

House Study Bill 676 - Introduced

SENATE/HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED GOVERNOR BILL)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to charter schools and innovation zone schools,
2 including by modifying provisions related to charter school
3 funding and operations, services provided to charter schools
4 by area education agencies, charter school contracts, and
5 charter school student participation in extracurricular
6 activities provided by public schools, striking provisions
7 allowing for the establishment of innovation zone schools, and
8 including applicability provisions.

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

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DIVISION I

CONSOLIDATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL CODE CHAPTERS AND ELIMINATION OF
INNOVATION ZONE SCHOOLS

Section 1. Section 29E.1, subsection 1, paragraph b,
subparagraph (4), Code 2026, is amended by striking the
subparagraph.

Sec. 2. Section 232E.1, subsection 6, Code 2026, is amended
to read as follows:

6. "Public school district" means a public school district
as described in chapter 274, and includes a charter school under
chapter 256E, ~~or a charter school or an innovation zone school~~
~~under chapter 256F.~~

Sec. 3. Section 256.7, subsection 15, Code 2026, is amended
to read as follows:

15. Adopt rules under chapter 17A that require school
districts, accredited nonpublic schools, and charter schools,
~~and innovation zone schools~~ to include information regarding
the exemptions and requirements for an exemption described in
section 139A.8, subsection 4, in any communication to the parent
or guardian of a student that is related to the immunizations
required under section 139A.8.

Sec. 4. Section 256.9, subsections 69, 71, 73, and 78, Code
2026, are amended to read as follows:

69. On or before May 1, 2025, develop and distribute to
school districts, accredited nonpublic schools, and charter
schools, ~~and innovation zone schools~~ model policies that, if
adopted, would satisfy a school district's responsibilities under
section 279.88 relating to policies governing student use of
personal electronic devices.

71. Develop and distribute to school districts, accredited
nonpublic schools, and charter schools, ~~and innovation zone~~
~~schools~~ family-centered resources to support student development
of mathematics knowledge at home.

73. On or before July 1, 2025, develop and distribute to
school districts, accredited nonpublic schools, and charter

1 schools, ~~and innovation zone schools~~ a comprehensive state
2 mathematics plan that is designed to increase the level of
3 mathematics proficiency attained by students using systematic and
4 sequential approaches to teaching subitizing, cardinality, object
5 counting, verbal counting, spatial relationships, benchmark
6 numbers, and part-part-whole models.

7 78. a. Develop and distribute to school districts,
8 accredited nonpublic schools, and charter schools, ~~and innovation~~
9 ~~zone schools~~ a test in multiple-choice format that consists of
10 all of the questions contained in the most recent version of
11 the civics test developed by the United States citizenship and
12 immigration services.

13 b. On or before the January 31 immediately subsequent to each
14 general election which is a presidential election, update the
15 test described in paragraph "a" and distribute the updated test
16 to school districts, accredited nonpublic schools, and charter
17 schools, ~~and innovation zone schools~~.

18 Sec. 5. Section 256E.1, subsection 3, unnumbered paragraph 1,
19 Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

20 The purpose of a charter school established pursuant to this
21 ~~chapter~~ subchapter shall be to accomplish the following:

22 Sec. 6. Section 256E.1, subsection 4, Code 2026, is amended
23 to read as follows:

24 4. The state board of education shall be the only authorizer
25 of charter schools under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter.

26 Sec. 7. Section 256E.2, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2026, is
27 amended to read as follows:

28 As used in this ~~chapter~~ subchapter, unless the context
29 otherwise requires:

30 Sec. 8. Section 256E.2, subsections 2 and 5, Code 2026, are
31 amended to read as follows:

32 2. "Charter school" means a school established in accordance
33 with this ~~chapter~~ subchapter.

34 5. "Founding group" means a person, group of persons,
35 or education service provider that develops and submits an

1 application for a charter school to the state board under this
2 ~~chapter~~ subchapter.

3 Sec. 9. Section 256E.3, Code 2026, is amended to read as
4 follows:

5 **256E.3 Department — duty to monitor.**

6 The department shall monitor the effectiveness of charter
7 schools and shall implement the applicable provisions of this
8 ~~chapter~~ subchapter.

9 Sec. 10. Section 256E.4, subsection 8, Code 2026, is amended
10 to read as follows:

11 8. The state board shall approve a charter school application
12 if the application satisfies the requirements of this ~~chapter~~
13 subchapter. The state board shall approve or deny a charter
14 school application no later than seventy-five calendar days after
15 the application is received. If the state board denies an
16 application, the state board shall provide notice of denial to
17 the founding group in writing within thirty days after the state
18 board's action. The notice shall specify the exact reasons
19 for denial and provide documentation supporting those reasons.
20 An approval decision may include, if appropriate, reasonable
21 conditions that the founding group must meet before a charter
22 school contract may be executed pursuant to section 256E.6. An
23 approved charter application shall not serve as a charter school
24 contract.

25 Sec. 11. Section 256E.5, subsection 8, Code 2026, is amended
26 to read as follows:

27 8. The state board shall approve a charter school application
28 if the application satisfies the requirements of this ~~chapter~~
29 subchapter. The state board shall approve or deny a charter
30 school application no later than seventy-five calendar days after
31 the application is received. If the state board denies an
32 application, the state board shall provide notice of denial to
33 the applicant in writing within thirty days after board action.
34 The notice shall specify the exact reasons for denial and provide
35 documentation supporting those reasons. An approval decision may

1 include, if appropriate, reasonable conditions that the applicant
2 must meet before a charter school contract may be executed
3 pursuant to section 256E.6. An approved charter application
4 shall not serve as a charter school contract.

5 Sec. 12. Section 256E.6, subsection 5, Code 2026, is amended
6 to read as follows:

7 5. A charter school approved under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter
8 shall not commence operations without a valid charter school
9 contract executed in accordance with this section and approved in
10 an open session of the state board.

11 Sec. 13. Section 256E.7, subsection 1, unnumbered paragraph
12 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

13 In order to fulfill the charter school's public purpose, a
14 charter school established under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter shall
15 be organized as a nonprofit education organization and shall
16 have all the powers necessary for carrying out the terms of
17 the charter school contract including but not limited to the
18 following, as applicable:

19 Sec. 14. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, unnumbered paragraph
20 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

21 A charter school established under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter is
22 exempt from all state statutes and rules and any local rule,
23 regulation, or policy, applicable to a noncharter school, except
24 that the charter school shall do all of the following:

25 Sec. 15. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, paragraph w, Code
26 2026, is amended to read as follows:

27 w. Comply with the requirements of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter.

