

REPRINTED

SENATE FILE 2415
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO SSB 2023)

(p.882)
Passed Senate, Date 3-19-96 Passed House, Date _____
Vote: Ayes 39 Nays 11 Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act establishing an environmental education program in the
2 state of Iowa and making appropriations.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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S.F. 2415

UNRECORDED

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 258B.1 STATEWIDE ENVIRONMENTAL
2 EDUCATION STRATEGY.

3 1. It is in the interest of the citizens of Iowa that a
4 comprehensive environmental education initiative be undertaken
5 that will result in environmentally literate and responsible
6 citizens who will effectively and constructively solve
7 existing environmental problems, prevent new environmental
8 problems, and maintain a sustainable environment for future
9 Iowans. A healthy economy is intimately linked to a healthy
10 environment. The appropriate audiences for environmental
11 education include both formal and nonformal audiences,
12 business, labor, governments, nonprofit entities, and
13 citizens.

14 2. The goal of this initiative is to assure that Iowans
15 are environmentally literate. An environmentally literate
16 citizen is committed to lifelong learning and understands the
17 following:

18 a. Basic principles of ecology, sociology, and economics.

19 b. The interconnection of all parts of the environment.

20 c. The environmental and social costs and benefits of
21 consumer decisions.

22 d. Sources of energy, the improving of energy efficiency,
23 and the relationships between energy use and life styles.

24 e. The implications of economic and population trends.

25 f. The impacts of personal life styles and personal
26 choices.

27 g. The importance of acting in a sustainable and
28 constructive manner to protect the quality and diversity of
29 the natural world.

30 3. An office of environmental education, an interagency
31 environmental education committee, state and county
32 environmental education plans, preschool-to-adult
33 environmental education programs, environmental education
34 assistance, and a grants program shall be established to
35 achieve the goal of accomplishing this initiative. For

1 purposes of this chapter, "nonformal education" means
2 education which takes place outside of the formal, educational
3 classroom setting.

4 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 258B.2 OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
5 EDUCATION.

6 1. An office of environmental education is established and
7 administratively attached to the Iowa department of education.
8 The full-time supervisor of the office shall be an experienced
9 environmental educator. The office shall be staffed by
10 appropriately trained personnel.

11 2. The office of environmental education shall do all of
12 the following:

13 a. Develop and publish a plan for environmental education
14 with assistance from the interagency environmental education
15 committee.

16 b. Accept, review, and approve county plans for
17 environmental education and administer the allocation of funds
18 to the county conservation boards provided for under section
19 258B.5.

20 c. Assess the status of environmental literacy of the
21 state's students, teachers, and citizens every four years.

22 d. Review the state's plan for environmental education
23 every four years with the assistance of the interagency
24 environmental education committee, revise the plan as needed,
25 and transmit the plan to the governor and the general
26 assembly.

27 e. Establish guidelines and specific criteria for the
28 grants program provided for in section 258B.4.

29 f. Administer the environmental education grants program.

30 g. Promote and aid in the establishment and evaluation of
31 school environmental education programs for preschool through
32 grade twelve.

33 h. Promote and aid in the development of preservice and
34 inservice environmental education programs for educators
35 through cooperation with groups including, but not limited to,

1 the Iowa conservation education council and Iowa's colleges
2 and universities.

3 i. Cooperate with federal and state agencies and the
4 private sector in developing, promoting, and evaluating
5 environmental education programs.

6 j. Function as an environmental education clearinghouse by
7 doing all of the following:

8 (1) Reviewing and recommending environmental education
9 materials.

10 (2) Cooperating with state agencies and organizations in
11 the development and distribution of an environmental education
12 newsletter.

13 (3) Establishing an electronic capacity to disseminate
14 data bases of environmental education information and to
15 network with intrastate, interstate, and federal programs.

16 k. Promote the development of cooperative environmental
17 education initiatives with the private sector.

18 l. Facilitate and encourage formal and nonformal
19 environmental education programs; facilitate, encourage, and
20 support multi-school districts' cooperative efforts to assess
21 the need for, develop, and evaluate environmental education
22 curricula, promote state government and private sector policy
23 that is consistent with the environmental education plan
24 established in this legislation, and assist in the
25 coordination of formal and nonformal environmental education
26 with the kindergarten through grade twelve and postsecondary
27 environmental education programs.

28 m. Initiate research on environmental education as called
29 for in the environmental education plan by issuing contracts
30 to organizations, colleges, universities, and other research-
31 based institutions.

32 n. Coordinate environmental education conferences to
33 assist in the dissemination, development, and achievement of
34 the state's environmental education plan.

35 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. 258B.3 INTERAGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL

1 EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

2 1. An interagency environmental education committee is
3 established. The committee shall be composed of individuals
4 with knowledge in environmental education and the members
5 shall be employees appointed by each agency head. These
6 agencies may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the
7 departments of agriculture and land stewardship, cultural
8 affairs, education, economic development, human services,
9 natural resources, public health, and transportation, the
10 state board of regents, and the attorney general's office.
11 The chair shall be elected by the members.

