

256.9 Duties of director.

Except for the college student aid commission and the public broadcasting board and division, the director shall:

1. Carry out programs and policies as determined by the state board.
2. Recommend to the state board rules necessary to implement programs and services of the department.
3. Establish divisions of the department as necessary or desirable in addition to divisions required by law. The organization of the department shall promote coordination of functions and services relating to administration, supervision, and improvement of instruction.
4. Employ personnel and assign duties and responsibilities of the department. The director shall appoint a deputy director and division administrators deemed necessary. They shall be appointed on the basis of their professional qualifications, experience in administration, and background. Members of the professional staff are not subject to the merit system provisions of chapter 8A, subchapter IV, and are subject to section 256.10.
5. Transmit to the department of management information about the distribution of state and federal funds pursuant to state law and rules of the department.
6. Develop a budget and transmit to the department of management estimates of expenditure requirements for all functions and services of the department.
7. Accept and administer federal funds apportioned to the state for educational and rehabilitation purposes and accept surplus commodities for distribution when made available by a governmental agency. The director may also accept grants and gifts on behalf of the department.
8. Cooperate with other governmental agencies and political subdivisions in the development of rules and enforcement of laws relating to education.
9. Conduct research on education matters.
10. Submit to each regular session of the general assembly recommendations relating to revisions or amendments to the school laws.
11. Approve, coordinate, and supervise the use of electronic data processing by school districts, area education agencies, and merged areas.
12. Act as the executive officer of the state board.
13. Act as custodian of a seal for the director's office and authenticate all true copies of decisions or documents.
14. Appoint advisory committees, in addition to those required by law, to advise in carrying out the programs, services, and functions of the department.
15. Provide the same educational supervision for the schools maintained by the director of human services as is provided for the public schools of the state and make recommendations to the director of human services for the improvement of the educational program in those institutions.
16. Interpret the school laws and rules relating to the school laws.

17. Hear and decide appeals arising from the school laws not otherwise specifically granted to the state board.
18. Prepare forms and procedures as necessary to be used by area education agency boards, district boards, school officials, principals, teachers, and other employees, and to insure uniformity, accuracy, and efficiency in keeping records in both pupil and cost accounting, the execution of contracts, and the submission of reports, and notify the area education agency board, district board, or school authorities when a report has not been filed in the manner or on the dates prescribed by law or by rule that the school will not be accredited until the report has been properly filed.
19. Determine by inspection, supervision, or otherwise, the condition, needs, and progress of the schools under the supervision of the department, make recommendations to the proper authorities for the correction of deficiencies and the educational and physical improvement of the schools, and request a state audit of the accounts of a school district, area education agency, school official, or school employee handling school funds when it is apparent that an audit should be made.
20. Preserve reports, documents, and correspondence that may be of a permanent value, which shall be open for inspection under reasonable conditions.
21. Keep a record of the business transacted by the director.
22. Endeavor to promote among the people of the state an interest in education.
23. Classify and define the various schools under the supervision of the department, formulate suitable courses of study, and publish and distribute the classifications and courses of study and promote their use.
24. Report biennially to the governor, at the time provided by law, the condition of the schools under the department's supervision, including the number of school districts, the number and value of schoolhouses, the enrollment and attendance in each district for the previous year, any measures proposed for the improvement of the public schools, financial and statistical information of public importance, and general information relating to educational affairs and conditions within the state or elsewhere. The report shall also review the programs and services of the department.
25. Direct area education agency administrators to arrange for professional teachers' meetings, demonstration teaching, or other field work for the improvement of instruction as best fits the needs of the public schools in each area.
26. Cause to be printed in book form, during the months of June and July in the year 1987 and every four years thereafter, if deemed necessary, all school laws then in force with forms, rulings, decisions, notes, and suggestions which may aid school officers in the proper discharge of their duties. A sufficient number shall be furnished to school officers, directors, superintendents, area administrators, members of the general assembly, and others as reasonably requested.
27. Direct that any amendments or changes in the school laws, with necessary notes and suggestions, be distributed as prescribed in subsection 26 annually.
28. Prepare and submit to each regular session of the general assembly a report containing the recommendations of the state board as to revisions, amendments, and new provisions of school laws.
29. Reserved.
30. Approve the salaries of area education agency administrators.
31. Develop criteria and procedures to assist in the identification of at-risk children and their developmental

needs.