28 Sec. 16. Section 256E.8, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
29 to read as follows:

30 1. Each student enrolled in a charter school established
31 under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter shall be counted, for state
32 school foundation purposes, in the student's district of
33 residence pursuant to section 257.6, subsection 1, paragraph
34 "a", subparagraph (9), including any applicable amounts under
35 section 256B.9. For purposes of this section, residence means

1 a residence under section 282.1.

2 Sec. 17. Section 256E.9, subsection 5, Code 2026, is amended
3 to read as follows:

4 5. Each charter school established under this ~~chapter~~
5 subchapter shall be evaluated and graded by the department
6 pursuant to the attendance center performance ranking system
7 developed and adopted by the department.

8 Sec. 18. Section 256E.10, subsections 1, 6, and 13, Code
9 2026, are amended to read as follows:

10 1. The state board shall monitor the performance and
11 compliance of each charter school the state board approves,
12 including collecting and analyzing data according to the charter
13 school contract in order to meet the requirements of this
14 ~~chapter~~ subchapter. Such oversight may include inquiries and
15 investigation of the charter school so long as the activities
16 are consistent with the intent of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter,
17 adhere to the terms of the charter school contract, and do not
18 unduly inhibit the autonomy granted to the charter school. Any
19 performance report resulting from an inquiry or investigation
20 under this section shall, upon conclusion of such action, be
21 included in the annual report required under section 256E.12.

22 6. Annually, by June 30, the state board shall issue a
23 charter school performance report and charter school contract
24 renewal application guidance to each charter school whose charter
25 school contract will expire during the following school budget
26 year. The performance report shall summarize the charter
27 school's performance record to date based on the data required
28 by the charter school contract and by this ~~chapter~~ subchapter
29 and shall identify concerns that may jeopardize renewal of the
30 charter school contract if not remedied. The charter school
31 shall have sixty days to respond to the performance report and
32 submit any corrections or clarifications for the report.

33 13. If a charter school has been evaluated and graded to
34 be in the exceptional category, or the highest rated category
35 under a succeeding evaluation system, under the evaluation and

1 grading required under section 256E.9, subsection 5, for the
2 immediately preceding two school years, and the charter school
3 is in compliance with the current charter school contract and
4 all provisions of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter, the charter school's
5 application renewal under subsection 8 shall be renewed for an
6 additional period of time equal to the length of the original
7 charter school contract or the most recent renewal of the
8 contract, whichever is longer, unless the state board provides
9 written notice to the charter school of the state board's
10 rejection of the expedited renewal within sixty days of the
11 filing of the application. The state board shall not reject
12 an expedited renewal application unless the state board finds
13 exceptional circumstances for the rejection or seeks material
14 changes to the charter school contract.

15 Sec. 19. Section 256E.10, subsection 10, paragraph a, Code
16 2026, is amended to read as follows:

17 a. Committed a material violation of any of the terms,
18 conditions, standards, or procedures required under the charter
19 school contract or this ~~chapter~~ subchapter.

20 Sec. 20. Section 256E.11, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
21 to read as follows:

22 1. Prior to any charter school closure decision, the state
23 board shall develop a charter school closure protocol to ensure
24 timely notice to parents and guardians, provide for the orderly
25 transition of students and student records to new schools, and to
26 provide proper disposition of school funds, property, and assets
27 in accordance with the requirements of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter.
28 The protocol shall specify required actions and timelines and
29 identify responsible parties for each such action.

30 Sec. 21. Section 256E.12, subsection 2, Code 2026, is amended
31 to read as follows:

32 2. The state board shall prepare and file with the general
33 assembly by December 1, annually, a comprehensive report with
34 findings and recommendations relating to the charter school
35 program in the state and whether the charter school program

1 under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter is meeting the goals and purposes
2 of the program. The report also shall contain, for each
3 charter school, a copy of the charter school's mission statement,
4 attendance statistics and dropout rate, aggregate assessment test
5 scores, projections of financial stability, and the number and
6 qualifications of teachers and administrators.

7 Sec. 22. Section 256F.1, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
8 to read as follows:

9 1. Charter schools ~~and innovation zone schools~~ shall be part
10 of the state's program of public education.

11 Sec. 23. Section 256F.1, subsection 3, unnumbered paragraph
12 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

13 The purpose of a charter school ~~or an innovation zone school~~
14 established pursuant to this ~~chapter~~ subchapter shall be to
15 accomplish the following:

16 Sec. 24. Section 256F.1, subsection 4, Code 2026, is amended
17 by striking the subsection.

18 Sec. 25. Section 256F.2, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2026,
19 is amended to read as follows:

20 As used in this ~~chapter~~ subchapter, unless the context
21 otherwise requires:

22 Sec. 26. Section 256F.2, subsections 1 and 3, Code 2026, are
23 amended to read as follows:

24 1. "Advisory council" means a council appointed by the school
25 board of directors of a charter school ~~or an innovation zone~~
26 ~~consortium~~ pursuant to section 256F.5, subsection 4.

27 3. "Charter school" means a charter school established in
28 accordance with this ~~chapter~~ subchapter.

29 Sec. 27. Section 256F.2, subsections 5 and 6, Code 2026, are
30 amended by striking the subsections.

31 Sec. 28. Section 256F.3, Code 2026, is amended to read as
32 follows:

33 **256F.3 Application Monitoring — no new approvals — adoption**
34 **of rules.**

35 1. The department shall monitor the effectiveness of charter

1 schools and ~~innovation zone schools~~ and shall implement the
2 applicable provisions of this chapter subchapter.

3 ~~2. a. To receive approval to establish a charter school~~
4 ~~in accordance with this chapter, the principal, teachers, or~~
5 ~~parents or guardians of students at an existing public school~~
6 ~~shall submit an application to the school board to convert an~~
7 ~~existing attendance center to a charter school. An attendance~~
8 ~~center shall not enter into a charter school contract with a~~
9 ~~school district under this chapter unless the attendance center~~
10 ~~is located within the school district. The application shall~~
11 ~~demonstrate the support of at least fifty percent of the teachers~~
12 ~~employed at the school on the date of the submission of the~~
13 ~~application and fifty percent of the parents or guardians voting~~
14 ~~whose children are enrolled at the school, provided that a~~
15 ~~majority of the parents or guardians eligible to vote participate~~
16 ~~in the ballot process, according to procedures established by~~
17 ~~rules of the state board.~~

