shall include:

(1) All pleadings, motions, and intermediate rulings.

(2) All evidence received or considered and all other submissions.

(3) A statement of all matters officially noticed.

(4) All questions and offers of proof, objections, and rulings thereon.

(5) All findings and exceptions.

(6) Any decision, opinion, or conclusion by the board.

b. The decision of the board shall be based solely on the evidence in the record and on matters officially noticed in the record.

7. The decision of the board shall be in writing.

8. When the board has reached a decision, opinion, or conclusion, it shall convene in open meeting and by roll call vote determine the continuance or discontinuance of the teacher's contract and, if the board votes to continue the teacher's contract, whether to suspend the teacher with or without pay for a period specified by the board or issue the teacher a one-year, nonrenewable contract. The record of the private hearing and written decision of the board shall be exempt from the provisions of chapter 22. The secretary of the board shall immediately mail notice of the board's action to the teacher.

[C77, 79, 81, §279.16]

92 Acts, ch 1008, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1227, §19; 2001 Acts, ch 62, §1; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §32, 33, 48, 49; 2018 Acts, ch 1026, §96; 2019 Acts, ch 24, §37

Referred to in §256.103, 256.160, 260C.39, 273.22, 275.33, 279.13, 279.14, 279.19, 279.19B, 279.27

279.17 Appeal by teacher to adjudicator. Repealed by 2017 Acts, ch 2, §47 – 49.

279.18 Appeal by teacher to court.

1. If a teacher rejects the board's decision, the teacher shall, within thirty days of the initial filing of such decision, appeal to the district court of the county in which the administrative office of the school district is located. The notice of appeal shall be immediately mailed by certified mail to the board. The secretary of the board shall transmit to the reviewing court the original or a certified copy of the entire record which may be the subject of the petition.

By stipulation of all parties to the review proceedings, the record of such a case may be shortened. A party unreasonably refusing to stipulate to limit the record may be taxed by the court for the additional cost. The court may require or permit subsequent corrections or additions to the shortened record.

2. In proceedings for judicial review of the board's decision, the court shall not hear any further evidence but shall hear the case upon the certified record. In such judicial review, especially when considering the credibility of witnesses, the court shall give weight to the decision of the board, but shall not be bound by it. The court may affirm the board's decision or remand to the board for further proceedings upon conditions determined by the court. The court shall reverse, modify, or grant any other appropriate equitable or legal relief from the board decision, including declaratory relief, if substantial rights of the petitioner have been prejudiced because the action is any of the following:

a. In violation of constitutional or statutory provisions.

b. In excess of the statutory authority of the board.

c. In violation of a board rule or policy or contract.

d. Made upon unlawful procedure.

e. Affected by other error of law.

f. Unsupported by a preponderance of the competent evidence in the record made before the board when that record is viewed as a whole.

g. Unreasonable, arbitrary, or capricious or characterized by an abuse of discretion or a clearly unwarranted exercise of discretion.

3. An aggrieved or adversely affected party to the judicial review proceeding may obtain a review of any final judgment of the district court by appeal to the supreme court. The appeal shall be taken as in other civil cases, although the appeal may be taken regardless of the amount involved.

4. For purposes of this section, unless the context otherwise requires, *"teacher"* shall include but not be limited to an instructor employed by a community college.

[C77, 79, 81, §279.18]

2002 Acts, ch 1047, §15; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §34, 48, 49

Referred to in §256.103, 256.160, 260C.39, 273.22, 275.33, 279.13, 279.16, 279.19B, 279.27

279.19 Probationary period.

1. The first three consecutive years of employment of a teacher in the same school district are a probationary period. However, if the teacher has successfully completed a probationary period of employment for another school district located in Iowa, the probationary period in the current district of employment shall not exceed two years. A board of directors may waive the probationary period for any teacher who previously has served a probationary period in another school district and the board may extend the probationary period for an additional year with the consent of the teacher.

2. In the case of the termination of a probationary teacher's contract, the contract may be terminated by the board of directors effective at the end of a school year without cause. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall notify the teacher not later than April 30 that the board has voted to terminate the contract effective at the end of the school year. The notice shall be in writing by letter, personally delivered, or mailed by certified mail. The notification shall be complete when received by the teacher. Within ten days after receiving the notice, the teacher may request a private conference with the school board to discuss the reasons for termination. The provisions of sections 279.15 and 279.16 shall not apply to such a termination.

3. The board's decision shall be final and binding unless the termination was based upon an alleged violation of a constitutionally guaranteed right of the teacher.

[C77, 79, 81, §279.19]

98 Acts, ch 1215, §43; 98 Acts, ch 1216, §26, 41; 2001 Acts, ch 161, §18; 2002 Acts, ch 1152, §5; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §35, 48, 49; 2017 Acts, ch 54, §41

Referred to in §256.103, 256.160, 273.22, 275.33, 275.56, 279.13, 279.16, 279.19B, 279.27, 280.15

279.19A Extracurricular contracts.

1. School districts employing individuals to coach interscholastic athletic sports shall issue a separate extracurricular contract for each of these sports. An extracurricular contract offered under this section shall be separate from the contract issued under section 279.13. An extracurricular contract shall be in writing, and shall state the number of contract days for that sport, the annual compensation to be paid, and any other matters as may be mutually agreed upon. The contract shall be for a single school year.

2. *a.* If the school district offers an extracurricular contract for a sport for the subsequent school year to an employee who is currently performing under an extracurricular contract for that sport, and the employee does not wish to accept the extracurricular contract for the subsequent year, the employee may resign from the extracurricular contract within twenty-one days after it has been received.

b. If the provisions of an extracurricular contract executed under this section conflict with a collective bargaining agreement negotiated under chapter 20 and effective when the extracurricular contract is executed or renewed, the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement shall prevail.

3. The board of directors of a school district may require an employee who has resigned from an extracurricular contract to accept, as a condition of employment under section 279.13, the extracurricular contract for no longer than one additional school year if all the following conditions apply:

a. The employee has accepted a teaching contract issued by the board pursuant to section 279.13 for the subsequent school year.

b. The board of directors has made a good faith effort to fill the coaching position with a licensed or authorized replacement.

c. The position has not been filled by June 1 of the year in which the employee resigned the extracurricular contract.

4. As a condition of employment under section 279.13, the board of directors of a school district may require an employee who has been issued a teaching contract pursuant to section 279.13 to accept an extracurricular contract for which the employee is licensed, or may require as a condition of employment that an applicant for a teaching contract under section 279.13 accept an extracurricular contract if all of the following conditions apply:

a. The individual who held the coaching position during the year has not been issued a teaching contract by the board pursuant to section 279.13 for the subsequent school year, or has been terminated from the extracurricular contract.

b. The board of directors has made a good faith effort to fill the coaching position with a licensed or authorized replacement.

c. The position has not been filled by June 1 of the year in which the vacancy occurred for the interscholastic athletic sport.

5. *a.* Within seven days following June 1 of that year, the board shall notify the employee in writing if the board intends to require the employee to accept an extracurricular contract for the subsequent school year under subsection 3 or 4. If the employee believes that the board did not make a good faith effort to fill the position the employee may appeal the decision by notifying the board in writing within ten days after receiving the notification.

b. The appeal shall state why the employee believes that the board did not make a good faith effort to fill the position. If the parties are unable to informally resolve the dispute, the parties shall attempt to agree upon an alternative means of resolving the dispute.

c. If the dispute is not resolved by mutual agreement, either party may appeal to the district court.

6. Subsections 3, 4, and 5 do not apply if the terms of a collective bargaining agreement provide otherwise.

7. An extracurricular contract may be terminated prior to the expiration of that contract for any lawful reason following an informal, private hearing before the board of directors. The decision of the board to terminate an extracurricular contract shall be final.

8. *a.* A termination proceeding regarding an extracurricular contract shall not affect a contract issued pursuant to section 279.13.

b. A termination of a contract entered into pursuant to section 279.13, or a resignation

from that contract by the teacher, constitutes an automatic termination or resignation of the extracurricular contract in effect between the same teacher and the employing school board.

9. For the purposes of this section, *"good faith effort"* includes advertising for the position in an appropriate publication, interviewing applicants, and giving serious consideration to those licensed or authorized, and otherwise qualified, applicants who apply.

10. The licensure requirements of subsections 3, 4, and 9 shall not apply to community colleges.

84 Acts, ch 1296, §1; 85 Acts, ch 74, §1 – 3; 89 Acts, ch 265, §40; 90 Acts, ch 1182, §3, 7; 2002 Acts, ch 1047, §16, 20; 2010 Acts, ch 1069, §78; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §36, 48, 49

Referred to in §256.11, 256.103, 256.160, 257.11, 273.22, 275.33, 279.13, 279.19B, 280.22

279.19B Coaching endorsement and authorization.

1. *a.* The board of directors of a school district may employ for head coach of any interscholastic athletic activities or for assistant coach of any interscholastic athletic activity, an individual who possesses a coaching authorization issued by the board of educational examiners or possesses a teaching license with a coaching endorsement issued pursuant to chapter 256, subchapter VII, part 3. However, a board of directors of a school district shall consider applicants with qualifications described below, in the following order of priority:

(1) A qualified individual who possesses a valid teaching license with a proper coaching endorsement.

(2) A qualified individual who meets the requirements of section 256.165, subsection 1, paragraph *"a"*, and possesses a coaching authorization issued by the board of educational examiners.

(3) A qualified individual who meets the requirements of section 256.165, subsection 1, paragraph *"b"*, and possesses a transitional coaching authorization issued by the board of educational examiners.

b. Qualifications are to be determined by the board of directors or their designee on a case-by-case basis.

2. For the first two weeks in which a qualified individual who possesses a transitional coaching authorization is employed as a transitional coach and for the first extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition sponsored by an organization as defined in section 280.13, the individual shall be supervised by a certified athletic director, administrator, or other practitioner in a supervisory role. If the individual performs to the supervising practitioner's satisfaction, the supervising practitioner shall sign and date an evaluation form provided by the organization to certify that the individual meets expectations to work with student athletes as a transitional coach. The organization shall develop and offer on its internet site an evaluation form that meets the requirements of this subsection.

3. An individual who has been issued a coaching authorization or who possesses a teaching license with a coaching endorsement but is not issued a teaching contract under section 279.13 and who is employed by the board of directors of a school district serves at the pleasure of the board of directors and is not subject to sections 279.13 through 279.19, and 279.27. Section 279.19A, subsection 1, applies to coaching authorizations.

4. The licensure and coaching authorization requirements of this section shall not apply to community colleges. An individual employed as a coach of a community college interscholastic athletic activity who is not issued a teaching contract under section 279.13 serves at the pleasure of the board of directors of the community college and is not subject to sections 279.13 through 279.19, and 279.27.

84 Acts, ch 1296, §2; 85 Acts, ch 49, §1; 88 Acts, ch 1284, §46; 89 Acts, ch 265, §35, 42; 93 Acts, ch 66, §1, 2; 2003 Acts, ch 19, §2; 2016 Acts, ch 1066, §3 – 5; 2017 Acts, ch 29, §82; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §2583

Referred to in §256.103, 256.160, 273.22, 275.33

279.20 Superintendent — term — employment of support personnel.

1. The board of directors of a school district may employ a superintendent of schools for a term of not to exceed three years. However, the board's initial contract with a superintendent shall not exceed one year if the board is obligated to pay a former superintendent under an

unexpired contract. The superintendent shall be the executive officer of the board and have such powers and duties as may be prescribed by rules adopted by the board or by law. Boards of directors may jointly exercise the powers conferred by this section.

2. The board of directors of a school district may delegate the authority to hire support personnel and sign the support personnel employment contracts, if applicable, if the board adopts a policy authorizing the superintendent to perform such duties and specifying the positions the superintendent is authorized to fill. For purposes of this subsection, the term *"support personnel"* includes, but is not limited to, bus drivers, custodians, educational associates, and clerical and food service employees.

[R60, §2037; C73, §1726; C97, §2776; SS15, §2778; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4230;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.14; C77, 79, 81, §279.20]

87 Acts, ch 224, §48; 2004 Acts, ch 1175, §94

Referred to in §256.160, 273.3, 273.22, 273.23, 275.25, 275.33, 275.41, 279.23

279.21 Principals.

1. The board of directors of a school district may employ principals, under the provisions of section 279.23. A principal shall hold a current valid principal's certificate. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 279.23, after serving at least nine months, a principal may be employed for a term of not to exceed two years.

2. *a.* The principal, under the supervision of the superintendent of the school district and pursuant to rules and policies of the board of directors of the school district, shall be responsible for administration and operation of the attendance center to which the principal is assigned.

b. The principal shall, pursuant to the policies adopted by the board of directors of the school district, be responsible for the planning, management, operation, and evaluation of the educational program offered at the attendance center to which the principal is assigned and shall submit recommendations to the superintendent regarding the appointment, assignment, promotion, transfer, and dismissal of all personnel assigned to the attendance center. The principal shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the superintendent.

c. For purposes of this section and sections 279.23, 279.23A, 279.24, and 279.25, the term *"principal"* includes school principals, associate principals, and assistant principals.

[C77, 79, 81, §279.21]

93 Acts, ch 32, §1; 2017 Acts, ch 54, §42

Referred to in §256.160, 273.22, 275.33

279.22 Residence of employees.

The board shall not adopt rules under section 279.8 which require its employees to reside within the boundaries of the school district.