32. Develop, in conjunction with the child development coordinating council or other similar agency, child-to-staff ratio recommendations and standards for at-risk programs based on national literature and test results and Iowa longitudinal test results.

33. Develop programs in conjunction with the center for early development education to be made available to the school districts to assist them in identification of at-risk children and their developmental needs.

34. Conduct or direct the area education agency to conduct feasibility surveys and studies, if requested under section 282.11, of the school districts within the area education agency service areas and all adjacent territory, including but not limited to contiguous districts in other states, for the purpose of evaluating and recommending proposed whole grade sharing agreements requested under section 282.7 and section 282.10, subsections 1 and 4. The surveys and studies shall be revised periodically to reflect reorganizations which may have taken place in the area education agency, adjacent territory, and contiguous districts in other states. The surveys and studies shall include a cover page containing recommendations and a short explanation of the recommendations. The factors to be used in determining the recommendations include, but are not limited to:

- a. The possibility of long-term survival of the proposed alliance.
- b. The adequacy of the proposed educational programs versus the educational opportunities offered through a different alliance.
- c. The financial strength of the new alliance.
- d. Geographical factors.
- e. The impact of the alliance on surrounding schools.

Copies of the completed surveys and studies shall be transmitted to the affected districts' school boards.

35. Develop standards and instructional materials to do all of the following:

- a. Assist school districts in developing appropriate before and after school programs for elementary school children.
- b. Assist school districts in the development of child care services and programs to complement half-day and all-day kindergarten programs.
- c. Assist school districts in the development of appropriate curricula for all-day, everyday kindergarten programs.
- d. Assist school districts in the development of appropriate curricula for the early elementary grades one through three.
- e. Assist prekindergarten instructors in the development of appropriate curricula and teaching practices.

Standards and materials developed shall include materials which employ developmentally appropriate practices and incorporate substantial parental involvement. The materials and standards shall include alternative teaching approaches including collaborative teaching and alternative dispute resolution training. The department shall consult with the child development coordinating council, the state child care advisory council, the department of human services, the state board of regents center for early developmental

education, the area education agencies, the department of child development in the college of family and consumer sciences at Iowa state university of science and technology, the early childhood elementary division of the college of education at the university of Iowa, and the college of education at the university of northern Iowa, in developing these standards and materials.

For purposes of this section "*substantial parental involvement*" means the physical presence of parents in the classroom, learning experiences designed to enhance the skills of parents in parenting and in providing for their children's learning and development, or educational materials which may be borrowed for home use.

36. Develop, or direct the area education agencies to develop, a statewide technical assistance support network to provide school districts or district subcontractors under section 279.49 with assistance in creating developmentally appropriate programs under section 279.49.

37. Administer and approve grants to school districts which provide innovative in-school programming for at-risk children in grades kindergarten through three, in addition to regular school curricula for children participating in the program, with the funds for the grants being appropriated for at-risk children by the general assembly. Grants approved shall be for programs in schools with a high percentage of at-risk children. Preference shall be given to programs which integrate at-risk children with the rest of the school population, which agree to limit class size and pupil-teacher ratios, which include parental involvement, which demonstrate community support, which cooperate with other community agencies, which provide appropriate guidance counseling services, and which use teachers with an early childhood endorsement. Grant programs shall contain an evaluation component that measures student outcomes.

38. Develop a model written publications code including reasonable provisions for the regulation of the time, place, and manner of student expression.

39. Provide educational resources and technical assistance to schools relating to the implementation of the nutritional guidelines for food and beverages sold on public school grounds or on the grounds of nonpublic schools receiving funds under section 283A.10.

