

Senate File 2501 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 2501

BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 2425)

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 2175)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to education, including by modifying provisions
2 related to charter school approval, contracts, funding, and
3 operations, services provided to charter schools by area
4 education agencies, charter school student participation
5 in extracurricular activities provided by public schools,
6 the Iowa public employees' retirement system, education
7 savings accounts, independent accreditation, teacher
8 training and licensure, the statewide voluntary preschool
9 program, the district-to-community college sharing or
10 concurrent enrollment program, open enrollment, school
11 tuition organizations, and innovation zone schools;
12 making appropriations; and including effective date and
13 applicability provisions.

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

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DIVISION I
CHARTER 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 schools, ~~and innovation zone schools~~ a comprehensive state

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

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

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

17 Sec. 5. Section 256.163, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
18 by adding the following new paragraph:

19 NEW PARAGRAPH. f. A charter school established pursuant to
20 chapter 256E, subchapter I.

21 Sec. 6. Section 256E.1, subsection 2, paragraphs a and b,
22 Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

23 a. A school board may create a founding group to apply to
24 the state board or the university of northern Iowa for approval
25 to establish and operate a charter school within and as a part
26 of the school district by establishing a new attendance center,
27 creating a new school within an existing attendance center, or
28 by converting an existing attendance center to charter status.

29 b. A founding group may apply to the state board or the
30 university of northern Iowa for approval to establish and
31 operate a charter school within the boundaries of the state
32 that operates as a new attendance center independently from a
33 public school district.

34 Sec. 7. Section 256E.1, subsection 3, unnumbered paragraph
35 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

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

3 Sec. 8. Section 256E.1, subsection 3, paragraph d, Code
4 2026, is amended to read as follows:

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

8 Sec. 9. Section 256E.1, subsection 4, Code 2026, is amended
9 to read as follows:

10 4. The state board of education and the university of
11 northern Iowa shall be the only ~~authorizer~~ authorizers of
12 charter schools under this chapter subchapter.

13 Sec. 10. Section 256E.2, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2026,
14 is amended to read as follows:

15 As used in this chapter subchapter, unless the context
16 otherwise requires:

17 Sec. 11. Section 256E.2, subsections 2 and 5, Code 2026, are
18 amended to read as follows:

19 2. "*Charter school*" means a school established in accordance
20 with this chapter subchapter.

21 5. "*Founding group*" means a person, group of persons,
22 or education service provider that develops and submits an
23 application for a charter school to the state board or the
24 university of northern Iowa under this chapter subchapter.

25 Sec. 12. Section 256E.3, Code 2026, is amended to read as
26 follows:

27 **256E.3 Department — duty to monitor.**

28 The department shall monitor the effectiveness of charter
29 schools and shall implement the applicable provisions of this
30 ~~chapter~~ subchapter.

31 Sec. 13. Section 256E.4, subsections 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,
32 and 10, Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

33 1. A school board may create a founding group to apply to
34 the state board or the university of northern Iowa for approval
35 to establish and operate a charter school within and as a part

1 of the school district by establishing a new attendance center,
2 creating a new school within an existing attendance center, or
3 by converting an existing attendance center. The application
4 shall demonstrate the founding group's academic and operational
5 vision and plans for the proposed charter school, demonstrate
6 the founding group's capacity to execute the vision and plans,
7 and provide the state board or the university of northern Iowa
8 a clear basis for assessing the founding group's plans and
9 capacity.

10 2. The state board, in consultation with the university
11 of northern Iowa, shall adopt rules to establish appropriate
12 application timelines and deadlines for the submission of
13 charter school applications under [this section](#).

14 3. The instructions for completing an application shall
15 include or otherwise inform applicants of all of the following:

16 a. The performance framework adopted by the state board, in
17 consultation with the university of northern Iowa, for charter
18 school oversight and evaluation requirements in accordance with
19 sections [256E.9](#) and [256E.10](#).

20 b. The criteria the state board or the university of
21 northern Iowa will use in evaluating applications.

22 c. The requirements concerning the format and content
23 essential for applicants to demonstrate the capacities
24 necessary to establish and operate a successful charter school.

25 5. If the founding group proposes to establish a charter
26 school by converting an existing attendance center of the
27 school district, the state board or the university of northern
28 Iowa shall not approve the application unless the founding
29 group submits evidence that the attendance center's teachers
30 and parents or guardians of students enrolled at the existing
31 attendance center voted in favor of the conversion. A vote
32 in favor of conversion under [this subsection](#) requires the
33 support of a majority of the teachers employed at the school
34 on the date of the vote and a majority of the parents or
35 guardians voting whose children are enrolled at the school,

1 provided that a majority of the parents or guardians eligible
2 to vote participate in the ballot process. The state board,
3 in consultation with the university of northern Iowa, shall
4 establish procedures by rule for voting under [this subsection](#).
5 A parent or guardian voting in accordance with [this subsection](#)
6 must be a resident of this state.

7 6. In reviewing and evaluating charter school applications,
8 the state board and the university of northern Iowa shall
9 employ procedures, practices, and criteria consistent with
10 nationally recognized principles and standards for reviewing
11 charter school applications. Each application review shall
12 include thorough evaluation of the written application, an
13 in-person interview with the founding group, and an opportunity
14 in a public forum for local residents to learn about and
15 provide input on each application.

16 7. Following review of a charter school application and
17 completion of the process required under [subsection 6](#), the
18 state board or the university of northern Iowa shall do all of
19 the following:

20 a. Approve a charter school application only if the founding
21 group has demonstrated competence in each element of the
22 approval criteria and if the founding group is likely to open
23 and operate a successful charter school.

24 b. Make application decisions on documented evidence
25 collected through the application review process.

26 c. Adhere to the policies and criteria that are transparent,
27 based on merit, and avoid conflicts of interest or any
28 appearance thereof.

29 8. The state board or the university of northern Iowa
30 shall approve a charter school application if the application
31 satisfies the requirements of [this chapter subchapter](#). The
32 state board or the university of northern Iowa shall approve or
33 deny a charter school application no later than seventy-five
34 calendar days after the application is received. If the state
35 board or the university of northern Iowa denies an application,

1 the state board or the university of northern Iowa shall
2 provide notice of denial to the founding group in writing
3 within thirty days after the state board's or the university
4 of northern Iowa's action. The notice shall specify the exact
5 reasons for denial and provide documentation supporting those
6 reasons. An approval decision may include, if appropriate,
7 reasonable conditions that the founding group must meet before
8 a charter school contract may be executed pursuant to section
9 256E.6. An approved charter application shall not serve as a
10 charter school contract.

11 9. A decision of the state board or the university of
12 northern Iowa relating to an application under [this section](#) is
13 not appealable.

14 10. An unsuccessful applicant under [this section](#) may
15 subsequently reapply to the state board or the university of
16 northern Iowa.

17 Sec. 14. Section 256E.4, subsection 4, paragraph ab, Code
18 2026, is amended to read as follows:

19 *ab.* The specific statutes and administrative rules with
20 which the charter school does not intend to comply. The
21 department, in consultation with the university of northern
22 Iowa, shall provide technical assistance to the applicant
23 concerning statutes and administrative rules that may be waived
24 under the charter school contract in order to facilitate the
25 goals of the charter school.

26 Sec. 15. Section 256E.5, subsections 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9,
27 and 10, Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

28 1. A founding group may apply to the state board or the
29 university of northern Iowa for approval to establish and
30 operate a charter school within the boundaries of the state
31 that operates as a new attendance center independently from a
32 public school district. The application shall demonstrate the
33 founding group's academic and operational vision and plans for
34 the proposed charter school, demonstrate the founding group's
35 capacity to execute the vision and plans, and provide the state

1 board or the university of northern Iowa a clear basis for
2 assessing the founding group's plans and capacity.

3 2. The state board, in consultation with the university
4 of northern Iowa, shall adopt rules to establish appropriate
5 application timelines and deadlines for the submission of
6 charter school applications under [this section](#).

7 3. The instructions for completing an application shall
8 include or otherwise inform applicants of all of the following:

9 a. The performance framework adopted by the state board, in
10 consultation with the university of northern Iowa, for charter
11 school oversight and evaluation requirements in accordance with
12 sections [256E.9](#) and [256E.10](#).

13 b. The criteria the state board or the university of
14 northern Iowa will use in evaluating applications.

15 c. The requirements concerning the format and content
16 essential for applicants to demonstrate the capacities
17 necessary to establish and operate a successful charter school.

18 5. In reviewing and evaluating charter school applications,
19 the state board and the university of northern Iowa shall
20 employ procedures, practices, and criteria consistent with
21 nationally recognized principles and standards for reviewing
22 charter school applications. Each application review shall
23 include thorough evaluation of the written application, an
24 in-person interview with the applicant, and an opportunity in a
25 public forum for local residents of the public school district
26 within which the applicant proposes to locate the charter
27 school to learn about and provide input on each application.

