

House Study Bill 173 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON
STATE GOVERNMENT BILL BY
CHAIRPERSON BLOOMINGDALE)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to student nutrition, including by modifying
2 the curricula provided to students enrolled in kindergarten
3 through grade twelve to include instruction related to
4 nutrition, modifying provisions related to the agriculture,
5 food, and natural resources component of the career and
6 technical education instruction provided to students enrolled
7 in grades nine through twelve, and modifying provisions
8 related to school meal programs, and including effective date
9 provisions.
10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 256.11, subsections 2, 3, and 4, Code
2 2025, are amended to read as follows:

3 2. a. The kindergarten program shall include experiences
4 designed to develop healthy emotional and social habits and
5 growth in the language arts and communication skills, as well
6 as a capacity for the completion of individual tasks, and
7 protect and increase physical well-being with attention given
8 to experiences relating to the development of life skills and,
9 subject to section 279.80, age-appropriate and research-based
10 human growth and development. The kindergarten program shall
11 also include instruction related to nutrition that emphasizes all
12 of the following:

13 (1) The importance of animal-based protein, dairy,
14 vegetables, and fruit.

15 (2) The nutritional benefits of animal-based protein, dairy,
16 vegetables, and fruit.

17 (3) The role that animal-based protein, dairy, vegetables,
18 and fruit play in a balanced diet.

19 b. A kindergarten teacher shall be licensed to teach in
20 kindergarten.

21 c. An accredited nonpublic school must meet the requirements
22 of this subsection only if the nonpublic school offers a
23 kindergarten program; provided, however, that section 279.80
24 shall not apply to a nonpublic school.

25 3. a. The following areas shall be taught in grades one
26 through six: English-language arts, social studies, mathematics,
27 science, health, physical education, traffic safety, music,
28 visual art, and, subject to section 279.80, age-appropriate
29 and research-based human growth and development. The health
30 curriculum shall include all of the following:

31 (1) The characteristics of communicable diseases.

32 (2) Instruction related to nutrition that emphasizes all of
33 the following:

34 (a) The importance of animal-based protein, dairy,
35 vegetables, and fruit.

1 (b) The nutritional benefits of animal-based protein, dairy,
2 vegetables, and fruit.

3 (c) The role that animal-based protein, dairy, vegetables,
4 and fruit play in a balanced diet.

5 b. Computer science instruction incorporating the standards
6 established under section 256.7, subsection 26, paragraph "a",
7 subparagraph (4), shall be offered in at least one grade
8 level commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2023.
9 ~~The health curriculum shall include the characteristics of~~
10 ~~communicable diseases.~~

11 c. The state board as part of accreditation standards shall
12 adopt curriculum definitions for implementing the elementary
13 program.

14 4. a. The following shall be taught in grades seven
15 and eight: English-language arts; social studies, including
16 instruction related to civics; mathematics; science; health;
17 age-appropriate and research-based human growth and development;
18 career exploration and development; physical education; music;
19 and visual art.

20 (1) Career exploration and development shall be designed so
21 that students are appropriately prepared to create an individual
22 career and academic plan pursuant to section 279.61, incorporate
23 foundational career and technical education concepts aligned with
24 the six career and technical education service areas as defined
25 in subsection 5, paragraph "h", incorporate relevant twenty-first
26 century skills to facilitate career readiness, and introduce
27 students to career opportunities within the local community
28 and across this state. This subparagraph shall not apply to
29 the teaching of career exploration and development in nonpublic
30 schools.

31 (2) The health curriculum shall include all of the following:

32 (a) Age-appropriate and research-based information regarding
33 the characteristics of sexually transmitted diseases.

34 (b) Instruction related to nutrition that emphasizes all of
35 the following:

1 (i) The importance of animal-based protein, dairy,
2 vegetables, and fruit.

3 (ii) The nutritional benefits of animal-based protein, dairy,
4 vegetables, and fruit.

5 (iii) The role that animal-based protein, dairy, vegetables,
6 and fruit play in a balanced diet.