40. Develop an application and review process for the identification of quality instructional centers at the community colleges. The process developed shall include but is not limited to the development of criteria for the identification of a quality instructional center as well as for the enhancement of other program offerings in order to upgrade programs to quality instructional center status. Criteria established shall be designed to increase student access to programs, establish high quality occupational and vocational education programs, and enhance interinstitutional cooperation in program offerings.

41. Explore, in conjunction with the state board of regents, the need for coordination between school districts, area education agencies, regents institutions, and community colleges for purposes of delivery of courses, use of telecommunications, transportation, and other similar issues. Coordination may include, but is not limited to, coordination of calendars, programs, schedules, or telecommunications emissions.

42. Develop an application and review process for approval of administrative and program sharing agreements between two or more community colleges or a community college and an institution of higher education under the board of regents entered into pursuant to section 260C.46.

43. Prepare a plan and a report for ensuring that all Iowa children will be able to satisfy the requirements for high school graduation. The plan and report shall include a statement of the dimensions of the dropout problem in Iowa; a survey of existing programs geared to dropout prevention; a plan for use of competency-based outcome methods and measures; proposals for alternative means for satisfying graduation requirements including alternative high school settings, supervised vocational experiences, education experiences within the correctional system, screening and assessment mechanisms for identifying students who are at risk of dropping out and the development of an individualized education plan for identified

students; a requirement that schools provide information to students who drop out of school on options for pursuing education at a later date; the development of basic materials and information for schools to present to students leaving school; a requirement that students notify their school districts of residence when the student discontinues school, including the reasons for leaving school and future plans for career development; a requirement that, unless a student chooses to make the information relating to the student leaving school confidential, schools make the information available to community colleges, area education agencies, and other educational institutions upon request; recommendations for the establishment of pilot projects for the development of model alternative options education programs; a plan for implementation of any recommended courses of action to attain a zero dropout rate by the year 2000; and other requirements necessary to achieve the goals of this subsection. Alternative means for satisfying graduation requirements which relate to the development of individualized education plans for students who have dropped out of the regular school program shall include, but are not limited to, a tracking component that requires a school district to maintain periodic contact with a student, assistance to a dropout in curing any of the student's academic deficiencies, an assessment of the student's employability skills and plans to improve those skills, and treatment or counseling for a student's social needs. The department shall also prepare a cost estimate associated with implementation of proposals to attain a zero dropout rate, including but not limited to evaluation of existing funding sources and a recommended allocation of the financial burden among federal, state, local, and family resources.

44. If funds are appropriated by the general assembly for the program, administer the teacher exchange program, develop forms for requests to participate in the program, and process requests from teacher participants for reimbursement of expenses incurred as a result of participating in the program.

45. Develop in-service and preservice training programs through the area education agencies and practitioner preparation institutions and guidelines for school districts for the establishment of family support programs. Guidelines developed shall describe barriers to learning and development which can affect children served by family support programs.

46. Serve as an ex officio member of the commission of libraries.

47. Grant annual exemptions from one or more of the minimum education standards contained in section 256.11 and rules adopted by the state board of education to nonpublic schools or public school districts who are engaging in comprehensive school transformation efforts that are broadly consistent with the current standards, but require exemption from one or more standards in order to implement the comprehensive school transformation effort within the nonpublic school or school district. Nonpublic schools or public school districts wishing to be exempted from one or more of the minimum standards contained in section 256.11 and rules adopted by the state board of education shall file a request for an exemption with the department. Requests for exemption shall include all of the following:

a. A description of the nonpublic school or public school district's school transformation plan, including but not limited to new structures, methodologies, and creative approaches designed to help students achieve at higher levels.

b. Identification of the standard or standards for which the exemption is being sought, including a statement of the reasons for requesting the exemption from the standard or standards.

c. Identification of a method for periodic demonstration that student achievement will not be lessened by the granting of the exemption.