28 6. Following review of a charter school application and
29 completion of the process required under [subsection 5](#), the
30 state board or the university of northern Iowa shall do all of
31 the following:

32 a. Approve a charter school application only if the
33 applicant has demonstrated competence in each element of the
34 state board's or the university of northern Iowa's published
35 approval criteria and the applicant is likely to open and

1 operate a successful charter school.

2 *b.* Make application decisions on documented evidence
3 collected through the application review process.

4 *c.* Adhere to the policies and criteria that are transparent,
5 based on merit, and avoid conflicts of interest or any
6 appearance thereof.

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

23 9. An unsuccessful charter school applicant may
24 subsequently reapply to the state board or the university of
25 northern Iowa.

26 10. A decision of the state board or the university of
27 northern Iowa relating to an application under [this section](#) is
28 not appealable.

29 Sec. 16. Section 256E.5, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
30 following new subsection:

31 NEW SUBSECTION. 1A. The governing board of a charter school
32 that is approved under this section shall be designated a local
33 education agency for the purpose of receiving federal funds for
34 all attendance centers that are under the jurisdiction of the
35 governing board.

1 Sec. 17. Section 256E.5, subsection 4, paragraph ab, Code
2 2026, is amended to read as follows:

3 *ab.* The specific statutes and administrative rules with
4 which the charter school does not intend to comply. The
5 department, in consultation with the university of northern
6 Iowa, shall provide technical assistance to the applicant
7 concerning statutes and administrative rules that may be waived
8 under the charter school contract in order to facilitate the
9 goals of the charter school.

10 Sec. 18. Section 256E.6, Code 2026, is amended to read as
11 follows:

12 **256E.6 Charter school contract.**

13 1. Within the later of thirty days following approval
14 of a charter school application or upon the satisfaction of
15 all reasonable conditions imposed on the applicant in the
16 charter school approval, if any, an enforceable and renewable
17 charter school contract shall be executed between the founding
18 group and the state board or the university of northern Iowa,
19 as applicable, setting forth the academic and operational
20 performance expectations and measures by which the charter
21 school will be evaluated pursuant to sections 256E.9 and
22 256E.10 and the other rights and duties of the parties.

23 2. An initial charter school contract shall be granted for
24 a term of five school budget years, commencing with the school
25 budget year in which the charter school opens. The charter
26 school contract shall include the beginning and ending dates
27 of the charter school contract term. An approved charter
28 school ~~may delay its opening for a period of time not to exceed~~
29 ~~one school year in order to plan and prepare for the charter~~
30 ~~school's opening~~ shall open on the first day of the school year
31 that is two school years immediately subsequent to the school
32 year in which the charter school contract is executed under
33 subsection 1; provided, however, that the approved charter
34 school may open on the first day of the school year that is
35 immediately subsequent to the school year in which the charter

1 school contract is executed under subsection 1 if the approved
2 charter school demonstrates adequate preparation to the state
3 board or the university of northern Iowa. If the charter
4 school requires an opening delay of more than ~~one school year~~
5 two school years immediately subsequent to the school year in
6 which the charter school contract is executed under subsection
7 1, the charter school may request an extension from the state
8 board or the university of northern Iowa.

9 3. Each charter school contract shall be signed by
10 the president of the state board or the president of the
11 university of northern Iowa, as applicable, and the president
12 or appropriate officer of the governing body of the founding
13 group.

14 4. Within fifteen days of the execution of a charter school
15 contract entered into by the state board or the university of
16 northern Iowa, the state board or the university of northern
17 Iowa shall notify the department and the department of
18 management of the name of the charter school and any applicable
19 education service provider, the proposed location of the
20 charter school, and the charter school's first year projected
21 enrollment.

22 5. A charter school approved under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter
23 shall not commence operations without a valid charter school
24 contract executed in accordance with [this section](#) and approved
25 in an open session of the state board or by the university of
26 northern Iowa.

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

35 7. A charter school contract may be amended to govern

1 multiple charter schools operated by the same applicant and
2 approved by the state board or the university of northern Iowa.
3 However, each charter school that is part of a charter school
4 contract shall be separate and distinct from any other charter
5 school governed by the contract.

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

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

14 Sec. 20. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, unnumbered paragraph
15 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

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

20 Sec. 21. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, paragraphs g, i, and
21 w, Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

22 *g.* Be subject to the same financial audits, audit
23 procedures, and audit requirements as a school district. The
24 audit shall be consistent with the requirements of sections
25 11.6, 11.14, 11.19, and 279.29, and section 256.9, subsection
26 20, except to the extent deviations are necessary because of
27 the program at the school. The department, the university
28 of northern Iowa, the auditor of state, or the legislative
29 services agency may conduct financial, program, or compliance
30 audits.

31 *i.* Provide instruction for at least the number of days
32 or hours required by section 279.10, subsection 1, unless
33 specifically waived by the state board or the university of
34 northern Iowa as part of the application process.

35 *w.* Comply with the requirements of this chapter subchapter.

1 Sec. 22. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, paragraph h,
2 unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as
3 follows:

4 Be subject to and comply with the requirements of section
5 256.7, subsection 21, and the educational standards of section
6 256.11, unless specifically waived by the state board or the
7 university of northern Iowa during the application process;
8 provided, however, that the state board or the university of
9 northern Iowa shall not waive any of the following educational
10 standards:

11 Sec. 23. Section 256E.7, subsection 9, Code 2026, is amended
12 to read as follows:

13 9. Individuals compensated by an education service provider
14 are prohibited from serving as a voting member on the governing
15 board of any charter school unless the state board or the
16 university of northern Iowa waives such prohibition.

17 Sec. 24. Section 256E.8, subsections 1 and 4, Code 2026, are
18 amended to read as follows:

19 1. Each student enrolled in a charter school established
20 under ~~this chapter~~ subchapter shall be counted, for state
21 school foundation purposes, in the student's district of
22 residence pursuant to section 257.6, subsection 1, paragraph
23 "a", subparagraph (9), including any applicable amounts under
24 section 256B.9. For purposes of this section, residence means
25 a residence under section 282.1.

26 4. If necessary, and pursuant to rules adopted by the
27 state board, in consultation with the university of northern
28 Iowa, funding amounts required under this section for the
29 first school year of a new charter school shall be based on
30 enrollment estimates for the charter school included in the
31 charter school contract. The department, in consultation
32 with the university of northern Iowa, shall adopt rules to
33 establish a process for determining estimated enrollments for
34 charter school funding purposes in school years after the first
35 school year of a charter school. Amounts paid using estimated

1 enrollments shall be reconciled during subsequent payments
2 based on actual enrollment of the charter school during each
3 school year.

4 Sec. 25. Section 256E.9, subsection 1, unnumbered paragraph
5 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

6 The performance provisions within the charter school
7 contract shall be based on a performance framework adopted
8 by the state board, in consultation with the university
9 of northern Iowa, that clearly sets forth the academic and
10 operational performance indicators, measures, and metrics that
11 will guide the evaluation of the charter school by the state
12 board or the university of northern Iowa, without compromising
13 individual student privacy. The performance framework shall
14 include but is not limited to indicators, measures, and metrics
15 for all of the following:

16 Sec. 26. Section 256E.9, subsections 2 and 5, Code 2026, are
17 amended to read as follows:

18 2. Annual performance targets shall be agreed upon between
19 each charter school and the state board, in consultation
20 with the university of northern Iowa, if applicable. Such
21 performance targets shall be contained in the charter school
22 contract and shall be designed to help each charter school
23 meet applicable federal, state, and local standards. The
24 performance targets contained in the charter school contract
25 may be amended by mutual agreement after the charter school is
26 operating and has collected initial achievement data for the
27 charter school's students.

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

32 Sec. 27. Section 256E.10, subsections 1, 2, 6, 8, 12, and
33 13, Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

34 1. The state board and the university of northern Iowa shall
35 monitor the performance and compliance of each charter school

1 ~~the state board approves~~ approved by the state board or the
2 university of northern Iowa, including collecting and analyzing
3 data according to the charter school contract in order to meet
4 the requirements of this chapter subchapter. Such oversight
5 may include inquiries and investigation of the charter school
6 so long as the activities are consistent with the intent of
7 ~~this chapter subchapter~~, adhere to the terms of the charter
8 school contract, and do not unduly inhibit the autonomy granted
9 to the charter school. Any performance report resulting from
10 an inquiry or investigation under this section shall, upon
11 conclusion of such action, be included in the annual report
12 required under section 256E.12.

13 2. As part of the charter school contract, the charter
14 school shall submit an annual report to the state board or the
15 university of northern Iowa to assist the state board or the
16 university of northern Iowa in evaluating the charter school's
17 performance and compliance with the performance framework.