[C81, §279.22]

279.23 Continuing contract for administrators.

1. Contracts with administrators shall be in writing and shall contain all of the following:

a. The term of employment which for all administrators except for superintendents may be a term of up to two years. Superintendents may be employed under section 279.20 for a term not to exceed three years.

b. The length of time during the school year services are to be performed.

c. The rate of compensation.

d. A statement that the contract is invalid if the administrator is under contract with another board of directors in this state covering the same period of time, until such contract shall have been released or terminated by its provisions.

e. Such other matters as may be agreed upon.

2. The contract shall be signed by the president and the administrator and shall be filed with the secretary of the board before the administrator enters upon performance of the contract. A contract shall not be tendered by an employing board to an administrator under its jurisdiction prior to March 15. A contract shall not be required to be signed by the administrator and returned to the board in less than twenty-one days after being tendered.

3. Except as otherwise specifically provided, an administrator's contract shall be governed

by the provisions of this section and sections 279.23A, 279.24, and 279.25, and not by section 279.13.

4. For purposes of this section and sections 279.23A, 279.24, and 279.25, the term *"administrator"* includes school superintendents, assistant superintendents, educational directors employed by school districts for grades kindergarten through twelve, educational directors employed by area education agencies under chapter 273, principals, assistant principals, other certified school supervisors employed by school districts for grades kindergarten through twelve as defined under section 20.4, and other certified school supervisors employed by area education agencies under chapter 273. For purposes of this section and sections 279.23A, 279.24, and 279.25, with regard to community college employees, *"administrator"* includes the administrator of an instructional division or an area of instructional responsibility, and the administrator of an instructional unit, department, or section.

5. Notwithstanding the other provisions of this section, a temporary contract may be issued to an administrator for up to nine months. Notwithstanding the other provisions of this section, a temporary contract may also be issued to an administrator to fill a vacancy created by a leave of absence in accordance with the provisions of section 29A.28, which contract shall automatically terminate upon return from military leave of the former incumbent of the administrator position. Temporary contracts shall not be subject to the provisions of sections 279.24 and 279.25.

[C77, 79, 81, §279.23]

87 Acts, ch 94, §1; 93 Acts, ch 32, §2; 2003 Acts, ch 19, §3; 2003 Acts, ch 180, §32; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §37, 38, 48, 49

Referred to in §256.160, 273.3, 273.22, 273.23, 275.25, 275.33, 275.41, 279.21, 284A.2

279.23A Evaluation criteria and procedures.

The board shall establish written evaluation criteria and shall establish and annually implement evaluation procedures. The board shall also establish written job descriptions for all supervisory positions.

87 Acts, ch 94, §2

Referred to in §279.21, 279.23, 284A.3, 284A.4, 284A.6

279.24 Contract with administrators — automatic continuation or termination.

1. An administrator's contract shall remain in force and effect for the period stated in the contract. The contract shall be automatically continued in force and effect for additional one-year periods beyond the end of its original term, except and until the contract is modified or terminated by mutual agreement of the board of directors and the administrator, or until terminated as provided by this section.

2. If the board of directors is considering termination of an administrator's contract, prior to any formal action, the board may arrange to meet in closed session, in accordance with the provisions of section 21.5, with the administrator and the administrator's representative. The board shall review the administrator's evaluation, review the reasons for nonrenewal, and give the administrator an opportunity to respond. If, following the closed session, the board of directors and the administrator are unable to mutually agree to a modification or termination of the administrator's contract, the board of directors may issue a one-year nonrenewable contract to the administrator. If the board of directors decides to terminate the administrator's contract, the board shall follow the procedures in this section.

3. An administrator may file a written resignation with the secretary of the school board on or before May 1 of each year or the date specified by the school board for return of the contract, whichever date occurs first.

4. Administrators employed in a school district for less than three consecutive years are probationary administrators. However, a school board may extend the probationary period for an additional year with the consent of the administrator. If a school board determines that it should terminate a probationary administrator's contract, the school board shall notify the administrator not later than May 15 that the contract will not be renewed beyond the current year. The notice shall be in writing by letter, personally delivered, or mailed by certified

mail. The notification shall be complete when received by the administrator. Within ten days after receiving the notice, the administrator may request a private conference with the school board to discuss the reasons for termination. The school board's decision to terminate a probationary administrator's contract shall be final unless the termination was based upon an alleged violation of a constitutionally guaranteed right of the administrator.

5. The school board may, by majority vote of the membership of the school board, cause the contract of an administrator to be terminated. If the school board determines that it should consider the termination of a nonprobationary administrator's contract, the following procedure shall apply:

a. On or before May 15, the administrator shall be notified in writing by a letter personally delivered or mailed by certified mail that the school board has voted to consider termination of the contract. The notification shall be complete when received by the administrator.

b. The notice shall state the specific reasons to be used by the school board for considering termination which for all administrators except superintendents shall be for just cause.

c. Within five days after receipt of the written notice that the school board has voted to consider termination of the contract, the administrator may request a private hearing in writing to the secretary of the school board. The board shall then forward the notification to the board of educational examiners along with a request that the board of educational examiners submit a list of five qualified administrative law judges who are employed by the division of administrative hearings created by section 10A.801 to the parties. Within three days from receipt of the list the parties shall select an administrative law judge by alternately removing a name from the list until only one name remains. The person whose name remains shall be the administrative law judge. The parties shall determine by lot which party shall remove the first name from the list. The private hearing shall be held no sooner than twenty days and not later than forty days following the administrator's request unless the parties otherwise agree. If the administrator does not request a private hearing, the school board, not later than May 31, may determine the continuance or discontinuance of the contract and, if the board determines to continue the administrator's contract, whether to suspend the administrator with or without pay for a period specified by the board. School board action shall be by majority roll call vote entered on the minutes of the meeting. Notice of school board action shall be personally delivered or mailed to the administrator.

d. The administrative law judge selected shall notify the secretary of the school board and the administrator in writing concerning the date, time, and location of the private hearing. The school board may be represented by a legal representative, if any, and the administrator shall appear and may be represented by counsel or by representative, if any. Any witnesses for the parties at the private hearing shall be sequestered. A transcript or recording shall be made of the proceedings at the private hearing. A school board member or administrator is not liable for any damage to an administrator or school board member if a statement made at the private hearing is determined to be erroneous as long as the statement was made in good faith.

e. The administrative law judge shall, within ten days following the date of the private hearing, make a proposed decision as to whether or not the administrator should be dismissed, and shall give a copy of the proposed decision to the administrator and the school board. Findings of fact shall be prepared by the administrative law judge. The proposed decision of the administrative law judge shall become the final decision of the school board unless within thirty days after the filing of the decision the administrator files a written notice of appeal with the school board, or the school board on its own motion determines to review the decision.

f. If the administrator appeals to the school board, or if the school board determines on its own motion to review the proposed decision of the administrative law judge, a private hearing shall be held before the school board within ten days after the petition for review, or motion for review, has been made or at such other time as the parties agree. The private hearing is not subject to chapter 21. The school board may hear the case de novo upon the record as submitted before the administrative law judge. In cases where there is an appeal from a proposed decision or where a proposed decision is reviewed on motion of the school board, an opportunity shall be afforded to each party to file exceptions, present briefs, and present

oral arguments to the school board which is to render the final decision. The secretary of the school board shall give the administrator written notice of the time, place, and date of the private hearing. The school board shall meet within five days after the private hearing to determine the question of continuance or discontinuance of the contract and, if the board determines to continue the administrator's contract, whether to suspend the administrator with or without pay for a period specified by the board or issue the administrator a one-year, nonrenewable contract. The school board shall make findings of fact which shall be based solely on the evidence in the record and on matters officially noticed in the record.

g. The decision of the school board shall be in writing.

h. When the school board has reached a decision, opinion, or conclusion, it shall convene in open meeting and by roll call vote determine the continuance or discontinuance of the administrator's contract and, if the board votes to continue the administrator's contract, whether to suspend the administrator with or without pay for a period specified by the board or issue the administrator a one-year, nonrenewable contract. The record of the private hearing and written decision of the board shall be exempt from the provisions of chapter 22. The secretary of the school board shall immediately personally deliver or mail notice of the school board's action to the administrator.

i. The administrator may within thirty days after notification by the school board of discontinuance of the contract appeal to the district court of the county in which the administrative office of the school district is located.

6. The court may affirm the school board's action. The court shall reverse, modify, or grant any other appropriate relief from the school board's action, equitable or legal, and including declaratory relief, if substantial rights of the administrator have been prejudiced because the school board's action is any of the following:

a. In violation of constitutional or statutory provisions.

b. In excess of the statutory authority of the school board.

c. In violation of school board policy or rule.

d. Made upon unlawful procedure.

e. Affected by other error of law.

f. Unsupported by a preponderance of the evidence in the record made before the school board when that record is reviewed as a whole.

g. Unreasonable, arbitrary, or capricious, or characterized by an abuse of discretion or clearly unwarranted exercise of discretion.

[C77, 79, 81, §279.24]

87 Acts, ch 39, §1; 88 Acts, ch 1109, §21; 90 Acts, ch 1249, §13; 92 Acts, ch 1009, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1227, §20; 93 Acts, ch 32, §3, 4; 2001 Acts, ch 62, §2; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §39, 40, 48, 49; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1719

Referred to in §256.159, 256.160, 260C.39, 273.3, 273.22, 273.23, 275.25, 275.33, 275.41, 279.21, 279.23, 279.25

279.25 Discharge of administrator.

An administrator may be discharged at any time during the contract year for just cause. The administrator shall be notified in writing that the board has voted to consider termination of the administrator's contract and the applicable procedures of section 279.24 shall apply.

[C77, 79, 81, §279.25]

Referred to in §273.3, 279.21, 279.23

279.26 Lease arrangements.

The board of directors of a local school district for which a voter-approved physical plant and equipment levy has been voted pursuant to section 298.2, may enter into a rental or lease arrangement, consistent with the purposes for which the voter-approved physical plant and equipment levy has been voted, for a period not exceeding ten years and not exceeding the period for which the voter-approved physical plant and equipment levy has been authorized by the voters.

[C75, §279.23; C77, 79, 81, §279.26]

89 Acts, ch 135, §73

Referred to in §298.2

279.27 Discharge of teacher.

1. A teacher may be discharged at any time during the contract year for just cause. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee, shall notify the teacher immediately that the superintendent will recommend in writing to the board at a regular or special meeting of the board held not more than fifteen days after notification has been given to the teacher that the teacher's continuing contract be terminated effective immediately following a decision of the board. The procedure for dismissal shall be as provided in section 279.15, subsection 2, and sections 279.16 through 279.19. The superintendent may suspend a teacher under this section pending hearing and determination by the board.

2. For purposes of this section, *"just cause"* includes but is not limited to a violation of the code of professional conduct and ethics of the board of educational examiners if the board has taken disciplinary action against a teacher, during the six months following issuance by the board of a final written decision and finding of fact after a disciplinary proceeding.

[C73, §1734; C97, §2782; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4237;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.24; C77, 79, 81, §279.27]

2005 Acts, ch 3, §59; 2017 Acts, ch 2, §41, 48, 49

Referred to in §256.103, 279.13, 279.14, 279.19B, 284.8

279.28 Insurance — supplies — textbooks.

The board of directors may provide and pay out of the general fund to insure school property a sum as necessary, and may purchase dictionaries, library books, including books for the purpose of teaching vocal music, maps, charts, and apparatus for the use of the schools as deemed necessary by the board of directors for each school building under its charge; and may furnish schoolbooks to indigent children when they are likely to be deprived of the proper benefits of the school unless so aided.

[C73, §1729; C97, §2783; S13, §2783; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4238;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.25; C77, 79, 81, §279.28]

89 Acts, ch 83, §38

279.29 Claims — investments.

1. The board shall audit and allow all just claims against the corporation, and no order shall be drawn upon the treasury until the claim therefor has been audited and allowed. In any district in which the board consists of five or more members, an audit made by one or more members of the board designated by the board or by a certified public accountant employed by the board, and certified to the board by such member or members of the board or by such accountant, shall satisfy the requirements of this section with respect to the audit of a claim.

2. Pending audit and allowance of claims under this section, the board shall invest moneys of the corporation to the extent practicable, and the board may provide for the joint investment of moneys with one or more school corporations pursuant to a joint investment agreement. All investments of funds shall be subject to sections 12B.10 and 12B.10A and other applicable law.

[C51, §1146, 1149; R60, §2037, 2038; C73, §1732, 1733, 1738, 1813; C97, §2780; S13, §2780; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4239;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.26; C77, 79, 81, §279.29]

86 Acts, ch 1226, §4; 92 Acts, ch 1156, §11

Referred to in §256E.7, 256F.4, 261E.9

279.30 Payments — exceptions.

Each payment must be made payable to the person entitled to receive the money or deposited directly into an account at a financial institution, as defined in section 527.2, specified by the person entitled to receive the money. The board of directors of a school district or an area education agency may by resolution authorize the secretary, upon approval of the superintendent or designee, or administrator, in the case of an area education agency, to issue payments when the board of directors is not in session in payment of reasonable and necessary expenses, but only upon verified bills filed with the secretary or administrator, and for the payment of salaries pursuant to the terms of a written contract. Each payment must be made payable only to the person performing the service or presenting the verified bill, and must state the purpose for which the payment is issued. All bills and salaries for which

payments are issued prior to audit and allowance by the board must be passed upon by the board of directors at the next meeting and be entered in the regular minutes of the secretary.

[C35, §4239-g1; C39, §**4239.1;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.27; C77, 79, 81, §279.30]

92 Acts, ch 1187, §4; 2006 Acts, ch 1152, §34; 2013 Acts, ch 88, §16

279.31 Settlement with treasurer.

The board shall from time to time examine the accounts of the treasurer and make settlements with the treasurer.