12 2. Members of the committee shall serve as environmental
13 education coordinators for their respective agencies. They
14 shall direct an assessment of their own agency's target
15 audiences and develop appropriate programs to educate these
16 audiences regarding environmental issues. The committee shall
17 establish subcommittees as needed and assist with the
18 development and implementation of the state's environmental
19 education plan.

20 3. The committee shall develop and maintain a memorandum
21 of understanding to specify methods by which the agencies can
22 share their resources to benefit environmental education in
23 the state.

24 4. The committee shall promote networking, coordination,
25 and cooperation among state agencies, promote the efficient
26 distribution of information, and facilitate the planning and
27 development of educational programs and materials. The
28 department of education is responsible for convening and
29 facilitating the functions of the committee.

30 5. Members of the committee are not eligible to receive
31 any separate compensation and are not eligible for
32 reimbursement of expenses from the committee.

33 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. 258B.4 GRANTS PROGRAM.

34 An environmental education grants program is established in
35 order to accomplish the goals set forth in section 258B.1.

1 Guidelines established by the office of environmental
2 education shall include, but are not limited to, a requirement
3 that grant proposals conform with county or state
4 environmental education plans. The department of education
5 shall administer the environmental education grant program. A
6 grant proposal affecting counties shall be submitted to and
7 receive the approval of county environmental education
8 committees prior to submission to the department of education.
9 A grant proposal affecting more than one county or the entire
10 state shall be submitted directly to the department of
11 education.

12 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. 258B.5 ASSISTANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
13 EDUCATION -- APPROPRIATION.

14 1. Financial assistance shall be administered by the
15 office of environmental education of the department of
16 education, and shall be provided to county conservation boards
17 to support the hiring of professional environmental educators
18 to assist schools and nonformal education sectors in planning
19 and leading environmental education programs. The financial
20 assistance shall be used to provide staff and equipment for
21 these programs and shall not be used for the construction or
22 maintenance of parks, buildings, or other physical facilities.
23 The financial assistance shall not replace existing county
24 moneys budgeted for environmental education. Financial
25 assistance shall be provided as follows:

26 a. Within thirty days of receipt of a county conservation
27 board's environmental education plan, pursuant to subsection
28 2, the sum of ten thousand one hundred dollars shall be
29 allocated to the county conservation board for use in
30 implementing the board's environmental education plan. One
31 million one hundred thousand dollars shall be divided among
32 eligible counties on a population-based formula detailed in
33 paragraphs "b" through "d".

34 b. A county shall be declared eligible if the county
35 submits certification that the county will do both of the

1 following:

2 (1) Provide county funding or support equivalent to one
3 cent per thousand dollars of the assessed value of taxable
4 property in the county or thirty-five thousand dollars,
5 whichever is less, according to a formula outlined in
6 paragraph "c", for environmental education.

7 (2) Explain how the financial assistance will be spent for
8 environmental education.

9 c. In order to meet county funding or support
10 requirements, county conservation boards may include the
11 dollar equivalent of the following county support:

12 (1) Salaries and benefits for all full-time and part-time
13 naturalists, environmental education coordinators,
14 environmental program specialists, and other positions whose
15 responsibilities lie solely within the county conservation
16 board's environmental education program.

17 (2) For staff positions involving some responsibilities
18 outside the environmental education program, such as a ranger,
19 a percentage of the salary and benefits equal to that portion
20 of time devoted specifically to the environmental education
21 program.

22 (3) Operation and maintenance, but not purchase, of a
23 county vehicle designated to be used specifically by the
24 environmental education program staff.

25 (4) Funds budgeted specifically for the environmental
26 education program, including, but not limited to: program
27 supplies, office supplies, telephone and communications,
28 uniforms, newsletters and other public relations tools,
29 publicity, library and resource materials, printing or
30 purchase of environmental and conservation education resource
31 materials, travel, and professional development workshops and
32 conferences.

33 The costs of construction or maintenance of parks,
34 buildings or any physical facilities shall specifically not be
35 used to meet the county funding or support requirements.

1 d. Counties declared eligible shall receive financial
2 assistance under this section according to the following
3 formula: official population figure of the county according
4 to the most recent federal decennial census times forty cents.

5 e. In order to fulfill the county funding or support
6 requirements of this section, county conservation boards may
7 contract with private nature centers, camps, or other private
8 or public entities to provide these environmental education
9 services. The boards shall submit an annual report to the
10 office of environmental education demonstrating and certifying
11 the proper use of these funds.

12 f. The focus of this financial assistance shall be, but is
13 not limited to: helping teachers, group leaders, and other
14 environmental educators to plan, develop, and implement
15 environmental education programs, including leading outdoor
16 environmental education classes for all ages and for both
17 formal and nonformal educational groups; providing program
18 resources such as environmental education activity guides and
19 curricula, learning kits, audiovisual materials, literature,
20 and equipment; and interpreting Iowa's natural and cultural
21 resources and how to use them wisely.

22 2. To receive funds under this section, a county shall
23 establish a county environmental education committee. The
24 county conservation board shall be responsible for the
25 establishment and membership of the committee. Members shall
26 include, but are not limited to, representatives from local
27 school, conservation, business, and industry groups with
28 established interests in environmental education.
29 Responsibilities of the committee shall include, but are not
30 limited to, the following:

31 a. Establishing operating rules for the committee.

