

House File 2754 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 2754
BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 2713)
(SUCCESSOR TO HSB 735)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to education, including by modifying provisions
2 related to charter schools, the Iowa public employees'
3 retirement system, financing programs for charter schools
4 administered by the Iowa finance authority, the statewide
5 voluntary preschool program for four-year-old children,
6 education savings accounts, independent accrediting agencies,
7 teacher training and licensure, and private instruction,
8 and making appropriations, and including effective date and
9 applicability provisions.
10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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DIVISION I

CHARTER SCHOOL FUNDING

Section 1. Section 256E.8, subsection 2, paragraph a, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

a. The charter school in which the student is enrolled shall receive under paragraph "c" an amount equal to the sum of the regular program state cost per pupil for the budget year plus the teacher leadership supplement state cost per pupil, the teacher salary supplement state cost per pupil, the professional development supplement state cost per pupil, and the early intervention supplement state cost per pupil for the budget year as provided in section 257.9 plus any moneys that would be due to the school district of residence for the student as a result of the non-English speaking weighting under section 280.4, subsection 3, for the budget year multiplied by the state cost per pupil for the budget year. If a student is an eligible pupil under section 261E.6, the charter school shall pay the tuition reimbursement amount to an eligible postsecondary institution as provided in section 261E.7.

Sec. 2. APPLICABILITY. This division of this Act applies to school budget years beginning on or after July 1, 2026.

DIVISION II

IOWA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Sec. 3. Section 97B.1A, subsection 8, paragraph a, Code 2026, is amended by adding the following new subparagraph:

NEW SUBPARAGRAPH. (13) Persons employed by a charter school established pursuant to chapter 256E that satisfies all applicable requirements under federal law for participation in the retirement system.

Sec. 4. Section 97B.1A, subsection 9, paragraph a, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

a. "Employer" means the state of Iowa, the counties, municipalities, agencies, public school districts, charter schools established pursuant to chapter 256E that satisfy all applicable requirements under federal law for participation in

1 the retirement system, all political subdivisions, and all of
2 their departments and instrumentalities, including area agencies
3 on aging, other than those employing persons as specified in
4 subsection 8, paragraph "b", subparagraph (7), and joint planning
5 commissions created under chapter 28E or 28I.

6 Sec. 5. Section 256E.11, subsection 2, Code 2026, is amended
7 to read as follows:

8 2. In the event of a charter school closure, the assets of
9 the charter school shall be used first to satisfy outstanding
10 payroll obligations for employees of the school and any
11 liabilities due and owing to the Iowa public employees'
12 retirement system, then to creditors of the school, then to the
13 public school district in which the charter school operated, if
14 applicable, and then to the state general fund. If the assets of
15 the charter school are insufficient to pay all obligations of the
16 charter school, the prioritization of the distribution of assets
17 shall be consistent with this subsection and otherwise determined
18 by the district court.

19 DIVISION III

20 EXTRACURRICULAR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONTESTS OR COMPETITIONS
21 PROVIDED BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

22 Sec. 6. Section 280.13D, Code 2026, is amended to read as
23 follows:

24 **280.13D Participation in extracurricular interscholastic**
25 **athletic contests or competitions provided by public schools.**

26 1. a. The board of directors of a school district shall
27 allow a student who resides within the school district, and who
28 is enrolled in a nonpublic school or a charter school established
29 pursuant to chapter 256E, to participate in any extracurricular
30 interscholastic athletic contest or competition that is provided
31 by the school district pursuant to the terms of an agreement
32 between the board of directors of the school district and the
33 authorities in charge of the nonpublic school or the governing
34 board of the charter school, as applicable, that provides for the
35 eligibility of the student, if all of the following criteria are

1 satisfied:

2 (1) The extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or
3 competition has not been provided by the nonpublic school or the
4 charter school during the two immediately preceding school years.

5 (2) The nonpublic school or charter school has not entered
6 into an agreement under section 280.13A with another school
7 district, nonpublic school, or charter school that provides
8 for the eligibility of students enrolled in the nonpublic
9 school or charter school to participate in the extracurricular
10 interscholastic athletic contest or competition that is being
11 provided by that school district, nonpublic school, or charter
12 school.