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

30 8. No later than October 1, the governing board of a charter
31 school seeking renewal shall submit a renewal application to
32 the state board or the university of northern Iowa pursuant to
33 the renewal application guidance. A renewal or denial shall be
34 approved by resolution of the state board, or by the university
35 of northern Iowa, within sixty days following the filing of the

1 renewal application.

2 12. A decision to revoke or to not renew a charter school
3 contract shall be by resolution of the state board, or by
4 the university of northern Iowa, and shall clearly state the
5 reasons for the revocation or nonrenewal.

6 13. If a charter school has been evaluated and graded to
7 be in the exceptional category, or the highest rated category
8 under a succeeding evaluation system, under the evaluation and
9 grading required under [section 256E.9, subsection 5](#), for the
10 immediately preceding two school years, and the charter school
11 is in compliance with the current charter school contract and
12 all provisions of [this chapter subchapter](#), the charter school's
13 application renewal under [subsection 8](#) shall be renewed
14 for an additional period of time equal to the length of the
15 original charter school contract or the most recent renewal
16 of the contract, whichever is longer, unless the state board
17 or the university of northern Iowa provides written notice to
18 the charter school of the state board's or the university of
19 northern Iowa's rejection of the expedited renewal within sixty
20 days of the filing of the application. The state board or
21 the university of northern Iowa shall not reject an expedited
22 renewal application unless the state board or the university of
23 northern Iowa finds exceptional circumstances for the rejection
24 or seeks material changes to the charter school contract.

25 Sec. 28. Section 256E.10, subsection 9, unnumbered
26 paragraph 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

27 Unless eligible for expedited renewal under [subsection 13](#),
28 when reviewing a charter school contract renewal application,
29 the state board or the university of northern Iowa shall do all
30 of the following:

31 Sec. 29. Section 256E.10, subsection 10, unnumbered
32 paragraph 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

33 A charter school contract may be revoked at any time or not
34 renewed if the state board or the university of northern Iowa
35 determines that the charter school did any of the following:

1 Sec. 30. Section 256E.10, subsection 10, paragraph a, Code
2 2026, is amended to read as follows:

3 a. Committed a material violation of any of the terms,
4 conditions, standards, or procedures required under the charter
5 school contract or this chapter subchapter.

6 Sec. 31. Section 256E.10, subsection 11, unnumbered
7 paragraph 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

8 The state board, in consultation with the university of
9 northern Iowa, shall develop charter school contract revocation
10 and nonrenewal standards and procedures that do all of the
11 following:

12 Sec. 32. Section 256E.11, subsection 1, Code 2026, is
13 amended to read as follows:

14 1. Prior to any charter school closure decision, the state
15 board, in consultation with the university of northern Iowa,
16 shall develop a charter school closure protocol to ensure
17 timely notice to parents and guardians, provide for the orderly
18 transition of students and student records to new schools, and
19 to provide proper disposition of school funds, property, and
20 assets in accordance with the requirements of this ~~chapter~~
21 subchapter. The protocol shall specify required actions and
22 timelines and identify responsible parties for each such
23 action.

24 Sec. 33. Section 256E.12, Code 2026, is amended to read as
25 follows:

26 **256E.12 Reports.**

27 1. Each charter school shall prepare and file an annual
28 report with the department. The department, in consultation
29 with the university of northern Iowa, shall prescribe by rule
30 the required contents of the report, but each such report shall
31 include information regarding student achievement, including
32 annual academic growth and proficiency, graduation rates,
33 and financial performance and sustainability. The reports
34 are public records and the examination, publication, and
35 dissemination of the reports are governed by the provisions of

1 chapter 22.

2 2. The state board, in consultation with the university of
3 northern Iowa, shall prepare and file with the general assembly
4 by December 1, annually, a comprehensive report with findings
5 and recommendations relating to the charter school program in
6 the state and whether the charter school program under this
7 ~~chapter~~ subchapter is meeting the goals and purposes of the
8 program. The report also shall contain, for each charter
9 school, a copy of the charter school's mission statement,
10 attendance statistics and dropout rate, aggregate assessment
11 test scores, projections of financial stability, and the number
12 and qualifications of teachers and administrators.

13 Sec. 34. Section 256F.1, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
14 to read as follows:

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

17 Sec. 35. Section 256F.1, subsection 3, unnumbered paragraph
18 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

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

22 Sec. 36. Section 256F.1, subsection 4, Code 2026, is amended
23 by striking the subsection.

24 Sec. 37. Section 256F.2, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2026,
25 is amended to read as follows:

26 As used in this ~~chapter~~ subchapter, unless the context
27 otherwise requires:

28 Sec. 38. Section 256F.2, subsections 1 and 3, Code 2026, are
29 amended to read as follows:

30 1. "Advisory council" means a council appointed by the
31 school board of directors of a charter school ~~or an innovation~~
32 ~~zone consortium~~ pursuant to [section 256F.5, subsection 4](#).

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

35 Sec. 39. Section 256F.2, subsections 5 and 6, Code 2026, are

1 amended by striking the subsections.

2 Sec. 40. Section 256F.3, Code 2026, is amended to read as
3 follows:

4 **256F.3 Application Monitoring — no new approvals — adoption**
5 **of rules.**

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

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

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

35 ~~c. A parent or guardian voting in accordance with this~~

1 ~~subsection must be a resident of this state.~~

2 3. ~~A school board shall receive and review all applications~~
3 ~~for converting an existing building or creating a new building~~
4 ~~for a charter school. Applications received on or before~~
5 ~~October 1 of a calendar year shall be considered for charter~~
6 ~~schools to be established at the beginning of the school~~
7 ~~district's next school year or at a time agreed to by the~~
8 ~~applicant and the school board. However, a school board may~~
9 ~~receive and consider applications after October 1 at its~~
10 ~~discretion.~~

11 4. ~~A school board shall by a majority vote approve or~~
12 ~~deny an application relating to a charter school no later~~
13 ~~than sixty calendar days after the application is received.~~
14 ~~An application approved by a school board and subsequently~~
15 ~~approved by the state board pursuant to [subsection 6](#) shall~~
16 ~~constitute, at a minimum, an agreement between the school board~~
17 ~~and the charter school for the operation of the charter school.~~
18 ~~A school board that denies an application for a conversion~~
19 ~~to a charter school shall provide notice of denial to the~~
20 ~~applicant in writing within thirty days after board action.~~
21 ~~The notice shall specify the exact reasons for denial and~~
22 ~~provide documentation supporting those reasons.~~

23 5. ~~An applicant may appeal school board denial of the~~
24 ~~applicant's charter school application to the state board~~
25 ~~in accordance with the procedures set forth in [chapter 290](#).~~
26 ~~The state board shall affirm, modify, or reverse the school~~
27 ~~board's decision on the basis of the information provided in~~
28 ~~the application indicating the ability and willingness of the~~
29 ~~proposed charter school to meet the requirements of section~~
30 ~~256F.1, subsection 3, and [section 256F.4](#).~~

31 6. ~~Upon approval of an application for the proposed~~
32 ~~establishment of a charter school, the school board shall~~
33 ~~submit an application for approval to establish the charter~~
34 ~~school to the state board in accordance with [section 256F.5](#).~~

35 7. ~~An application submitted to the state board pursuant to~~

1 ~~subsection 2, paragraph "b", or subsection 6 shall set forth the~~
2 ~~manner in which the charter school or innovation zone school~~
3 ~~will provide special instruction, in accordance with section~~
4 ~~280.4, to students who are English learners. The application~~
5 ~~shall set forth the manner in which the charter school or~~
6 ~~innovation zone school will comply with federal and state laws~~
7 ~~and regulations relating to the federal National School Lunch~~
8 ~~Act and the federal Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C.~~
9 ~~§1751-1785, and chapter 283A. The state board shall approve~~
10 ~~only those applications that meet the requirements specified in~~
11 ~~section 256F.1, subsection 3, and sections 256F.4 and 256F.5.~~
12 ~~The state board may deny an application if the state board~~
13 ~~deems that approval of the application is not in the best~~
14 ~~interest of the affected students.~~

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

17 ~~9. 2.~~ The state board shall not approve a new charter
18 school under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter on or after July 1, 2021.

19 ~~10. 3.~~ The state board shall adopt rules in accordance with
20 chapter 17A for the implementation of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter.
21 If federal rules or regulations relating to the distribution
22 or utilization of federal funds allocated to the department
23 pursuant to ~~this section~~ are adopted that are inconsistent
24 with the provisions of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter, the state
25 board shall adopt rules to comply with the requirements of the
26 federal rules or regulations. The state board shall identify
27 inconsistencies between federal and state rules and regulations
28 as provided in ~~this subsection~~ and shall submit recommendations
29 for legislative action to the chairpersons and ranking members
30 of the senate and house standing committees on education at the
31 next meeting of the general assembly.

