

**281—12.8(256) Accountability for student achievement.** Schools and school districts shall meet the following accountability requirements for increased student achievement. Area education agencies shall provide technical assistance as required by 281—subrule 72.4(7).

**12.8(1) Comprehensive school improvement.** The general accreditation standards are minimum, uniform requirements. However, the department encourages schools and school districts to go beyond the minimum with their work toward ongoing improvement. As a means to this end, local comprehensive school improvement plans shall be specific to a school or school district and designed, at a minimum, to increase the learning, achievement, and performance of all students.

As a part of ongoing improvement in its educational system, the board shall adopt a written comprehensive school improvement plan designed for continuous school, parental, and community involvement in the development and monitoring of a plan that is aligned with school or school district determined needs. The plan shall incorporate, to the extent possible, the consolidation of federal and state planning, goal setting, and reporting requirements. The plan shall contain, but is not limited to, the following components:

*a. Community involvement.*

(1) Local community. The school or school district shall involve the local community in decision-making processes as appropriate. The school or school district shall seek input from the local community about, but not limited to, the following elements at least once every five years:

1. Statement of philosophy, beliefs, mission, or vision;
2. Major educational needs; and
3. Student learning goals.

(2) School improvement advisory committee. To meet requirements of Iowa Code section 280.12(2) as amended by 2007 Iowa Acts, Senate File 61, section 1, the board shall appoint and charge a school improvement advisory committee to make recommendations to the board. Based on the committee members' analysis of the needs assessment data, the committee shall make recommendations to the board about the following components:

1. Major educational needs;
2. Student learning goals;
3. Long-range goals that include, but are not limited to, the state indicators that address reading, mathematics, and science achievement; and
4. Harassment or bullying prevention goals, programs, training, and other initiatives.

(3) At least annually, the school improvement advisory committee shall also make recommendations to the board with regard to, but not limited to, the following:

1. Progress achieved with the annual improvement goals for the state indicators that address reading, mathematics, and science in subrule 12.8(3);
2. Progress achieved with other locally determined core indicators; and
3. Annual improvement goals for the state indicators that address reading, mathematics, and science achievement.

*b. Data collection, analysis, and goal setting.*

(1) Policy. The board shall adopt a policy for conducting ongoing and long-range needs assessment processes. This policy shall ensure involvement of and communication with the local community regarding its expectations for adequate preparation for all students as responsible citizens and successful wage earners. The policy shall include provisions for keeping the local community regularly informed of progress on state indicators as described in subrule 12.8(3), other locally determined indicators within the comprehensive school improvement plan as required by Iowa Code section 280.12, and the methods a school district will use to inform kindergarten through grade 3 parents of their individual child's performance biannually as described in 1999 Iowa Acts, House File 743. The policy shall describe how the school or school district shall provide opportunities for local community feedback on an ongoing basis.

(2) Long-range data collection and analysis. The long-range needs assessment process shall include provisions for collecting, analyzing, and reporting information derived from local, state, and national

sources. The process shall include provisions for reviewing information acquired over time on the following:

1. State indicators and other locally determined indicators;
2. Locally established student learning goals; and
3. Specific data collection required by federal and state programs.

Schools and school districts shall also collect information about additional factors influencing student achievement which may include, but are not limited to, demographics, attitudes, health, and other risk factors.

(3) Long-range goals. The board, with input from its school improvement advisory committee, shall adopt long-range goals to improve student achievement in at least the areas of reading, mathematics, and science.

(4) Annual data collection and analysis. The ongoing needs assessment process shall include provisions for collecting and analyzing annual assessment data on the state indicators, other locally determined indicators, and locally established student learning goals.

(5) Annual improvement goals. The board, with input from its school improvement advisory committee, shall adopt annual improvement goals based on data from at least one districtwide assessment. The goals shall describe desired annual increase in the curriculum areas of, but not limited to, mathematics, reading, and science achievement for all students, for particular subgroups of students, or both. Annual improvement goals may be set for the early intervention program as described in subrule 12.5(18), other state indicators, locally determined indicators, locally established student learning goals, other curriculum areas, future student employability, or factors influencing student achievement.

*c. Content standards and benchmarks.*

(1) Policy. The board shall adopt a policy outlining its procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating its total curriculum. The policy shall describe a process for establishing content standards, benchmarks, performance levels, and annual improvement goals aligned with needs assessment information.