[C51, §1146, 1149; R60, §2037, 2038; C73, §1732, 1733, 1738, 1813; C97, §2780; S13, §2780; C24, §4239; C27, 31, 35, §4239-a1; C39, §**4239.2;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.28; C77, 79, 81, §279.31]

279.32 Compensation of officers.

1. The board shall fix the compensation to be paid the secretary. No member of the board shall receive compensation for official services. The board may pay a school treasurer a reasonable compensation.

2. Actual and necessary expenses, including travel, incurred by the board or individual members thereof in the performance of official duties may be paid or reimbursed.

[C51, §1146, 1149; R60, §2037, 2038; C73, §1732, 1733, 1738, 1813; C97, §2780; S13, §2780; C24, §4239; C27, 31, 35, §4239-a3; C39, §**4239.3;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.29; C77, 79, 81, §279.32]

279.33 Annual settlements.

At a regular or special meeting held on or after August 31 of each year, and prior to the organizational meeting held after the regular school election, the board of each school corporation shall meet, examine the books of and settle with the secretary and treasurer for the year ending on the preceding June 30, and transact other business as necessary. The treasurer at the time of settlement shall furnish the board with a statement from each depository showing the balance then on deposit in the depository. If the secretary or treasurer fails to make proper reports for the settlement, the board shall take action to obtain the balance information.

[SS15, §2757; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4240;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.30; C77, 79, 81, §279.33]

83 Acts, ch 185, §4, 62; 2001 Acts, ch 47, §2; 2006 Acts, ch 1152, §35; 2010 Acts, ch 1033, §41; 2021 Acts, ch 25, §4

279.34 Motor vehicles required to operate on ethanol blended gasoline.

A motor vehicle purchased by or used under the direction of the board of directors to provide services to a school corporation shall not operate on gasoline other than ethanol blended gasoline as defined in section 214A.1. The motor vehicle shall also be affixed with a brightly visible sticker which notifies the traveling public that the motor vehicle is being operated on ethanol blended gasoline. However, the sticker is not required to be affixed to an unmarked vehicle used for purposes of providing law enforcement or security.

91 Acts, ch 254, §16; 93 Acts, ch 26, §5; 2006 Acts, ch 1142, §65; 2007 Acts, ch 126, §50

279.35 Publication of proceedings.

The proceedings of each regular, adjourned, or special meeting of the board, including the schedule of bills allowed, shall be published after the adjournment of the meeting in the manner provided in this section and section 279.36, and the publication of the schedule of the bills allowed shall include a list of claims allowed, including salary claims for services performed. The schedule of bills allowed may be published on a once monthly basis in lieu of publication with the proceedings of each meeting of the board. The list of claims allowed shall include the name of the person or firm making the claim, the purpose of the claim, and the amount of the claim. If the purpose for the claims is the same, two or more claims made by the same vendor, supplier, or claimant may be consolidated if the number of claims

consolidated and the total consolidated claim amount are listed in the statement. However, the board shall provide at its office upon request an unconsolidated list of all claims allowed. Salaries paid to individuals regularly employed by the district shall only be published annually and the publication shall include the total amount of the annual salary of each employee. The secretary shall furnish a copy of the proceedings to be published within two weeks following the adjournment of the meeting.

[C27, 31, 35, §4242-b1; C39, §**4242.1;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.33; C77, 79, 81, §279.35]

83 Acts, ch 185, §6, 62; 87 Acts, ch 224, §49; 2006 Acts, ch 1018, §2

Referred to in §260C.14, 279.36

279.36 Publication procedures and fee.

1. The requirements of section 279.35 are satisfied by publication in at least one newspaper published in the district or, if there is none, in at least one newspaper having general circulation within the district.

2. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1989, and each fiscal year thereafter, the fee for the publications shall be the legal publication fee provided by section 618.11.

[C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.34; C77, 79, 81, §279.36]

87 Acts, ch 224, §50; 2018 Acts, ch 1026, §97; 2019 Acts, ch 59, §82

Referred to in §260C.14, 279.6, 279.35

279.37 Employment of counsel.

A school corporation may employ an attorney to represent the school corporation as necessary for the proper conduct of the legal affairs of the school corporation.

[R60, §2040; C73, §1740; C97, §2759; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §**4245;** C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §279.35; C77, 79, 81, §279.37]

279.38 Membership in association of school boards — audit.

1. Boards of directors of school corporations may pay, out of funds available to them, reasonable annual dues to the Iowa association of school boards. Each board that pays membership dues to the Iowa association of school boards shall annually report to the local community the amount the board pays in annual dues to the Iowa association of school boards, the amount of any fees paid and revenue or dividend payments received for services the board receives from the association or from any of the association's affiliated for-profit entities, and the products or services the school district received inclusive with membership in the association.

2. The financial condition and transactions of the Iowa association of school boards shall be audited as provided in section 11.6. In addition, annually the Iowa association of school boards shall publish and submit to the department of education a listing of the school districts and the annual dues paid by each, the total revenue the association receives from each school district resulting from the payment of membership fees and the sale of products and services to the school district by the association or its affiliated for-profit entities, and shall publish an accounting of all moneys expended for expenses incurred by and salaries paid to legislative representatives and lobbyists of the association. In addition, the association shall submit to the general assembly copies of all reports the association provides to the United States department of education relating to federal grants and grant amounts that the association or its affiliated for-profit entities administer or distribute to school districts. The Iowa association of school boards is subject to chapters 21 and 22 relating to open meetings and public records.

3. Membership in such an Iowa association of school boards shall be limited to those duly elected members of the boards of directors of local school corporations.

[C71, 73, 75, §279.37; C77, 79, 81, §279.38]

83 Acts, ch 185, §7, 62; 89 Acts, ch 264, §7; 2010 Acts, ch 1183, §30; 2011 Acts, ch 75, §38; 2021 Acts, ch 25, §5

279.38A Membership in other organizations — reporting requirements.

1. Duly elected members of boards of directors and designated administrators of school

corporations may join, including the payment of dues, and participate in local, regional, and national organizations which directly relate to the functions of the board of directors.

2. Each board that pays membership dues to an organization in accordance with this section shall annually report to the local community and to the department of education the amount the board pays in annual dues to the organization, the amount of any fees paid and revenue or dividend payments received for services the board receives from the organization, and the products or services the school district received inclusive with membership in the organization. If the organization administers federal education grants on behalf of school districts or distributes federal education grant funds to school districts, the organization shall submit to the general assembly copies of all reports the organization provides to the United States department of education, on the date on which each such report is provided to the United States department of education, relating to federal grants and grant amounts that the organization administers for or distributes to school districts. The governing board of the organization is subject to chapters 21 and 22 relating to open meetings and public records.

93 Acts, ch 117, §3; 2010 Acts, ch 1183, §31

279.39 School buildings.

The board of any school corporation shall establish attendance centers and provide suitable buildings for each school in the district and may at the regular or a special meeting resolve to submit to the registered voters of the district at an election held on a date specified in section 39.2, subsection 4, the question of voting a tax or authorizing the board to issue bonds, or both.

93 Acts, ch 160, §15; 95 Acts, ch 67, §53; 2008 Acts, ch 1115, §47, 71; 2023 Acts, ch 71, §120, 136

Extended time contracts for facilities, see §278.1

2023 amendment applies July 1, 2023, for elections on propositions relating to the issuing of bonds or other indebtedness occurring on or after that date; 2023 Acts, ch 71, §136

279.40 Sick leave.

1. *a.* Public school employees are granted leave of absence for medically related disability with full pay in the following minimum amounts:

(1) The first year of employment ..... 10 days.
(2) The second year of employment ..... 11 days.
(3) The third year of employment ..... 12 days.
(4) The fourth year of employment ..... 13 days.
(5) The fifth year of employment ..... 14 days.
(6) The sixth and subsequent years of employment ..... 15 days.

b. The above amounts shall apply only to consecutive years of employment in the same school district and unused portions shall be cumulative to at least a total of ninety days. The school board shall, in each instance, require such reasonable evidence as it may desire confirming the necessity for such leave of absence.

2. Nothing in this section shall be construed as limiting the right of a school board to grant more time than the days herein specified.

3. Cumulation of sick leave under this section shall not be affected or terminated due to the organization or dissolution of a community school district or districts which include all or the portion of the district which employed the particular public school employee for the school year previous to the organization or dissolution, if the employee is employed by one of the community school districts for the first school year following its organization or dissolution.

4. Any amounts due an employee under this section shall be reduced by benefits payable under sections 85.33 and 85.34, subsection 1.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.40]

2010 Acts, ch 1061, §99

279.41 Schoolhouses and sites sold — funds.

1. Moneys received from the condemnation, sale, or other disposition for public purposes of schoolhouses, school sites, or both schoolhouses and school sites, shall be deposited in the physical plant and equipment levy fund and may, without a vote of the electorate, be used for

purposes authorized under section 298.3, as ordered by the board of directors of the school corporation.

2. Notwithstanding subsection 1, the board of directors of a school corporation may take action to deposit moneys received as provided in subsection 1 in any account maintained by the school corporation after holding a public hearing on the proposed action of the board. The board shall publish notice of the time and place of the public hearing in the same manner as required in section 24.9.

[C62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.41]

94 Acts, ch 1029, §18; 2006 Acts, ch 1152, §36; 2021 Acts, ch 25, §6; 2023 Acts, ch 64, §45

279.42 Gifts to schools.

The board of directors of a school district that receives funds through a gift, devise, or bequest shall deposit the funds in a trust fund, permanent fund, or custodial fund and shall use the funds in accordance with the terms of the gift, devise, or bequest.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §279.42]

94 Acts, ch 1029, §19; 2013 Acts, ch 88, §17; 2020 Acts, ch 1022, §4

Gifts to governmental bodies, see also §565.6

279.43 Reporting inappropriate teaching assignments.

An employee licensed by the board of educational examiners and holding a contract as described in section 279.13 shall disclose any occurrence of a teaching assignment for which that employee is not properly licensed to the school official responsible for determining teaching assignments. Failure of the employee to disclose this occurrence or failure of the school official responsible for determining teaching assignments to make appropriate adjustments to the employee's teaching assignment once the employee discloses the occurrence shall constitute an incident of misconduct as provided in section 256.146, subsection 13, and is actionable by the board. If the school official fails to make appropriate adjustments to the teaching assignment once disclosure by the employee is made, the employee shall report this occurrence to the department or to the board for further action.

2007 Acts, ch 214, §35

279.44 Energy audits. Repealed by 2021 Acts, ch 25, §10.

279.45 Administrative expenditures.

The administrative expenditures as a percent of a school district's general fund for a base year shall not exceed five percent. Annually, the board of directors shall certify to the department of education the amounts of the school district's administrative expenditures and its general fund. For the purposes of this section, *"base year"* means the same as defined in section 257.2, and *"administrative expenditures"* means expenditures for executive administration.

86 Acts, ch 1226, §5; 88 Acts, ch 1158, §56; 89 Acts, ch 135, §74; 2013 Acts, ch 88, §18

279.46 Retirement incentives — tax.

The board of directors of a school district may adopt a program for payment of a monetary bonus, continuation of health or medical insurance coverage, or other incentives for encouraging its employees to retire before the normal retirement date as defined in chapter 97B. The program is available only to employees who notify the board of directors prior to April 1 of the fiscal year that they intend to retire not later than the start of the next following school calendar. The age at which employees shall be designated eligible for the program shall be at the discretion of the board. An employee retiring under this section may apply for a retirement allowance under chapter 97B or chapter 294. The board may include in the district management levy an amount to pay the total estimated accumulated cost to the school district of the health or medical insurance coverage, bonus, or other incentives for employees fifty-five years of age or older who retire under this section.

87 Acts, ch 224, §51; 89 Acts, ch 135, §75; 92 Acts, ch 1220, §1; 98 Acts, ch 1216, §27, 43; 2002 Acts, ch 1152, §6; 2003 Acts, ch 180, §33; 2014 Acts, ch 1052, §1 – 3

Referred to in §298.4

279.47 Telecommunications — participation by school districts in database development.

The board of directors of each school district utilizing telecommunications as an instructional tool shall participate in procedures adopted by the state board of education under section 256.7, subsection 9.

87 Acts, ch 207, §2

279.48 Equipment purchase.

1. The board of directors of a school corporation may purchase equipment, and may negotiate and enter into a loan agreement and issue a note to pay for the equipment subject to the following terms and procedures:

a. The note must mature within five years, or the useful life of the equipment, whichever is less.

b. The note may bear interest at a rate to be determined by the board of directors in the manner provided in section 74A.3, subsection 1, paragraph "*a*". Chapter 75 is not applicable.

c. The board of directors shall provide for the form of the agreement and note.

d. Principal and interest on the note must be payable from budgeted receipts in the debt service fund for each year of a period of up to five years.

2. The total of scheduled annual payments of principal or interest due and payable from current budgeted receipts or future budgeted receipts with respect to all loan agreements authorized under this section or section 285.10, subsection 7, paragraph "*b*", must not exceed ten percent of the last authorized budget of the school corporation.

94 Acts, ch 1175, §7; 2008 Acts, ch 1032, §198; 2021 Acts, ch 25, §7

Referred to in §273.3, 279.53

279.49 Child care programs.

1. The board of directors of a school corporation may operate or contract for the operation of a program to provide child care to children not enrolled in school or to students enrolled in kindergarten through grade six before and after school, or to both. Programs operated or contracted by a board shall be licensed by the department of health and human services under chapter 237A as a child care center unless the program is exempt from licensure under chapter 237A. Notwithstanding requirements of the department of health and human services regarding space allocated to child care centers licensed under chapter 237A, a program operated or contracted by a board which is located on school grounds may define alternative spaces, in policy and procedures, appropriate to meet the needs of children in the program if the primary space is required for another use.