13 b. The board of directors of a school district shall allow
14 a student who resides within a contiguous school district,
15 and who is enrolled in a nonpublic school or charter school,
16 to participate in any extracurricular interscholastic athletic
17 contest or competition that is provided by the school district
18 pursuant to the terms of an agreement between the board of
19 directors of the school district and the authorities in charge
20 of the nonpublic school or the governing board of the charter
21 school, as applicable, that provides for the eligibility of the
22 student, if all of the following criteria are satisfied:

23 (1) The extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or
24 competition has not been provided by the nonpublic school or
25 charter school or by the student's school district of residence,
26 during the two immediately preceding school years.

27 (2) The nonpublic school has not entered into an agreement
28 under section 280.13A with another school district, nonpublic
29 school, or charter school that provides for the eligibility
30 of students enrolled in the nonpublic school or charter school
31 to participate in the extracurricular interscholastic athletic
32 contest or competition that is being provided by that school
33 district, nonpublic school, or charter school.

34 c. If the board of directors of a school district has
35 established a fee for the cost of a student's participation in an

1 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition,
2 a student who is enrolled in a nonpublic school or a charter
3 school and is participating in a contest or competition at a
4 public school pursuant to paragraph "a" or "b", or the student's
5 parent or guardian, shall be responsible for the payment of such
6 fee. The amount of such fee shall not exceed the amount of the
7 fee the board of directors of the school district has established
8 for students who are enrolled in the school district.

9 2. A student who is enrolled in a nonpublic school or a
10 charter school and is participating in a contest or competition
11 at a public school pursuant to subsection 1, paragraph "a" or
12 "b", shall participate under the same conditions as a student who
13 is enrolled in the school district, including meeting the school
14 district's student code of conduct requirements.

15 3. A student who participates in an extracurricular
16 interscholastic athletic contest or competition pursuant to this
17 section shall be deemed to satisfy the residence requirements for
18 purposes of section 256.46.

19 DIVISION IV

20 LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY STATUS

21 Sec. 7. Section 256E.5, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
22 following new subsection:

23 NEW SUBSECTION. 1A. The governing board of a charter school
24 that is approved under this section shall be designated a local
25 education agency for the purpose of receiving federal funds for
26 all attendance centers that are under the jurisdiction of the
27 governing board.

28 DIVISION V

29 CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM

30 Sec. 8. NEW SECTION. **16.163 Charter school facilities**
31 **revolving loan program fund — credit enhancement agreements.**

32 1. a. A charter school facilities revolving loan program
33 fund is created within the authority to assist charter schools
34 established pursuant to chapter 256E in acquiring suitable
35 school facilities. The moneys in the charter school facilities

1 revolving loan program fund are appropriated to the authority
2 for use in the development and operation of a charter school
3 facilities revolving loan program to assist charter schools in
4 purchasing, acquiring, developing, reconstructing, remodeling, or
5 replacing school buildings.

6 b. Moneys transferred by the authority for deposit in the
7 charter school facilities revolving loan program fund, moneys
8 appropriated to the charter school facilities revolving loan
9 program, and any other moneys available to and obtained or
10 accepted by the authority for placement in the charter school
11 facilities revolving loan program fund shall be deposited in
12 the fund. Additionally, payment of interest, recaptures of
13 awards, and other repayments to the charter school facilities
14 revolving loan program fund shall be deposited in the fund.
15 Notwithstanding section 12C.7, subsection 2, interest or earnings
16 on moneys in the charter school facilities revolving loan program
17 fund shall be credited to the fund. Notwithstanding section
18 8.33, moneys that remain unencumbered or unobligated at the end
19 of the fiscal year shall not revert but shall remain available
20 for the same purpose in the succeeding fiscal year.

21 c. The authority shall annually allocate moneys available
22 in the charter school facilities revolving loan program fund
23 to assist charter schools in purchasing, acquiring, developing,
24 reconstructing, remodeling, or replacing school buildings.