32 b. Developing and submitting to the county conservation
33 board annual eligibility reports.

34 c. Developing and submitting the county environmental
35 education plan to the office of environmental education. The

1 plan shall include, but is not limited to, all of the
2 following:

3 (1) Long-term goals for environmental education in the
4 county and an outline of the relationship of the plan to the
5 goal of achieving environmental literacy.

6 (2) A description of the manner in which the plan utilizes
7 existing professional environmental education personnel,
8 programs, and facilities.

9 (3) An outline of the resources needed to achieve plan
10 goals, including sufficient professional educators to meet a
11 target of one environmental educator for every three thousand
12 to four thousand students in the county.

13 (4) Letters of support for the plan from the members of
14 the county environmental education committee.

15 The plan shall be reviewed and accordingly revised every
16 four years in coordination with a state assessment of
17 environmental literacy provided for in section 258B.2.

18 d. Facilitating communication among all parties active in
19 environmental education in the county to maximize the use of
20 local resources.

21 e. Reviewing and commenting on grants proposals submitted
22 to the office of environmental education pursuant to section
23 258B.4.

24 3. There is appropriated from the general fund of the
25 state to the department of education for each fiscal year the
26 sum of nine hundred ninety thousand dollars for the purpose of
27 providing financial assistance for environmental education as
28 provided in subsection 1.

29 Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. 258B.6 RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL
30 EDUCATION PROGRAMS -- APPROPRIATION.

31 1. A residential environmental education program is
32 created to recognize the critical role that both direct
33 experience with the outdoors and a several-day residential
34 experience away from home and the formal school environment
35 play in the formation of an environmentally literate

1 citizenry.

2 2. Phase I of the program shall provide supplemental
3 funding of thirty-five dollars per pupil to school districts
4 that choose to provide for the attendance of the pupils in one
5 grade level at a certified residential environmental education
6 center. To receive this funding, school districts must
7 provide proof of attendance by their pupils at such a center
8 and participation by pupils in a certified program for a
9 minimum of three consecutive days for each pupil. In
10 addition, school districts shall submit evidence of matching
11 contributions of at least fifty percent of the total program
12 cost. Local school districts shall choose the grade level and
13 the time of year they feel is most developmentally appropriate
14 for this residential experience.

15 3. Phase II of the program shall consist of all of the
16 following:

17 a. Development of certification criteria for facilities,
18 staff, and programs.

19 b. Census of existing facilities, staff, and programs
20 relative to the certification criteria.

21 c. Assessment of the needs of these facilities.

22 4. The program shall be administered by the office of
23 environmental education.

24 5. There is appropriated from the general fund of the
25 state to the department of education for each fiscal year, the
26 sum of three hundred fifty thousand dollars for the purposes
27 of phase I of the residential environmental education program
28 as provided in subsection 2.

29 Sec. 7. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. There is appropriated
30 from the general fund of the state to the department of
31 education for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1996, and
32 ending June 30, 1997, the following amount, or so much thereof
33 as is necessary, to be used for the purpose designated:

34 OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

35 For salaries, support, maintenance, miscellaneous purposes,

1 and for not more than the following full-time equivalent
2 position:

3	\$	600,000
4	FTE	1.00

5 EXPLANATION

6 This bill establishes an environmental education strategy
7 for the state of Iowa. The bill also establishes and funds a
8 state office of environmental education for all of Iowa's
9 citizens from preschoolers to adults. The office is
10 administratively attached to the department of education to
11 establish and coordinate a plan for the state. The office is
12 to serve as a clearinghouse, a database headquarters, and to
13 coordinate with federal and state agencies and the private
14 sector in developing and implementing environmental education
15 strategies. A grants program is also established to be
16 administered by the department of education.

17 An interagency environmental education committee is
18 established to coordinate efforts among state agencies to
19 promote and assist in providing environmental education
20 programs in the state.

21 An assistance program is established and the bill
22 appropriates \$990,000 to provide assistance for county
23 conservation boards. The bill provides a formula for
24 determining the eligibility of each county board.

25 The bill also provides an appropriation of \$350,000 for
26 reimbursements to a school district to be distributed on a per
27 pupil basis for those pupils who spend three consecutive days
28 at a certified residential environmental education center.