The director shall develop a procedure for application for exemption and receipt, review, and evaluation of nonpublic school and public school district requests, including but not limited to development of criteria for the granting or denying of requests for exemptions and a time line for the submission, review, and granting or denying of requests for exemption from one or more standards.

48. Develop and administer, with the cooperation of the commission of veterans affairs, a program which shall be known as operation recognition. The purpose of the program is to award high school diplomas to veterans of World War I, World War II, and the Korean and Vietnam conflicts who left high school prior to graduation to enter United States military service. The department and the commission shall jointly develop an application procedure, distribute applications, and publicize the program to school districts, accredited nonpublic schools, county commissions of veteran affairs, veterans organizations, and state, regional, and local media. All honorably discharged veterans who are residents or former residents of the state; who served at any time between April 6, 1917, and November 11, 1918, at any time between September 16, 1940, and December 31, 1946, at any time between June 25, 1950, and January 31, 1955, or at any time between February 28, 1961, and May 5, 1975, all dates inclusive; and who did not return to school and complete their education after the war or conflict shall be eligible to receive a diploma. Diplomas may be issued posthumously. Upon approval of an application, the department shall issue an honorary high school diploma for an eligible veteran. The diploma shall indicate the veteran's school of attendance. The department and the commission shall work together to provide school districts, schools, communities, and county commissions of veteran affairs with information about hosting a diploma ceremony on or around Veterans Day. The diploma shall be mailed to the veteran or, if the veteran is deceased, to the veteran's family.

49. Reconcile, with the assistance of the community colleges, audited financial statements and the financial data submitted to the department. The reconciliation shall include an analysis of funding by funding source.

50. Develop core knowledge and skill criteria, based upon the Iowa teaching standards, for the evaluation, the advancement, and for teacher career development purposes pursuant to chapter 284. The criteria shall further define the characteristics of quality teaching as established by the Iowa teaching standards. The director, in consultation with the board of educational examiners, shall also develop a transition plan for implementation of the career development standards developed pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 25, with regard to licensure renewal requirements. The plan shall include a requirement that practitioners be allowed credit for career development completed prior to implementation of the career development standards developed pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 25.

51. Disburse, transfer, or receive funds as authorized or required under federal or state law or regulation in a manner that utilizes electronic transfer of the funds whenever possible.

52. Develop and implement a comprehensive management information system designed for the purpose of establishing standardized electronic data collections and reporting protocols that facilitate compliance with state and federal reporting requirements, improve school-to-school and district-to-district information exchanges, and maintain the confidentiality of individual student and staff data. The system shall provide for the electronic transfer of individual student records between schools, districts, postsecondary institutions, and the department. The director may establish, to the extent practicable, a uniform coding and reporting system, including a statewide uniform student identification system.

86 Acts, ch 1245, § 1409; 87 Acts, ch 115, § 36; 88 Acts, ch 1114, § 1; 88 Acts, ch 1158, § 54; 88 Acts, ch 1263, § 1; 89 Acts, ch 155, § 2; 89 Acts, ch 206, § 6; 90 Acts, ch 1152, § 1; 90 Acts, ch 1253, § 6, 122; 90 Acts, ch 1271, § 1101; 91 Acts, ch 84, § 2; 91 Acts, ch 126, § 1; 92 Acts, ch 1158, § 3; 92 Acts, ch 1159, § 1, 6; 92 Acts, ch 1221, § 2; 92 Acts, ch 1246, § 27; 93 Acts, ch 48, § 14, 15; 94 Acts, ch 1091, § 412; 98 Acts, ch 1215, § 23, 63; 99 Acts, ch 192, § 30; 2000 Acts, ch 1081, § 1; 2000 Acts, ch 1167, § 2; 2001 Acts, ch 161, § 14; 2001 Acts, ch 181, § 12; 2002 Acts, ch 1140, § 5; 2002 Acts, ch 1152, § 2; 2002 Acts, 2nd Ex, ch 1003, § 92, 95; 2003 Acts, ch 145, § 222; 2003 Acts, ch 180, § 3, 4