25 2. In addition to the charter school facilities revolving
26 loan program authorized pursuant to subsection 1, the authority
27 is authorized to make or enter into a liquidity or credit
28 enhancement agreement with a charter school established pursuant
29 to chapter 256E to assist the charter school in purchasing,
30 acquiring, developing, reconstructing, remodeling, or replacing
31 school buildings.

32 Sec. 9. CODE EDITOR DIRECTIVE. The Code editor shall
33 designate section 16.163, as enacted in this Act, as a new
34 section within chapter 16, subchapter X, part 6, and may
35 redesignate the preexisting part and correct internal references

1 as necessary, including references to part headnotes.

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DIVISION VI

3 STATEWIDE VOLUNTARY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

4 Sec. 10. Section 256C.3, subsection 4, Code 2026, is amended
5 by adding the following new paragraph:

6 NEW PARAGRAPH. e. (1) A school district may enter into a
7 chapter 28E agreement with a community-based provider to allow
8 the community-based provider to provide high-quality instruction
9 as part of the approved local program.

10 (2) Upon the request of a community-based provider, a school
11 district shall enter into a chapter 28E agreement with a
12 community-based provider to allow the community-based provider to
13 provide high-quality instruction as part of the approved local
14 program.

15 (3) A chapter 28E agreement entered into pursuant to this
16 paragraph shall not limit the number of eligible students who may
17 receive high-quality instruction from a community-based provider
18 as part of the approved local program.

19 Sec. 11. NEW SECTION. **256C.7 Limitation of authority.**

20 1. This chapter shall not be construed to authorize the state
21 or any political subdivision of the state to exercise authority
22 over any community-based provider or construed to require a
23 community-based provider to modify its academic standards for
24 admission or educational program in order to receive payments
25 from a school district pursuant to section 256C.4, subsection 1.

26 2. This chapter shall not be construed to expand the
27 authority of the state or any political subdivision of the state
28 to impose regulations upon any community-based provider that are
29 not necessary to implement this chapter.

30 3. A community-based provider that receives payments from a
31 school district pursuant to section 256C.4, subsection 1, is not
32 an agent of this state or of a political subdivision of this
33 state.

34 4. Rules adopted by the department of education to implement
35 this chapter that impose an undue burden on a community-based

1 provider are invalid.

2 5. A community-based provider that receives payments from
3 a school district pursuant to section 256C.4, subsection 1,
4 shall be given the maximum freedom possible to provide for the
5 educational needs of the community-based provider's students,
6 consistent with state and federal law.

7 DIVISION VII

8 EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

9 Sec. 12. Section 257.11B, subsections 3 and 4, Code 2026, are
10 amended to read as follows:

11 3. a. (1) On or after January 1, but on or before June 30,
12 preceding the school year for which the education savings account
13 payment is requested, the parent or guardian of an eligible pupil
14 may request an education savings account payment by submitting an
15 application to the department of education.

16 (2) On or after December 1, but on or before December 20,
17 preceding the semester for which the education savings account
18 payment is requested, the parent or guardian of an eligible pupil
19 may request an education savings account payment by submitting an
20 application to the department of education.

21 b. Within thirty days following submission of an application,
22 the department of education or third-party entity shall notify
23 the parent or guardian of each pupil approved for the following
24 school year or semester and specify the amount of the education
25 savings account payment for the pupil, if known at the time of
26 the notice. As soon as practical following the processing of all
27 applications, the department of education or third-party entity
28 shall determine the number of pupils in each school district
29 approved for the school budget year and provide such information
30 to the department of management.

31 c. Education savings account payments shall only be approved
32 for one school year or one semester, as applicable, and
33 applications must be submitted annually for payments in
34 subsequent school years.

35 4. Each education savings account payment shall be equal

1 to the regular program state cost per pupil for the same
2 school budget year; provided, however, that an education savings
3 account payment shall be equal to fifty percent of the regular
4 program state cost per pupil for the same school budget year
5 if the pupil's parent or guardian submitted an application under
6 subsection 3, paragraph "a", subparagraph (2).