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SENATE FILE 2415

S-5330

- 1 Amend Senate File 2415 as follows:
- 2 1. Page 2, line 20, by striking the word "Assess"
- 3 and inserting the following: "Develop an instrument
- 4 and procedure for assessing".
- 5 2. Page 2, by striking line 30 and inserting the
- 6 following:
- 7 "____. Develop an instrument and procedure for
- 8 evaluating".
- 9 3. Page 3, line 6, by striking the words
- 10 "Function as" and inserting the following: "Promote
- 11 and aid in the establishment of".
- 12 4. Page 3, by striking lines 28 through 31 and
- 13 inserting the following:
- 14 "____. Cooperate with organizations, colleges,
- 15 universities, and other research-based institutions to
- 16 encourage research on environmental education as
- 17 called for in the state environmental education plan."
- 18 5. Page 5, by striking line 28 and inserting the
- 19 following: "2, fifty percent of any funds
- 20 appropriated by the general assembly for purposes of
- 21 this section shall be".
- 22 6. Page 5, lines 30 and 31, by striking the words
- 23 "One million one hundred thousand dollars" and
- 24 inserting the following: "The other fifty percent of
- 25 any funds appropriated by the general assembly for
- 26 purposes of this section".
- 27 7. By striking page 9, line 22, through page 10,
- 28 line 4, and inserting the following:
- 29 "____. The program shall be administered
- 30 cooperatively by the department of education and the
- 31 department of natural resources."
- 32 8. By renumbering, relettering, and redesignating
- 33 as necessary.

By COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
LARRY MURPHY, Chairperson

S-5330 FILED MARCH 13, 1996

*Adopted 3-19-96**(P. 881)*

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 258B.1 STATEWIDE ENVIRONMENTAL
2 EDUCATION STRATEGY.

3 1. It is in the interest of the citizens of Iowa that a
4 comprehensive environmental education initiative be undertaken
5 that will result in environmentally literate and responsible
6 citizens who will effectively and constructively solve
7 existing environmental problems, prevent new environmental
8 problems, and maintain a sustainable environment for future
9 Iowans. A healthy economy is intimately linked to a healthy
10 environment. The appropriate audiences for environmental
11 education include both formal and nonformal audiences,
12 business, labor, governments, nonprofit entities, and
13 citizens.

14 2. The goal of this initiative is to assure that Iowans
15 are environmentally literate. An environmentally literate
16 citizen is committed to lifelong learning and understands the
17 following:

- 18 a. Basic principles of ecology, sociology, and economics.
- 19 b. The interconnection of all parts of the environment.
- 20 c. The environmental and social costs and benefits of
21 consumer decisions.
- 22 d. Sources of energy, the improving of energy efficiency,
23 and the relationships between energy use and life styles.
- 24 e. The implications of economic and population trends.
- 25 f. The impacts of personal life styles and personal
26 choices.
- 27 g. The importance of acting in a sustainable and
28 constructive manner to protect the quality and diversity of
29 the natural world.

30 3. An office of environmental education, an interagency
31 environmental education committee, state and county
32 environmental education plans, preschool-to-adult
33 environmental education programs, environmental education
34 assistance, and a grants program shall be established to
35 achieve the goal of accomplishing this initiative. For

1 purposes of this chapter, "nonformal education" means
2 education which takes place outside of the formal, educational
3 classroom setting.

4 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 258B.2 OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
5 EDUCATION.

6 1. An office of environmental education is established and
7 administratively attached to the Iowa department of education.
8 The full-time supervisor of the office shall be an experienced
9 environmental educator. The office shall be staffed by
10 appropriately trained personnel.

11 2. The office of environmental education shall do all of
12 the following:

13 a. Develop and publish a plan for environmental education
14 with assistance from the interagency environmental education
15 committee.

16 b. Accept, review, and approve county plans for
17 environmental education and administer the allocation of funds
18 to the county conservation boards provided for under section
19 258B.5.

20 c. Develop an instrument and procedure for assessing the
21 status of environmental literacy of the state's students,
22 teachers, and citizens every four years.

23 d. Review the state's plan for environmental education
24 every four years with the assistance of the interagency
25 environmental education committee, revise the plan as needed,
26 and transmit the plan to the governor and the general
27 assembly.

28 e. Establish guidelines and specific criteria for the
29 grants program provided for in section 258B.4.

30 f. Administer the environmental education grants program.

31 g. Develop an instrument and procedure for evaluating
32 school environmental education programs for preschool through
33 grade twelve.

34 h. Promote and aid in the development of preservice and
35 inservice environmental education programs for educators

1 through cooperation with groups including, but not limited to,
2 the Iowa conservation education council and Iowa's colleges
3 and universities.

4 i. Cooperate with federal and state agencies and the
5 private sector in developing, promoting, and evaluating
6 environmental education programs.

7 j. Promote and aid in the establishment of an
8 environmental education clearinghouse by doing all of the
9 following:

10 (1) Reviewing and recommending environmental education
11 materials.

12 (2) Cooperating with state agencies and organizations in
13 the development and distribution of an environmental education
14 newsletter.

15 (3) Establishing an electronic capacity to disseminate
16 data bases of environmental education information and to
17 network with intrastate, interstate, and federal programs.

18 k. Promote the development of cooperative environmental
19 education initiatives with the private sector.

20 l. Facilitate and encourage formal and nonformal
21 environmental education programs; facilitate, encourage, and
22 support multi-school districts' cooperative efforts to assess
23 the need for, develop, and evaluate environmental education
24 curricula, promote state government and private sector policy
25 that is consistent with the environmental education plan
26 established in this legislation, and assist in the
27 coordination of formal and nonformal environmental education
28 with the kindergarten through grade twelve and postsecondary
29 environmental education programs.

30 m. Cooperate with organizations, colleges, universities,
31 and other research-based institutions to encourage research on
32 environmental education as called for in the state
33 environmental education plan.