2. *a.* The person employed to be responsible for a program operated or contracted by a board shall collaborate with that board in the operation of that program.

b. An employee of a program operated or contracted by a board shall be subject to a background investigation at least once every five years after the employee's initial date of hire.

3. The facilities housing a program operated under this section shall comply with standards adopted by the director of the department of inspections, appeals, and licensing for school buildings under chapter 10A, subchapter V, part 2. In addition, if a program involves children who are younger than school age, the facilities housing those children shall meet the fire safety standards which would apply to that age of child in a child care facility licensed by the department of health and human services.

4. The board may establish a fee for the cost of participation in a child care program authorized under this section. The fee shall be established pursuant to a sliding fee schedule based upon staffing costs and other expenses and a family's ability to pay. If a fee is established, the parent or guardian of a child participating in a program shall be responsible for payment of any agreed upon fee. The board may require the parent or guardian to furnish transportation of the child.

5. The board may utilize or make application for program subsidies from any existing child care funding streams.

6. The components of programs established under this section for child care shall

include, but are not limited to, parental involvement in program design and direction, activities designed to further children's physical, mental, and emotional development, and a parental education component to educate parents about the physical, mental, and emotional development of children.

85 Acts, ch 173, §26; 89 Acts, ch 206, §10; 89 Acts, ch 265, §40; 92 Acts, ch 1212, §27; 94 Acts, ch 1175, §8; 99 Acts, ch 192, §33; 2015 Acts, ch 88, §2, 3, 5; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1031, 1655
Referred to in §256.9, 256A.3, 280.3A, 298A.12

279.50 Human growth and development instruction — early intervention programs.

1. Subject to section 279.80, each school board shall provide instruction in kindergarten which gives attention to experiences relating to life skills and human growth and development as required in section 256.11. School districts shall use research provided in section 256.9, subsection 46, paragraph *"b"*, to evaluate and upgrade their instructional materials and teaching strategies for human growth and development.

2. *a.* Subject to section 279.80, each school board shall provide age-appropriate and research-based instruction in human growth and development including instruction regarding self-esteem, stress management, interpersonal relationships, and domestic abuse in grades one through six.

b. (1) In grades five and six, the age-appropriate and research-based instruction in human growth and development described in paragraph *"a"* shall include all of the following:

(a) Instruction related to human development inside the womb.

(b) A high-definition ultrasound video showing the presence of the brain, heart, and other vital organs in early fetal development.

(c) A high-quality, computer-generated rendering or animation, or an ultrasound or other real image, that depicts the humanity of the unborn child by showing prenatal human development, starting at fertilization, noting significant markers in cell growth and organ development throughout every stage of pregnancy.

(2) The age-appropriate and research-based instruction in human growth and development described in paragraph *"a"* shall not include any book, article, outline, handout, video, or other educational material produced or provided by an entity that does any of the following:

(a) Performs abortions.

(b) Promotes abortions.

(c) Contracts or subcontracts with an entity that performs or promotes abortions.

(d) Becomes or continues to be an affiliate of any entity that performs or promotes abortions.

(e) Regularly makes referrals to an entity that provides or promotes abortions.

c. The state board of education shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to administer and interpret this subsection.

3. *a.* Each school board shall provide age-appropriate and research-based instruction in human growth and development including instruction regarding human sexuality, self-esteem, stress management, interpersonal relationships, domestic abuse, and the prevention and control of disease, including sexually transmitted diseases as required in section 256.11, in grades seven through twelve.

b. (1) The age-appropriate and research-based instruction in human growth and development described in paragraph *"a"* shall include all of the following:

(a) Instruction related to human development inside the womb.

(b) A high-definition ultrasound video showing the presence of the brain, heart, and other vital organs in early fetal development.

(c) A high-quality, computer-generated rendering or animation, or an ultrasound or other real image, that depicts the humanity of the unborn child by showing prenatal human development, starting at fertilization, noting significant markers in cell growth and organ development throughout every stage of pregnancy.

(2) The age-appropriate and research-based instruction in human growth and development described in paragraph *"a"* shall not include any book, article, outline, handout,

video, or other educational material produced or provided by an entity that does any of the following:

(a) Performs abortions.

(b) Promotes abortions.

(c) Contracts or subcontracts with an entity that performs or promotes abortions.

(d) Becomes or continues to be an affiliate of any entity that performs or promotes abortions.

(e) Regularly makes referrals to an entity that provides or promotes abortions.

c. The state board of education shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to administer and interpret this subsection.

4. Each school board shall annually provide to a parent or guardian of any pupil enrolled in the school district, information about the human growth and development curriculum used in the pupil's grade level and the procedure for inspecting the instructional materials prior to their use in the classroom.

5. Each school district shall, upon request by any agency or organization, provide information about the human growth and development curriculum used in each grade level and the procedure for inspecting and updating the instructional materials.

6. A pupil shall not be required to take instruction in human growth and development if the pupil's parent or guardian files with the appropriate principal a written request that the pupil be excused from the instruction. Notification that the written request may be made shall be included in the information provided by the school district.

7. Each school board or community college which offers general adult education classes or courses shall periodically offer an instructional program in parenting skills and in human growth and development for parents, guardians, prospective biological and adoptive parents, and foster parents.

8. Each area education agency shall periodically offer a staff development program for teachers who provide instruction in human growth and development.

9. The department of education shall identify and disseminate information about early intervention programs for students who are at the greatest risk of suffering from the problem of dropping out of school, substance use disorder, adolescent pregnancy, or suicide.

10. For purposes of this section and sections 256.9 and 256.11, unless the context otherwise requires:

a. "Age-appropriate" means topics, messages, and teaching methods suitable to particular ages or age groups of children and adolescents, based on developing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral capacity typical for the age or age group.

b. "Research-based" means complete, unbiased information that is verified or supported by the weight of research conducted in compliance with accepted scientific methods, recognized as medically accurate and objective by leading professional organizations and agencies with relevant expertise in the field, and published in peer-reviewed journals where appropriate.

11. To the extent not inconsistent with this section and section 256.11, an accredited nonpublic school may also choose curriculum in accordance with doctrinal teachings for the human sexuality component of the human growth and development requirements of this section and section 256.11.

12. Nothing in this section or section 256.11 shall be construed to prohibit a school or school district from developing and making available abstinence-based or abstinence-only materials pursuant to the requirements of section 256.9, subsection 46, and from offering an abstinence-based or abstinence-only curriculum in meeting the human sexuality component of the human growth and development requirements of this section and section 256.11.

88 Acts, ch 1018, §3, 5, 6; 90 Acts, ch 1253, §121; 91 Acts, ch 218, §19; 2007 Acts, ch 98, §4; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1032; 2023 Acts, ch 90, §21, 22; 2023 Acts, ch 91, §9 – 11; 2025 Acts, ch 127, §5, 6

Referred to in §256.11
Subsections 2 and 3 amended
Subsection 10, paragraph b amended

279.50A Educational standards — agreements with community colleges.

1. A school district may enter into an agreement with a community college under which the community college may offer, or provide a community college-employed instructor to teach, any unit, and if the unit of coursework under the agreement meets the requirements specified in section 257.11, subsection 3, paragraph *"b"*, subparagraphs (2) through (7), the unit offered shall be deemed to meet the education program requirement pertaining to the unit under section 256.11, subsection 5, if applicable. The provisions of this subsection are applicable only if all of the following conditions are met:

a. The unit is offered during the regular school day.

b. The unit is made accessible by the school district to all eligible pupils.

2. Pupils enrolled in a unit of coursework offered pursuant to subsection 1 are not eligible for supplementary weighting under section 257.11, subsection 3.

2019 Acts, ch 164, §4, 5; 2020 Acts, ch 1062, §94; 2020 Acts, ch 1063, §127; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §2584; 2023 Acts, ch 90, §13

279.51 Programs for at-risk children.

1. There is appropriated from the general fund of the state to the department of education for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007, and each succeeding fiscal year, the sum of twelve million six hundred six thousand one hundred ninety-six dollars. The moneys shall be allocated as follows:

a. Two hundred seventy-five thousand eight hundred sixty-four dollars of the funds appropriated shall be allocated to the area education agencies to assist school districts in developing program plans and budgets under this section and to assist school districts and child development programs under section 256A.3 in meeting other responsibilities in early childhood education.

b. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007, and for each succeeding fiscal year, eight million five hundred thirty-six thousand seven hundred forty dollars of the funds appropriated shall be allocated to the child development coordinating council established in chapter 256A for the purposes set out in subsection 2 of this section and section 256A.3.

c. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007, and for each fiscal year thereafter, three million five hundred ten thousand nine hundred ninety-two dollars of the funds appropriated shall be allocated as grants to school districts that have elementary schools that demonstrate the greatest need for programs for at-risk students with preference given to innovative programs for the early elementary school years. School districts receiving grants under this paragraph shall at a minimum provide activities and materials designed to encourage children's self-esteem, provide role modeling and mentoring techniques in social competence and social skills, and discourage inappropriate drug use. The grant allocations made in this paragraph may be renewed for additional periods of time. Of the amount allocated under this paragraph for each fiscal year, seventy-five thousand dollars shall be allocated to school districts which have an actual student population of ten thousand or less and have an actual non-English speaking student population which represents greater than five percent of the total actual student population for grants to elementary schools in those districts.

d. Notwithstanding section 256A.3, subsection 5, of the amount appropriated in this subsection for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007, and for each succeeding fiscal year, up to two hundred eighty-two thousand six hundred dollars may be used for administrative costs.

2. *a.* Funds allocated under subsection 1, paragraph *"b"*, shall be used by the child development coordinating council for the following:

(1) To continue funding for programs previously funded by grants awarded under section 256A.3 and to provide additional grants under section 256A.3. The council shall seek to provide grants on the basis of the location within the state of children meeting at-risk definitions.

(2) At the discretion of the child development coordinating council, award grants for the following:

(a) To school districts to establish programs for three-year-old, four-year-old, and five-year-old at-risk children.

(b) To provide grants to provide educational support services to parents of at-risk children age birth through three years.

b. A grantee under this subsection may direct the use of moneys received to serve any qualifying child ranging in age from three years old to five years old, regardless of the age of population indicated on the grant request in its initial year of application. A grantee is encouraged to consider the degree to which the program complements existing programs and services for three-year-old, four-year-old, and five-year-old at-risk children available in the area, including other child care and preschool services, services provided through a school district, and services available through an area education agency.

3. The department shall seek assistance from foundations and public and private agencies in the evaluation of the programs funded under this section, and in the provision of support to school districts in developing and implementing the programs funded under this section.

4. Notwithstanding section 8.33, moneys appropriated in this section that remain unencumbered or unobligated at the close of the fiscal year shall not revert but shall remain available for expenditure for the purposes designated.

5. The state board of education shall adopt rules under chapter 17A for the administration of this section.

89 Acts, ch 135, §76; 90 Acts, ch 1272, §69, 70; 91 Acts, ch 267, §239, 240; 92 Acts, ch 1227, §21; 94 Acts, ch 1199, §47 – 49; 95 Acts, ch 209, §14; 96 Acts, ch 1186, §23; 96 Acts, ch 1219, §7 – 10; 97 Acts, ch 209, §17, 18; 98 Acts, ch 1133, §1; 98 Acts, ch 1215, §44; 98 Acts, ch 1223, §24, 25; 99 Acts, ch 192, §33; 99 Acts, ch 195, §11, 12; 2000 Acts, ch 1058, §32; 2000 Acts, ch 1198, §2 – 4, 6; 2007 Acts, ch 215, §62; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §100; 2011 Acts, ch 132, §18, 106; 2021 Acts, ch 59, §1, 2; 2022 Acts, ch 1149, §15, 16

Referred to in §256A.3

See annual Iowa Acts for provisions relating to the reduction in appropriations contained in this section for certain fiscal years

279.51A Classroom environment — behavioral challenges — reports of violence or assault.

1. A classroom teacher may clear students from the classroom only if necessary to prevent or terminate an imminent threat of bodily injury to a student or another person in the classroom.

2. If a classroom teacher clears all other students from the classroom in accordance with subsection 1, the school principal shall, by the end of the school day if possible but at least within twenty-four hours after the incident giving rise to the classroom clearance, notify the parents or guardians of all students assigned to the classroom that was cleared. The notification shall not identify, directly or indirectly, any students involved in the incident giving rise to the classroom clearance. The principal of the school shall request that the parent or guardian of the student whose behavior caused the classroom clearance meet with the principal, the classroom teacher, and other staff as appropriate.

3. If the student whose behavior caused the classroom clearance has an individualized education program or a behavioral intervention plan, the classroom teacher shall call for and be included in a review and potential revision of the student's individualized education program or behavioral intervention plan by the student's individualized education program team. The area education agency, in collaboration with the school district, may, when the parent or guardian meets with the individualized education program team during the reevaluation of the student's individualized education program, inform the parent or guardian of individual or family counseling services available in the area.

4. *a.* A classroom teacher employed by a school district shall report any threat of violence or incident of violence that results in injury or property damage or assault by a student enrolled in the school to the principal or the lead administrator of the school within twenty-four hours after the threat of violence or incident of violence occurs, and the classroom teacher may notify the parent or guardian of the student who made the threat of violence or caused the incident of violence, and the parent or guardian of the student to whom the threat of violence was made or the incident of violence occurred, of the threat of violence or incident of violence.

b. The principal or lead administrator of the school shall notify the parent or guardian of

the student enrolled in the school who made the threat of violence or caused the incident of violence that resulted in injury or property damage or assault, and the parent or guardian of the student to whom the threat of violence was made or the incident of violence occurred, of the threat of violence or incident of violence within twenty-four hours after the classroom teacher reports the threat of violence or incident of violence to the principal or lead administrator pursuant to paragraph *"a"*.

