

House File 2247 - Introduced

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A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to competency-based education and making
2 appropriations.

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

1 Section 1. Section 256.7, subsection 26, paragraph a,
2 subparagraph (1), Code 2014, is amended to read as follows:

3 (1) The rules establishing high school graduation
4 requirements shall authorize a school district or accredited
5 nonpublic school to consider that any student, at any grade
6 level, who satisfactorily completes a high school-level unit
7 of ~~English or language arts, mathematics, science, or social~~
8 ~~studies~~ instruction has satisfactorily completed a unit of the
9 high school graduation requirements for that area ~~as specified~~
10 ~~in this lettered paragraph~~ of instruction, and shall authorize
11 the school district or accredited nonpublic school to issue
12 high school credit for the unit to the student.

13 Sec. 2. Section 256.24, Code 2014, is amended by striking
14 the section and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

15 **256.24 Competency-based education system — activities —**
16 **appropriation.**

17 1. The department shall develop, implement, and support a
18 statewide competency-based system.

19 2. The department shall establish an Iowa competency-based
20 education collaborative grant program to award grants to
21 not more than ten school districts annually for purposes of
22 developing, implementing, and evaluating competency-based
23 education pilot and demonstration projects. However,
24 the department may also award grants to cohorts of school
25 districts annually for purposes of collaboratively developing,
26 implementing, and evaluating competency-based education pilot
27 and demonstration projects.

28 *a.* The department shall develop grant application,
29 selection, and evaluation criteria.

30 *b.* Each pilot or demonstration project shall be conducted
31 for a minimum of one year, but may be conducted for multiple
32 school years as proposed by the applicant and approved by the
33 department.

34 *c.* Grant amounts shall be distributed as determined by the
35 department.

1 3. The department shall employ at least two consultants
2 full-time to lead the work of school districts receiving
3 grants under this section as the districts collaboratively
4 investigate, develop, and implement competency-based
5 educational pathways for their students. The consultants
6 shall also work to create a framework to guide the statewide
7 implementation of a competency-based education system, and to
8 assist area education agencies and other school districts in
9 developing such competency-based education pathways.

10 4. The department shall submit progress reports analyzing
11 the status, activities, and preliminary findings of the
12 projects to the state board, the governor, and the general
13 assembly by January 15 annually. The department shall
14 summarize the projects' findings, including student achievement
15 results, and submit the summary and any recommendations in a
16 final report to the state board, the governor, and the general
17 assembly by January 15, 2020.

18 5. There is appropriated from the general fund of the
19 state to the department, for the following fiscal years, the
20 following amounts, to be used for administering this section,
21 providing grants in accordance with this section, and for not
22 more than two full-time equivalent positions:

23 a. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2014, and ending
24 June 30, 2015, the sum of one million dollars.

25 b. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015, and ending
26 June 30, 2016, the sum of one million dollars.

27 c. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016, and ending
28 June 30, 2017, the sum of one million dollars.

29 d. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017, and ending
30 June 30, 2018, the sum of one million dollars.

31 e. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2018, and ending
32 June 30, 2019, the sum of one million dollars.

33 6. This section is repealed July 1, 2020.

34

EXPLANATION

35 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with

1 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

2 This bill relates to competency-based education by
3 authorizing school districts and accredited nonpublic
4 schools to issue credit toward meeting high school graduation
5 requirements to any student at any level who successfully
6 completes a unit of high school instruction, expanding the
7 current competency-based education grant program, and making a
8 standing limited appropriation of \$1 million per year for the
9 fiscal period beginning July 1, 2014, and ending June 30, 2019,
10 to the department of education for purposes of developing,
11 implementing, and supporting a statewide competency-based
12 system; duties the department is directed to undertake.

13 In 2013, the department was directed under Code section
14 256.24 to establish a competency-based education grant program
15 to award grants to not more than 10 school districts. The
16 bill rewrites the Code section to continue the grant program
17 as part of the broader effort to develop a statewide system of
18 competency-based education pathways. In addition to the 10
19 individual school districts receiving grants, the bill allows
20 the department to award grants to cohorts of school districts.

21 The department must also employ at least two consultants
22 full-time to lead the work of school districts receiving
23 grants. The consultants must also work to create a framework
24 to guide the statewide implementation of a competency-based
25 education system, and to assist area education agencies and
26 other school districts developing competency-based education
27 pathways for students.

28 The date by which the department must submit its final
29 report summarizing the projects' findings, and providing any
30 recommendations to the state board of education, the governor,
31 and the general assembly, is moved back one year to January 15,
32 2020.

33 The Code section is repealed July 1, 2020.