32 Sec. 41. Section 256F.4, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
33 by striking the subsection.

34 Sec. 42. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, unnumbered paragraph
35 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

1 Although a charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ may
2 elect to comply with one or more provisions of statute or
3 administrative rule, a charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~
4 is exempt from all statutes and rules applicable to a school,
5 a school board, or a school district, except that the charter
6 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall do all of the following:

7 Sec. 43. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, paragraphs a and h,
8 Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

9 a. Meet all applicable federal, state, and local health and
10 safety requirements and laws prohibiting discrimination on the
11 basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national
12 origin, religion, ancestry, or disability. A charter school
13 ~~or innovation zone school~~ located within the boundaries of a
14 school district subject to court-ordered desegregation at the
15 time the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ application
16 is approved shall be subject to the desegregation order unless
17 otherwise specifically provided for in the desegregation order.

18 h. Be subject to and comply with [chapter 284](#) relating to
19 the student achievement and teacher quality program. A charter
20 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ that complies with chapter
21 284 shall receive state moneys or be eligible to receive state
22 moneys calculated as provided in section 257.10, subsections
23 9 and 10, and [section 257.37A](#) as if it did not operate under a
24 charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ contract.

25 Sec. 44. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, Code 2026, is amended
26 by adding the following new paragraph:

27 NEW PARAGRAPH. v. Be subject to and comply with the
28 requirements of section 256E.9 related to the incorporation
29 into the charter school contract of a performance framework
30 that is used by the state board to evaluate the charter school
31 in the same manner as a charter school established under
32 subchapter I.

33 Sec. 45. Section 256F.4, subsections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8,
34 Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

35 3. A charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall not

1 discriminate in its student admissions policies or practices
2 on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures
3 of achievement or aptitude, or status as a person with a
4 disability. However, a charter school ~~or innovation zone~~
5 ~~school~~ may limit admission to students who are within a
6 particular range of ages or grade levels or on any other
7 basis that would be legal if initiated by a school district.
8 Enrollment priority shall be given to the siblings of students
9 enrolled in a charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~.

10 4. A charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall
11 enroll an eligible resident student who submits a timely
12 application unless the number of applications exceeds the
13 capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. In
14 this case, students must be accepted by lot. A charter school
15 ~~or innovation zone school~~ may enroll an eligible nonresident
16 student who submits a timely application in accordance with
17 the student admission policy established pursuant to section
18 256F.5, subsection 1. If the charter school ~~or innovation zone~~
19 ~~school~~ enrolls an eligible nonresident student, the charter
20 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall notify the school
21 district of residence and the sending district not later than
22 March 1 of the preceding school year. Transportation for the
23 student shall be in accordance with section 282.18, subsection
24 10. The sending district shall make payments to the charter
25 school ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ in the manner required
26 under [section 282.18, subsection 7](#). ~~If the nonresident pupil~~
27 ~~is also an eligible pupil under [section 261E.6](#), the innovation~~
28 ~~zone consortium shall pay the tuition reimbursement amount to~~
29 ~~an eligible postsecondary institution as provided in section~~
30 ~~261E.7.~~

31 5. A charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall provide
32 instruction for at least the number of days or hours required
33 by [section 279.10, subsection 1](#).

34 6. Notwithstanding [subsection 2](#), a charter school ~~or~~
35 ~~innovation zone school~~ shall meet the requirements of section

1 256.7, subsection 21.

2 7. ~~a.~~ A charter school shall be considered a part of the
3 school district in which it is located for purposes of state
4 school foundation aid pursuant to [chapter 257](#).

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

8 8. A charter school ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ may enter
9 into contracts in accordance with [chapter 26](#).

10 Sec. 46. Section 256F.5, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2026,
11 is amended to read as follows:

12 An application to the state board for the approval of a
13 charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall include but
14 shall not be limited to a description of the following:

15 Sec. 47. Section 256F.5, subsections 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10,
16 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17, Code 2026, are amended to read as
17 follows:

18 1. The method for admission to the charter school ~~or~~
19 ~~innovation zone school~~.

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

22 4. The method for appointing or forming an advisory
23 council for the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~.
24 The membership of an advisory council appointed or formed in
25 accordance with this ~~chapter~~ subchapter shall not include more
26 than one member of a participating school board.

27 6. The charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ governance
28 and bylaws.

29 7. The financial plan for the operation of the charter
30 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ including, at a minimum,
31 a listing of the support services the school district ~~or~~
32 ~~innovation zone consortium~~ will provide, and the charter
33 ~~school or innovation zone school's~~ revenues, budgets, and
34 expenditures.

35 10. The organization of the charter school ~~or innovation~~

1 ~~zone school~~ in terms of ages of students or grades to be taught
2 along with an estimate of the total enrollment of the charter
3 school ~~or innovation zone school~~.

4 12. A statement indicating how the charter school ~~or~~
5 ~~innovation zone school~~ will meet the requirements of section
6 256F.1, as applicable; [section 256F.4, subsection 2](#), paragraph
7 "a"; and [section 256F.4, subsection 3](#).

8 13. Assurance of the assumption of liability by the charter
9 school ~~or the innovation zone consortium for the innovation~~
10 ~~zone school~~.

11 14. The types and amounts of insurance coverage to be
12 obtained by the charter school ~~or innovation zone consortium~~
13 ~~for the innovation zone school~~.

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

17 16. The means, costs, and plan for providing transportation
18 for students enrolled in the charter school ~~or innovation zone~~
19 ~~school~~.

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

23 Sec. 48. Section 256F.6, subsections 1 and 3, Code 2026, are
24 amended to read as follows:

25 1. a. An approved charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~
26 application shall constitute an agreement, the terms of which
27 shall, at a minimum, be the terms of a ~~four-year~~ five-year
28 enforceable, renewable contract between a school board, ~~or the~~
29 ~~boards participating in an innovation zone consortium~~, and the
30 state board. ~~The contract shall include an operating agreement~~
31 ~~for the operation of the charter school or innovation zone~~
32 ~~school~~. The terms of the contract may be revised at any time
33 with the approval of both the state board and the school board
34 ~~or the boards participating in the innovation zone consortium~~,
35 whether or not the stated provisions of the contract are being

1 fulfilled. The contract must include all of the following:

2 (1) An operating agreement for the operation of the charter
3 school.

4 (2) A performance framework as required under section
5 256F.4, subsection 2, paragraph "v".

6 *b.* A contract may be renewed by agreement of the school
7 board ~~or the boards participating in an innovation zone~~
8 ~~consortium, as applicable,~~ and the state board.

9 *c.* The charter school ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ shall
10 provide parents and guardians of students enrolled in the
11 charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ with a copy of the
12 charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ application approved
13 pursuant to [section 256F.5](#).

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

17 Sec. 49. Section 256F.7, Code 2026, is amended to read as
18 follows:

19 **256F.7 Employment and related matters.**

20 1. A charter school ~~or the boards participating in an~~
21 ~~innovation zone consortium~~ shall employ or contract with
22 necessary teachers and administrators, as defined in section
23 256.145, who hold a valid license with an endorsement for the
24 type of service for which the teacher or administrator is
25 employed.

26 2. The school board ~~or innovation zone consortium, as~~
27 ~~specified in the application,~~ in consultation with the advisory
28 council, shall decide matters related to the operation of the
29 charter school ~~or innovation zone school,~~ including budgeting,
30 curriculum, and operating procedures.

31 3. ~~a.~~ Employees of a charter school shall be considered
32 employees of the school district.

33 ~~b.~~ ~~Employees of an innovation zone school shall be~~
34 ~~considered employees of a board participating in the innovation~~
35 ~~zone consortium.~~

1 Sec. 50. Section 256F.8, subsections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6, Code
2 2026, are amended to read as follows:

3 1. A contract for the establishment of a charter school ~~or~~
4 ~~innovation zone school~~ may be revoked by the state board, or
5 the school board that established the charter school, ~~or the~~
6 ~~innovation zone consortium that established the innovation zone~~
7 ~~school~~ if the appropriate board ~~or consortium~~ determines that
8 one or more of the following occurred:

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

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

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

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

18 e. Assessment of student progress, which is administered
19 in accordance with state and locally determined indicators
20 established pursuant to rules adopted by the state board,
21 does not show improvement in student progress over that
22 which existed in the same student population prior to the
23 establishment of the charter school ~~or the innovation zone~~
24 ~~school~~.

25 2. The decision by a school board ~~or an innovation zone~~
26 ~~consortium~~ to revoke or to fail to take action to renew a
27 charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ contract is subject to
28 appeal under procedures set forth in [chapter 290](#).

29 3. A school board ~~or a board participating in an innovation~~
30 ~~zone consortium~~ that is considering revocation or nonrenewal
31 of a charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ contract shall
32 notify the advisory council, the parents or guardians of the
33 students enrolled in the charter school ~~or innovation zone~~
34 ~~school~~, and the teachers and administrators employed by the
35 charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~, sixty days prior to

1 revoking or the date by which the contract must be renewed, but
2 not later than the last day of classes in the school year.