5. Each school district shall report to the department of education, in a manner prescribed by the department, an annual count of all incidents of violence that result in injury or property damage or assault by a student in a school building, on school grounds, or at a school-sponsored function, and any time a student is referred for the use of or transfer to a therapeutic classroom. The report shall include but not be limited to demographic information on students reported as victims and reported as perpetrators of incidents of violence that result in injury or property damage or assault, including but not limited to disaggregated information on race, gender, national origin, age, grade level, and disability, along with any other data required for the department to implement the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. No. 114-95, with appropriate safeguards to ensure student privacy. The department shall compile and summarize the reports, categorized by behavior, and shall submit the summary to the general assembly by November 1 annually. A teacher or administrator who submits a report in accordance with this section and who meets the requirements of section 280.27 or section 613.21 shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such action, as well as for participating in any administrative or judicial proceeding resulting from or relating to the report pursuant to the provisions of sections 280.27 and 613.21. The provisions of section 70A.29 shall apply to a teacher or administrator who submits a report in accordance with this section or who reports an incident of violence or assault to a local law enforcement agency in good faith and without fraudulent intent or the intent to deceive. Personal information regarding a student in a report submitted pursuant to this section shall be kept confidential as required under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g, and in the same manner as personal information in student records maintained, created, collected, or assembled by or for a school corporation or educational institution in accordance with section 22.7, subsection 1.

6. For purposes of this section, unless the context otherwise requires, *"bodily injury"* means physical pain, illness, or any other impairment of physical condition.

2020 Acts, ch 1108, §9; 2023 Acts, ch 96, §4
Referred to in §256B.2

279.52 Optional funding of asbestos projects.

1. The board of directors may pay the actual cost of an asbestos project from any funds in the general fund of the district, funds received from the physical plant and equipment levy, or moneys obtained through a federal asbestos loan program, to be repaid from any of the funds specified in this section over a three-year period.

2. For the purpose of this section, *"cost of an asbestos project"* includes the costs of inspection and reinspection, sampling, analysis, assessment, response actions, operations and maintenance, training, periodic surveillance, developing of management plans and recordkeeping requirements relating to the presence of asbestos in school buildings of the district and its removal or encapsulation.

89 Acts, ch 135, §77; 2000 Acts, ch 1072, §1; 2000 Acts, ch 1232, §64
Referred to in §279.53

279.53 Loan proceeds.

The proceeds of loans issued to school districts pursuant to section 279.48 or 279.52 shall be deposited into either the general fund of a school district or the physical plant and equipment levy fund. The board of directors shall expend the amount of the principal and interest due each year to maturity from the same fund into which the loan proceeds were deposited.

2008 Acts, ch 1041, §1; 2024 Acts, ch 1167, §16

279.54 School district income surtax. Repealed by 2000 Acts, ch 1072, §3.

279.55 through 279.57 Repealed by 2016 Acts, ch 1036, §15.

279.58 School dress code policies.

1. The general assembly finds and declares that the students and the administrative and instructional staffs of Iowa's public schools have the right to be safe and secure at school. Gang-related apparel worn at school draws attention away from the school's learning environment and directs it toward thoughts or expressions of violence, bigotry, hate, and abuse.

2. The board of directors of a school district may adopt, for the district or for an individual school within the district, a dress code policy that prohibits students from wearing gang-related or other specific apparel if the board determines that the policy is necessary for the health, safety, or positive educational environment of students and staff in the school environment or for the appropriate discipline and operation of the school. Adoption and enforcement of a dress code policy is not a violation of section 280.22.

95 Acts, ch 191, §20

279.59 Access by associations.

The board of directors of a school district shall provide not-for-profit, professional education associations that offer membership to teachers or administrators equal access to teacher or administrator mailboxes for distribution of professional literature.

2001 Acts, ch 159, §11

279.60 Assessments — access to data — reports.

1. Each school district shall administer the teaching strategies gold early childhood assessment to every resident prekindergarten or four-year-old child whose parent or guardian enrolls the child in the district, and shall administer a valid and reliable universal screening instrument, as prescribed by the department of education, to every kindergarten student enrolled in the district not later than the date specified in section 257.6, subsection 1. The assessment shall be aligned with state early learning standards and preschool programs shall be encouraged to administer the assessment at least at the beginning and end of the preschool program, with the assessment information entered into the statewide longitudinal data system. The department shall work to develop agreements with head start programs to incorporate similar information about four-year-old children served by head start into the statewide longitudinal data system.

2. The school district shall also collect information from each parent, guardian, or legal custodian of a kindergarten student enrolled in the district on whether the student attended preschool. Each school district shall report the preschool information collected to the department of education in the manner prescribed by the department not later than January 1 of that school year. The early childhood Iowa program in the department of health and human services shall have access to the raw data. The department of education shall review the information submitted pursuant to this section and shall submit its findings and recommendations annually in a report to the governor, the general assembly, the early childhood Iowa state board, and the early childhood Iowa area boards.

3. Each school district shall administer the Iowa assessments, created by the state university of Iowa, to all students enrolled in grade ten.

2005 Acts, ch 148, §16; 2006 Acts, ch 1152, §37; 2010 Acts, ch 1031, §306; 2012 Acts, ch 1119, §33; 2013 Acts, ch 121, §105, 107; 2021 Acts, ch 25, §8; 2022 Acts, ch 1021, §55; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1033

279.61 Individual career and academic plan — report.

1. For the school year beginning July 1, 2016, and each succeeding school year, the board of directors of each school district shall cooperate with each student enrolled in grade eight to develop an individualized career and academic plan to guide the student.

a. The plan shall be developed to achieve, at a minimum, the following:

(1) Prepare the student for successful completion of the core curriculum developed by

the state board of education pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 26, by the time the student graduates from high school.

(2) Identify the coursework and work-based learning needed in grades nine through twelve to support the student's postsecondary education and career options.

(3) Prepare the student to successfully complete, prior to graduation and following a timeline included in the plan, the essential components of a career information and decision-making system that meets standards adopted by the state board of education in accordance with subsection 4.

(4) Prior to graduation, advise the student how to successfully complete the free application for federal student aid.

b. The student's parent or guardian shall sign the student's career and academic plan, and the signed plan shall be included in the student's cumulative records.

2. The board of directors of each school district shall report annually to each student enrolled in grades nine through twelve in the school district, and, if the student is under the age of eighteen, to each student's parent or guardian, the student's progress toward meeting the goal of successfully completing the core curriculum and high school graduation requirements adopted by the state board of education pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 26, and toward achieving the goals of the student's career and academic plan.

3. The superintendent of each school district shall designate a team of education practitioners to carry out the duties assigned to the school district under this section. The team shall include but not be limited to a school counselor; teachers, including career and technical education teachers; and an individual responsible for coordinating work-based learning activities. The team shall regularly consult with representatives of employers, state and local workforce systems and centers, higher education institutions, and postsecondary career training programs.

4. The state board of education shall adopt rules setting forth standards for career information and decision-making systems. The rules adopted under this section shall establish an approval process for the approval of a vendor-provided career information and decision-making system which school districts may use in compliance with this section.

5. For the school year beginning July 1, 2016, and each succeeding school year, the board of directors of each school district shall submit to the local community an annual report on student utilization of the district's career information and decision-making system.

6. The director of the department of education shall monitor school districts for compliance with this section through the accreditation process established for school districts under section 256.11. If the department of education finds that a school district is not in substantial compliance with this section, the school district shall submit to the department for approval an action plan which sets forth the steps to be taken to ensure substantial compliance with this section. The department of education shall include in its annual condition of education report a review of school district and student performance required under this section.

7. The state board of education shall adopt rules to administer this section.

2005 Acts, ch 149, §3; 2006 Acts, ch 1152, §13; 2007 Acts, ch 214, §36; 2008 Acts, ch 1127, §4; 2016 Acts, ch 1108, §7, 9; 2022 Acts, ch 1134, §6, 7; 2023 Acts, ch 90, §2

Referred to in §256.11, 256.136, 256.137, 261E.4, 261E.6, 261E.8, 261E.9, 261E.10, 261E.13, 279.84B

279.62 Nonprofit school organizations.

The board of directors of a school district may take action to adopt a resolution to establish, and authorize expenditures for the operational support of, an entity or organization for the sole benefit of the school district and its students that is exempt from federal income taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The entity or organization shall reimburse the school district for expenditures made by the school district on behalf of the entity or organization. Prior to establishing such an entity or organization, the board of directors shall hold a public hearing on the proposal to establish such an entity or organization. Such an entity or organization shall maintain its records in accordance with chapter 22, except that the entity or organization shall provide for the anonymity of a donor at the written request of the donor. The board of directors of a school district shall annually

report to the local community the administrative expenditures, revenues, and activities of the entity or organization established by the school district pursuant to this section.

2005 Acts, ch 179, §92, 97; 2021 Acts, ch 19, §1
Referred to in §11.6

279.63 Financial report.

1. The board of directors of each public school district shall develop, maintain, and distribute a financial report on an annual basis. The objective of the financial report shall be to facilitate public access to a variety of information and statistics relating to the education funding received by the school district, enrollment and employment figures, and additional information.

2. The financial report shall contain, at a minimum, information relating to the following:

a. All property tax levies, income surtaxes, and local option sales taxes in place in the school district, listed by type of levy, rate, amount, duration, and notification of the maximum rate and amount limitations permitted by statute.

b. The amount of funding received on a per pupil basis through the operation of the school finance formula, and from any other state appropriation or state funding source.

c. Federal funding received per student or teacher population targeted to receive the funds, and any other federal grants or funding received by the district.

d. Teacher and administrator minimum, maximum, and average salary paid by the district, and the percentage and dollar increase under teacher and administrator salary and benefits settlement agreements.

e. Teacher and administrator health insurance and other alternative health benefit information, including the monthly premium, the percentage of the premium paid by the district, and the percentage of the premium paid by a teacher or administrator for single and family insurance.

f. Teacher and administrator employment statistics, including the annual number of licensed full-time and part-time teachers and administrators employed by the school district during the preceding five years, and including the number of teachers and administrators no longer employed by the district, and new hires.

g. Student enrollment levels during the preceding five years, including regular enrollment, special education enrollment, and enrollment adjustments made pursuant to supplementary weighting.

h. Such additional information as the school district may determine.

3. Copies of a school district's financial report for the previous school year shall be posted on an internet site maintained by the school district by January 1 of each school year. If the school district does not maintain or develop an internet site, the school district shall either distribute or post written copies of the financial report at specified locations throughout the school district.

2006 Acts, ch 1152, §14; 2009 Acts, ch 54, §9; 2013 Acts, ch 90, §257

279.64 Tax-sharing agreements.

A school district may enter into an agreement under chapter 28E with a contiguous school district for the purpose of sharing all or a percentage of school district taxes collected from that portion of valuation described in section 403.19, subsection 2, that is released by the municipality to the school district.

2006 Acts, ch 1156, §1
Referred to in §403.19

279.65 Student handbooks.

1. Annually, on or before the beginning of the school calendar, each school district shall publish one or more student handbooks and provide to the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in the school district a printed or electronic copy of a student handbook that includes basic information related to the expectations of students in the grade level or attendance center to which the student handbook applies, including information related to academics, attendance, discipline, health and safety, and daily schedules.

2. Each school district shall require that the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in

the school district acknowledge receipt of the applicable student handbook, either in writing or electronically.

2023 Acts, ch 96, §8
Referred to in §256E.7

279.65A Discipline of students who make threats of violence or cause incidents of violence.

The board of directors of each school district shall adopt, in collaboration with teachers and administrative staff employed by the school district, policies for different grade levels that describe how a school district may discipline a student for making a threat of violence or causing an incident of violence that results in injury or property damage or assault. All of the following shall apply to the policies:

1. The policies must incorporate strategies that are designed to correct the student's behavior.

2. The policies must provide for parent or guardian conferences, counseling sessions, or mental health counseling sessions, when appropriate. The policies must provide that the school district must receive the prior written consent of the student's parent or guardian before requiring the student to participate in a counseling session or a mental health counseling session.

3. The policies must be consistent with the provisions of chapter 256B, the administrative rules adopted by the state board for purposes of chapter 256B, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq., and the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended and codified in 29 U.S.C. §701 et seq.

4. The policies must provide for escalating levels of discipline each time the student makes a threat of violence or causes an incident of violence that results in injury or property damage or assault.

5. The policies must allow for the school district to select the level of discipline that the school district determines corresponds to the severity of the threat of violence or incident of violence.

6. The policies must allow the school district to suspend the student, permanently remove the student from a particular class, expel the student, or place the student in an alternative learning environment, including a therapeutic classroom, when appropriate.

7. The policies must require an individualized education program meeting if the student who made the threat of violence or caused the incident of violence that resulted in injury or property damage or assault has an individualized education program.

8. The policies must be published on the school district's internet site and in applicable student handbooks.

2023 Acts, ch 96, §7
Referred to in §256.9, 256E.7

279.66 Discipline and personal conduct standards.

1. The board of directors of a school district shall review and modify existing policies related to student discipline and student conduct that are designed to promote responsible behavior on school property and at school functions in order that the policy shall govern the conduct of students, teachers and other school personnel, and visitors; provide opportunities for students to exercise self-discipline and practice cooperative classroom behavior; and encourage students and practitioners to model fairness, equity, and respect. The policy shall specify the responsibilities of students, parents and guardians, and practitioners in creating an atmosphere where all individuals feel a sense of respect, safety, and belonging, and shall set forth the consequences for unacceptable behavior. The policy shall be published in the student handbook.