34 n. Coordinate environmental education conferences to
35 assist in the dissemination, development, and achievement of

1 the state's environmental education plan.

2 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. 258B.3 INTERAGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL
3 EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

4 1. An interagency environmental education committee is
5 established. The committee shall be composed of individuals
6 with knowledge in environmental education and the members
7 shall be employees appointed by each agency head. These
8 agencies may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the
9 departments of agriculture and land stewardship, cultural
10 affairs, education, economic development, human services,
11 natural resources, public health, and transportation, the
12 state board of regents, and the attorney general's office.
13 The chair shall be elected by the members.

14 2. Members of the committee shall serve as environmental
15 education coordinators for their respective agencies. They
16 shall direct an assessment of their own agency's target
17 audiences and develop appropriate programs to educate these
18 audiences regarding environmental issues. The committee shall
19 establish subcommittees as needed and assist with the
20 development and implementation of the state's environmental
21 education plan.

22 3. The committee shall develop and maintain a memorandum
23 of understanding to specify methods by which the agencies can
24 share their resources to benefit environmental education in
25 the state.

26 4. The committee shall promote networking, coordination,
27 and cooperation among state agencies, promote the efficient
28 distribution of information, and facilitate the planning and
29 development of educational programs and materials. The
30 department of education is responsible for convening and
31 facilitating the functions of the committee.

32 5. Members of the committee are not eligible to receive
33 any separate compensation and are not eligible for
34 reimbursement of expenses from the committee.

35 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. 258B.4 GRANTS PROGRAM.

1 An environmental education grants program is established in
2 order to accomplish the goals set forth in section 258B.1.
3 Guidelines established by the office of environmental
4 education shall include, but are not limited to, a requirement
5 that grant proposals conform with county or state
6 environmental education plans. The department of education
7 shall administer the environmental education grant program. A
8 grant proposal affecting counties shall be submitted to and
9 receive the approval of county environmental education
10 committees prior to submission to the department of education.
11 A grant proposal affecting more than one county or the entire
12 state shall be submitted directly to the department of
13 education.

14 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. 258B.5 ASSISTANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
15 EDUCATION -- APPROPRIATION.

16 1. Financial assistance shall be administered by the
17 office of environmental education of the department of
18 education, and shall be provided to county conservation boards
19 to support the hiring of professional environmental educators
20 to assist schools and nonformal education sectors in planning
21 and leading environmental education programs. The financial
22 assistance shall be used to provide staff and equipment for
23 these programs and shall not be used for the construction or
24 maintenance of parks, buildings, or other physical facilities.
25 The financial assistance shall not replace existing county
26 moneys budgeted for environmental education. Financial
27 assistance shall be provided as follows:

28 a. Within thirty days of receipt of a county conservation
29 board's environmental education plan, pursuant to subsection
30 2, fifty percent of any funds appropriated by the general
31 assembly for purposes of this section shall be allocated to
32 the county conservation board for use in implementing the
33 board's environmental education plan. The other fifty percent
34 of any funds appropriated by the general assembly for purposes
35 of this section shall be divided among eligible counties on a

1 population-based formula detailed in paragraphs "b" through
2 "d".

3 b. A county shall be declared eligible if the county
4 submits certification that the county will do both of the
5 following:

6 (1) Provide county funding or support equivalent to one
7 cent per thousand dollars of the assessed value of taxable
8 property in the county or thirty-five thousand dollars,
9 whichever is less, according to a formula outlined in
10 paragraph "c", for environmental education.

11 (2) Explain how the financial assistance will be spent for
12 environmental education.

13 c. In order to meet county funding or support
14 requirements, county conservation boards may include the
15 dollar equivalent of the following county support:

16 (1) Salaries and benefits for all full-time and part-time
17 naturalists, environmental education coordinators,
18 environmental program specialists, and other positions whose
19 responsibilities lie solely within the county conservation
20 board's environmental education program.

21 (2) For staff positions involving some responsibilities
22 outside the environmental education program, such as a ranger,
23 a percentage of the salary and benefits equal to that portion
24 of time devoted specifically to the environmental education
25 program.

26 (3) Operation and maintenance, but not purchase, of a
27 county vehicle designated to be used specifically by the
28 environmental education program staff.

29 (4) Funds budgeted specifically for the environmental
30 education program, including, but not limited to: program
31 supplies, office supplies, telephone and communications,
32 uniforms, newsletters and other public relations tools,
33 publicity, library and resource materials, printing or
34 purchase of environmental and conservation education resource
35 materials, travel, and professional development workshops and

1 conferences.

2 The costs of construction or maintenance of parks,
3 buildings or any physical facilities shall specifically not be
4 used to meet the county funding or support requirements.

5 d. Counties declared eligible shall receive financial
6 assistance under this section according to the following
7 formula: official population figure of the county according
8 to the most recent federal decennial census times forty cents.

9 e. In order to fulfill the county funding or support
10 requirements of this section, county conservation boards may
11 contract with private nature centers, camps, or other private
12 or public entities to provide these environmental education
13 services. The boards shall submit an annual report to the
14 office of environmental education demonstrating and certifying
15 the proper use of these funds.