7 Sec. 13. Section 257.11B, subsection 6, paragraph a, Code
8 2026, is amended to read as follows:

9 a. For each pupil approved for an education savings account
10 payment, the department of education or third-party entity shall
11 establish an individual account for that pupil in the education
12 savings account fund. The If the pupil's parent or guardian
13 submitted an application under subsection 3, paragraph "a",
14 subparagraph (1), the amount of the pupil's education savings
15 account payment shall be deposited into the pupil's individual
16 account on July 15 or thirty days following submission of
17 the application, whichever is later, and such amount shall be
18 immediately available for the payment of qualified educational
19 expenses incurred by the parent or guardian for the pupil
20 during that fiscal year using a payment method authorized under
21 subsection 5. If the pupil's parent or guardian submitted an
22 application under subsection 3, paragraph "a", subparagraph (2),
23 the amount of the pupil's education savings account payment shall
24 be deposited into the pupil's individual account within thirty
25 days following submission of the application, and such amount
26 shall be immediately available for the payment of qualified
27 educational expenses incurred by the parent or guardian for the
28 pupil during that fiscal year using a payment method authorized
29 under subsection 5.

30 DIVISION VIII

31 INDEPENDENT ACCREDITING AGENCIES

32 Sec. 14. Section 256.11, subsection 16, Code 2026, is amended
33 by adding the following new paragraph:

34 NEW PARAGRAPH. d. (1) This subsection shall not be
35 construed to authorize the state or any political subdivision

1 of the state to exercise authority over any nonpublic school or
2 construed to require a nonpublic school to modify its academic
3 standards for admission or educational program.

4 (2) This section shall not be construed to expand the
5 authority of the state or any political subdivision of the state
6 to impose regulations upon any nonpublic school that are not
7 necessary to implement this section.

8 (3) Rules adopted by the state board of education to
9 implement this section that impose an undue burden on a nonpublic
10 school are invalid.

11 (4) A nonpublic school shall be given the maximum freedom
12 possible to provide for the educational needs of the school's
13 students, consistent with state and federal law.

14 DIVISION IX

15 SCHEDULE OF TEACHER TRAININGS AND LICENSURE RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

16 Sec. 15. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — SCHEDULE OF REQUIRED
17 TEACHER TRAINING AND LICENSURE RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS.

18 1. The department of education shall convene and provide
19 administrative support to a task force that shall study the
20 training programs in which teachers in this state are required to
21 participate pursuant to state law and the requirements associated
22 with renewing a teaching license.

23 2. Any expense incurred by a member of the task force shall
24 be the responsibility of the individual member or the respective
25 entity represented by the member.

26 3. The task force shall submit its findings and
27 recommendations to the general assembly on or before December 31,
28 2026. The recommendations must include specific recommendations
29 related to how to change current law to create a more manageable
30 training program schedule and licensure renewal requirement
31 schedule for teachers.

32 EXPLANATION

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

35 This bill relates to education by modifying provisions related

1 to charter schools, the Iowa public employees' retirement system,
2 financing programs for charter schools administered by the Iowa
3 finance authority, the statewide voluntary preschool program,
4 education savings accounts, independent accrediting agencies,
5 teacher training and licensure, and makes appropriations.

6 DIVISION I — CHARTER SCHOOL FUNDING. Currently, each student
7 enrolled in a charter school under Code chapter 256E shall be
8 counted, for state school foundation purposes, in the student's
9 district of residence. The department of education is then
10 required to pay to the charter school in which the student is
11 enrolled an amount equal to the sum of the regular program state
12 cost per pupil for the budget year plus other additional costs
13 specified in Code section 256E.8(2)(a). This division adds the
14 teacher salary supplement state cost per pupil to the amount
15 required to be paid to the charter school. This provision
16 applies to school budget years beginning on or after July 1,
17 2026.

