

256.16 Specific criteria for teacher preparation and certain educators.

1. Pursuant to [section 256.7, subsection 5](#), the state board shall adopt rules requiring all higher education institutions providing practitioner preparation to do the following:

a. Include preparation in reading theory, knowledge, strategies, and approaches; and for integrating literacy instruction into content areas. Such preparation shall address all students, including but not limited to students with disabilities; students who are at risk of academic failure; students who have been identified as gifted and talented or English learners; and students with dyslexia, whether or not such students have been identified as children requiring special education under [chapter 256B](#).

b. Include in the professional education program, preparation that contributes to the education of students with disabilities and students who are gifted and talented, preparation in developing and implementing individualized education programs and behavioral intervention plans, preparation for educating individuals in the least restrictive environment and identifying that environment, strategies that address difficult and violent student behavior and improve academic engagement and achievement, and preparation in classroom management addressing high-risk behaviors including but not limited to behaviors related to substance use disorder. Preparation required under this paragraph must be successfully completed before graduation from the practitioner preparation program.

c. (1) (a) Except as described in subparagraph division (b), require that each student admitted to an approved practitioner preparation program participate in pre-student teaching field experiences that include both observation and participation in teaching activities in a variety of school settings. Pre-student teaching field experiences for students participating in an initial teacher preparation program shall comprise a total of at least eighty hours in duration, at least ten hours of which shall occur prior to a student's acceptance in an approved practitioner preparation program.

(b) Pre-student teaching field experiences for students participating in a teacher intern preparation program may comprise a total of at least fifty hours in duration.

(2) Require that the student teaching experience shall be a minimum of fourteen weeks in duration during the student's final year of the practitioner preparation program.

(a) A student shall be credited a minimum of one week, but not more than ten weeks, of prior work experience as a substitute teacher or a para-educator, including prior experience under the teacher and para-educator registered apprenticeship grant program, toward the requirements associated with the fourteen-week student teaching experience, if all of the following requirements are satisfied:

(i) If the student has prior work experience as a substitute teacher, the board of educational examiners has issued a substitute license or substitute authorization to the student.

(ii) The student's prior work experience took place in the classroom of a cooperating teacher who is appropriately licensed in the subject area and grade level endorsement for which the student is being prepared.

(iii) The student bears the primary responsibility for planning, instruction, and assessment within the classroom during the student teaching experience.

(b) A student shall be credited a minimum of one week, but not more than fourteen weeks, of work experience as a para-educator toward the requirements associated with the fourteen-week student teaching experience, if all of the following requirements are satisfied:

(i) The student works as a para-educator for at least one-half of each school day during the student teaching experience.

(ii) The student's work experience takes place in the classroom of a cooperating teacher who is appropriately licensed in the subject area and grade level endorsement for which the student is being prepared.

(iii) The student bears the primary responsibility for planning, instruction, and assessment within the classroom during the student teaching experience.

(3) The program shall make every reasonable effort to offer the student teaching experience prior to a student's last semester, or equivalent, in the program, and to expand the student's student teaching opportunities beyond one semester or the equivalent.

d. Require that faculty members in professional education maintain an ongoing involvement in activities in elementary, middle, or secondary schools. The activities shall include at least forty hours of team teaching during a period not exceeding five years in duration at the elementary, middle, or secondary level.

e. Include instruction in skills and strategies to be used in classroom management of individuals, and of small and large groups, under varying conditions; skills for communicating and working constructively with pupils, teachers, administrators, and parents; preparation in reading theory, knowledge, strategies, and approaches, and for integrating literacy instruction into content areas in accordance with [this section](#); and skills for understanding the role of the state board and the functions of other education agencies in the state. Rules adopted in accordance with this paragraph shall be based upon recommendations of the department after consultation with teacher education faculty members in colleges and universities.

f. Prescribe minimum experiences and responsibilities to be accomplished during the student teaching experience by the student teacher and by the cooperating teacher based upon recommendations of the department after consultation with teacher education faculty members in colleges and universities. The student teaching experience shall include opportunities for the student teacher to become knowledgeable about the Iowa teaching standards, including but not limited to a mock evaluation performed by the cooperating teacher. The mock evaluation shall not be used as an assessment tool by the practitioner preparation program. The student teaching experience shall consist of interactive experiences involving the college or university personnel, the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, and administrative personnel from the cooperating teacher's school district.

g. Offer annually a workshop of at least one day in duration for prospective cooperating teachers. The workshop shall define the objectives of the student teaching experience, review the responsibilities of the cooperating teacher, and provide the cooperating teacher with other information and assistance the institution deems necessary.

h. Provide practitioner preparation students with instruction in the use of electronic technology for classroom and instructional purposes.