18 ~~b. To receive approval to establish an innovation zone school~~
19 ~~in accordance with this chapter, an innovation zone consortium~~
20 ~~shall submit an application to the state board which demonstrates~~
21 ~~the support of at least fifty percent of the teachers employed~~
22 ~~at each proposed innovation zone school on the date of the~~
23 ~~submission of the application and fifty percent of the parents~~
24 ~~or guardians voting whose children are enrolled at each proposed~~
25 ~~innovation zone school, provided that a majority of the parents~~
26 ~~or guardians eligible to vote participate in the ballot process,~~
27 ~~according to procedures established by rules of the state board.~~

28 ~~c. A parent or guardian voting in accordance with this~~
29 ~~subsection must be a resident of this state.~~

30 ~~3. A school board shall receive and review all applications~~
31 ~~for converting an existing building or creating a new building~~
32 ~~for a charter school. Applications received on or before October~~
33 ~~1 of a calendar year shall be considered for charter schools to~~
34 ~~be established at the beginning of the school district's next~~
35 ~~school year or at a time agreed to by the applicant and the~~

1 school board. However, a school board may receive and consider
2 applications after October 1 at its discretion.

3 4. A school board shall by a majority vote approve or deny
4 an application relating to a charter school no later than sixty
5 calendar days after the application is received. An application
6 approved by a school board and subsequently approved by the state
7 board pursuant to subsection 6 shall constitute, at a minimum,
8 an agreement between the school board and the charter school for
9 the operation of the charter school. A school board that denies
10 an application for a conversion to a charter school shall provide
11 notice of denial to the applicant in writing within thirty days
12 after board action. The notice shall specify the exact reasons
13 for denial and provide documentation supporting those reasons.

14 5. An applicant may appeal school board denial of the
15 applicant's charter school application to the state board in
16 accordance with the procedures set forth in chapter 290.
17 The state board shall affirm, modify, or reverse the school
18 board's decision on the basis of the information provided in
19 the application indicating the ability and willingness of the
20 proposed charter school to meet the requirements of section
21 256F.1, subsection 3, and section 256F.4.

22 6. Upon approval of an application for the proposed
23 establishment of a charter school, the school board shall submit
24 an application for approval to establish the charter school to
25 the state board in accordance with section 256F.5.

26 7. An application submitted to the state board pursuant to
27 subsection 2, paragraph "b", or subsection 6 shall set forth the
28 manner in which the charter school or innovation zone school will
29 provide special instruction, in accordance with section 280.4,
30 to students who are English learners. The application shall set
31 forth the manner in which the charter school or innovation zone
32 school will comply with federal and state laws and regulations
33 relating to the federal National School Lunch Act and the federal
34 Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §1751-1785, and chapter
35 283A. The state board shall approve only those applications that

1 ~~meet the requirements specified in section 256F.1, subsection~~
2 ~~3, and sections 256F.4 and 256F.5. The state board may deny~~
3 ~~an application if the state board deems that approval of the~~
4 ~~application is not in the best interest of the affected students.~~

5 ~~8. The state board shall approve not more than ten innovation~~
6 ~~zone consortium applications.~~

7 ~~9.~~ 2. The state board shall not approve a new charter school
8 under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter on or after July 1, 2021.

9 ~~10.~~ 3. The state board shall adopt rules in accordance with
10 chapter 17A for the implementation of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter.
11 If federal rules or regulations relating to the distribution
12 or utilization of federal funds allocated to the department
13 pursuant to this section are adopted that are inconsistent with
14 the provisions of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter, the state board shall
15 adopt rules to comply with the requirements of the federal rules
16 or regulations. The state board shall identify inconsistencies
17 between federal and state rules and regulations as provided in
18 this subsection and shall submit recommendations for legislative
19 action to the chairpersons and ranking members of the senate and
20 house standing committees on education at the next meeting of the
21 general assembly.

22 Sec. 29. Section 256F.4, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
23 by striking the subsection.

24 Sec. 30. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, unnumbered paragraph
25 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

26 Although a charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ may
27 elect to comply with one or more provisions of statute or
28 administrative rule, a charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~
29 is exempt from all statutes and rules applicable to a school,
30 a school board, or a school district, except that the charter
31 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall do all of the following:

32 Sec. 31. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, paragraphs a and h,
33 Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

34 a. Meet all applicable federal, state, and local health and
35 safety requirements and laws prohibiting discrimination on the

1 basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national
2 origin, religion, ancestry, or disability. A charter school ~~or~~
3 ~~innovation zone school~~ located within the boundaries of a school
4 district subject to court-ordered desegregation at the time the
5 charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ application is approved
6 shall be subject to the desegregation order unless otherwise
7 specifically provided for in the desegregation order.

8 h. Be subject to and comply with chapter 284 relating to
9 the student achievement and teacher quality program. A charter
10 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ that complies with chapter 284
11 shall receive state moneys or be eligible to receive state moneys
12 calculated as provided in section 257.10, subsections 9 and 10,
13 and section 257.37A as if it did not operate under a charter
14 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ contract.

15 Sec. 32. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, Code 2026, is amended
16 by adding the following new paragraph:

17 NEW PARAGRAPH. v. Be subject to and comply with the
18 requirements of section 256E.9 related to the incorporation into
19 the charter school contract of a performance framework that is
20 used by the state board to evaluate the charter school in the
21 same manner as a charter school established under subchapter I.

22 Sec. 33. Section 256F.4, subsections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8,
23 Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

24 3. A charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall not
25 discriminate in its student admissions policies or practices
26 on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of
27 achievement or aptitude, or status as a person with a disability.
28 However, a charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ may limit
29 admission to students who are within a particular range of ages
30 or grade levels or on any other basis that would be legal if
31 initiated by a school district. Enrollment priority shall be
32 given to the siblings of students enrolled in a charter school ~~or~~
33 ~~innovation zone school~~.

34 4. A charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall enroll
35 an eligible resident student who submits a timely application

1 unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a
2 program, class, grade level, or building. In this case, students
3 must be accepted by lot. A charter school ~~or innovation zone~~
4 ~~school~~ may enroll an eligible nonresident student who submits
5 a timely application in accordance with the student admission
6 policy established pursuant to section 256F.5, subsection 1.
7 If the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ enrolls an
8 eligible nonresident student, the charter school ~~or innovation~~
9 ~~zone school~~ shall notify the school district of residence and the
10 sending district not later than March 1 of the preceding school
11 year. Transportation for the student shall be in accordance
12 with section 282.18, subsection 10. The sending district shall
13 make payments to the charter school ~~or innovation zone consortium~~
14 in the manner required under section 282.18, subsection 7. If
15 ~~the nonresident pupil is also an eligible pupil under section~~
16 ~~261E.6, the innovation zone consortium shall pay the tuition~~
17 ~~reimbursement amount to an eligible postsecondary institution as~~
18 ~~provided in section 261E.7.~~

19 5. A charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall provide
20 instruction for at least the number of days or hours required by
21 section 279.10, subsection 1.