7 b. Computer science instruction incorporating the standards
8 established under section 256.7, subsection 26, paragraph "a",
9 subparagraph (4), shall be offered in at least one grade
10 level commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2023.
11 ~~Career exploration and development shall be designed so that~~
12 ~~students are appropriately prepared to create an individual~~
13 ~~career and academic plan pursuant to section 279.61, incorporate~~
14 ~~foundational career and technical education concepts aligned~~
15 ~~with the six career and technical education service areas as~~
16 ~~defined in subsection 5, paragraph "h", incorporate relevant~~
17 ~~twenty-first century skills to facilitate career readiness, and~~
18 ~~introduce students to career opportunities within the local~~
19 ~~community and across this state. The health curriculum shall~~
20 ~~include age-appropriate and research-based information regarding~~
21 ~~the characteristics of sexually transmitted diseases.~~

22 c. The state board as part of accreditation standards shall
23 adopt curriculum definitions for implementing the program in
24 grades seven and eight. ~~However, this subsection shall not~~
25 ~~apply to the teaching of career exploration and development in~~
26 ~~nonpublic schools.~~

27 Sec. 2. Section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph h,
28 subparagraph (1), subparagraph division (a), Code 2025, is
29 amended to read as follows:

30 (a) Agriculture, food, and natural resources, which shall
31 include instruction related to food production, the benefits of
32 local sourcing, and sustainable farming practices.

33 Sec. 3. Section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph j,
34 subparagraph (1), Code 2025, is amended to read as follows:

35 (1) One unit of health education which may include personal

1 health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and
2 survival skills; consumer health; family life; age-appropriate
3 and research-based human growth and development; substance
4 use disorder and nonuse; emotional and social health; health
5 resources; cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and prevention and
6 control of disease, including age-appropriate and research-based
7 information regarding sexually transmitted diseases. The one
8 unit of health education shall include instruction related to
9 nutrition that emphasizes all of the following:

10 (a) The importance of animal-based protein, dairy,
11 vegetables, and fruit.

12 (b) The nutritional benefits of animal-based protein, dairy,
13 vegetables, and fruit.

14 (c) The role that animal-based protein, dairy, vegetables,
15 and fruit play in a balanced diet.

16 Sec. 4. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, paragraph g, Code 2025,
17 is amended by adding the following new subparagraphs:

18 NEW SUBPARAGRAPH. (01) The educational standards established
19 in section 256.11, subsections 2, 3, and 4, and section
20 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph "j", subparagraph (1), related to
21 instruction on nutrition.

22 NEW SUBPARAGRAPH. (3) The educational standards established
23 in section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph "h", subparagraph (1),
24 subparagraph division (a), related to instruction relating to
25 food production, the benefits of local sourcing, and sustainable
26 farming practices.

27 Sec. 5. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, Code 2025, is amended
28 by adding the following new paragraphs:

29 NEW PARAGRAPH. Op. Be subject to and comply with the
30 requirements of section 256.11, subsections 2, 3, and 4, and
31 section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph "j", subparagraph (1),
32 related to instruction on nutrition in the same manner as a
33 school district.

34 NEW PARAGRAPH. r. Be subject to and comply with the
35 requirements of section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph

1 "h", subparagraph (1), subparagraph division (a), related to
2 instruction relating to food production, the benefits of local
3 sourcing, and sustainable farming practices in the same manner as
4 a school district.

5 Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. **283A.14 Application for waiver —**
6 **updated nutritional guidelines — joint committee.**

7 1. The general assembly finds and declares all of the
8 following:

9 a. The nutritional needs and cultural preferences of the
10 students in Iowa might be better served by localizing nutritional
11 standards.

12 b. Unique regional food sources, including corn, pork, and
13 dairy, are not adequately addressed by federal guidelines.

14 c. Flexibility in nutritional standards can enhance the
15 ability of schools to provide meals that are both nutritious and
16 appealing to students, which may increase student participation
17 in school breakfast and lunch programs.

18 2. Within ninety days after the effective date of this Act,
19 the department of education shall apply for a waiver under the
20 provisions of the federal National School Lunch Act of 1966,
21 42 U.S.C. §1751 et seq., and the federal Child Nutrition Act of
22 1966, 42 U.S.C. §1771 et seq., to request all of the following:

23 a. An exemption from sodium limits, whole grain requirements,
24 and fruit and vegetable variety stipulations in school breakfast
25 and lunch programs.

26 b. Permission to substitute or modify federal requirements
27 with state-specific nutritional guidelines that align with Iowa's
28 dietary recommendations or cultural food practices.

29 3. If the waiver applied for by the department of education
30 under subsection 2 is granted, the department of education shall
31 adopt updated guidelines for what constitutes a nutritionally
32 adequate meal. The department shall consult with the department
33 of agriculture and land stewardship, experts in nutrition,
34 educators, parents, local farmers, and other stakeholders during
35 the process of adopting updated guidelines for what constitutes a

1 nutritionally adequate meal. The guidelines for what constitutes
2 a nutritionally adequate meal may reflect local preferences,
3 regional food sources, including corn, pork, and dairy, and
4 cultural considerations. The guidelines for what constitutes a
5 nutritionally adequate meal must satisfy all of the following
6 requirements:

7 a. Be at least as stringent in promoting health and
8 preventing chronic diseases as the federal guidelines.