2. The board of directors of a school district shall include or reference in the student handbook guidance published pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 63, by the department of education for parents, guardians, and community members who have concerns about school districts or their governing boards.

2007 Acts, ch 214, §38; 2021 Acts, ch 170, §32

279.67 Competitive living wage.

It is the goal of this state that every employee of a public school corporation be provided with a competitive living wage.

2008 Acts, ch 1191, §57

279.68 Student progression — intensive reading instruction — reporting requirements.

1. *Reading proficiency, assessments, and parental notification.*

a. A school district shall assess all students enrolled in kindergarten through grade three at the beginning of each school year for their level of reading or reading readiness on locally determined or statewide assessments, as provided in section 256.7, subsection 31. If a student is not reading proficiently and is persistently at risk in reading, based upon the assessments administered in accordance with this paragraph, the school district shall provide intensive reading instruction to the student. The student's reading proficiency shall be periodically reassessed by locally determined or statewide assessments including periodic universal screening and annual standard-based assessments. The student shall continue to be provided with intensive reading instruction, at grade levels beyond grade three if necessary, until the student is reading at grade level, as determined by the student's consistently proficient performance on valid and reliable measures of reading ability. For purposes of this section, *"persistently at risk"* means the student has not met the grade-level benchmark on two consecutive screening assessments administered under this paragraph.

b. The parent or guardian of any student in kindergarten through grade three who is persistently at risk in reading shall be notified in writing and shall be provided all of the following:

(1) A description of the services currently provided to the student.

(2) A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports that the school district will provide to the student that are designed to remediate the identified areas in which the student is persistently at risk in reading.

(3) Strategies for parents and guardians to use in helping the student read proficiently, including but not limited to the promotion of parent-guided home reading.

(4) Regular updates regarding the student's progress toward reaching or exceeding the targeted level of reading proficiency.

c. (1) Each school district shall provide written notice to the parent or guardian of any student in kindergarten through grade six who is not reading proficiently of the student's level of reading or reading readiness. The written notice shall contain a description of the parent's or guardian's ability to request that the student be retained in the student's current grade level for the subsequent school year.

(2) A school district shall not promote a student who is not reading proficiently to the next grade level, and shall retain the student in the student's current grade level for the subsequent school year, if the student's parent or guardian submits to the school district a request that the student be retained in the student's current grade level pursuant to subparagraph (1).

d. A school district shall provide to students in kindergarten through the end of grade six who are not reading proficiently with personalized reading plans until the student is reading at grade level, as determined by the student's consistently proficient performance on valid and reliable measures of reading ability.

2. *Successful progression for early readers.* If funds are appropriated by the general assembly for purposes of implementing this subsection, a school district shall do all of the following:

a. Provide students who are persistently at risk in reading with intensive instructional services and supports, free of charge, to remediate the identified areas in which students are not proficient in reading, including a minimum of ninety minutes daily of scientific, research-based reading instruction and other strategies prescribed by the school district which may include but are not limited to the following:

(1) Small group instruction.

(2) Reduced teacher-student ratios.

(3) More frequent progress monitoring.

(4) Tutoring or mentoring.

(5) Extended school day, week, or year.

(6) Summer reading programs.

b. At regular intervals, apprise the parent or guardian of academic and other progress being made by the student and give the parent or guardian other useful information.

c. In addition to required reading enhancement and acceleration strategies, provide parents of students who are persistently at risk in reading with a plan outlined in a parental contract, including participation in regular parent-guided home reading.

d. Establish a reading enhancement and acceleration development initiative designed to offer intensive accelerated reading instruction to each kindergarten through grade three student who is persistently at risk in reading. The initiative shall comply with all of the following criteria:

(1) Be provided to all kindergarten through grade three students who are persistently at risk in reading. The assessment initiative shall measure phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

(2) Be provided during regular school hours in addition to the regular reading instruction.

(3) Provide a reading curriculum that meets guidelines adopted pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 31, and at a minimum has the following specifications:

(a) Assists students who are persistently at risk in reading to develop the skills to read at grade level. Assistance shall include but not be limited to strategies that formally address dyslexia, when appropriate. For purposes of this subparagraph division (a), *"dyslexia"* means a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin, is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities, and may include difficulties that typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction, as well as secondary consequences such as problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

(b) Provides skill development in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

(c) Includes a scientifically based and reliable assessment.

(d) Provides initial and ongoing analysis of each student's reading progress.

(e) Is implemented during regular school hours.

(f) Provides a curriculum in core academic subjects to assist the student in maintaining or meeting proficiency levels for the appropriate grade in all academic subjects.

e. Report to the department of education the specific intensive reading interventions and supports implemented by the school district pursuant to this section. The department shall annually prescribe the components of required or requested reports.

3. *Ensuring continuous improvement in reading proficiency.*

a. To ensure all children are reading proficiently by the end of third grade, each school district shall address reading proficiency, drawing upon information about students from assessments and reassessments conducted pursuant to subsection 1 and the prevalence of areas in which students are persistently at risk in reading identified by classroom, elementary school, and other student characteristics. Each school district shall review chronic early elementary absenteeism for its impact on literacy development. If more than fifteen percent of an attendance center's students are not reading proficiently and are persistently at risk in reading by the end of third grade, the school district shall develop and implement strategies to reduce that percentage, including school and community strategies to raise the percentage of students who are reading at grade level.

b. Each school district, subject to an appropriation of funds by the general assembly, shall provide professional development services to enhance the skills of elementary teachers in responding to children's unique reading issues and needs and to increase the use of evidence-based strategies.

2012 Acts, ch 1119, §34; 2014 Acts, ch 1077, §2; 2016 Acts, ch 1123, §2; 2016 Acts, ch 1132, §12, 13; 2017 Acts, ch 172, §27 – 30; 2020 Acts, ch 1048, §7; 2023 Acts, ch 90, §3; 2024 Acts, ch 1139, §2

Referred to in §256.7, 280.29

279.68A Student progression — mathematics proficiency.

1. Each school district shall assess all students enrolled in kindergarten through grade six at least three times each school year to determine the students' level of mathematics proficiency by administering a mathematics screener that is on the list developed by the department of education pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 74.

2. If, as the result of the assessments administered pursuant to subsection 1, a school district determines that a student is persistently at risk in mathematics, the school district shall do all of the following:

a. Assess the student's level of proficiency in mathematics at least every other week and implement mathematics interventions and supports.

b. Develop, in consultation with the student's parents or guardians, a personalized mathematics plan that identifies interventions and supports that will be used to help the student achieve proficiency in mathematics.

c. If the student is meeting expectations related to increases in the student's level of mathematics proficiency, provide the student with small group interventions.

d. If the student is not meeting expectations related to increases in the student's level of mathematics proficiency, provide the student with intensive interventions.

3. A school district shall provide the assessments, plans, and interventions described in subsection 2 to students enrolled in kindergarten through grade six who are persistently at risk in mathematics until the student performs at benchmark on the statewide summative assessment in mathematics or until the student performs at benchmark on two consecutive assessments administered pursuant to subsection 1, whichever occurs first.

4. For purposes of this section, "*persistently at risk*" means the student has not met the grade-level benchmark on two consecutive assessments administered pursuant to subsection 1.

5. The state board of education shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to administer this section.

2025 Acts, ch 121, §3
NEW section

279.69 School employees — background investigations.

1. Prior to hiring an applicant for a school employee position, a school district or accredited nonpublic school shall have access to and shall review the information in the Iowa court information system available to the general public, the sex offender registry information under section 692A.121 available to the general public, the central registry for child abuse information established under section 235A.14, and the central registry for dependent adult abuse information established under section 235B.5 for information regarding the applicant. A school district shall follow the same procedure by June 30, 2014, for each school employee employed by the school district as of July 1, 2013. A school district or accredited nonpublic school shall implement a consistent policy to follow the same procedure for each school employee employed by the school district or accredited nonpublic school on or after July 1, 2013, at least every five years after the school employee's initial date of hire. A school district or accredited nonpublic school shall not charge an employee for the cost of the registry checks conducted pursuant to this subsection. A school district or accredited nonpublic school shall maintain documentation demonstrating compliance with this subsection.

2. Being listed in the sex offender registry established under chapter 692A, the central registry for child abuse information established under section 235A.14, or the central registry for dependent adult abuse information established under section 235B.5 shall constitute grounds for the immediate suspension from duties of a school employee, pending a termination hearing by the board of directors of a school district or the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school. A termination hearing conducted pursuant to this subsection shall be limited to the question of whether the school employee was incorrectly listed in the registry.

3. For purposes of this section, "*school employee*" means an individual employed by a school district or an accredited nonpublic school, as applicable, including a part-time,

substitute, or contract employee. *"School employee"* does not include an individual subject to a background investigation pursuant to section 256.146, subsection 16, section 279.13, subsection 1, paragraph *"b"*, or section 321.375, subsection 2.

2013 Acts, ch 140, §137; 2023 Acts, ch 100, §6
Referred to in §256E.7, 273.3

279.70 Training on suicide prevention, adverse childhood experiences identification, and toxic stress response mitigation strategies.

1. For purposes of this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

a. "Adverse childhood experience" means a potentially traumatic event occurring in childhood that can have negative, lasting effects on an individual's health and well-being.

b. "Postvention" means the provision of crisis intervention, support, and assistance for those affected by a suicide or suicide attempt to prevent further risk of suicide.

2. By July 1, 2019, the board of directors of a school district shall require annual, evidence-based training at least one hour in length on suicide prevention and postvention for all school personnel who hold a license, certificate, authorization, or statement of recognition issued by the board of educational examiners and who have regular contact with students in kindergarten through grade twelve. The content of the training shall be based on nationally recognized best practices.

3. By July 1, 2019, the board of directors of a school district shall require annual, evidence-based, evidence-supported training on the identification of adverse childhood experiences and strategies to mitigate toxic stress response for all school personnel who hold a license, certificate, authorization, or statement of recognition issued by the board of educational examiners and who have regular contact with students in kindergarten through grade twelve. The content of the training shall be based on nationally recognized best practices.

2018 Acts, ch 1051, §2
Referred to in §256.7

279.70A Student identification cards — suicide prevention information.

A public school that issues identification cards to students in grades seven through twelve shall include on either side of the identification card the crisis hotline telephone and text numbers and the internet address for your life Iowa or the your life Iowa successor program. A public school that issues identification cards to students in grades five and six may include on either side of the identification card the crisis hotline telephone and text numbers and the internet address for your life Iowa or the your life Iowa successor program.

2023 Acts, ch 145, §1, 2
Section applies to student identification cards issued on or after July 1, 2023; 2023 Acts, ch 145, §2

279.71 Student online personal information protection.

1. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

a. "Attendance center" means a school district building that contains classrooms used for instructional purposes for elementary, middle, or secondary school students.

b. "Covered information" means personally identifiable information or material, or information that is linked to personally identifiable information or material, in any media or format that is not publicly available and is any of the following:

(1) Created by or provided to an operator by a student, or the student's parent or legal guardian, in the course of the student's, parent's, or legal guardian's use of the operator's site, service, or application for kindergarten through grade twelve school purposes.

(2) Created by or provided to an operator by an employee or agent of a school district or attendance center for kindergarten through grade twelve school purposes.

(3) Gathered by an operator through the operation of its site, service, or application for kindergarten through grade twelve school purposes and personally identifies a student, including but not limited to information in the student's educational record or electronic mail, first and last name, home address, telephone number, electronic mail address, or other information that allows physical or online contact, discipline records, test results, special education data, juvenile dependency records, grades, evaluations, criminal records,

medical records, health records, social security number, biometric information, disabilities, socioeconomic information, food purchases, political affiliations, religious information, text messages, documents, student identifiers, search activity, photos, voice recordings, or geolocation information.

c. "Interactive computer service" means that term as defined in 47 U.S.C. §230.

d. "Kindergarten through grade twelve school purposes" means purposes that are directed by or that customarily take place at the direction of a kindergarten through grade twelve attendance center, school district, or a practitioner employed by a school district, in the administration of school activities, including but not limited to instruction in the classroom or at home, administrative activities, and collaboration between students, school district or attendance center personnel, or parents, or are otherwise for the use and benefit of the school district or attendance center.

e. "Operator" means, to the extent that it is operating in this capacity, the operator of an internet site, online service, online application, or mobile application with actual knowledge that the site, service, or application is used primarily for kindergarten through grade twelve school purposes and was designed and marketed for such purposes.

f. "School district" means a public school district described in chapter 274.

g. "Targeted advertising" means presenting advertisements to a student where the advertisement is selected based on information obtained or inferred over time from that student's online behavior, usage of applications, or covered information. *"Targeted advertising"* does not include advertising to a student at an online location based upon that student's current visit to that location, or in response to that student's request for information or feedback, without the retention of that student's online activities or requests over time for the purpose of targeting subsequent ads.

2. *a.* An operator shall not knowingly do any of the following:

(1) Engage in targeted advertising on the operator's internet site, service, or application, or target advertising on any other internet site, service, or application if the targeting of the advertising is based on any information, including covered information and persistent unique identifiers, that the operator has acquired because of the use of that operator's internet site, service, or application for kindergarten through grade twelve school purposes.

(2) Use information, including persistent unique identifiers, created or gathered by the operator's internet site, service, or application, to amass a profile about a student except in furtherance of kindergarten through grade twelve school purposes. *"Amass a profile"* does not include the collection and retention of account information that remains under the control of the student, the student's parent or guardian, or kindergarten through grade twelve school.