22 6. Notwithstanding subsection 2, a charter school ~~or~~
23 ~~innovation zone school~~ shall meet the requirements of section
24 256.7, subsection 21.

25 7. ~~a.~~ A charter school shall be considered a part of the
26 school district in which it is located for purposes of state
27 school foundation aid pursuant to chapter 257.

28 ~~b.~~ ~~Students enrolled in an innovation zone school shall~~
29 ~~be counted, for state school foundation aid purposes, in the~~
30 ~~student's district of residence.~~

31 8. A charter school ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ may enter
32 into contracts in accordance with chapter 26.

33 Sec. 34. Section 256F.5, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2026,
34 is amended to read as follows:

35 An application to the state board for the approval of a

1 charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall include but shall
2 not be limited to a description of the following:

3 Sec. 35. Section 256F.5, subsections 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12,
4 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17, Code 2026, are amended to read as
5 follows:

6 1. The method for admission to the charter school ~~or~~
7 ~~innovation zone school~~.

8 2. The mission, purpose, innovation, and specialized focus of
9 the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~.

10 4. The method for appointing or forming an advisory council
11 for the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~. The membership
12 of an advisory council appointed or formed in accordance with
13 this ~~chapter~~ subchapter shall not include more than one member of
14 a participating school board.

15 6. The charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ governance
16 and bylaws.

17 7. The financial plan for the operation of the charter school
18 ~~or innovation zone school~~ including, at a minimum, a listing
19 of the support services the school district ~~or innovation zone~~
20 ~~consortium~~ will provide, and the charter school ~~or innovation~~
21 ~~zone school's~~ revenues, budgets, and expenditures.

22 10. The organization of the charter school ~~or innovation zone~~
23 ~~school~~ in terms of ages of students or grades to be taught along
24 with an estimate of the total enrollment of the charter school ~~or~~
25 ~~innovation zone school~~.

26 12. A statement indicating how the charter school ~~or~~
27 ~~innovation zone school~~ will meet the requirements of section
28 256F.1, as applicable; section 256F.4, subsection 2, paragraph
29 "a"; and section 256F.4, subsection 3.

30 13. Assurance of the assumption of liability by the charter
31 school ~~or the innovation zone consortium for the innovation zone~~
32 ~~school~~.

33 14. The types and amounts of insurance coverage to be
34 obtained by the charter school ~~or innovation zone consortium for~~
35 ~~the innovation zone school~~.

1 15. A plan of operation to be implemented if the charter
2 school ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ revokes or fails to renew
3 its contract.

4 16. The means, costs, and plan for providing transportation
5 for students enrolled in the charter school ~~or innovation zone~~
6 ~~school~~.

7 17. The specific statutes, administrative rules, and school
8 board policies with which the charter school ~~or innovation zone~~
9 ~~school~~ does not intend to comply.

10 Sec. 36. Section 256F.6, subsections 1 and 3, Code 2026, are
11 amended to read as follows:

12 1. a. An approved charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~
13 application shall constitute an agreement, the terms of which
14 shall, at a minimum, be the terms of a ~~four-year~~ five-year
15 enforceable, renewable contract between a school board, ~~or the~~
16 ~~boards participating in an innovation zone consortium,~~ and the
17 state board. ~~The contract shall include an operating agreement~~
18 ~~for the operation of the charter school or innovation zone~~
19 ~~school~~. The terms of the contract may be revised at any time
20 with the approval of both the state board and the school board
21 ~~or the boards participating in the innovation zone consortium,~~
22 whether or not the stated provisions of the contract are being
23 fulfilled. The contract must include all of the following:

24 (1) An operating agreement for the operation of the charter
25 school.

26 (2) A performance framework as required under section 256F.4,
27 subsection 2, paragraph "v".

28 b. A contract may be renewed by agreement of the school board
29 ~~or the boards participating in an innovation zone consortium,~~ as
30 applicable, and the state board.

31 c. The charter school ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ shall
32 provide parents and guardians of students enrolled in the charter
33 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ with a copy of the charter
34 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ application approved pursuant to
35 section 256F.5.

1 3. The state board of education shall provide by rule for the
2 ongoing review of each party's compliance with a contract entered
3 into in accordance with this ~~chapter~~ subchapter.

4 Sec. 37. Section 256F.7, Code 2026, is amended to read as
5 follows:

6 **256F.7 Employment and related matters.**

7 1. A charter school ~~or the boards participating in an~~
8 ~~innovation zone consortium~~ shall employ or contract with
9 necessary teachers and administrators, as defined in section
10 256.145, who hold a valid license with an endorsement for
11 the type of service for which the teacher or administrator is
12 employed.

13 2. The school board ~~or innovation zone consortium, as~~
14 ~~specified in the application,~~ in consultation with the advisory
15 council, shall decide matters related to the operation of the
16 charter school ~~or innovation zone school,~~ including budgeting,
17 curriculum, and operating procedures.

18 3. ~~a.~~ Employees of a charter school shall be considered
19 employees of the school district.

20 ~~b. Employees of an innovation zone school shall be considered~~
21 ~~employees of a board participating in the innovation zone~~
22 ~~consortium.~~

23 Sec. 38. Section 256F.8, subsections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6, Code
24 2026, are amended to read as follows:

25 1. A contract for the establishment of a charter school ~~or~~
26 ~~innovation zone school~~ may be revoked by the state board, or
27 the school board that established the charter school, ~~or the~~
28 ~~innovation zone consortium that established the innovation zone~~
29 ~~school~~ if the appropriate board ~~or consortium~~ determines that one
30 or more of the following occurred:

31 a. Failure of the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~
32 to abide by and meet the provisions set forth in the contract,
33 including educational goals.

34 b. Failure of the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ to
35 comply with all applicable law.

1 c. Failure of the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ to
2 meet generally accepted public sector accounting principles.

3 d. The existence of one or more other grounds for revocation
4 as specified in the contract.

5 e. Assessment of student progress, which is administered
6 in accordance with state and locally determined indicators
7 established pursuant to rules adopted by the state board, does
8 not show improvement in student progress over that which existed
9 in the same student population prior to the establishment of the
10 charter school ~~or the innovation zone school~~.

11 2. The decision by a school board ~~or an innovation zone~~
12 ~~consortium~~ to revoke or to fail to take action to renew a charter
13 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ contract is subject to appeal
14 under procedures set forth in chapter 290.