3 4. If the state board determines that a charter school ~~or~~
4 ~~innovation zone school~~ is in substantial violation of the terms
5 of the contract, the state board shall notify the school board
6 ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ and the advisory council of its
7 intention to revoke the contract at least sixty days prior to
8 revoking a contract and the school board ~~or the school boards~~
9 ~~participating in the innovation zone consortium~~ shall assume
10 oversight authority, operational authority, or both oversight
11 and operational authority. The notice shall state the
12 grounds for the proposed action in writing and in reasonable
13 detail. The school board ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ may
14 request in writing an informal hearing before the state board
15 within fourteen days of receiving notice of revocation of
16 the contract. Upon receiving a timely written request for a
17 hearing, the state board shall give reasonable notice to the
18 school board ~~or innovation zone consortium~~ of the hearing
19 date. The state board shall conduct an informal hearing before
20 taking final action. Final action to revoke a contract shall
21 be taken in a manner least disruptive to students enrolled in
22 the charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~. The state board
23 shall take final action to revoke or approve continuation of
24 a contract by the last day of classes in the school year. If
25 the final action to revoke a contract under [this section](#) occurs
26 prior to the last day of classes in the school year, a charter
27 school ~~or innovation zone school~~ student may enroll in the
28 resident district.

29 6. A school board revoking a contract or a school board,
30 ~~innovation zone consortium~~, or advisory council that fails to
31 renew a contract under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter is not liable
32 for that action to the charter school ~~or innovation zone~~
33 ~~school~~, a student enrolled in the charter school ~~or innovation~~
34 ~~zone school~~ or the student's parent or guardian, or any other
35 person.

1 Sec. 51. Section 256F.9, Code 2026, is amended to read as
2 follows:

3 **256F.9 Procedures after revocation — student enrollment.**

4 If a charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ contract
5 is revoked in accordance with this ~~chapter~~ subchapter, a
6 nonresident student who attended the school, and any siblings
7 of the student may submit an application to another school
8 district according to [section 282.18](#). Applications and notices
9 required by [section 282.18](#) shall be processed and provided in a
10 prompt manner.

11 Sec. 52. Section 256F.10, Code 2026, is amended to read as
12 follows:

13 **256F.10 Reports.**

14 1. A charter school ~~or innovation zone school~~ shall
15 report at least annually to the school board ~~or innovation~~
16 ~~zone consortium~~, advisory council, and the state board the
17 information required by the school board ~~or innovation zone~~
18 ~~consortium~~, advisory council, or the state board. The reports
19 are public records subject to [chapter 22](#).

20 2. Not later than December 1 annually, the state board shall
21 submit a comprehensive report with findings and recommendations
22 to the general assembly. The report shall evaluate the state's
23 charter school ~~and innovation zone school~~ programs generally,
24 including but not limited to an evaluation of whether the
25 charter schools ~~and innovation zone schools~~ are fulfilling the
26 purposes set forth in [section 256F.4, subsection 2](#). The report
27 also shall contain, for each charter school ~~or innovation~~
28 ~~zone school~~, a copy of the charter ~~school or innovation~~
29 ~~zone school's~~ mission statement, attendance statistics and
30 dropout rate, aggregate assessment test scores, projections of
31 financial stability, the number and qualifications of teachers
32 and administrators, and number of and comments on supervisory
33 visits by the department of education.

34 Sec. 53. Section 256F.12, Code 2026, is amended to read as
35 follows:

1 **256F.12 Operation of existing charter schools.**

2 Charter schools established under this ~~chapter~~ subchapter
3 prior to July 1, 2021, shall continue to operate under and be
4 subject to the requirements of this ~~chapter~~ subchapter and
5 shall not be subject to ~~chapter 256E~~ subchapter I.

6 Sec. 54. Section 257.6, subsection 1, paragraph a,
7 subparagraph (9), Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

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

10 Sec. 55. Section 280.36, subsection 3, Code 2026, is amended
11 to read as follows:

12 3. The board of directors of a school district or the
13 authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school
14 may enter into an agreement with another school district,
15 accredited nonpublic school, or charter school, ~~or innovation~~
16 ~~zone school~~ to create a multidisciplinary school safety
17 assessment team that shall coordinate resources among the
18 schools and assess and intervene when a student enrolled in
19 either school exhibits behavior that may pose a threat to
20 the safety of either school, employees of either school, or
21 students enrolled in either school.

22 Sec. 56. Section 282.9, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
23 to read as follows:

24 1. Notwithstanding sections ~~256E.7, 256F.4~~ 256E.23,
25 275.55A, and 282.18, or any other provision to the contrary,
26 prior to knowingly enrolling an individual who is required
27 to register as a sex offender under chapter 692A, but who is
28 otherwise eligible to enroll in a public school, the board of
29 directors of a school district shall determine the educational
30 placement of the individual. Upon receipt of notice that a
31 student who is enrolled in the district is required to register
32 as a sex offender under chapter 692A, the board shall determine
33 the educational placement of the student. The tentative agenda
34 for the meeting of the board of directors at which the board
35 will consider such enrollment or educational placement shall

1 specifically state that the board is considering the enrollment
2 or educational placement of an individual who is required
3 to register as a sex offender under [chapter 692A](#). If the
4 individual is denied enrollment in a school district under this
5 section, the school district of residence shall provide the
6 individual with educational services in an alternative setting.

7 Sec. 57. Section 282.18, subsection 11, paragraph a,
8 subparagraph (8), Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

9 (8) If the pupil participates in open enrollment because
10 of circumstances that meet the definition of good cause. For
11 purposes of [this section](#), "*good cause*" means a change in a
12 child's residence due to a change in family residence, a change
13 in a child's residence from the residence of one parent or
14 guardian to the residence of a different parent or guardian, a
15 change in the state in which the family residence is located,
16 a change in a child's parents' marital status, a guardianship
17 or custody proceeding, placement in foster care, adoption,
18 participation in a foreign exchange program, initial placement
19 of a prekindergarten student in a special education program
20 requiring specially designed instruction, or participation in
21 a substance use disorder or mental health treatment program,
22 a change in the status of a child's resident district such
23 as removal of accreditation by the state board, surrender of
24 accreditation, or permanent closure of a nonpublic school,
25 revocation of a charter school contract as provided in section
26 256E.10 or ~~256F.8~~ [256E.27](#), the failure of negotiations for a
27 whole grade sharing, reorganization, dissolution agreement, or
28 the rejection of a current whole grade sharing agreement, or
29 reorganization plan.

30 Sec. 58. Section 297.24, subsection 3, paragraph d, Code
31 2026, is amended by striking the paragraph.

32 Sec. 59. CODE EDITOR DIRECTIVE — TRANSFERS — NEW
33 SUBCHAPTERS.

34 1. The Code editor is directed to make the following
35 transfers:

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

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

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

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

18 3. The Code editor is directed to make changes in any Code
19 sections or other noncodified enactments amended or enacted
20 by any other Act to correspond with the changes made in this
21 Act if there appears to be no doubt as to the proper method of
22 making the changes and the changes would not be contrary to or
23 inconsistent with the purposes of this Act or any other Act.

24 Sec. 60. APPLICABILITY. The following applies to charter
25 school contracts that are executed or renewed pursuant to
26 chapter 256E on or after the effective date of this division
27 of this Act:

28 The section of this division of this Act amending section
29 256E.6.

30 Sec. 61. APPLICABILITY. The following apply to charter
31 school contracts entered into under section 256F.6 between a
32 school board and the state board of education that are renewed
33 on or after the effective date of this division of this Act:

34 1. The section of this division of this Act amending
35 section 256F.4, subsection 2, by requiring charter schools to

1 incorporate a performance framework into the charter school
2 contract.

3 2. The section of this division of this Act amending section
4 256F.6, subsection 1, paragraph "a".

5 DIVISION II

6 FUNDING AND AREA EDUCATION AGENCY SERVICES

7 Sec. 62. Section 256E.8, subsection 2, paragraph a, Code
8 2026, is amended to read as follows:

9 a. The charter school in which the student is enrolled
10 shall receive under paragraph "c" an amount equal to the sum
11 of the regular program state cost per pupil for the budget
12 year plus the teacher leadership supplement state cost per
13 pupil, the teacher salary supplement state cost per pupil, the
14 professional development supplement state cost per pupil, and
15 the early intervention supplement state cost per pupil for
16 the budget year as provided in [section 257.9](#) plus any moneys
17 that would be due to the school district of residence for the
18 student as a result of the non-English speaking weighting under
19 [section 280.4](#), subsection 3, for the budget year multiplied by
20 the state cost per pupil for the budget year. If a student
21 is an eligible pupil under [section 261E.6](#), the charter school
22 shall pay the tuition reimbursement amount to an eligible
23 postsecondary institution as provided in [section 261E.7](#).

