

House File 167 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 167

BY DOLECHECK and SCHULTZ

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to independent accreditation of nonpublic
2 schools.

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

1 Section 1. Section 256.11, Code 2011, is amended by adding
2 the following new subsection:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 16. *a.* Notwithstanding subsections
4 1 through 12, a nonpublic school may be accredited by an
5 approved independent accrediting agency instead of by the state
6 board as provided in this subsection. The state board shall
7 maintain a list of approved independent accrediting agencies
8 comprised of at least six regional or national nonprofit,
9 nongovernmental agencies recognized in the education community
10 as reliable authorities concerning the quality of education
11 offered by a school and shall publish the list of independent
12 accrediting agencies on the department's internet site. The
13 list shall include the north central association commission on
14 accreditation and school improvement, the independent schools
15 association of the central states, the association of christian
16 schools international, christian schools international, and
17 the national accreditation commission of the lutheran church
18 — Missouri synod.

19 *b.* A nonpublic school that participates in the accreditation
20 process offered by an independent accrediting agency on
21 the approved list published pursuant to paragraph "a" shall
22 be deemed to meet the education standards of this section.
23 However, such a school shall comply with statutory health and
24 safety requirements for school facilities.

25 *c.* If the state board takes preliminary action to remove
26 an agency from the approved list published on the department's
27 internet site pursuant to paragraph "a", the department
28 shall, at least one year prior to removing the agency from
29 the approved list, notify the nonpublic schools participating
30 in the accreditation process offered by the agency of the
31 state board's intent to remove the accrediting agency from
32 its approved list of independent accrediting agencies. The
33 notice shall also be posted on the department's internet site
34 and shall contain the proposed date of removal. The nonpublic
35 school shall attain accreditation under this subsection or

1 subsections 1 through 12 not later than one year following the
2 date on which the state board removes the agency from its list
3 of independent accrediting agencies.

4

EXPLANATION

5 This bill establishes an alternative to the accreditation of
6 nonpublic schools by the state board of education by requiring
7 the state board to maintain a list of approved independent
8 accrediting agencies comprised of at least six regional or
9 national nonprofit, nongovernmental agencies recognized in the
10 education community as reliable authorities concerning the
11 quality of education offered by a school, and to publish the
12 list of independent accrediting agencies on the department's
13 internet site. A nonpublic school that participates in the
14 accreditation process offered by an independent accrediting
15 agency on the list published by the state board shall be
16 deemed to meet the education standards of Code section 256.11.
17 However, such a school shall comply with statutory health and
18 safety requirements for school facilities.

19 The list shall include the north central association
20 commission on accreditation and school improvement, the
21 independent schools association of the central states, the
22 association of christian schools international, christian
23 schools international, and the national accreditation
24 commission of the lutheran church — Missouri synod.

25 If the state board takes preliminary action to remove an
26 agency from its list of approved independent accrediting
27 agencies, the department shall notify the nonpublic schools
28 accredited through the alternative process of the state board's
29 intent to remove the independent accrediting agency from its
30 approved list at least one year prior to removing the agency
31 from the approved list, and the nonpublic school shall attain
32 accreditation not later than one year following the date on
33 which the state board removes the agency from its approved list
34 of independent accrediting agencies.