(3) Sell or rent a student's information, including covered information. This subparagraph does not apply to the purchase, merger, or other type of acquisition of an operator by another entity, if the operator or successor entity complies with this section regarding previously acquired student information, or to national assessment providers if the provider secures the express written consent of the parent or student, given in response to clear and conspicuous notice, solely to provide access to employment, educational scholarships or financial aid, or postsecondary educational opportunities.

(4) Except as otherwise provided in subsection 4, disclose covered information unless the disclosure is made for the following purposes:

(a) In furtherance of the kindergarten through grade twelve school purpose of the internet site, service, or application, if the recipient of the covered information disclosed under this subparagraph division does not further disclose the information unless done to allow or improve operability and functionality of the operator's internet site, service, or application.

(b) To ensure legal and regulatory compliance or protect against liability.

(c) To respond to or participate in the judicial process.

(d) To protect the safety or integrity of users of the internet site or others or the security of the internet site, service, or application.

(e) For a kindergarten through grade twelve school, educational, or employment purpose requested by the student or the student's parent or guardian, provided that the information is not used or further disclosed for any other purpose.

(f) To a third party, if the operator contractually prohibits the third party from using any

covered information for any purpose other than providing the contracted service to or on behalf of the operator and requires the third party to protect student information to the same extent that the operator is required to do pursuant to this section, prohibits the third party from disclosing any covered information provided by the operator with subsequent third parties, and requires the third party to implement and maintain security procedures and practices consistent with current industry standards and all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.

b. Nothing in paragraph *"a"* shall prohibit the operator's use of information for maintaining, developing, supporting, improving, or diagnosing the operator's internet site, service, or application.

3. An operator shall do all of the following:

a. Implement and maintain security procedures and practices consistent with current industry standards and all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations appropriate to the nature of the covered information designed to protect that covered information from unauthorized access, destruction, use, modification, or disclosure.

b. Delete as soon as reasonably practicable, a student's covered information if the school district or attendance center requests deletion of covered information under the control of the school district or attendance center, unless a student or parent or guardian consents to the maintenance of the covered information.

4. An operator may use or disclose covered information of a student under all of the following circumstances:

a. If other provisions of federal or state law require the operator to disclose the information, and the operator complies with the requirements of federal and state law in protecting and disclosing that information.

b. If no covered information is used for advertising or to amass a profile on the student for purposes other than elementary, middle school, or high school purposes; for legitimate research purposes, as required by state or federal law and subject to the restrictions under applicable state and federal law; or as allowed by state or federal law and in furtherance of kindergarten through grade twelve school purposes or postsecondary educational purposes.

c. To a state or local educational agency, including kindergarten through grade twelve attendance centers and school districts, for kindergarten through grade twelve school purposes, as permitted by state or federal law.

5. This section does not prohibit an operator from doing any of the following:

a. Using covered information to improve educational products if that information is not associated with an identified student within the operator's internet site, service, or application or other internet sites, services, or applications owned by the operator.

b. Using covered information that is not associated with an identified student to demonstrate the effectiveness of the operator's products or services, including in the operator's marketing.

c. Sharing covered information that is not associated with an identified student for the development and improvement of educational internet sites, services, or applications.

d. Using recommendation engines to recommend to a student either of the following:

(1) Additional content relating to an educational, other learning, or employment opportunity purpose within an online site, service, or application if the recommendation is not determined in whole or in part by payment or other consideration from a third party.

(2) Additional services relating to an educational, other learning, or employment opportunity purpose within an online site, service, or application if the recommendation is not determined in whole or in part by payment or other consideration from a third party.

e. Responding to a student's request for information or for feedback without the information or response being determined in whole or in part by payment or other consideration from a third party.

6. This section does not do any of the following:

a. Limit the authority of a law enforcement agency to obtain any content or information from an operator as authorized by law or under a court order.

b. Limit the ability of an operator to use student data, including covered information, for adaptive learning or customized student learning purposes.

c. Apply to general audience internet sites, general audience online services, general audience online applications, or general audience mobile applications, even if login credentials created for an operator's internet site, service, or application may be used to access those general audience internet sites, services, or applications.

d. Limit service providers from providing internet connectivity to attendance centers or students and students' families.

e. Prohibit an operator of an internet site, online service, online application, or mobile application from marketing educational products directly to parents if the marketing did not result from the use of covered information obtained by the operator through the provision of services covered under this section.

f. Impose a duty upon a provider of an electronic store, gateway, marketplace, or other means of purchasing or downloading software or applications to review or enforce compliance with this section on those applications or software.

g. Impose a duty on a provider of an interactive computer service to review or enforce compliance with this section by third-party content providers.

h. Prohibit students from downloading, exporting, transferring, saving, or maintaining the students' own student data or documents.

2018 Acts, ch 1042, §1

279.72 Training on dyslexia.

By July 1, 2024, the board of directors of a school district shall require all persons employed by the school district who hold a teaching license with an endorsement for prekindergarten, prekindergarten or elementary special education, or prekindergarten through grade three levels issued under chapter 256, subchapter VII, part 3, all practitioners and paraprofessionals assigned as Title I teachers and Title I paraprofessionals under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. No. 114-95, and all practitioners endorsed to teach English as a second language to complete the Iowa reading research center dyslexia overview module. Such persons employed by the school district after July 1, 2024, shall complete the module within one year of the employee's initial date of hire.

2020 Acts, ch 1048, §8; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §2585

279.73 Intellectual freedom — protection — complaints.

1. The board of directors of each school district shall protect the intellectual freedom of the school district's students and practitioners and shall establish and publicize policies that protect students and faculty from discrimination based on speech. A person shall not retaliate against a person who files a complaint for a violation of this section. If the person who files a complaint for a violation of this section is an employee of the school district, the provisions of section 70A.29 shall apply.

2. If the board of directors of the school district or a court finds that an employee of the school district who holds a license, certificate, statement of recognition, or authorization issued by the board of educational examiners under chapter 256, subchapter VII, part 3, discriminated against a student or employee in violation of this section, the employee found to be in violation under this section shall be subject to a hearing conducted by the board of educational examiners pursuant to section 256.146, subsection 13, which may result in disciplinary action and the employee's employment may be terminated.

2021 Acts, ch 130, §5; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §2586

Referred to in §256.11, 256.146

279.74 Training and curriculum prohibited — specific defined concepts.

1. For purposes of this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

a. *"Race or sex scapegoating"* means the same as defined in section 261H.8.

b. *"Race or sex stereotyping"* means the same as defined in section 261H.8.

c. *"Specific defined concepts"* means the same as defined in section 261H.8.

2. Each school district may continue training that fosters a workplace and learning environment that is respectful of all employees and students. However, the superintendent of each school district shall ensure that any curriculum or mandatory staff or student

training provided by an employee of the school district or by a contractor hired by the school district does not teach, advocate, encourage, promote, or act upon specific stereotyping and scapegoating toward others on the basis of demographic group membership or identity. This subsection shall not be construed as preventing an employee or contractor who teaches any curriculum or who provides mandatory training from responding to questions regarding specific defined concepts raised by participants in the training.

3. School district diversity and inclusion efforts shall discourage students of the school district from discriminating against another by political ideology or any characteristic protected under the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, Pub. L. No. 88-352, as amended, and applicable state law. Each school district shall prohibit its employees from discriminating against students or employees by political ideology or any characteristic protected under the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, Pub. L. No. 88-352, as amended, and applicable state law.

4. This section shall not be construed to do any of the following:

a. Inhibit or violate the first amendment rights of students or faculty, or undermine a school district's duty to protect to the fullest degree intellectual freedom and free expression. The intellectual vitality of students and faculty shall not be infringed under this section.

b. Prevent a school district from promoting racial, cultural, ethnic, intellectual, or academic diversity or inclusiveness, provided such efforts are consistent with the provisions of this section, chapter 216, and other applicable law.

c. Prohibit discussing specific defined concepts as part of a larger course of academic instruction.

d. Create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the state of Iowa, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

e. Prohibit a state or federal court or agency of competent jurisdiction from ordering a training or remedial action containing discussions of specific defined concepts as a remedial action due to a finding of discrimination, including discrimination based on race or sex.

f. Prohibit the use of curriculum that teaches the topics of sexism, slavery, racial oppression, racial segregation, or racial discrimination, including topics relating to the enactment and enforcement of laws resulting in sexism, racial oppression, segregation, and discrimination.

2021 Acts, ch 163, §3
Referred to in §256.11

279.75 Training for equity coordinators.

The board of directors of a school district shall provide training on free speech under the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States developed and distributed pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 64, annually to any equity coordinator employed by the school district.

2021 Acts, ch 170, §33
Referred to in §256.9

279.76 Health examinations, surveys, and screenings — prohibition.

1. *a.* Each school district is prohibited from administering or conducting an invasive physical examination of a student, a student health screening that is not required by state or federal law, or a formal examination or survey of a student that is designed to assess the student's mental, emotional, or physical health that is not required by state or federal law, without first acquiring the written consent of the student's parent or guardian. This section applies only to a minor child in the direct care of a parent or guardian, and does not apply to an emancipated minor or a minor who is not residing with the parent or guardian.

b. Each school district shall give written notice to a student's parent or guardian of an examination or survey of the student required by state or federal law that is designed to assess the student's mental, emotional, or physical health not less than seven days prior to the examination or survey. The notice shall include a copy of the examination or survey or a link to an internet site where the parent or guardian may access the examination or survey.

c. This subsection shall not apply to a hearing, dental, or vision screening or examination.

2. This section shall not be construed to prohibit a school district from conducting health screenings or invasive physical examinations in emergent care situations or from cooperating in a child abuse assessment commenced in accordance with section 232.71B.

3. For purposes of this section:

a. "*Emergent care situation*" means a sudden or unforeseen occurrence or onset of a medical or behavioral condition that could result in serious injury or harm to a student or others in the event immediate medical attention is not provided. "*Emergent care situation*" includes the need to screen a student or others for symptoms or exposures during an outbreak or public health event of concern as designated by the department of health and human services.

b. "*Invasive physical examination*" means any medical examination that involves the exposure of private body parts or any act during such examination that includes incision, insertion, or injection into the body, but does not include a hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening.

c. "*Student health screening*" means an intentionally planned, periodic process to identify if students may be at risk for a health concern and to determine if a referral for an in-depth assessment is needed to consider appropriate health services. "*Student health screening*" does not include an episodic, individual screening done in accordance with professional licensed practice.

2022 Acts, ch 1036, §3; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1034; 2023 Acts, ch 91, §12; 2024 Acts, ch 1039, §1
Referred to in §256E.7, 256F.4

279.77 Transparency — publication of school district information.

1. Each school district shall publish all of the following information related to the current school year on the school district's internet site:

a. A detailed explanation of the procedures or policies in effect for the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the school district to request the removal of a book, article, outline, handout, video, or other educational material that is available to students in the classroom or in a library operated by the school district. Each school district shall prominently display the detailed explanation on the school district's internet site.

b. A detailed explanation of the procedures or policies in effect to request the review of decisions made by the board of directors of the school district, including the petition process established pursuant to section 279.8B.

2. The board of directors of each school district shall adopt a policy describing the procedures for the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the school district or a resident of the school district to review the instructional materials used in classrooms in the school district. The policy shall include a process for a student's parent or guardian to request that the student not be provided with certain instructional materials. The policy shall be prominently displayed on the school district's internet site and the board of directors of the school district shall, at least annually, provide a written or electronic copy of the policy to the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in the school district. For purposes of this section, "*instructional materials*" means either printed or electronic textbooks and related core materials that are written and published primarily for use in elementary school and secondary school instruction and are required by a state educational agency or local educational agency for use by students in the student's classes by the teacher of record. "*Instructional materials*" does not include lesson plans.

3. Each school district shall make available on the school district's internet site a comprehensive list of all books available to students in libraries operated by the school district. However, for school years beginning prior to July 1, 2025, if the school district does not use an electronic catalog, the school district may request a waiver from this requirement from the department of education.

4. The identity of a parent or guardian who requests the removal of a book, article, outline, handout, video, or other educational material that is available to students in the classroom or in a library operated by the school district pursuant to subsection 1, paragraph "*a*", shall be confidential and shall not be a public record subject to disclosure under chapter 22.

5. This section shall not be construed to require a school district to do any of the following:

a. Reproduce educational materials that were not created by a person employed by the board of directors.

b. Distribute any educational materials in a manner that would infringe on the intellectual property rights of any person.

2023 Acts, ch 91, §13

279.78 Parental rights in education.

1. As used in this section:

a. *"Gender identity"* means an individual's subjective identification as male, female, or neither male nor female. Gender identity shall not be considered a synonym or substitute for sex or gender.

b. *"License"* means the same as defined in section 256.145.

c. *"Practitioner"* means the same as defined in section 256.145.

2. A school district shall not knowingly give false or misleading information to the parent or guardian of a student regarding the student's gender identity or intention to transition to a gender that is different than the sex listed on a student's official birth certificate or certificate issued upon adoption if the certificate was issued at or near the time of the student's birth.

3. If a student enrolled in a school district requests an accommodation that is intended to affirm the student's gender identity from a licensed practitioner employed by the school district, including a request that the licensed practitioner address the student using a name or pronoun that is different than the name or pronoun assigned to the student in the school district's registration forms or records, the licensed practitioner shall report the student's request to an administrator employed by the school district, and the administrator shall report the student's request to the student's parent or guardian.