24 Sec. 63. Section 257.35, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
25 following new subsection:

26 NEW SUBSECTION. 21A. The director of the department of
27 management may deduct the following from the state aid due to
28 each school district pursuant to this chapter and shall pay
29 the amounts to the respective area education agencies on a
30 monthly basis from September 15 through June 15 during each
31 school year for purposes of providing services to students
32 enrolled in charter schools established pursuant to chapter
33 256E, subchapter I, within the boundaries of the area education
34 agency:

35 a. The amount calculated for media services for the school

1 district that is attributable to the number of students
2 enrolled in charter schools established pursuant to chapter
3 256E, subchapter I, within the school district who are provided
4 with media services by an area education agency.

5 *b.* The amount calculated for educational services for the
6 school district that is attributable to the number of students
7 enrolled in charter schools established pursuant to chapter
8 256E, subchapter I, within the school district who are provided
9 with educational services by an area education agency.

10 Sec. 64. Section 273.2, subsection 3, paragraph a, Code
11 2026, is amended to read as follows:

12 *a.* The area education agency shall furnish educational
13 services and programs as provided in [section 273.1](#), this
14 section, [sections 273.3 through 273.8](#), and [chapter 256B](#) to
15 pupils enrolled in public or nonpublic schools which are on
16 the list of accredited schools pursuant to [section 256.11](#), and
17 to pupils enrolled in charter schools established pursuant
18 to chapter 256E, subchapter I, which request to receive such
19 services. The programs and services provided shall be at least
20 commensurate with programs and services existing on July 1,
21 1974. The programs and services provided to pupils enrolled
22 in nonpublic schools shall be comparable to programs and
23 services provided to pupils enrolled in public schools within
24 constitutional guidelines.

25 Sec. 65. Section 273.2, subsection 4, Code 2026, is amended
26 to read as follows:

27 4. The area education agency shall provide for special
28 education services and media services for school districts
29 and shall encourage and assist school districts to establish
30 programs for gifted and talented children. The area education
31 agency shall provide for media services for charter schools
32 established pursuant to chapter 256E, subchapter I. The area
33 education agency shall assist in facilitating interlibrary
34 loans of materials between school districts and other
35 libraries.

1 interscholastic athletic contest or competition or any
2 extracurricular activity that is being provided by that school
3 district, nonpublic school, or charter school.

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

16 (1) The extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or
17 competition or extracurricular activity has not been provided
18 by the nonpublic school or charter school, or by the student's
19 school district of residence, during the two immediately
20 preceding school years.

21 (2) The nonpublic school or charter school has not
22 entered into an agreement under [section 280.13A](#) with another
23 school district, nonpublic school, or charter school that
24 provides for the eligibility of students enrolled in the
25 nonpublic school or charter school to participate in the
26 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition
27 or extracurricular activity that is being provided by that
28 school district, nonpublic school, or charter school.

29 *c.* If the board of directors of a school district has
30 established a fee for the cost of a student's participation
31 in an extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or
32 competition or extracurricular activity, a student who is
33 enrolled in a nonpublic school or a charter school established
34 pursuant to chapter 256E, subchapter I, and is participating
35 ~~in a contest or competition~~ an extracurricular interscholastic

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

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

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

21 DIVISION IV

22 DRIVER EDUCATION

23 Sec. 68. Section 321.178, subsection 1, paragraph c, Code
24 2026, is amended to read as follows:

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

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

1 district. The charter school shall be responsible for the
2 payment of all of the school district's costs associated with
3 providing the approved course in driver education to such
4 students.

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

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

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

33 DIVISION V

34 IOWA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

35 Sec. 69. Section 97B.1A, subsection 8, paragraph a, Code

1 2026, is amended by adding the following new subparagraph:

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

6 Sec. 70. Section 97B.1A, subsection 9, paragraph a, Code
7 2026, is amended to read as follows:

8 a. *“Employer”* means the state of Iowa, the counties,
9 municipalities, agencies, public school districts, charter
10 schools established pursuant to chapter 256E, subchapter
11 I, that satisfy all applicable requirements under federal
12 law for participation in the retirement system, all
13 political subdivisions, and all of their departments and
14 instrumentalities, including area agencies on aging, other than
15 those employing persons as specified in [subsection 8](#), paragraph
16 *“b”*, subparagraph (7), and joint planning commissions created
17 under [chapter 28E](#) or [28I](#).

18 Sec. 71. Section 256E.11, subsection 2, Code 2026, is
19 amended to read as follows:

20 2. In the event of a charter school closure, the assets of
21 the charter school shall be used first to satisfy outstanding
22 payroll obligations for employees of the school and any
23 liabilities due and owing to the Iowa public employees’
24 retirement system, then to creditors of the school, then to the
25 public school district in which the charter school operated,
26 if applicable, and then to the state general fund. If the
27 assets of the charter school are insufficient to pay all
28 obligations of the charter school, the prioritization of the
29 distribution of assets shall be consistent with [this subsection](#)
30 and otherwise determined by the district court.

31 DIVISION VI

32 CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM

33 Sec. 72. NEW SECTION. 16.163 Charter school facilities
34 revolving loan program fund — credit enhancement agreements.

35 1. a. A charter school facilities revolving loan program

1 fund is created within the authority to assist charter
2 schools established pursuant to chapter 256E, subchapter I,
3 in acquiring suitable school facilities. The moneys in the
4 charter school facilities revolving loan program fund are
5 appropriated to the authority for use in the development and
6 operation of a charter school facilities revolving loan program
7 to assist charter schools in purchasing, acquiring, developing,
8 reconstructing, remodeling, or replacing school buildings.

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

25 *c.* The authority shall annually allocate moneys available in
26 the charter school facilities revolving loan program fund to
27 assist charter schools in purchasing, acquiring, developing,
28 reconstructing, remodeling, or replacing school buildings.

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

1 Sec. 73. CODE EDITOR DIRECTIVE. The Code editor shall
2 designate section 16.163, as enacted in this division of
3 this Act, as a new section within chapter 16, subchapter X,
4 part 6, and may redesignate the preexisting part and correct
5 internal references as necessary, including references to part
6 headnotes.

7 DIVISION VII

8 EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

9 Sec. 74. Section 257.11B, subsections 3 and 4, Code 2026,
10 are amended to read as follows:

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

16 (2) On or after October 15, but on or before November 15,
17 preceding the semester for which the education savings account
18 payment is requested, the parent or guardian of an eligible
19 pupil may request an education savings account payment by
20 submitting an application to the department of education.

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

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

35 4. Each education savings account payment shall be equal to

1 the regular program state cost per pupil for the same school
2 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 if
5 the pupil's parent or guardian submitted an application under
6 subsection 3, paragraph "a", subparagraph (2).

7 DIVISION VIII

8 INDEPENDENT ACCREDITATION

9 Sec. 75. Section 256.11, subsection 16, Code 2026, is
10 amended by adding the following new paragraphs:

11 NEW PARAGRAPH. d. (1) If an approved independent
12 accrediting agency deaccredits a nonpublic school, the
13 nonpublic school shall not seek accreditation from an
14 independent accrediting agency that is on the approved list
15 pursuant to paragraph "a" for a period of three years beginning
16 on the date the approved independent accrediting agency
17 deaccredited the nonpublic school.

18 (2) If an approved independent accrediting agency
19 deaccredits a nonpublic school, the nonpublic school may
20 immediately seek accreditation under subsection 10.

21 NEW PARAGRAPH. e. (1) This subsection shall not be
22 construed to authorize the state or any political subdivision
23 of the state to exercise authority over any nonpublic school or
24 construed to require a nonpublic school to modify its academic
25 standards for admission or educational program.

26 (2) This section shall not be construed to expand the
27 authority of the state or any political subdivision of the
28 state to impose regulations upon any nonpublic school that are
29 not necessary to implement this section.

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

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

1 DIVISION IX
2 SCHEDULE OF TEACHER TRAININGS AND LICENSURE RENEWAL
3 REQUIREMENTS

4 Sec. 76. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — SCHEDULE OF REQUIRED
5 TEACHER TRAINING AND LICENSURE RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS.

6 1. The department of education shall convene and provide
7 administrative support to a task force that shall study the
8 training programs in which teachers in this state are required
9 to participate pursuant to state law and the requirements
10 associated with renewing a teaching license.

11 2. Any expense incurred by a member of the task force
12 shall be the responsibility of the individual member or the
13 respective entity represented by the member.

14 3. The task force shall submit its findings and
15 recommendations to the general assembly on or before
16 December 31, 2026. The recommendations must include specific
17 recommendations related to how to change current law to create
18 a more manageable training program schedule and licensure
19 renewal requirement schedule for teachers.

20 DIVISION X
21 STATEWIDE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

22 Sec. 77. Section 256.163, subsection 1, paragraph c, Code
23 2026, is amended to read as follows:

24 c. Preschool programs at school districts approved to
25 participate in the preschool program, or at community-based
26 providers approved to directly participate in the preschool
27 program, under [chapter 256C](#).

