

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