(2) Content standards and benchmarks. The board shall adopt clear, rigorous, and challenging content standards and benchmarks in reading, mathematics, and science to guide the learning of students from the date of school entrance until high school graduation. Included in the local standards and benchmarks shall be the core content standards from Iowa's approved standards and assessment system under the applicable provisions of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Standards and benchmarks may be adopted for other curriculum areas defined in 281—Chapter 12, Division V. The comprehensive school improvement plan submitted to the department shall contain, at a minimum, the core content standards for reading, mathematics, and science. The educational program as defined in 281—Chapter 12, Division II, shall incorporate career education, multicultural and gender fair education, technology integration, global education, higher-order thinking skills, learning skills, and communication skills as outlined in subrules 12.5(7), 12.5(8), 12.5(10), and 12.5(11), and subparagraph 12.8(1)“c”(1).

*d. Determination and implementation of actions to meet the needs.* The comprehensive school improvement plan shall include actions the school or school district shall take districtwide in order to accomplish its long-range and annual improvement goals as required in Iowa Code section 280.12(1)“b.”

(1) Actions shall include, but are not limited to, addressing the improvement of curricular and instructional practices to attain the long-range goals, annual improvement goals, and the early intervention goals as described in subrule 12.5(18).

(2) A school or school district shall document consolidation of state and federal resources and requirements, as appropriate, to implement the actions in its comprehensive school improvement plan. State and federal resources shall be used, as applicable, to support implementation of the plan.

(3) A school or school district may have building-level action plans, aligned with its comprehensive school improvement plan. These may be included in the comprehensive school improvement plan or kept on file at the local level.

*e. Evaluation of the comprehensive school improvement plan.* A school or school district shall develop strategies to collect data and information to determine if the plan has accomplished the goals for which it was established.

*f. Assessment of student progress.* Each school or school district shall include in its comprehensive school improvement plan provisions for districtwide assessment of student progress for all students. The plan shall identify valid and reliable student assessments aligned with local content standards, which include the core content standards referenced in subparagraph 12.8(1)“c”(2). These assessments are not limited to commercially developed measures. School districts receiving early intervention funding described in subrule 12.5(18) shall provide for diagnostic reading assessments for kindergarten through grade 3 students.

(1) State indicators. Using at least one districtwide assessment, a school or school district shall assess student progress on the state indicators in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science as specified in subrule 12.8(3). At least one districtwide assessment shall allow for, but not be limited to, the comparison of the school or school district’s students with students from across the state and in the nation in reading, mathematics, and science.

(2) Performance levels. A school or school district shall establish at least three performance levels on at least one districtwide valid and reliable assessment in the areas of reading and mathematics for at least grades 4, 8, and 11 and science in grades 8 and 10 or use the achievement levels as established by the Iowa Testing Program to meet the intent of this subparagraph (2).

*g. Assurances and support.* A school or school district shall provide evidence that its board has approved and supports the five-year comprehensive school improvement plan and any future revisions of that plan. This assurance includes the commitment for ongoing improvement of the educational system.

*h. Statewide summative assessment.*

(1) For purposes of this chapter, the statewide summative assessment of student progress administered by school districts for purposes of the core academic indicators shall be the summative assessment developed by the Iowa testing program within the University of Iowa college of education and administered by the Iowa testing program’s designee. The department may require the Iowa testing program to enter into agreements with such designee to ensure the department is able to comply with Iowa Code chapter 256; this chapter; the requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. No. 114-95; the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; and any other applicable state or federal law.

(2) For the school year beginning July 1, 2018, and each succeeding school year, the statewide summative assessment referred in this paragraph shall meet all of the following requirements:

1. All students enrolled in school districts in grades 3 through 11 shall be administered an assessment in mathematics and English language arts, including reading and writing, during the last quarter of the school year, and all students enrolled in school districts in grades 5, 8, and 10 shall be administered an assessment in science during the last quarter of the school year.

2. The assessment, at a minimum, shall assess the core academic indicators identified in Iowa Code section 256.7(21)“b”; be aligned with the Iowa common core standards in both content and rigor; accurately describe student achievement and growth for purposes of the school, the school district, and state accountability systems; provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of student progress toward college or career readiness; and meet the summative assessment requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. No. 114-95.