4. If, after investigation, the department of education determines that a school district or an employee of a school district has violated this section, the school district or employee of the school district, as applicable, shall be subject to the following:

a. For the first violation of this section, the department of education shall issue a written warning to the board of directors of the school district or the employee, as applicable.

b. (1) For a second or subsequent violation of this section, if the department of education finds that a school district knowingly violated this section, the superintendent of the school district shall be subject to a hearing conducted by the board of educational examiners pursuant to section 256.146, subsection 13, which may result in disciplinary action.

(2) For a second or subsequent violation of this section, if the department of education finds that an employee of the school district who holds a license, certificate, authorization, or statement of recognition issued by the board of educational examiners knowingly violated this section, the employee shall be subject to a hearing conducted by the board of educational examiners pursuant to section 256.146, subsection 13, which may result in disciplinary action.

5. The state board of education shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to administer this section.

2023 Acts, ch 91, §14; 2025 Acts, ch 1, §27
Referred to in §256E.7, 256F.4
Subsection 1, paragraph a amended

279.79 Surveys — required parent or guardian consent.

1. The board of directors of a school district must receive the prior written consent of a student's parent or guardian before requiring a student to take part in any survey, analysis, activity, or evaluation that reveals information concerning any of the following about the student or the student's family, whether the information is personally identifiable or not:

a. The political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent or guardian.

b. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.

c. Sexual behavior, orientation, or attitudes.

d. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.

e. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom the student has close familial relationships.

f. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of attorneys, physicians, or ministers.

g. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent or guardian.

h. Income, except when required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program.

2. An employee of a school district, or a contractor engaged by a school district, shall not answer any question pertaining to any particular student enrolled in the school district in any survey related to the social or emotional abilities, competencies, or characteristics of the student, unless the board of directors of the school district satisfies all of the following requirements:

a. The board of directors of the school district provides to the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in the school district detailed information related to the survey, including the person who created the survey, the person who sponsors the survey, how information generated by the survey is used, and how information generated by the survey is stored.

b. The board of directors of the school district receives the written consent from a student's parent or guardian authorizing the employee or contractor to answer questions in the survey pertaining to the student.

3. Subsection 2 shall not be construed to prohibit an employee of a school district, or a contractor engaged by a school district, from answering questions pertaining to any particular student enrolled in the school district as part of the process of developing or implementing an individualized education program for such student.

2023 Acts, ch 91, §15
Referred to in §256E.7, 256F.4

279.80 Sexual orientation and gender theory — prohibited instruction.

1. As used in this section:

a. "*Gender theory*" means the concept that an individual may properly be described in terms of an internal sense of gender that is incongruent with the individual's sex as either male or female. "*Gender theory*" includes the concept that an individual who experiences distress or discomfort with the individual's sex should identify as and live consistent with the individual's internal sense of gender, and that an individual can delay natural puberty and develop sex characteristics of the opposite sex through the use of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and surgical procedures.

b. "*Sexual orientation*" means the same as defined in section 216.2.

2. A school district shall not provide any program, curriculum, test, survey, questionnaire, promotion, or instruction relating to gender theory or sexual orientation to students in kindergarten through grade six.

2023 Acts, ch 91, §16; 2025 Acts, ch 1, §28
Referred to in §256.11, 256E.7, 256F.4, 279.50
Section amended

279.81 Library materials review committee.

The board of directors of a school district shall not allow a student to serve on any committee that determines, or provides recommendations related to, whether a material in a library operated by the school district should be removed.

2023 Acts, ch 91, §17
Referred to in §256E.7, 256F.4

279.82 Intra-district enrollment.

1. A parent or guardian of a student enrolled in a school district may enroll the student in another attendance center within the same school district that offers classes at the student's grade level in the manner provided in this section if, as a result of viewing a recording created by a video surveillance system or a report from a school district employee, and consistent with the requirements of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g, and any regulations promulgated pursuant to that Act, the school district determines that any

student enrolled in the school district has harassed or bullied the student. For purposes of this subsection, *"harassment"* and *"bullying"* mean the same as defined in section 280.28.

2. *a.* A parent or guardian shall send notification to the school district, on forms prescribed by the department of education, that the parent or guardian intends to enroll the student in another attendance center within the same school district that offers classes at the student's grade level.

b. The school district shall enroll the student in another attendance center within the same school district unless the attendance center has insufficient classroom space for the student. If the request is granted, the school district shall transmit a copy of the form to the parent or guardian within five days after the school district's action. The parent or guardian may withdraw the request at any time prior to the school district's action on the request. A denial of a request by the school district may be appealed to the board of directors of the school district.

c. The board of directors of each school district shall adopt a policy that defines the term *"insufficient classroom space"* for that district.

3. A request under this section is for a period of not less than one year. A student who attends school in another attendance center pursuant to this section may return to the original attendance center and enroll at any time, once the parent or guardian has notified the school district in writing of the decision to enroll the student in the original attendance center.

4. If a request filed under this section is for a student requiring special education under chapter 256B, the request to transfer to another attendance center shall only be granted if all of the following conditions are met:

a. The attendance center maintains a special education instructional program that is appropriate to meet the student's educational needs and the enrollment of the student in the attendance center would not cause the size of the class or caseload in that special education instructional program in the attendance center to exceed the maximum class size or caseload established pursuant to rules adopted by the state board of education.

b. If the student would be assigned to a general education class, there is sufficient classroom space for the general education class to which the student would be assigned.

5. If a student, for whom a request to transfer has been filed with the school district, has been suspended or expelled in the school district, the student shall not be permitted to transfer until the student has been reinstated. Once the student has been reinstated, however, the student shall be permitted to transfer in the same manner as if the student had not been suspended or expelled. If a student, for whom a request to transfer has been filed with a school district, is expelled in the school district, the student shall be permitted to transfer under this section if the student applies for and is reinstated. However, if the student applies for reinstatement but is not reinstated in the school district, the school district may deny the request to transfer. The decision of the school district may be appealed to the board of directors of the school district.

6. A student who is enrolled in another attendance center within the same school district pursuant to this section is eligible to participate immediately in varsity interscholastic athletic contests and athletic competitions as a member of a team from the receiving attendance center.

7. This section shall not be construed to prohibit a school district from allowing the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the school district to enroll the student in another attendance center within the same school district that offers classes at the student's grade level pursuant to a policy adopted by the board of directors of the school district that allows for transfers for reasons in addition to those allowed pursuant to this section.

8. The state board of education shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to administer this section.

2023 Acts, ch 91, §18, 21

279.83 Notice to parents or guardians related to physical injuries, harassment, or bullying.

After following the policy adopted by the school district pursuant to section 280.28, subsection 3, an employee of a school district may notify the parents or guardians of a

student enrolled in the school district in writing or by electronic mail within twenty-four hours after the employee witnesses, either directly or indirectly by viewing a recording created by a video surveillance system, any student enrolled in the school district harassing or bullying the student. For purposes of this section, *"harassment"* and *"bullying"* mean the same as defined in section 280.28.

2023 Acts, ch 91, §19, 21

279.84 School security.

1. For purposes of this section:

a. *"Private school security officer"* means an individual employed by a private security business who possesses a permit to carry weapons issued under section 724.6.

b. *"Private security business"* means the same as defined in section 80A.1.

c. *"School resource officer"* means any of the following:

(1) A peace officer as defined in section 801.4.

(2) A reserve peace officer as defined in section 80D.1A.

2. The board of directors of each school district with a total enrollment of at least eight thousand students shall employ, or retain the services of, at least one private school security officer or school resource officer to guard each attendance center where students enrolled in grade nine, grade ten, grade eleven, or grade twelve regularly attend classes, unless a majority of the members of the board of directors of the school district vote to not employ or retain a private school security officer or a school resource officer. A private school security officer employed or retained by the board of directors of a school district pursuant to this subsection shall be required to participate in the annual live scenario training and quarterly live firearms training approved by the department of public safety pursuant to section 724.6, subsection 1, paragraph *"a"*, subparagraph (3).

3. The board of directors of each school district with a total enrollment of less than eight thousand students is encouraged to employ, or retain the services of, at least one private school security officer or school resource officer to guard each attendance center where students enrolled in grade nine, grade ten, grade eleven, or grade twelve regularly attend classes. A private school security officer employed or retained by the board of directors of a school district pursuant to this subsection shall be required to participate in the annual live scenario training and quarterly live firearms training approved by the department of public safety pursuant to section 724.6, subsection 1, paragraph *"a"*, subparagraph (3).

2024 Acts, ch 1084, §1; 2024 Acts, ch 1179, §10, 13

279.84A Mobile panic alert systems.

A school district may purchase, install, and operate a mobile panic alert system if all of the following requirements are satisfied:

1. The system is capable of connecting different emergency services technologies to ensure real-time coordination between school employees and law enforcement agencies.

2. The system is capable of integrating with local public safety answering point infrastructure and existing land mobile radio platform technology to transmit 911 calls and mobile activations.

2024 Acts, ch 1179, §2, 13

279.84B College and career transition counselors or coordinators — information related to completion of postsecondary programs.

1. The board of directors of each school district shall provide each student enrolled in the school district in grades eleven and twelve who has expressed an interest in postsecondary education, including in the student's individual career and academic plan created pursuant to section 279.61, with all of the following:

a. A link to the most recent copy of the report published by the state board of regents pursuant to section 262.9, subsection 38.

b. A link to the Iowa student outcomes internet site maintained by the department of education.

2. If the school district employs a college and career transition counselor or coordinator,

the college and career transition counselor or coordinator shall be responsible for providing the information described in subsection 1.

3. For purposes of this section, *"college and career transition counselor or coordinator"* means a licensed school counselor or an appropriately trained individual responsible for providing direct services to students, parents, families, schools, and postsecondary institutions to support college preparation and postsecondary success, such as college preparation, financial aid processing, and transition to postsecondary institution enrollment.

2024 Acts, ch 1124, §3

279.85 School bonds — restrictions.

Notwithstanding sections 298.21 and 423F.4, the board of directors of a school district shall not issue negotiable, interest-bearing school bonds for borrowing money for purposes of constructing a new school building or site to be used primarily for interscholastic athletic contests or competitions, or renovating or improving a school building or site that is currently used primarily for interscholastic athletic contests or competitions, unless all of the attendance centers of the school corporation are in compliance with the provisions of the state building code, adopted on or after May 17, 2024, related to the construction of new attendance centers and the renovation of existing attendance centers that incorporate standards designed to increase the safety of schools and school infrastructure.

2024 Acts, ch 1179, §3, 13, 14

Section applies to school bonds authorized by voters at an election held after July 1, 2024, and projects approved by the board of directors of a school district after July 1, 2024; 2024 Acts, ch 1179, §14

279.86 Purchase of security equipment.

1. A school district shall install and maintain school infrastructure, as defined in section 423F.3, subsection 6, paragraph *"a"*, subparagraph (5), so that such school infrastructure performs as expected for the operational life of the school infrastructure.

2. A school district shall not purchase school infrastructure, as defined in section 423F.3, subsection 6, paragraph *"a"*, subparagraph (5), from an organization that is not included on the list established by the department of homeland security and emergency management pursuant to section 423F.3, subsection 6, paragraph *"a"*, subparagraph (5), subparagraph division (a), subparagraph subdivision (vii), subparagraph part (C).

3. If a school district purchases school infrastructure, as defined in section 423F.3, subsection 6, paragraph *"a"*, subparagraph (4), or other school safety and security equipment, including radios, cameras, panic buttons, automated locks, or shatter-resistant window film, the school district shall install and maintain in an operable condition such school infrastructure or school safety and security equipment.

2024 Acts, ch 1179, §4, 13, 15

Section applies to school infrastructure purchased by a school district on or after May 17, 2024; 2024 Acts, ch 1179, §15

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 70, 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 70, paragraph *"a"*, by doing one of the following:

a. Affixing the seal described in section 256.9, subsection 70, 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 70, paragraph *"b"*, is affixed.

2025 Acts, ch 63, §3

Referred to in §256.9

NEW section

279.88 Limitation on use of personal electronic devices.

1. Commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2025, the board of directors of each school district shall adopt policies regarding student use of personal electronic devices during school hours that restrict student use of such devices during classroom instructional time. The policies must meet all of the following requirements:

a. Identify policies and information related to various educational devices and technologies that will be made available to students for instructional purposes.

b. Identify the methods that a parent or guardian of a student may use to communicate with the student during school hours or while the student is participating in a school-sponsored activity.

c. Identify the methods that a parent or guardian of a student may use to communicate with the student during an emergency situation.

d. Include protocols that the school district will use to securely store a student's personal electronic device when such device is in the possession of the school district.

e. Specify the discipline associated with a student's violation of the policies, including the discipline associated with a student's use of a personal electronic device during classroom instruction or during the administration of an assessment.

f. Establish a process through which a student's parent or guardian may petition the school district to allow the student to maintain access to the student's personal electronic device during the portion of the school day in which classroom instructional time is delivered if the student's parent or guardian can establish that there is a legitimate reason related to the student's physical or mental health for the student to maintain access to the device during such time.

g. Allow a student who has an individualized education program, or a plan under section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. §794, to maintain access to the student's personal electronic device during the portion of the school day in which classroom instructional time is delivered if the student's individualized education program, or plan under section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. §794, requires the student to maintain such access.

2. The board of directors of a school district may adopt policies that limit student use of personal electronic devices during school hours, including the use of such devices during classroom instructional time, that are more stringent than the model policies developed and distributed by the director of the department of education pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 69.

3. For purposes of this section, "*personal electronic device*" includes but is not limited to electronic communication equipment, mobile phones, smart phones, video game devices, and portable media players.

4. The state board of education may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to administer this section.

2025 Acts, ch 36, §2, 4
Referred to in §256.9
NEW section