16 f. The focus of this financial assistance shall be, but is
17 not limited to: helping teachers, group leaders, and other
18 environmental educators to plan, develop, and implement
19 environmental education programs, including leading outdoor
20 environmental education classes for all ages and for both
21 formal and nonformal educational groups; providing program
22 resources such as environmental education activity guides and
23 curricula, learning kits, audiovisual materials, literature,
24 and equipment; and interpreting Iowa's natural and cultural
25 resources and how to use them wisely.

26 2. To receive funds under this section, a county shall
27 establish a county environmental education committee. The
28 county conservation board shall be responsible for the
29 establishment and membership of the committee. Members shall
30 include, but are not limited to, representatives from local
31 school, conservation, business, and industry groups with
32 established interests in environmental education.

33 Responsibilities of the committee shall include, but are not
34 limited to, the following:

35 a. Establishing operating rules for the committee.

1 b. Developing and submitting to the county conservation
2 board annual eligibility reports.

3 c. Developing and submitting the county environmental
4 education plan to the office of environmental education. The
5 plan shall include, but is not limited to, all of the
6 following:

7 (1) Long-term goals for environmental education in the
8 county and an outline of the relationship of the plan to the
9 goal of achieving environmental literacy.

10 (2) A description of the manner in which the plan utilizes
11 existing professional environmental education personnel,
12 programs, and facilities.

13 (3) An outline of the resources needed to achieve plan
14 goals, including sufficient professional educators to meet a
15 target of one environmental educator for every three thousand
16 to four thousand students in the county.

17 (4) Letters of support for the plan from the members of
18 the county environmental education committee.

19 The plan shall be reviewed and accordingly revised every
20 four years in coordination with a state assessment of
21 environmental literacy provided for in section 258B.2.

22 d. Facilitating communication among all parties active in
23 environmental education in the county to maximize the use of
24 local resources.

25 e. Reviewing and commenting on grants proposals submitted
26 to the office of environmental education pursuant to section
27 258B.4.

28 3. There is appropriated from the general fund of the
29 state to the department of education for each fiscal year the
30 sum of nine hundred ninety thousand dollars for the purpose of
31 providing financial assistance for environmental education as
32 provided in subsection 1.

33 Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. 258B.6 RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL
34 EDUCATION PROGRAMS -- APPROPRIATION.

35 1. A residential environmental education program is

1 created to recognize the critical role that both direct
2 experience with the outdoors and a several-day residential
3 experience away from home and the formal school environment
4 play in the formation of an environmentally literate
5 citizenry.

6 2. Phase I of the program shall provide supplemental
7 funding of thirty-five dollars per pupil to school districts
8 that choose to provide for the attendance of the pupils in one
9 grade level at a certified residential environmental education
10 center. To receive this funding, school districts must
11 provide proof of attendance by their pupils at such a center
12 and participation by pupils in a certified program for a
13 minimum of three consecutive days for each pupil. In
14 addition, school districts shall submit evidence of matching
15 contributions of at least fifty percent of the total program
16 cost. Local school districts shall choose the grade level and
17 the time of year they feel is most developmentally appropriate
18 for this residential experience.

19 3. Phase II of the program shall consist of all of the
20 following:

21 a. Development of certification criteria for facilities,
22 staff, and programs.

23 b. Census of existing facilities, staff, and programs
24 relative to the certification criteria.

25 c. Assessment of the needs of these facilities.

26 4. The program shall be administered cooperatively by the
27 department of education and the department of natural
28 resources.

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Hammond
Connolly
Kramer

SSB-2023
Education

Succeeded By
(SF) HF 2415
SENATE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION BILL BY
CHAIRPERSON CONNOLLY)

Passed Senate, Date _____ Passed House, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act establishing an environmental education program in the
2 state of Iowa.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 258B.1 STATEWIDE ENVIRONMENTAL
2 EDUCATION STRATEGY.

3 1. It is in the interest of the citizens of Iowa that a
4 comprehensive environmental education initiative be undertaken
5 that will result in environmentally literate and responsible
6 citizens who will effectively and constructively solve
7 existing environmental problems, prevent new environmental
8 problems, and maintain a sustainable environment for future
9 Iowans. A healthy economy is intimately linked to a healthy
10 environment. The appropriate audiences for environmental
11 education include both formal and nonformal audiences,
12 business, labor, governments, nonprofit entities, and
13 citizens.

14 2. The goal of this initiative is to assure that Iowans
15 are environmentally literate. An environmentally literate
16 citizen is committed to lifelong learning and understands the
17 following:

- 18 a. Basic principles of ecology, sociology, and economics.
- 19 b. The interconnection of all parts of the environment.
- 20 c. The environmental and social costs and benefits of
21 consumer decisions.
- 22 d. Sources of energy, the improving of energy efficiency,
23 and the relationships between energy use and life styles.
- 24 e. The implications of economic and population trends.
- 25 f. The impacts of personal life styles and personal
26 choices.
- 27 g. The importance of acting in a sustainable and
28 constructive manner to protect the quality and diversity of
29 the natural world.