3. The assessment shall be available for administration in both paper-and-pencil and computer-based formats and include assessments in mathematics, science, and English language arts, including reading and writing.

4. The assessment shall be peer-reviewed by an independent third-party evaluator to determine that the assessment is aligned with the Iowa core academic standards, provides a measurement of student growth and student proficiency, and meets the summative assessment requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. No. 114-95. The assessment developed by the Iowa testing service within the University of Iowa college of education shall make any necessary adjustments as determined by the peer review to meet the requirements of this paragraph.

5. The costs of complying with the requirement of this paragraph shall be borne by the Iowa testing program within the University of Iowa college of education.

**12.8(2)** *Submission of a comprehensive school improvement plan.* A school or school district shall submit to the department and respective area education agency a multiyear comprehensive school improvement plan on or before September 15, 2000. Beginning July 1, 2001, a school or school district shall submit a revised five-year comprehensive school improvement plan by September 15 of the school year following the comprehensive site visit specified in Iowa Code section 256.11 which incorporates, when appropriate, areas of improvement noted pursuant to subrule 12.8(4). A school or school district may, at any time, file a revised comprehensive school improvement plan with the department and respective area education agency.

**12.8(3)** *Annual reporting requirements.* A school or school district shall, at minimum, report annually to its local community about the progress on the state indicators and other locally determined indicators.

*a. State indicators.* A school or school district shall collect data on the following indicators for reporting purposes:

(1) The percentage of all fourth, eighth, and eleventh grade students achieving proficient or higher reading status using at least three achievement levels and by gender, race, socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, and other subgroups as required by state or federal law.

(2) The percentage of all fourth, eighth, and eleventh grade students achieving proficient or higher mathematics status using at least three achievement levels and for gender, race, socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, and other subgroups as required by state or federal law.

(3) The percentage of all eighth and tenth grade students achieving proficient or higher science status using at least three achievement levels.

(4) The percentage of students considered as dropouts for grades 7 to 12 by gender, race, students with disabilities, and other subgroups as required by state or federal law.

(5) The percentage of high school seniors who intend to pursue postsecondary education/training.

(6) The percentage of high school students achieving a score or status on a measure indicating probable postsecondary success. This measure should be the measure used by the majority of students in the school, school district, or attendance center who plan to attend a postsecondary institution.

(7) The percentage of high school graduates who complete a core program of four years of English-language arts and three or more years each of mathematics, science, and social studies.

*b. Annual progress report.* Each school or school district shall submit an annual progress report to its local community, its respective area education agency, and the department. That report shall be submitted to the department by September 15, 2000, and by September 15 every year thereafter. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

(1) Baseline data on at least one districtwide assessment for the state indicators described in subrule 12.8(3). Every year thereafter the school or school district shall compare the annual data collected with the baseline data. A school or school district is not required to report to the community about subgroup assessment results when a subgroup contains fewer than ten students at a grade level. A school or school district shall report districtwide assessment results for all enrolled and tuitioned-in students.

(2) Locally determined performance levels for at least one districtwide assessment in, at a minimum, the areas of reading, mathematics, and science. Student achievement levels as defined by the Iowa Testing Program may be used to fulfill this requirement.

(3) Long-range goals to improve student achievement in the areas of, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science.

(4) Annual improvement goals based on at least one districtwide assessment in, at a minimum, the areas of reading, mathematics, and science. One annual improvement goal may address all areas, or individual annual improvement goals for each area may be identified. When a school or school district does not meet its annual improvement goals for one year, it shall include in its annual progress report the actions it will take to meet annual improvement goals for the next school year.

(5) Data on multiple assessments for reporting achievement for all students in the areas of reading and mathematics by September 15, 2001, and for science by September 15, 2003.

(6) Results by individual attendance centers, as appropriate, on the state indicators as stated in subrule 12.8(3) and any other locally determined factors or indicators. An attendance center, for reporting purposes, is a building that houses students in grade 4 or grade 8 or grade 11.

(7) Progress with the use of technology as required by Iowa Code section 295.3. This requirement does not apply to accredited nonpublic schools.