15 3. A school board ~~or a board participating in an innovation~~
16 ~~zone consortium~~ that is considering revocation or nonrenewal of
17 a charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ contract shall notify
18 the advisory council, the parents or guardians of the students
19 enrolled in the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~, and
20 the teachers and administrators employed by the charter school ~~or~~
21 ~~innovation zone school~~, sixty days prior to revoking or the date
22 by which the contract must be renewed, but not later than the
23 last day of classes in the school year.

24 4. If the state board determines that a charter school ~~or~~
25 ~~innovation zone school~~ is in substantial violation of the terms
26 of the contract, the state board shall notify the school board
27 ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ and the advisory council of its
28 intention to revoke the contract at least sixty days prior to
29 revoking a contract and the school board ~~or the school boards~~
30 ~~participating in the innovation zone consortium~~ shall assume
31 oversight authority, operational authority, or both oversight
32 and operational authority. The notice shall state the grounds
33 for the proposed action in writing and in reasonable detail.
34 The school board ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ may request
35 in writing an informal hearing before the state board within

1 fourteen days of receiving notice of revocation of the contract.
2 Upon receiving a timely written request for a hearing, the
3 state board shall give reasonable notice to the school board or
4 ~~innovation zone consortium~~ of the hearing date. The state board
5 shall conduct an informal hearing before taking final action.
6 Final action to revoke a contract shall be taken in a manner
7 least disruptive to students enrolled in the charter school or
8 ~~innovation zone school~~. The state board shall take final action
9 to revoke or approve continuation of a contract by the last day
10 of classes in the school year. If the final action to revoke
11 a contract under this section occurs prior to the last day of
12 classes in the school year, a charter school or ~~innovation zone~~
13 ~~school~~ student may enroll in the resident district.

14 6. A school board revoking a contract or a school board,
15 ~~innovation zone consortium~~, or advisory council that fails to
16 renew a contract under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter is not liable for
17 that action to the charter school or ~~innovation zone school~~, a
18 student enrolled in the charter school or ~~innovation zone school~~
19 or the student's parent or guardian, or any other person.

20 Sec. 39. Section 256F.9, Code 2026, is amended to read as
21 follows:

22 **256F.9 Procedures after revocation — student enrollment.**

23 If a charter school or ~~innovation zone school~~ contract is
24 revoked in accordance with this ~~chapter~~ subchapter, a nonresident
25 student who attended the school, and any siblings of the student
26 may submit an application to another school district according
27 to section 282.18. Applications and notices required by section
28 282.18 shall be processed and provided in a prompt manner.

29 Sec. 40. Section 256F.10, Code 2026, is amended to read as
30 follows:

31 **256F.10 Reports.**

32 1. A charter school or ~~innovation zone school~~ shall report at
33 least annually to the school board or ~~innovation zone consortium~~,
34 advisory council, and the state board the information required by
35 the school board or ~~innovation zone consortium~~, advisory council,

1 or the state board. The reports are public records subject to
2 chapter 22.

3 2. Not later than December 1 annually, the state board shall
4 submit a comprehensive report with findings and recommendations
5 to the general assembly. The report shall evaluate the state's
6 charter school ~~and innovation zone school~~ programs generally,
7 including but not limited to an evaluation of whether the charter
8 schools ~~and innovation zone schools~~ are fulfilling the purposes
9 set forth in section 256F.4, subsection 2. The report also shall
10 contain, for each charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~, a
11 copy of the charter school ~~or innovation zone~~ school's mission
12 statement, attendance statistics and dropout rate, aggregate
13 assessment test scores, projections of financial stability, the
14 number and qualifications of teachers and administrators, and
15 number of and comments on supervisory visits by the department
16 of education.

17 Sec. 41. Section 256F.12, Code 2026, is amended to read as
18 follows:

19 **256F.12 Operation of existing charter schools.**

20 Charter schools established under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter
21 prior to July 1, 2021, shall continue to operate under and be
22 subject to the requirements of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter and shall
23 not be subject to ~~chapter 256E~~ subchapter I.

24 Sec. 42. Section 257.6, subsection 1, paragraph a,
25 subparagraph (9), Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

26 (9) Resident pupils enrolled in a charter school under
27 chapter 256E ~~or 256F~~.

28 Sec. 43. Section 280.36, subsection 3, Code 2026, is amended
29 to read as follows:

30 3. The board of directors of a school district or the
31 authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school may
32 enter into an agreement with another school district, accredited
33 nonpublic school, or charter school, ~~or innovation zone school~~
34 to create a multidisciplinary school safety assessment team that
35 shall coordinate resources among the schools and assess and

1 intervene when a student enrolled in either school exhibits
2 behavior that may pose a threat to the safety of either school,
3 employees of either school, or students enrolled in either
4 school.

5 Sec. 44. Section 282.9, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
6 to read as follows:

7 1. Notwithstanding sections 256E.7, ~~256F.4~~ 256E.23, 275.55A,
8 and 282.18, or any other provision to the contrary, prior to
9 knowingly enrolling an individual who is required to register
10 as a sex offender under chapter 692A, but who is otherwise
11 eligible to enroll in a public school, the board of directors
12 of a school district shall determine the educational placement
13 of the individual. Upon receipt of notice that a student
14 who is enrolled in the district is required to register as
15 a sex offender under chapter 692A, the board shall determine
16 the educational placement of the student. The tentative agenda
17 for the meeting of the board of directors at which the board
18 will consider such enrollment or educational placement shall
19 specifically state that the board is considering the enrollment
20 or educational placement of an individual who is required to
21 register as a sex offender under chapter 692A. If the individual
22 is denied enrollment in a school district under this section, the
23 school district of residence shall provide the individual with
24 educational services in an alternative setting.

25 Sec. 45. Section 282.18, subsection 11, paragraph a,
26 subparagraph (8), Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

27 (8) If the pupil participates in open enrollment because
28 of circumstances that meet the definition of good cause. For
29 purposes of this section, "good cause" means a change in a
30 child's residence due to a change in family residence, a change
31 in a child's residence from the residence of one parent or
32 guardian to the residence of a different parent or guardian, a
33 change in the state in which the family residence is located,
34 a change in a child's parents' marital status, a guardianship
35 or custody proceeding, placement in foster care, adoption,

1 participation in a foreign exchange program, initial placement
2 of a prekindergarten student in a special education program
3 requiring specially designed instruction, or participation in
4 a substance use disorder or mental health treatment program,
5 a change in the status of a child's resident district such
6 as removal of accreditation by the state board, surrender of
7 accreditation, or permanent closure of a nonpublic school,
8 revocation of a charter school contract as provided in section
9 256E.10 or ~~256F.8~~ 256E.27, the failure of negotiations for a
10 whole grade sharing, reorganization, dissolution agreement, or
11 the rejection of a current whole grade sharing agreement, or
12 reorganization plan.