30 3. An office of environmental education, an interagency
31 environmental education committee, a state plan, a curriculum
32 framework, teacher environmental programs, preschool to adult
33 environmental education programs, environmental education
34 assistance programs, and a grants program shall be established
35 to achieve the goal of accomplishing this initiative. For

1 purposes of this chapter, "nonformal education" means
2 education which takes place outside of the formal, educational
3 classroom setting.

4 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 258B.2 OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
5 EDUCATION.

6 1. An office of environmental education is established and
7 administratively attached to the Iowa department of education.
8 The full-time supervisor of the office shall be an experienced
9 environmental educator. The office shall be staffed by
10 appropriately trained personnel.

11 2. The office of environmental education shall do all of
12 the following:

13 a. Develop and publish a plan for environmental education
14 with assistance from the interagency environmental education
15 committee.

16 b. Assess the status of environmental literacy of the
17 state's students, teachers, and citizens every four years.

18 c. Review the state's plan for environmental education
19 every four years with the assistance of the interagency
20 environmental education committee, revise the plan as needed,
21 and transmit the plan to the governor and the general
22 assembly.

23 d. Administer the environmental education grants program.

24 e. Promote and aid in the establishment and evaluation of
25 school environmental education programs for preschool through
26 grade twelve.

27 f. Promote and aid in the development of preservice and
28 inservice environmental education programs for educators
29 through cooperation with groups including, but not limited to,
30 the Iowa conservation education council and Iowa's colleges
31 and universities.

32 g. Cooperate with federal and state agencies and the
33 private sector in developing, promoting, and evaluating
34 environmental education programs.

35 h. Function as an environmental education clearinghouse by

1 doing all of the following:

2 (1) Reviewing and recommending environmental education
3 materials.

4 (2) Cooperating with state agencies and organizations in
5 the development and distribution of an environmental education
6 newsletter.

7 (3) Establishing an electronic capacity to disseminate
8 data bases of environmental education information and to
9 network with intrastate, interstate, and federal programs.

10 i. Promote the development of cooperative environmental
11 education initiatives with the private sector.

12 j. Facilitate and encourage formal and nonformal
13 environmental education programs; facilitate, encourage, and
14 support multi-school districts' cooperative efforts to assess
15 the need for, develop, and evaluate environmental education
16 curricula, promote state government and private sector policy
17 that is consistent with the environmental education plan
18 established in this legislation, and assist in the
19 coordination of formal and nonformal environmental education
20 with the kindergarten through grade twelve and postsecondary
21 environmental education programs.

22 k. Initiate research on environmental education as called
23 for in the environmental education plan by issuing contracts
24 to organizations, colleges, universities, and other research-
25 based institutions.

26 l. Coordinate environmental education conferences to
27 assist in the dissemination, development, and achievement of
28 the state's environmental education plan.

29 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. 258B.3 INTERAGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL
30 EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

31 1. An interagency environmental education committee is
32 established. The committee shall be composed of individuals
33 with knowledge in environmental education and the members
34 shall be employees appointed by each agency head. These
35 agencies may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the

1 departments of agriculture and land stewardship, cultural
2 affairs, education, economic development, human services,
3 natural resources, public health, and transportation, the
4 state board of regents, and the attorney general's office.
5 The chair shall be elected by the members.

6 2. Members of the committee shall serve as environmental
7 education coordinators for their respective agencies. They
8 shall direct an assessment of their own agency's target
9 audiences and develop appropriate programs to educate these
10 audiences regarding environmental issues. The committee shall
11 establish subcommittees as needed and assist with the
12 development and implementation of the state's environmental
13 education plan.

14 3. The committee shall develop and maintain a memorandum
15 of understanding to specify methods by which the agencies can
16 share their resources to benefit environmental education in
17 the state.

18 4. The committee shall promote networking, coordination,
19 and cooperation among state agencies, promote the efficient
20 distribution of information, and facilitate the planning and
21 development of educational programs and materials. The
22 department of education is responsible for convening and
23 facilitating the functions of the committee.

24 5. Members of the committee are not eligible to receive
25 any separate compensation and are not eligible for
26 reimbursement of expenses from the committee.

27 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. 258B.4 GRANTS PROGRAM.

28 The office of environmental education shall administer a
29 grant program that shall award grants annually to
30 organizations, agencies, institutions, and individuals for the
31 development, dissemination, and evaluation of environmental
32 education programs. The office of environmental education
33 shall develop a grant evaluation plan. Proposals addressing
34 needs and priorities identified by the office of environmental
35 education or included in the state plan for environmental

1 education shall receive priority. The office of environmental
2 education shall adopt rules establishing specific criteria and
3 guidelines for the grants program. An annual appropriation
4 shall be provided to fund the grants program.

5 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. 258B.5 ASSISTANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
6 EDUCATION.

7 1. The goal of providing financial assistance for
8 environmental education shall be to provide a minimum of one
9 environmental education staff person for every three to four
10 thousand pupils in grades kindergarten through grade twelve in
11 a county.