9 b. Maintain a commitment to nutritional health and student
10 well-being.

11 c. Prioritize the following food groups, in the order listed:

12 (1) Animal-based protein, including but not limited to beef,
13 pork, poultry, fish, and eggs.

14 (2) Dairy products, including but not limited to milk,
15 cheese, and yogurt.

16 (3) Vegetables, including but not limited to local and
17 seasonal produce.

18 (4) Fresh fruit or dried or frozen fruit when fresh fruit is
19 not seasonally available.

20 4. If the waiver applied for by the department of education
21 under subsection 2 is granted, the department of education
22 and the department of agriculture and land stewardship shall
23 establish a joint committee to do all of the following:

24 a. Oversee the implementation of the guidelines for what
25 constitutes a nutritionally adequate meal.

26 b. Review the outcomes associated with the guidelines for
27 what constitutes a nutritionally adequate meal.

28 c. Study the nutritional science associated with the
29 guidelines for what constitutes a nutritionally adequate meal
30 and seek feedback from schools, parents, and agricultural
31 stakeholders related to the guidelines.

32 d. Provide recommendations to the department of education
33 related to changes that may need to be made to the guidelines for
34 what constitutes a nutritionally adequate meal.

35 5. If the waiver applied for by the department of education

1 under subsection 2 is granted, the department of education shall
2 submit to the general assembly an annual report, beginning on
3 or before the first June 30 after the implementation of the new
4 guidelines, which describes the impact of the guidelines related
5 to what constitutes a nutritionally adequate meal, including
6 information related to school breakfast and lunch program
7 participation, student health outcomes, feedback from school
8 districts, progress in implementing the guidelines, challenges
9 associated with implementing the guidelines, and recommendations
10 for further enhancement of the guidelines.

11 6. If the waiver applied for by the department of education
12 under subsection 2 is granted, the department of education
13 shall conduct an evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the
14 guidelines for what constitutes a nutritionally adequate meal
15 compared to the comparable federal standards within five years
16 after the effective date of the waiver.

17 Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. The following, being deemed of
18 immediate importance, takes effect upon enactment:

19 The section of this Act enacting section 283A.14.

20 EXPLANATION

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

23 This bill relates to student nutrition, including by modifying
24 the curricula provided to students enrolled in kindergarten
25 through grade 12 to include instruction related to nutrition,
26 modifying provisions related to the agriculture, food, and
27 natural resources component of the career and technical education
28 instruction provided to students enrolled in grades 9 through 12,
29 and modifying provisions related to school meal programs.

30 The bill requires school districts, accredited nonpublic
31 schools, charter schools, and innovation zone schools to
32 provide instruction related to nutrition to students enrolled in
33 kindergarten through grade 12. The bill also requires school
34 districts, accredited nonpublic schools, charter schools, and
35 innovation zone schools to provide instruction related to food

1 production, the benefits of local sourcing, and sustainable
2 farming practices as part of the agriculture, food, and natural
3 resources component of the career and technical education
4 curriculum in grades 9 through 12.

5 The bill creates new Code section 283A.14, which requires
6 the department of education (DE) to, within 90 days after the
7 effective date of the bill, apply for a waiver under federal
8 law to request an exemption from certain limits and requirements
9 related to school breakfast and lunch programs and to request
10 permission to substitute or modify federal requirements with
11 state-specific nutritional guidelines that align with Iowa's
12 dietary recommendations or cultural food practices. The bill
13 provides that if the waiver is granted, DE is required to
14 adopt updated guidelines for what constitutes a nutritionally
15 adequate meal for purposes of Iowa's school meal programs. The
16 bill establishes requirements related to these guidelines and
17 persons with whom DE is required to consult during the process
18 of updating the guidelines. Also, if the waiver is granted,
19 the bill requires DE and the department of agriculture and
20 land stewardship to establish a joint committee related to the
21 guidelines and establishes the joint committee's duties.

22 New Code section 283A.14 requires DE to submit an annual
23 report to the general assembly that describes the impact of
24 the guidelines for what constitutes a nutritionally adequate
25 meal, including information related to school breakfast and
26 lunch program participation, student health outcomes, feedback
27 from school districts, progress in implementing the guidelines,
28 challenges associated with implementing the guidelines, and
29 recommendations for further enhancement of the guidelines, if
30 the waiver is granted. New Code section 283A.14 also requires
31 DE to conduct an evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the
32 guidelines for what constitutes a nutritionally adequate meal
33 compared to the comparable federal standards within five years
34 after the effective date of the waiver, if the waiver is granted.

35 New Code section 283A.14 takes effect upon enactment.