13 Sec. 46. Section 297.24, subsection 3, paragraph d, Code
14 2026, is amended by striking the paragraph.

15 Sec. 47. CODE EDITOR DIRECTIVE — TRANSFERS — NEW
16 SUBCHAPTERS.

17 1. The Code editor is directed to make the following
18 transfers:

- 19 a. Section 256F.1 to section 256E.20.
- 20 b. Section 256F.2 to section 256E.21.
- 21 c. Section 256F.3 to section 256E.22.
- 22 d. Section 256F.4 to section 256E.23.
- 23 e. Section 256F.5 to section 256E.24.
- 24 f. Section 256F.6 to section 256E.25.
- 25 g. Section 256F.7 to section 256E.26.
- 26 h. Section 256F.8 to section 256E.27.
- 27 i. Section 256F.9 to section 256E.28.
- 28 j. Section 256F.10 to section 256E.29.
- 29 k. Section 256F.12 to section 256E.30.

30 2. The Code editor is directed to create two new subchapters
31 in chapter 256E as follows:

32 a. Subchapter I shall be entitled "Charter Schools" and
33 include sections 256E.1 through 256E.13.

34 b. Subchapter II shall be entitled "Legacy Charter Schools"
35 and include sections 256E.20 through 256E.30.

1 3. The Code editor is directed to make changes in any Code
2 sections or other noncodified enactments amended or enacted by
3 any other Act to correspond with the changes made in this Act
4 if there appears to be no doubt as to the proper method of
5 making the changes and the changes would not be contrary to or
6 inconsistent with the purposes of this Act or any other Act.

7 Sec. 48. APPLICABILITY. The following apply to charter
8 school contracts entered into under section 256F.6 between a
9 school board and the state board of education that are renewed
10 on or after the effective date of this division of this Act:

11 1. The section of this division of this Act amending section
12 256F.4, subsection 2, by requiring charter schools to incorporate
13 a performance framework into the charter school contract.

14 2. The section of this division of this Act amending section
15 256F.6, subsection 1, paragraph "a".

16 DIVISION II

17 FUNDING AND AREA EDUCATION AGENCY SERVICES

18 Sec. 49. Section 256E.8, subsection 2, paragraph a, Code
19 2026, is amended to read as follows:

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

35 Sec. 50. Section 257.35, Code 2026, is amended by adding the

1 following new subsection:

2 NEW SUBSECTION. 21A. The director of the department of
3 management may deduct the following from the state aid due to
4 each school district pursuant to this chapter and shall pay the
5 amounts to the respective area education agencies on a monthly
6 basis from September 15 through June 15 during each school
7 year for purposes of providing services to students enrolled in
8 charter schools established pursuant to chapter 256E, subchapter
9 I, within the boundaries of the area education agency:

10 a. The amount calculated for media services for the school
11 district that is attributable to the number of students
12 enrolled in charter schools established pursuant to chapter 256E,
13 subchapter I, within the school district who are provided with
14 media services by an area education agency.

15 b. The amount calculated for educational services for the
16 school district that is attributable to the number of students
17 enrolled in charter schools established pursuant to chapter 256E,
18 subchapter I, within the school district who are provided with
19 educational services by an area education agency.

20 Sec. 51. Section 273.2, subsection 3, paragraph a, Code 2026,
21 is amended to read as follows:

22 a. The area education agency shall furnish educational
23 services and programs as provided in section 273.1, this section,
24 sections 273.3 through 273.8, and chapter 256B to pupils enrolled
25 in public or nonpublic schools which are on the list of
26 accredited schools pursuant to section 256.11, and to pupils
27 enrolled in charter schools established pursuant to chapter 256E,
28 subchapter I, which request to receive such services. The
29 programs and services provided shall be at least commensurate
30 with programs and services existing on July 1, 1974. The
31 programs and services provided to pupils enrolled in nonpublic
32 schools shall be comparable to programs and services provided
33 to pupils enrolled in public schools within constitutional
34 guidelines.

35 Sec. 52. Section 273.2, subsection 4, Code 2026, is amended

1 to read as follows:

2 4. The area education agency shall provide for special
3 education services and media services for school districts
4 and shall encourage and assist school districts to establish
5 programs for gifted and talented children. The area education
6 agency shall provide for media services for charter schools
7 established pursuant to chapter 256E, subchapter I. The area
8 education agency shall assist in facilitating interlibrary loans
9 of materials between school districts and other libraries.

10 Sec. 53. APPLICABILITY. The following apply to school budget
11 years beginning on or after July 1, 2026:

12 1. The section of this division of this Act amending section
13 256E.8, subsection 2, paragraph "a".

14 2. The section of this division of this Act amending section
15 257.35.

16 DIVISION III

17 EXTRACURRICULAR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONTESTS OR COMPETITIONS

18 PROVIDED BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

19 Sec. 54. Section 280.13D, Code 2026, is amended to read as
20 follows:

21 **280.13D Participation in extracurricular interscholastic**
22 **athletic contests or competitions provided by public schools.**

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

34 (1) The extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or
35 competition has not been provided by the nonpublic school or the

1 charter school during the two immediately preceding school years.

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

10 b. The board of directors of a school district shall allow a
11 student who resides within a contiguous school district, and who
12 is enrolled in a nonpublic school or a charter school established
13 pursuant to chapter 256E, subchapter I, to participate in any
14 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition
15 that is provided by the school district pursuant to the terms
16 of an agreement between the board of directors of the school
17 district and the authorities in charge of the nonpublic school
18 or the governing board of the charter school, as applicable,
19 that provides for the eligibility of the student, if all of the
20 following criteria are satisfied:

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

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

33 c. If the board of directors of a school district has
34 established a fee for the cost of a student's participation in an
35 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition,

1 a student who is enrolled in a nonpublic school or a charter
2 school established pursuant to chapter 256E, subchapter I, and
3 is participating in a contest or competition at a public school
4 pursuant to paragraph "a" or "b", or the student's parent or
5 guardian, shall be responsible for the payment of such fee. The
6 amount of such fee shall not exceed the amount of the fee the
7 board of directors of the school district has established for
8 students who are enrolled in the school district.