28 Sec. 78. Section 256C.1, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
29 to read as follows:

30 1. "*Approved local program*" means a school district's
31 program or community-based provider's program for four-year-old
32 children approved by the department of education to provide
33 ~~high-quality~~ high-quality preschool instruction.

34 Sec. 79. Section 256C.1, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
35 following new subsection:

1 NEW SUBSECTION. 1A. *“Community-based provider approved*
2 *to directly participate in the preschool program”* means a
3 community-based provider that meets the community-based
4 provider requirements under section 256C.3 and has been
5 approved by the department to directly participate in the
6 preschool program. *“Community-based provider approved to*
7 *directly participate in the preschool program”* does not mean a
8 community-based provider that partners with a school district’s
9 approved local program.

10 Sec. 80. Section 256C.3, subsection 1, paragraph b, Code
11 2026, is amended to read as follows:

12 *b.* If space and funding are available, including funding
13 from another school district account or fund from which
14 preschool program expenditures are authorized by law, a school
15 district approved to participate in the preschool program or
16 community-based provider approved to directly participate in
17 the preschool program may enroll and pay the cost of attendance
18 for a younger or older child in the preschool program; however,
19 the child shall not be counted for state funding purposes.

20 Sec. 81. Section 256C.3, subsection 2, paragraph a,
21 subparagraph (1), Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

22 (1) The individual is either employed by or under contract
23 with the school district, or with the community-based provider
24 approved to directly participate in the preschool program, that
25 is implementing the program.

26 Sec. 82. Section 256C.3, subsection 3, unnumbered paragraph
27 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

28 The state board shall adopt rules to further define the
29 following preschool program requirements which shall be used
30 to determine whether or not a local program implemented by a
31 school district approved to implement the preschool program or
32 a community-based provider directly approved to implement the
33 preschool program qualifies as an approved local program:

34 Sec. 83. Section 256C.3, subsection 3, paragraph h, Code
35 2026, is amended to read as follows:

1 *h.* Provision for ensuring that children receiving care from
2 other child care arrangements can participate in the preschool
3 program with minimal disruption due to transportation and
4 movement from one site to another. The children participating
5 in the preschool program may be transported by the school
6 district or community-based provider to activities associated
7 with the program along with other children.

8 Sec. 84. Section 256C.3, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
9 following new subsection:

10 NEW SUBSECTION. 4A. *Community-based provider*
11 *requirements.* The state board shall adopt rules to further
12 define the following requirements of community-based providers
13 approved to directly participate in the preschool program in
14 implementing the preschool program:

15 *a.* Methods of demonstrating readiness to implement
16 high-quality instruction in the local program shall be
17 identified.

18 *b.* A community-based provider shall participate in data
19 collection and performance measurement processes and reporting
20 as defined by rule.

21 *c.* Professional development for community-based provider
22 preschool teachers shall be addressed in the community-based
23 provider's professional development plan.

24 Sec. 85. Section 256C.3, subsection 5, paragraphs a, b, and
25 d, Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

26 *a.* The department shall implement an application and
27 selection process for school district participation and
28 community-based provider participation in the preschool program
29 that includes but is not limited to the enrollment requirements
30 provided under [section 256C.4](#).

31 *b.* The department shall track the progress of
32 students served by a school district preschool program or
33 community-based provider preschool program and the students'
34 performance in elementary and secondary education.

35 *d.* The state board, in collaboration with the department,

1 shall ensure that the administrative rules adopted to support
2 the preschool program emphasize that children's access to
3 the program is voluntary, that the preschool foundation aid
4 provided to a school district or a community-based provider is
5 provided based upon the enrollment of eligible students in the
6 school district's or community-based provider's local program
7 regardless of whether an eligible student is a resident of the
8 school district, and that agreements entered into by a school
9 district for the provision of programming in settings other
10 than the school district's facilities are between the school
11 district and the private provider.

12 Sec. 86. Section 256C.4, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended
13 to read as follows:

14 1. ~~General~~ State funding for school district approved to
15 participate in the preschool program.

16 a. State funding provided under the preschool program to
17 school districts shall be based upon the enrollment of eligible
18 students in the preschool programming provided by a school
19 district approved to participate in the preschool program.

20 b. A school district approved to participate in the
21 preschool program may authorize expenditures for the district's
22 preschool programming from any of the revenue sources available
23 to the district from the sources listed in [chapter 298A](#),
24 provided the expenditures are within the uses permitted for the
25 revenue source. In addition, the use of the revenue source
26 for preschool or prekindergarten programming must have been
27 approved prior to any expenditure from the revenue source for
28 the district's approved local program.

29 c. Funding provided under the preschool program is intended
30 to supplement, not supplant, existing public funding for
31 preschool programming.

32 d. Preschool foundation aid funding shall not be commingled
33 with the other state aid payments made under [section 257.16](#)
34 to a school district and shall be accounted for by the local
35 school district separately from the other state aid payments.

1 Preschool foundation aid payments made to school districts are
2 miscellaneous income for purposes of [chapter 257](#). A school
3 district shall maintain a separate listing within its budget
4 for preschool foundation aid payments received and expenditures
5 made. A school district shall certify to the department of
6 education that preschool foundation aid funding received by
7 the school district was used to supplement, not supplant,
8 moneys otherwise received and used by the school district for
9 preschool programming.

10 e. Preschool foundation aid funding shall not be used
11 for the costs of constructing a facility in connection
12 with an approved local program. Preschool foundation aid
13 funding may be used by approved local programs and ~~community~~
14 ~~providers~~ community-based providers that partner with a
15 school district's local program for any purpose determined
16 by the board of directors of the school district to meet
17 standards for high-quality preschool instruction and for
18 purposes that directly or indirectly benefit students
19 enrolled in the approved local program, including but not
20 limited to professional development for preschool teachers,
21 instructional equipment and supplies, material and equipment
22 designed to develop pupils' large and small motor skills,
23 translation services, playground equipment and repair costs,
24 food and beverages used by children in the approved local
25 program, safety equipment, facility rental fees, and for
26 other direct costs that enhance the approved local program,
27 including by contracting with community partners for any
28 such services. Preschool foundation aid funding may be used
29 by approved local programs for the costs of transportation
30 involving children participating in the preschool program.
31 The costs of transporting other children associated with the
32 preschool program or transported as provided in section 256C.3,
33 subsection 3, paragraph "h", may be prorated by the school
34 district. Preschool foundation aid funding received by an
35 approved local program that remains unexpended and unobligated

1 at the end of a fiscal year beginning on or after July 1, 2017,
2 shall be used to build the approved local program's preschool
3 program capacity in the next succeeding fiscal year excluding
4 that portion of such unexpended and unobligated funding that
5 the school district authorizes for transfer for deposit in the
6 school district's flexibility account established under section
7 298A.2, subsection 2, if the statutory requirements for the use
8 of such funding are met. For purposes of determining whether a
9 school district has authority to transfer preschool foundation
10 aid funding for deposit in the school district's flexibility
11 account established under [section 298A.2, subsection 2](#), the
12 school district must have provided preschool programming
13 during the fiscal year for which funding remains unexpended
14 and unobligated to all eligible students for whom a timely
15 application for enrollment was submitted.

16 *f.* The receipt of funding by a school district for the
17 purposes of [this chapter](#), the need for additional funding
18 for the purposes of [this chapter](#), or the enrollment count of
19 eligible students under [this chapter](#) shall not be considered
20 to be unusual circumstances, create an unusual need for
21 additional funds, or qualify under any other circumstances that
22 may be used by the school budget review committee to grant
23 supplemental aid to or establish a modified supplemental amount
24 for a school district under [section 257.31](#).

25 *g.* For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015, and each
26 succeeding fiscal year, of the amount of preschool foundation
27 aid received by a school district for a fiscal year in
28 accordance with [section 257.16](#), not more than five percent may
29 be used by the school district for administering the district's
30 approved local program. Outreach activities and rent for
31 facilities not owned by the school district are permissive uses
32 of the administrative funds.

33 *h.* For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015, and each
34 succeeding fiscal year, of the amount of preschool foundation
35 aid received by a school district for a fiscal year in

1 accordance with [section 257.16](#), not less than ninety-five
2 percent of the per pupil amount shall be passed through to
3 a community-based provider for each pupil enrolled in the
4 district's approved local program. For the fiscal year
5 beginning July 1, 2015, and each succeeding fiscal year, not
6 more than ten percent of the amount of preschool foundation aid
7 passed through to a community-based provider may be used by the
8 community-based provider for administrative costs. The costs
9 of outreach activities and rent for facilities not owned by
10 the school district are permissive administrative costs. The
11 costs of transportation involving children participating in the
12 preschool program and other children may be prorated.