18 DIVISION II — IOWA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM.
19 This division provides that persons employed by charter schools
20 that satisfy all applicable requirements under federal law for
21 participation in the retirement system are employees for purposes
22 of the provisions of the Iowa public employees' retirement system
23 (IPERS). Additionally, the division provides that charter schools
24 that satisfy all applicable requirements under federal law for
25 participation in the retirement system are employers for purposes
26 of the provisions of IPERS.

27 The bill provides that in the event of a charter school
28 closure, the assets of the charter school shall be, after payroll
29 obligations but prior to paying creditors, used to satisfy any
30 liabilities due and owing to IPERS.

31 DIVISION III — EXTRACURRICULAR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC
32 CONTESTS OR COMPETITIONS PROVIDED BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS. This
33 division requires the board of directors of a school district
34 to allow a student who resides within the district, and
35 who is enrolled in a charter school, to participate in any

1 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition
2 that is provided by the school district pursuant to the
3 terms of an agreement between the board of directors of the
4 school district and the governing board of the charter school
5 if the extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or
6 competition has not been provided by the charter school during
7 the two immediately preceding school years and if the charter
8 school has not entered into an agreement under Code section
9 280.13A (sharing interscholastic activities) with another school
10 district, nonpublic school, or charter school that provides
11 for the eligibility of students enrolled in the charter school
12 to participate in the extracurricular interscholastic athletic
13 contest or competition that is being provided by that school.

14 The division requires the board of directors of a school
15 district to allow a student who resides within a contiguous
16 school district, and who is enrolled in a charter school,
17 to participate in any extracurricular interscholastic athletic
18 contest or competition that is provided by the school district
19 pursuant to the terms of an agreement between the board
20 of directors of the school district and the governing board
21 of the charter school if the extracurricular interscholastic
22 athletic contest or competition has not been provided by the
23 charter school or by the student's school district of residence
24 during the two immediately preceding school years and if
25 the charter school has not entered into an agreement under
26 Code section 280.13A with another school district, nonpublic
27 school, or charter school that provides for the eligibility of
28 students enrolled in the charter school to participate in the
29 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition
30 that is being provided by that school.

31 The division provides that if the board of directors of
32 a school district has established a fee for the cost of a
33 student's participation in an extracurricular interscholastic
34 athletic contest or competition, a student who is enrolled in a
35 charter school and is participating in a contest or competition

1 at a public school pursuant to the division's provisions, or
2 the student's parent or guardian, shall be responsible for the
3 payment of such fee.

4 The division requires a student who is enrolled in a
5 charter school and is participating in a contest or competition
6 at a public school pursuant to the division's provisions to
7 participate under the same conditions as a student who is
8 enrolled in the school district, including meeting the school
9 district's student code of conduct requirements.

10 The division provides that a student who participates in an
11 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition
12 pursuant to the division's provisions is deemed to satisfy
13 the residence requirements for purposes of Code section 256.46
14 (rules for participation in extracurricular activities by certain
15 children).

16 DIVISION IV — LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY STATUS. This division
17 provides that the governing board of a charter school that is
18 approved under Code section 256E.5 (founding group-state board
19 model) is a local education agency for the purpose of receiving
20 federal funds for all attendance centers that are under the
21 jurisdiction of the governing board.

22 DIVISION V — CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES REVOLVING LOAN
23 PROGRAM. This division establishes a charter school facilities
24 revolving loan program fund within the Iowa finance authority
25 (IFA) to assist charter schools in acquiring suitable school
26 facilities. The moneys in the fund are appropriated to the IFA
27 for use in the development and operation of a charter school
28 facilities revolving loan program in purchasing, acquiring,
29 developing, reconstructing, remodeling, or replacing school
30 buildings. The division also allows the IFA to make or enter
31 into a liquidity or credit enhancement agreement with a charter
32 school in purchasing, acquiring, developing, reconstructing,
33 remodeling, or replacing school buildings.