12 2. Financial assistance shall be provided to county
13 conservation boards to support the hiring of professional
14 environmental educators to assist schools and nonformal
15 education sectors in planning and leading environmental
16 education programs. The financial assistance shall be used to
17 provide staff and equipment for these programs and shall not
18 be used for the construction or maintenance of parks,
19 buildings, or other physical facilities. The financial
20 assistance shall not replace existing county moneys budgeted
21 for environmental education. Financial assistance shall be
22 provided as follows:

23 a. Ten thousand one hundred dollars shall be allocated to
24 each county, regardless of population. One million one
25 hundred thousand dollars shall be divided among eligible
26 counties on a population-based formula detailed in paragraphs
27 "b" through "d".

28 b. A county shall be declared eligible if the county
29 submits certification that the county will do both of the
30 following:

31 (1) Provide county funding or support equivalent to one
32 cent per thousand dollars of the assessed value of taxable
33 property in the county or thirty-five thousand dollars,
34 whichever is less, according to a formula outlined in
35 paragraph "c", for environmental education.

1 (2) Explain how the financial assistance will be spent for
2 environmental education.

3 c. In order to meet county funding or support
4 requirements, county conservation boards may include the
5 dollar equivalent of the following county support:

6 (1) Salaries and benefits for all full-time and part-time
7 naturalists, environmental education coordinators,
8 environmental program specialists, and other positions whose
9 responsibilities lie solely within the county conservation
10 board's environmental education program.

11 (2) For staff positions involving some responsibilities
12 outside the environmental education program, such as a ranger,
13 a percentage of the salary and benefits equal to that portion
14 of time devoted specifically to the environmental education
15 program.

16 (3) Operation and maintenance, but not purchase, of a
17 county vehicle designated to be used specifically by the
18 environmental education program staff.

19 (4) Funds budgeted specifically for the environmental
20 education program, including, but not limited to: program
21 supplies, office supplies, telephone and communications,
22 uniforms, newsletters and other public relations tools,
23 publicity, library and resource materials, printing or
24 purchase of environmental and conservation education resource
25 materials, travel, and professional development workshops and
26 conferences.

27 The costs of construction or maintenance of parks,
28 buildings or any physical facilities shall specifically not be
29 used to meet the county funding or support requirements.

30 d. Counties declared eligible shall receive financial
31 assistance under this section according to the following
32 formula: official population figure of the county according
33 to the most recent federal decennial census times forty cents.

34 e. In order to fulfill the county funding or support
35 requirements of this section, county conservation boards may

1 contract with private nature centers, camps, or other private
2 or public entities to provide these environmental education
3 services. The boards shall submit an annual report to the
4 office of environmental education demonstrating and certifying
5 the proper use of these funds.

6 f. The focus of this financial assistance shall be, but is
7 not limited to: helping teachers, group leaders, and other
8 environmental educators to plan, develop, and implement
9 environmental education programs, including leading outdoor
10 environmental education classes for all ages and for both
11 formal and nonformal educational groups; providing program
12 resources such as environmental education activity guides and
13 curricula, learning kits, audiovisual materials, literature,
14 and equipment; and interpreting Iowa's natural and cultural
15 resources and how to use them wisely.

16 Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. 258B.6 RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL
17 EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

18 1. A residential environmental education program is
19 created to recognize the critical role that both direct
20 experience with the outdoors and a several-day residential
21 experience away from home and the formal school environment
22 play in the formation of an environmentally literate
23 citizenry.

24 2. Phase I of the program shall provide supplemental
25 funding of thirty-five dollars per pupil to school districts
26 that choose to provide for the attendance of the pupils in one
27 grade level at a certified residential environmental education
28 center. To receive this funding, school districts must
29 provide proof of attendance by their pupils at such a center
30 and participation by pupils in a certified program for a
31 minimum of three consecutive days for each pupil. Local
32 school districts shall choose the grade level and the time of
33 year they feel is most developmentally appropriate for this
34 residential experience.

35 3. Phase II of the program shall consist of all of the

1 following:

2 a. Development of certification criteria for facilities,
3 staff, and programs.

4 b. Census of existing facilities, staff, and programs
5 relative to the certification criteria.

6 c. Assessment of the needs of these facilities.

7 4. The program shall be administered by the office of
8 environmental education.

9

EXPLANATION

10 This bill establishes an environmental education strategy
11 for the state of Iowa. The bill also establishes a state
12 office of environmental education for all of Iowa's citizens
13 from preschoolers to adults. The office is administratively
14 attached to the department of education to establish and
15 coordinate a plan for the state. The office is to serve as a
16 clearinghouse, a database headquarters, and to coordinate with
17 federal and state agencies and the private sector in
18 developing and implementing environmental education
19 strategies. A grants program is also established to be
20 administered by the office of environmental education.

21 An interagency environmental education committee is
22 established to coordinate efforts among state agencies to
23 promote and assist in providing environmental education
24 programs in the state.

25 A funding program is established for county conservation
26 boards, including a formula to determine eligibility of each
27 county board.

28 The bill also provides for reimbursements to a school
29 district of \$35 per public school pupil who spends three
30 consecutive days at a certified residential environmental
31 education center.

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