

House File 2652 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 2652
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 460)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to play-based learning in preschool,
2 prekindergarten, and kindergarten.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. Section 256.11, subsection 1, paragraphs a and b,
2 Code 2025, are amended to read as follows:

3 a. If a school offers a prekindergarten program, the program
4 shall be designed to help children to work and play with
5 others, to express themselves, to learn to use and manage their
6 bodies, and to extend their interests and understanding of the
7 world about them. The prekindergarten program shall encourage
8 cooperative efforts between home and school and shall focus on
9 community resources. The prekindergarten program shall include
10 at least ninety minutes of play-based learning during each half
11 school day and at least one hundred eighty minutes of play-based
12 learning during each full school day. Except as otherwise
13 provided in this subsection, a prekindergarten teacher shall
14 hold a license certifying that the holder is qualified to teach
15 in prekindergarten. A nonpublic school which offers only a
16 prekindergarten may, but is not required to, seek and obtain
17 accreditation.

18 b. If the board of directors of a school district contracts
19 for the operation of a prekindergarten program, the program shall
20 be under the oversight of an appropriately licensed teacher. If
21 the program contracted with was in existence on July 1, 1989,
22 oversight of the program shall be provided by the district. If
23 the program contracted with was not in existence on July 1, 1989,
24 the director of the program shall be a licensed teacher and the
25 director shall provide program oversight. Any director of a
26 program contracted with by a school district under this section
27 who is not a licensed teacher is required to register with
28 the department of education. The prekindergarten program shall
29 include at least ninety minutes of play-based learning during
30 each half school day and at least one hundred eighty minutes of
31 play-based learning during each full school day.

32 Sec. 2. Section 256.11, subsection 2, Code 2025, is amended
33 to read as follows:

34 2. The kindergarten program shall include experiences
35 designed to develop healthy emotional and social habits and

1 growth in the language arts and communication skills, as well
2 as a capacity for the completion of individual tasks, and
3 protect and increase physical well-being with attention given
4 to experiences relating to the development of life skills and,
5 subject to section 279.80, age-appropriate and research-based
6 human growth and development. The kindergarten program shall
7 include at least forty-five minutes of play-based learning during
8 each school day. A kindergarten teacher shall be licensed to
9 teach in kindergarten. An accredited nonpublic school must meet
10 the requirements of this subsection only if the nonpublic school
11 offers a kindergarten program; provided, however, that section
12 279.80 shall not apply to a nonpublic school.

13 Sec. 3. Section 256.11, subsection 19, Code 2025, is amended
14 by adding the following new paragraph:

15 NEW PARAGRAPH. *Ob.* "Play-based learning" means a pedagogical
16 approach that emphasizes play and child-directed experiences in
17 promoting learning and that includes developmentally appropriate
18 strategies that can be integrated with existing learning
19 standards. "Play-based learning" includes social imitation,
20 learning through expression, and unstructured play within the
21 classroom setting where it is a time for the discovery of each
22 child's individual talents, abilities, and needs. "Play-based
23 learning" does not include time spent in recess or as part of a
24 physical education course or instruction.

25 Sec. 4. Section 256C.3, subsection 3, Code 2025, is amended
26 by adding the following new paragraph:

27 NEW PARAGRAPH. *i.* Provision for at least ninety minutes of
28 play-based learning during each half school day and at least
29 one hundred eighty minutes of play-based learning during each
30 full school day. For purposes of this paragraph, "play-based
31 learning" means the same as defined in section 256.11, subsection
32 19.

33 Sec. 5. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, paragraph g, Code 2025,
34 is amended by adding the following new subparagraph:

35 NEW SUBPARAGRAPH. (01) The educational standards established

1 in section 256.11, subsections 1 and 2, related to play-based
2 learning.

3 Sec. 6. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, Code 2025, is amended
4 by adding the following new paragraph:

5 NEW PARAGRAPH. r. Be subject to and comply with the
6 requirements of section 256.11, subsections 1 and 2, relating to
7 play-based learning in the same manner as a school district.

8 EXPLANATION

9 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
10 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

11 This bill relates to play-based learning in preschool,
12 prekindergarten, and kindergarten.

13 The bill defines "play-based learning" as a pedagogical
14 approach that emphasizes play and child-directed experiences in
15 promoting learning and that includes developmentally appropriate
16 strategies that can be integrated with existing learning
17 standards.

18 The bill requires school districts, accredited nonpublic
19 schools, charter schools, and innovation zone schools to
20 incorporate at least 90 minutes of play-based learning during
21 each half school day and at least 180 minutes of play-based
22 learning during each full school day into the prekindergarten
23 program. Schools are required to incorporate at least 45 minutes
24 of play-based learning each school day into the kindergarten
25 program. The bill also requires preschools that operate under
26 Code chapter 256C (statewide preschool program) to provide for at
27 least 90 minutes of play-based learning during each half school
28 day and at least 180 minutes of play-based learning during each
29 full school day.