(8) School districts are encouraged to provide information on the reading proficiency of kindergarten through grade 3 students by grade level. However, all school districts receiving early intervention block grant funds shall report to the department the progress toward achieving their early intervention goals.

(9) Other reports of progress as the director of the department requires and other reporting requirements as the result of federal and state program consolidation.

**12.8(4) Accreditation, monitoring, and enforcement.** The state board shall establish, and the department shall use, for the school year commencing July 1, 2021, and each succeeding school year, an accreditation, monitoring, and enforcement process for school districts and nonpublic schools seeking accreditation pursuant to this chapter. The process established shall include all of the following requirements.

*a. Phase I monitoring.*

(1) Phase I monitoring shall consist of annual monitoring by the department of all accredited schools and school districts for compliance with state and federal school laws, regulations, and rules adopted by the state board under Iowa Code chapter 17A, including but not limited to the following:

1. Accreditation standards adopted by the state board as provided in this chapter.
2. Fiscal compliance.
3. Federal education laws including but not limited to the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq., as amended.
4. The federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Iowa Code chapter 216.
5. All other requirements of this chapter applicable to accredited schools and school districts.

(2) Phase I monitoring may include but shall not be limited to the following:

1. One or more desk audits requiring submission of information to the department in a manner and on forms prescribed by the department.
2. One or more remote or on-site visits to schools or school districts to address accreditation issues identified in a desk audit. Such a visit may be conducted by an individual departmental consultant or may be a comprehensive site visit by a team of departmental consultants and other subject-matter professionals.
3. A review of district finances by department staff or a neutral third party.
4. A review of local school board policies and procedures by department staff or a neutral third party.

(3) The department shall provide a public report annually of findings of noncompliance and required corrective actions for each accredited school and school district. The purpose of the phase I process is to bring schools and school districts into minimum compliance with federal and state laws, regulations, and rules, and no citation or corrective action may be designed to require more than minimum compliance.

(4) The department shall provide a written report annually to the state board of any monitoring review resulting in multiple or substantial findings of noncompliance or noncompliance findings that remain uncorrected for more than 30 days past the deadline set by the department for correction.

(5) The department shall eliminate duplicative reporting on the part of schools and school districts for phase I monitoring, and is prohibited from collecting information not specifically permitted by federal or state law, regulation, or rule.

(6) Enforcement actions under phase I monitoring are limited to actions permitted pursuant to subparagraphs 12.8(4)“c”(2) and 12.8(4)“c”(3). Violations of federal legal requirements shall follow the procedures and limitations of the governing federal statute and regulations.

*b. Phase II monitoring.*

(1) Phase II monitoring shall take place when any of the following conditions are present:

1. When either the annual monitoring or the biennial on-site visit of phase I indicates that an accredited school or school district is deficient and fails to be in compliance with accreditation standards.

2. In response to a petition filed with the director requesting such an accreditation committee visitation that is signed by eligible electors residing in the school district equal in number to at least 20 percent of the registered voters of the school district.

3. In response to a petition filed with the director requesting such an accreditation committee visitation that is signed by 20 percent or more of the parents or guardians who have children enrolled in the school or school district.

4. At the direction of the state board.

5. When the school budget review committee submits to the department a recommendation for a fiscal review pursuant to Iowa Code section 257.31(18).

(2) Phase II monitoring shall consist of a full desk audit of all monitoring requirements and an on-site visit to the school or school district for the purpose of determining the extent of noncompliance; the reason for lack of correction, if applicable; and a recommendation for corrective action to the director and the state board.

(3) Phase II monitoring requires the use of an accreditation committee appointed by the director. The accreditation committee shall be made up primarily of department staff but may request the assistance of third-party specialists at the discretion of the director. An accreditation committee visit to a nonpublic school requires membership on the committee from nonpublic school instructional or administrative staff or board members. A member of a committee shall not have a direct interest in the school district or nonpublic school being visited.

(4) After visiting the school district or nonpublic school, the accreditation committee shall, within 30 days, determine whether the accreditation standards have been met and shall make a report to the director, together with a recommendation on what enforcement actions, if any, should be recommended to the state board.

*c. Enforcement.*

(1) The department shall enforce the laws, regulations, and rules applicable to school districts and nonpublic schools consistent with the process outlined in this subrule. The department shall coordinate its enforcement of Iowa Code chapter 216 with the Iowa state civil rights commission to reduce duplication of efforts.

