

280.3 Educational program — attendance center requirements.

1. The board of directors of each public school district and the authorities in charge of each nonpublic school shall prescribe the minimum educational program and an attendance policy which shall require each child to attend school for at least one hundred forty-eight days, to be met by attendance for at least thirty-seven days each school quarter, for the schools under their jurisdictions.

2. The minimum educational program shall be the curriculum set forth in subsection 3 of this section and section 256.11, except as otherwise provided by law. The board of directors of a public school district shall not allow discrimination in any educational program on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, marital status, or place of national origin.

3. The board of directors of each public school district and the authorities in charge of each nonpublic school shall do all of the following:

a. Adopt an implementation plan by July 1, 2010, which provides for the adoption of at least one core curriculum subject area each year as established by the state board of education for grades nine through twelve pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 26. The core curriculum established for grades nine through twelve by the state board of education pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 26, shall be fully implemented by each school district and school by July 1, 2012.

b. Adopt an implementation plan, by July 1, 2012, which provides for the full implementation of the core curriculum established for kindergarten through grade eight by the state board of education pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 26, by the 2014-2015 school year.

4. A nonpublic school which is unable to meet the minimum educational program may request an exemption from the state board of education. The authorities in charge of the nonpublic school shall file with the director of the department of education the names and locations of all schools desiring to be exempted and the names, ages, and post office addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who are enrolled. The director, subject to the approval of the state board, may exempt the nonpublic school from compliance with the minimum educational program for two school years. When the exemption has once been granted, renewal of the exemption for each succeeding school year may be conditioned by the director, with the approval of the board, upon proof of achievement in the basic skills of arithmetic, the communicative arts of reading, writing, grammar, and spelling, and an understanding of United States history, history of Iowa, and the principles of American government, of the pupils of compulsory school age exempted in the preceding year. Proof of achievement shall be determined on the basis of tests or other means of evaluation prescribed by the director of the department of education with the approval of the state board of education. The testing or evaluation, if required, shall be accomplished prior to submission of the request for renewal of the exemption. Renewal requests shall be filed with the director by April 15 of the school year preceding the school year for which the applicants desire exemption. This section shall not apply to schools eligible for exemption under section 299.24.

5. The board of directors of each public school district and the authorities in charge of each nonpublic school shall establish and maintain attendance centers based upon the needs of the school age pupils enrolled in the school district or nonpublic school. Public school kindergarten programs shall and public and nonpublic school prekindergarten programs may be provided. In addition, the board of directors or governing authority may include in the educational program of any school such additional courses, subjects, or activities which it deems fit the needs of the pupils.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §280.3]

85 Acts, ch 212, §21, 22; 89 Acts, ch 210, §7; 91 Acts, ch 200, §2; 2008 Acts, ch 1127, §5