9 2. A student who is enrolled in a nonpublic school or a
10 charter school established pursuant to chapter 256E, subchapter
11 I, and is participating in a contest or competition at a public
12 school pursuant to subsection 1, paragraph "a" or "b", shall
13 participate under the same conditions as a student who is
14 enrolled in the school district, including meeting the school
15 district's student code of conduct requirements.

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

20 DIVISION IV

21 DRIVER EDUCATION

22 Sec. 55. Section 321.178, subsection 1, paragraph c, Code
23 2026, is amended to read as follows:

24 c. (1) (a) Every public school district in Iowa shall
25 offer or make available to all students residing in the school
26 district, or Iowa students attending a nonpublic school or
27 receiving competent private instruction or independent private
28 instruction as defined in section 299A.1, in the district, an
29 approved course in driver education.

30 (b) (i) Every public school district in Iowa shall offer
31 or make available to all Iowa students residing in the school
32 district who attend a charter school established pursuant to
33 chapter 256E, subchapter I, an approved course in driver
34 education pursuant to policies established by the public school
35 district. The charter school shall be responsible for the

1 payment of all of the school district's costs associated with
2 providing the approved course in driver education to such
3 students.

4 (ii) Every charter school established pursuant to chapter
5 256E, subchapter I, shall offer or make available to all students
6 attending the charter school an approved course in driver
7 education.

8 (c) The receiving district shall be the school district
9 responsible for making driver education available to a student
10 participating in open enrollment under section 282.18.

11 (2) The courses may be offered at sites other than at the
12 public school or charter school, including nonpublic school
13 facilities within the public school districts. An approved
14 course offered during the summer months, on Saturdays, after
15 regular school hours during the regular terms or partly in one
16 term or summer vacation period and partly in the succeeding term
17 or summer vacation period, as the case may be, shall satisfy
18 the requirements of this section to the same extent as an
19 approved course offered during the regular school hours of the
20 school term. A student who successfully completes and obtains
21 certification in an approved course in driver education or an
22 approved course in motorcycle education may, upon proof of such
23 fact, be excused from any field test which the student would
24 otherwise be required to take in demonstrating the student's
25 ability to operate a motor vehicle. A student shall not be
26 excused from any field test if a parent, guardian, or instructor
27 requests that a test be administered. A final field test
28 prior to a student's completion of an approved course shall be
29 administered by a person qualified to provide street or highway
30 driving instruction under paragraph "b", subparagraph (2).

31 DIVISION V

32 CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATIONS

33 Sec. 56. Section 256.163, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
34 by adding the following new paragraph:

35 NEW PARAGRAPH. f. A charter school established pursuant to

1 chapter 256E, subchapter I.

2 Sec. 57. Section 256E.1, subsection 3, paragraph d, Code
3 2026, is amended to read as follows:

4 d. Accelerating student learning to prevent learning loss
5 during the ~~COVID-19 pandemic and other~~ significant disruptions to
6 student learning.

7 Sec. 58. Section 256E.6, subsections 2 and 6, Code 2026, are
8 amended to read as follows:

9 2. An initial charter school contract shall be granted for a
10 term of five school budget years, commencing the school budget
11 year in which the charter school opens. The charter school
12 contract shall include the beginning and ending dates of the
13 charter school contract term. An approved charter school may
14 ~~delay its opening for a period of time not to exceed one school~~
15 ~~year in order to plan and prepare for the charter school's~~
16 opening shall open on the first day of the school year that is
17 two school years immediately subsequent to the school year in
18 which the charter school contract is executed under subsection 1;
19 provided, however, that the approved charter school may open on
20 the first day of the school year that is immediately subsequent
21 to the school year in which the charter school contract is
22 executed under subsection 1 if the approved charter school
23 demonstrates adequate preparation to the state board. If the
24 charter school requires an opening delay of more than ~~one school~~
25 ~~year~~ two school years immediately subsequent to the school year
26 in which the charter school contract is executed under subsection
27 1, the charter school may request an extension from the state
28 board.

29 6. The contract may provide for requirements or conditions to
30 govern and monitor the start-up progress of an approved charter
31 school ~~prior to the opening of the charter school~~ from the
32 date the charter school contract is executed under subsection
33 1 through the date the charter school opens under subsection
34 2, including but not limited to conditions to ensure that the
35 charter school meets all building, health, safety, insurance, and

1 other legal requirements.

2 Sec. 59. Section 261E.8, subsection 2, paragraph a, Code
3 2026, is amended to read as follows:

4 a. (1) Students from accredited nonpublic schools, and
5 students receiving competent private instruction or independent
6 private instruction under chapter 299A, and students from charter
7 schools established pursuant to chapter 256E may access the
8 program through the school district in which the accredited
9 nonpublic school, ~~or~~ private institution, or charter school is
10 located.

11 (2) Students from charter schools established pursuant to
12 chapter 256E that provide educational instruction and course
13 content that is delivered entirely over the internet may access
14 the program through the students' school district of residence.

15 Sec. 60. APPLICABILITY. The following applies to charter
16 school contracts that are executed pursuant to section 256E.6,
17 subsection 1, on or after the effective date of this division of
18 this Act:

19 The section of this division of this Act amending section
20 256E.6.

21 EXPLANATION

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

24 This bill relates to charter schools and innovation zone
25 schools, including by modifying provisions related to charter
26 school funding and operations, services provided to charter
27 schools by area education agencies, charter school contracts,
28 and charter school student participation in extracurricular
29 activities provided by public schools, and striking provisions
30 allowing for the establishment of innovation zone schools.

31 DIVISION I — CONSOLIDATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL CODE CHAPTERS
32 AND ELIMINATION OF INNOVATION ZONE SCHOOLS. Current Code chapter
33 256F authorizes school districts to join together to establish
34 an innovation zone school, a public school, administered by a
35 principal, that is designed to encourage diverse approaches to

1 learning and education and that operates pursuant to the terms
2 of a contract entered into between the boards of directors of
3 the school districts establishing the innovation zone school
4 and the state board of education. The division modifies Code
5 chapter 256F to remove all references to innovation zone schools,
6 which eliminates the authorization for school districts to join
7 together to establish an innovation zone school. The division
8 makes conforming changes.

9 Current law provides that the term of a charter school
10 contract entered into between the board of directors of a school
11 district that has established a charter school under Code chapter
12 256F and the state board of education shall be four years. The
13 division provides that the term of such a contract shall be five
14 years. The division also requires such a contract to incorporate
15 a performance framework in the same manner as a Code chapter
16 256E, subchapter I, charter school's contract is required to
17 do so under Code section 256E.9 (performance framework). These
18 provisions apply to charter school contracts under Code chapter
19 256F that are renewed on or after the effective date of the
20 division.