(2) If, after having an opportunity to correct, if permitted, a school district is found to be in noncompliance with federal education laws including but not limited to the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq., as amended; the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; or Iowa Code chapter 216; or Iowa Code section 279.73 or 279.74, the director shall recommend, and the state board may do, one of the following within 30 days of the finding of noncompliance:

1. Impose conditions on funding provided to a school district, including directing the use of school district funds and designating the school district a high-risk grantee under 2 CFR §200.207.

2. Withhold payment of state or federal funds to a school district, in whole or in part, until noncompliance is corrected. Initial withholding of state funds is at the discretion of the director for a period of 60 calendar days, after which it is subject to approval of the state board every 60 calendar days. Withholding of federal funds is subject to the governing federal statute or regulation.

(3) The director may use any of the following permitted enforcement mechanisms and shall exercise discretion to ensure that enforcement actions are proportionate to school district or nonpublic school noncompliance:

1. Advise the school district or nonpublic school on the availability of appropriate technical assistance.

2. Require the school district or nonpublic school to complete a corrective action plan or plan for improvement by a reasonable deadline.

3. Recommend a phase II visit to the school district or nonpublic school to the state board.

4. Refer conduct of school district or nonpublic school staff or school board members, or school authorities, to the office of the attorney general for investigation.
  5. Refer financial concerns to the auditor of state for investigation.
  6. Recommend removal of accreditation of the school district or school to the state board.
  7. Take any other enforcement mechanism available to the director.
- (4) The department shall focus enforcement activities on all of the following:
1. Improving educational results for children, families, and students.
  2. Ensuring that public agencies and their governing boards meet requirements of state and federal laws.

**12.8(5) *Loss of accreditation.***

*a.* If the recommendation pursuant to subrule 12.8(4) is that a school district or nonpublic school not remain accredited, the accreditation committee shall provide the school district or nonpublic school with a report that includes a list of all of the deficiencies, a plan prescribing the actions that must be taken to correct the deficiencies, and a deadline date for completion of the prescribed actions. The accreditation committee shall advise the school district or nonpublic school of available resources and technical assistance to improve areas of weakness. The school district or nonpublic school shall be provided with the opportunity to respond to the accreditation committee's report. The director shall review the accreditation committee's report and the response of the school district or nonpublic school and shall provide a report to the state board along with copies of the accreditation committee's report, the response to the accreditation committee's report, and other pertinent information. At the request of the school district or nonpublic school, the school district or nonpublic school may appear before the state board and address the state board directly regarding any part of the plan specified in the report. The state board may modify the plan. During the period of time specified in the plan for its implementation by a school district or nonpublic school, the school district or school shall remain accredited.

*b.* The accreditation committee shall revisit the school district or nonpublic school and shall determine whether the deficiencies in the standards have been corrected.

*c.* The accreditation team shall make a report and recommendation to the director and the state board. The committee recommendation shall specify whether the school district or nonpublic school shall remain accredited. For a school district, the committee report and recommendation shall also specify under what conditions the district may remain accredited. The conditions may include but are not limited to providing temporary oversight authority, operational authority, or both oversight and operational authority to the director and the state board for some or all aspects of the school district in order to bring the school district into compliance with minimum standards.

*d.* The state board shall review the report and recommendation, may request additional information, and shall determine whether the deficiencies have been corrected.

*e.* If the deficiencies have not been corrected, and the conditional accreditation alternatives contained in the report are not mutually acceptable to the state board and the local board, the state board shall deaccredit the school district and merge the territory of the school district with one or more contiguous school districts at the end of the school year. The state board may place a district under receivership for the remainder of the school year. The receivership shall be under the direct supervision and authority of the area education agency in which the district is located. The decision of whether to deaccredit the school district or to place the district under receivership shall be based upon a determination by the state board of the best interests of the students, parents, residents of the community, teachers, administrators, and school district board members and upon the recommendations of the accreditation committee and the director.

*f.* In the case of a nonpublic school, if the deficiencies have not been corrected, the state board may deaccredit the nonpublic school. The deaccreditation shall take effect on the date established by the resolution of the state board, which shall be no later than the end of the school year in which the nonpublic school is deaccredited.

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