34 DIVISION VI — STATEWIDE VOLUNTARY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FOR
35 FOUR-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN. This division authorizes school districts

1 to enter into a Code chapter 28E agreement with a community-based
2 provider allowing the community-based provider to provide
3 instruction as part of the approved local program, and the
4 division requires school districts to enter into such an
5 agreement upon the request of a community-based provider.
6 Additionally, the division prohibits such Code chapter 28E
7 agreements from limiting the number of eligible students who may
8 receive instruction from a community-based provider as part of
9 the approved local program.

10 The division prohibits Code chapter 256C (statewide voluntary
11 preschool program for four-year-old children) from being
12 construed to authorize the state or any political subdivision of
13 the state to exercise authority over any community-based provider
14 or construed to require a community-based provider to modify
15 its academic standards for admission or educational program in
16 order to receive payments from a school district under the
17 statewide voluntary preschool program (SWVPP). The division also
18 prohibits Code chapter 256C from being construed to expand the
19 authority of the state or any political subdivision of the state
20 to impose regulations upon any community-based provider that are
21 not necessary to implement this section. The division provides
22 that a community-based provider that receives payments from a
23 school district under the SWVPP is not an agent of this state
24 or of a political subdivision of this state. Rules adopted by
25 the department of education to implement the SWVPP that impose
26 an undue burden on a community-based provider are invalid. The
27 division requires that a community-based provider that receives
28 payments from a school district under the SWVPP be given the
29 maximum freedom possible to provide for the educational needs
30 of the community-based provider's students, consistent with state
31 and federal law.

32 DIVISION VII — EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS. The education
33 savings account program is a program that provides funds
34 to pupils who attend nonpublic schools to pay for qualified
35 educational expenses, including but not limited to tuition,

1 tutoring or cognitive skill training fees, educational therapy
2 costs, software expenses, and expenses related to course
3 materials. Under current law, the parent or guardian of a
4 pupil is required to submit an application for payment under the
5 education savings account program to the department of education
6 on or after January 1, but on or before June 30, preceding the
7 school year for which the education savings account payment is
8 requested. This division allows the parent or guardian of a
9 pupil to submit such an application on or after December 1, but
10 on or before December 20, preceding the semester for which the
11 education savings account payment is requested. Additionally,
12 under current law each education savings account payment is equal
13 to the regular program state cost per pupil for the same school
14 budget year. The division provides that, if the parent or
15 guardian of a pupil submitted such an application on or after
16 December 1, but on or before December 20, preceding the semester
17 for which the education savings account payment is requested, the
18 education savings account payment for such pupil is equal to 50
19 percent of the regular program state cost per pupil for the same
20 school budget year. The division makes conforming changes.

21 DIVISION VIII — INDEPENDENT ACCREDITING AGENCIES. Current law
22 authorizes a nonpublic school to be accredited by an approved
23 independent accrediting agency instead of by the state board of
24 education if the nonpublic school is accredited by an independent
25 accrediting agency that is on a list of approved independent
26 accrediting agencies maintained by the state board of education.
27 This division provides that these provisions shall not be
28 construed to authorize the state or any political subdivision
29 of the state to exercise authority over any nonpublic school or
30 construed to require a nonpublic school to modify its academic
31 standards for admission or educational program. The division
32 also provides that these provisions shall not be construed to
33 expand the authority of the state or any political subdivision
34 of the state to impose regulations upon any nonpublic school that
35 are not necessary to implement the state's educational standards.

1 The division provides that rules adopted by the state board of
2 education to implement these provisions that impose an undue
3 burden on a nonpublic school are invalid. The division requires
4 that a nonpublic school shall be given the maximum freedom
5 possible to provide for the educational needs of the school's
6 students, consistent with state and federal law.

7 DIVISION IX — SCHEDULE OF TEACHER TRAININGS AND LICENSURE
8 RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS. This division requires the department of
9 education to convene a task force to study the training programs
10 in which teachers in this state are required to participate
11 pursuant to state law and the requirements associated with
12 renewing a teaching license. The task force is required to
13 submit its findings and recommendations to the general assembly
14 on or before December 31, 2026. The recommendations must include
15 specific recommendations related to how to change current law to
16 create a more manageable training program schedule and licensure
17 renewal requirement schedule for teachers.