21 The division transfers the Code sections within Code chapter
22 256F (charter schools and innovation zone schools) to a new
23 subchapter II within Code chapter 256E (charter schools — school
24 board and founding group models). The division also organizes
25 the current Code sections within Code chapter 256E into a new
26 subchapter I.

27 DIVISION II — FUNDING AND AREA EDUCATION AGENCY
28 SERVICES. Currently, each student enrolled in a charter school
29 under Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, shall be counted, for
30 state school foundation purposes, in the student's district of
31 residence. The department of education is then required to pay
32 to the charter school in which the student is enrolled an amount
33 equal to the sum of the regular program state cost per pupil
34 for the budget year plus other additional costs specified in
35 Code section 256E.8(2)(a). This division adds the teacher salary

1 supplement state cost per pupil to the amount required to be paid
2 to the Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school. This
3 provision applies to school budget years beginning on or after
4 July 1, 2026.

5 The division requires area education agencies to provide
6 educational services and media services to students enrolled in
7 Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter schools. Additionally,
8 the division authorizes the department of management to deduct
9 both of the following from the state aid due to each school
10 district pursuant to Code chapter 257 (financing school programs)
11 and pay the amounts to the respective area education agencies
12 for purposes of providing services to students enrolled in Code
13 chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter schools within the boundaries
14 of the area education agency: the amount calculated for media
15 services for the school district that is attributable to the
16 number of students enrolled in Code chapter 256E, subchapter
17 I, charter schools within the school district who are provided
18 with media services by an area education agency, and the amount
19 calculated for educational services for the school district that
20 is attributable to the number of students enrolled in Code
21 chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter schools within the school
22 district who are provided with educational services by an area
23 education agency. This provision applies to school budget years
24 beginning on or after July 1, 2026.

25 DIVISION III — EXTRACURRICULAR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC
26 CONTESTS OR COMPETITIONS PROVIDED BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS. The division
27 requires the board of directors of a school district to allow a
28 student who resides within the district, and who is enrolled in a
29 Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school, to participate
30 in any extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or
31 competition that is provided by the school district pursuant
32 to the terms of an agreement between the board of directors
33 of the school district and the governing board of the charter
34 school if the extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or
35 competition has not been provided by the charter school during

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

8 The division requires the board of directors of a school
9 district to allow a student who resides within a contiguous
10 school district, and who is enrolled in a Code chapter
11 256E, subchapter I, charter school, to participate in any
12 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition
13 that is provided by the school district pursuant to the
14 terms of an agreement between the board of directors of the
15 school district and the governing board of the charter school
16 that provides for the eligibility of the student if the
17 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition
18 has not been provided by the charter school, or by the student's
19 school district of residence, during the two immediately
20 preceding school years, and if the charter school has not entered
21 into an agreement under Code section 280.13A with another school
22 district, nonpublic school, or charter school that provides
23 for the eligibility of students enrolled in the charter school
24 to participate in the extracurricular interscholastic athletic
25 contest or competition that is being provided by that school.

26 The division provides that if the board of directors of a
27 school district has established a fee for the cost of a student's
28 participation in an extracurricular interscholastic athletic
29 contest or competition, a student who is enrolled in a Code
30 chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school and is participating
31 in a contest or competition at a public school pursuant to the
32 division's provisions, or the student's parent or guardian, shall
33 be responsible for the payment of such fee.

34 The division requires a student who is enrolled in a Code
35 chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school and is participating

1 in a contest or competition at a public school pursuant
2 to the division's provisions to participate under the same
3 conditions as a student who is enrolled in the school district,
4 including meeting the school district's student code of conduct
5 requirements.

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

12 DIVISION IV — DRIVER EDUCATION. Current law requires every
13 public school district in Iowa to offer or make available to
14 all students residing in the school district, including Iowa
15 students attending a nonpublic school or receiving competent
16 private instruction or independent private instruction, in the
17 district, an approved course in driver education. The division
18 requires Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter schools to
19 offer or make available such courses to students attending the
20 charter school. In addition, the division requires every public
21 school district in Iowa to offer or make available to all Iowa
22 students residing in the school district who attend a Code
23 chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school an approved course in
24 driver education pursuant to policies established by the school
25 district. The charter school is responsible for the payment of
26 all of the school district's costs associated with providing the
27 approved course in driver education to such students.

28 DIVISION V — CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATIONS. Code section 256.163
29 establishes requirements for teacher licensure beyond a temporary
30 initial license or an initial license. Pursuant to current
31 Code section 256.163, the requirements for teacher licensure
32 beyond a temporary initial license or an initial license include
33 successful completion of a beginning teacher mentoring and
34 induction program; two years of successful teaching experience
35 in a school district with an approved career paths, leadership

1 roles, and compensation framework; or evidence of not less
2 than three years of successful teaching experience at certain
3 specified schools or programs. The division modifies Code
4 section 256.163 to add charter schools, established pursuant
5 to Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, to this list of schools
6 or programs, allowing a teacher to attain licensure beyond a
7 temporary initial license or an initial license if the teacher
8 completes not less than three years of successful teaching
9 experience at such a charter school.

10 Current law provides that one of the purposes of charter
11 schools established under Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, is to
12 accelerate student learning to prevent learning loss during the
13 COVID-19 pandemic and other significant disruptions to student
14 learning. The division modifies this provision to provide that
15 one of the purposes of such charter schools is to accelerate
16 student learning to prevent learning loss during significant
17 disruptions to student learning.

18 The division provides that an initial charter school contract
19 shall be granted for a term of five school budget years,
20 commencing the school budget year in which the charter school
21 opens. In addition, the division provides that an approved
22 charter school opens on the first day of the school year that
23 is two school years immediately subsequent to the school year in
24 which the charter school contract is executed; provided, however,
25 that the approved charter school may open on the first day of
26 the school year that is immediately subsequent to the school year
27 in which the charter school contract is executed if the approved
28 charter school demonstrates adequate preparation to the state
29 board. If the charter school requires an opening delay of more
30 than two school years immediately subsequent to the school year
31 in which the charter school contract is executed, the charter
32 school may request an extension from the state board. This
33 provision applies to charter school contracts that are executed
34 on or after the effective date of the division.

35 The division allows students from charter schools established

1 pursuant to Code chapter 256E, subchapters I and II, to
2 access the district-to-community college sharing or concurrent
3 enrollment program through the school district in which the
4 charter school is located. The division also allows students
5 from online charter schools to access the program through the
6 students' school district of residence.

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