i. Annually solicit the views of the education community regarding the institution's practitioner preparation programs.

j. Submit evidence that the college or department of education in the institution is communicating with other colleges or departments in the institution so that practitioner preparation students may integrate teaching methodology with subject matter areas of specialization.

k. Submit evidence that the performance evaluation of a student teacher is a cooperative process that involves both the faculty member supervising the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. The rules shall require that each institution develop a written evaluation procedure for use by the cooperating teacher and a form for evaluating student teachers, and require that a copy of the completed form be included in the student teacher's permanent record.

l. If the rules adopted by the board of educational examiners for issuance of any type or class of license require an applicant to complete work in student teaching, pre-student teaching experiences, field experiences, practicums, clinicals, or internships, enter into a written contract with any school district, accredited nonpublic school, preschool registered or licensed by the department of health and human services, or area education agency in Iowa, to provide for such work under terms and conditions as agreed upon by the contracting parties. The terms and conditions of a written contract entered into with a preschool pursuant to this paragraph shall require that a student teacher be under the direct supervision of an appropriately licensed cooperating teacher who is employed to teach at the preschool. Students actually teaching or engaged in preservice licensure activities in a school district under the terms of such a contract are entitled to the same protection under [section 670.8](#) as is afforded by that section to officers and employees of the school district, during the time such students are so assigned.

m. If a higher education institution providing practitioner preparation offers a program

that is designed to assist students in attaining a teacher intern license from the board of educational examiners, the program shall require participants to satisfy all of the following requirements before completing the program:

(1) A participant in the program must have graduated from an accredited or state-approved college or university and must meet the requirements for an endorsement area approved by the board of educational examiners for a teacher intern license.

(2) A participant in the program must complete the required pedagogy training.

(3) A participant in the program must work under the supervision of a teacher leader assigned by the school district or accredited nonpublic school, including during co-teaching and planning time.

n. (1) Administer an examination identical to the foundations of reading assessment administered in 2012 as part of the Massachusetts tests, or the most current version of such assessment.

(2) The higher education institution shall report to the department no later than August 1 annually, in the form and manner prescribed by the department, the percentage of students whose scores on the assessment administered during the prior school year were above, at, and below the passing score, and shall report any services or opportunities to retake the assessment the institution may make available to a student who fails the assessment. The department shall compile the reports submitted under this subparagraph and publish on the department's internet site the compiled reports related to students enrolled in the practitioner preparation program who plan to teach in kindergarten through grade six.

o. Include preparation in methods for teaching mathematics. A higher education institution providing practitioner preparation may satisfy this requirement by requiring students admitted to an approved practitioner preparation program who will be teaching mathematics to students enrolled in kindergarten through grade twelve to complete mathematics methods coursework and demonstrate competency in number sense, learning progressions, conceptual understanding, and procedural fluency and application in mathematics, including the implementation of high-quality instructional materials aligned to Iowa academic standards for mathematics.

2. A person initially applying for a license shall successfully complete a practitioner preparation program approved under [section 256.7, subsection 3](#), and containing the subject matter specified in [this section](#), before the initial action by the board of educational examiners under [subchapter VII, part 3](#), takes place.

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1416; 89 Acts, ch 265, §27; 96 Acts, ch 1129, §67; 99 Acts, ch 191, §1; 2012 Acts, ch 1119, §39; 2016 Acts, ch 1078, §1; 2018 Acts, ch 1057, §6; 2019 Acts, ch 30, §2 – 4; 2020 Acts, ch 1085, §1; 2020 Acts, ch 1108, §2, 16; 2021 Acts, ch 76, §149; 2022 Acts, ch 1011, §2; 2022 Acts, ch 1103, §2 – 5, 9, 10; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §986, 2548; 2024 Acts, ch 1139, §1; 2024 Acts, ch 1162, §15; 2024 Acts, ch 1171, §1; 2025 Acts, ch 121, §2; 2025 Acts, ch 142, §3 – 6](#)

Referred to in [§256.146](#)

2022 amendments to subsections 1, 2, and 3, by [2022 Acts, ch 1103, §2 – 5](#), apply to students who attended or are attending practitioner preparation programs before, on, or after June 13, 2022; [2022 Acts, ch 1103, §10](#)

Subsection 1, paragraph c, subparagraph (1) amended

Subsection 1, paragraph c, subparagraph (2), subparagraph division (a), subparagraph subdivision (i) amended

Subsection 1, paragraph c, subparagraph (2), subparagraph division (b), subparagraph subdivision (i) stricken and former subparagraph subdivisions (ii) – (iv) redesignated as (i) – (iii)

Subsection 1, paragraph m, subparagraph (2) stricken and former subparagraphs (3) and (4) renumbered as (2) and (3)

Subsection 1, NEW paragraph o