13 Sec. 87. Section 256C.4, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
14 following new subsection:

15 NEW SUBSECTION. 1A. *State preschool funding for*
16 *community-based providers approved to directly participate in the*
17 *preschool program.*

18 *a.* State preschool funding shall not be used for the costs
19 of constructing a facility in connection with an approved
20 local program. Preschool foundation aid funding may be used
21 by community-based providers for any purpose determined by the
22 community-based provider to meet standards for high-quality
23 preschool instruction and for purposes that directly or
24 indirectly benefit students enrolled in the approved local
25 program, including but not limited to professional development
26 for preschool teachers, instructional equipment and supplies,
27 material and equipment designed to develop pupils' large and
28 small motor skills, translation services, playground equipment
29 and repair costs, food and beverages used by children in the
30 approved local program, safety equipment, facility rental fees,
31 and for other direct costs that enhance the approved local
32 program, including by contracting with other community partners
33 for any such services. State preschool funding may be used
34 by approved local programs for the costs of transportation
35 involving children participating in the preschool program.

1 Preschool foundation aid funding received by a community-based
2 provider approved to directly participate in the preschool
3 program that remains unexpended and unobligated at the end
4 of a fiscal year shall be used to build the community-based
5 provider's capacity in the next succeeding fiscal year.

6 *b.* For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and each
7 succeeding fiscal year, of the amount of state preschool
8 funding received by a community-based provider approved
9 to directly participate in the preschool program for a
10 fiscal year, not more than five percent may be used by the
11 community-based provider for administering the approved local
12 program. Outreach activities and rent for facilities not owned
13 by the community-based provider are permissive uses of the
14 administrative funds.

15 Sec. 88. Section 256C.4, subsection 2, paragraph a, Code
16 2026, is amended to read as follows:

17 *a.* To be included as an eligible student in the enrollment
18 count of the preschool programming provided by a school
19 district approved to participate in the preschool program or
20 a community-based provider approved to directly participate
21 in the preschool program, a child must be four years of age
22 by September 15 in the base year and attending the school
23 district's or community-based provider's approved local
24 program.

25 Sec. 89. Section 256C.5, subsection 1, paragraphs c and d,
26 Code 2026, are amended to read as follows:

27 *c.* "*Preschool budget enrollment*" means the figure that is
28 equal to fifty percent of the actual enrollment of eligible
29 students in the preschool programming provided by a school
30 district approved to participate in the preschool program or a
31 community-based provider approved to directly participate in
32 the preschool program on October 1 of the base year, or the
33 first Monday in October if October 1 falls on a Saturday or
34 Sunday.

35 *d.* "*Preschool foundation aid*" means the product of the

1 regular program state cost per pupil for the budget year
2 multiplied by the school district's preschool budget enrollment
3 or the community-based provider's preschool budget enrollment.

4 Sec. 90. Section 256C.5, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
5 following new subsection:

6 NEW SUBSECTION. 2A. *Preschool foundation aid community-based*
7 *provider amount.* For the initial school year for which a
8 community-based provider approved to directly participate in
9 the preschool program receives that approval and implements
10 the preschool program, the preschool foundation aid payable
11 to the community-based provider is the product of the regular
12 program state cost per pupil for the school year multiplied
13 by fifty percent of the community-based provider's eligible
14 student enrollment on the date in the school year determined
15 by rule. For budget years subsequent to the initial year
16 for which a community-based provider approved to directly
17 participate in the preschool program receives that initial
18 approval and implements the preschool program, the preschool
19 foundation aid is the same as calculated pursuant to subsection
20 1. The funding for the preschool foundation aid payable to the
21 community-based provider shall be paid from the appropriation
22 made in section 257.16. Continuation of a community-based
23 provider's participation in the preschool program for a second
24 or subsequent budget year is subject to the approval of the
25 department based upon the community-based provider's compliance
26 with accountability provisions and the department's on-site
27 review of the community-based provider's implementation of the
28 preschool program.

29 Sec. 91. Section 256C.5, subsection 3, Code 2026, is amended
30 to read as follows:

31 3. *Aid payments.*

32 a. Preschool foundation aid shall be paid as part of the
33 state aid payments made to school districts in accordance with
34 section 257.16.

35 b. Preschool foundation aid paid directly to community-based

1 providers shall be paid to the community-based provider in
2 monthly installments beginning on September 15 of a budget year
3 and ending on or about June 15 of the budget year as determined
4 by the department of management, taking into consideration the
5 relative budget and cash position of the state resources.

6 Sec. 92. EMERGENCY RULES. The state board of education may
7 adopt emergency rules under section 17A.4, subsection 3, and
8 section 17A.5, subsection 2, paragraph "b", to implement the
9 provisions of this division of this Act and the rules shall
10 be effective immediately upon filing unless a later date is
11 specified in the rules. Any rules adopted in accordance with
12 this section shall also be published as a notice of intended
13 action as provided in section 17A.4.

14 DIVISION XI

15 SCHOOL TUITION ORGANIZATIONS — PRESCHOOL STARTUP COSTS

16 Sec. 93. SCHOOL TUITION ORGANIZATIONS — PRESCHOOL STARTUP
17 COSTS.

18 1. As used in this section:

19 a. "Preschool" means a nonpublic provider of preschool
20 services that commenced operations in 2025; is located in a
21 city with a population of greater than thirty-nine thousand
22 but less than forty thousand according to the 2020 federal
23 decennial census; and is located in a county with a population
24 of greater than one hundred fifty-five thousand but less than
25 one hundred eighty thousand, according to the 2020 federal
26 decennial census.

27 b. "School tuition organization" means the same as defined
28 in section 422.11S, subsection 6.

29 2. a. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary,
30 a school tuition organization that represents schools located
31 in a county with a population of greater than one hundred
32 fifty-five thousand but less than one hundred eighty thousand,
33 according to the 2020 federal decennial census, may provide
34 funding to a preschool in an amount up to the costs the
35 preschool incurred in its first year of operation related to

1 the provision of preschool services.

2 b. Payments made pursuant to paragraph "a" shall not count
3 toward the allocation of annual revenue standards established
4 in section 422.11S, subsection 6, paragraph "c", subparagraph
5 (1).

6 DIVISION XII

7 MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

8 Sec. 94. Section 261E.8, subsection 2, paragraph a, Code
9 2026, is amended to read as follows:

10 a. (1) Students from accredited nonpublic schools, and
11 students receiving competent private instruction or independent
12 private instruction under chapter 299A, and students from
13 charter schools established pursuant to chapter 256E may access
14 the program through the school district in which the accredited
15 nonpublic school, ~~or private institution, or charter school~~ is
16 located.

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

21 Sec. 95. Section 282.18, subsection 2, paragraph b, Code
22 2026, is amended to read as follows:

23 b. (1) The board of the receiving district shall enroll the
24 pupil in a school in the receiving district for the following
25 school year unless the receiving district has insufficient
26 classroom space for the pupil or unless the receiving district
27 has prohibited the pupil from enrolling pursuant to subsection
28 14. The board of directors of a receiving district may adopt
29 a policy granting the superintendent of the school district
30 authority to approve open enrollment applications. If the
31 request is granted, the board shall transmit a copy of the form
32 to the parent or guardian and the school district of residence
33 within five days after board action, but not later than June
34 1 of the preceding school year. The parent or guardian may
35 withdraw the request at any time prior to the start of the

1 school year.

2 (2) A denial of a request by the board of a receiving
3 district is not subject to appeal. The board of a receiving
4 district, or the superintendent of the receiving district
5 if the board of the receiving district has adopted a policy
6 granting the superintendent the authority to approve open
7 enrollment applications, shall document the reason for the
8 denial of a request and submit information related to the
9 denial to the department of education in a manner prescribed
10 by the department.

11 DIVISION XIII

12 IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE

13 Sec. 96. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act, being deemed of
14 immediate importance, takes effect upon enactment.

15 EXPLANATION

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

18 This bill relates to education, including by modifying
19 provisions related to charter school approval, contracts,
20 funding, and operations, services provided to charter
21 schools by area education agencies, charter school student
22 participation in extracurricular activities provided by
23 public schools, the Iowa public employees' retirement system,
24 education savings accounts, independent accreditation, teacher
25 training and licensure, the statewide voluntary preschool
26 program, the district-to-community college sharing or
27 concurrent enrollment program, open enrollment, school tuition
28 organizations, and innovation zone schools.

29 DIVISION I — CHARTER SCHOOLS. Current Code chapter 256F
30 authorizes school districts to join together to establish
31 an innovation zone school, which is a public school,
32 administered by a principal, that is designed to encourage
33 diverse approaches to learning and education and that operates
34 pursuant to the terms of a contract entered into between the
35 boards of directors of the school districts establishing the

1 innovation zone school and the state board of education. This
2 division modifies Code chapter 256F to remove all references to
3 innovation zone schools, which eliminates the authorization for
4 school districts to join together to establish an innovation
5 zone school.

6 The division transfers the Code sections within Code chapter
7 256F (charter schools and innovation zone schools) to a new
8 subchapter II within Code chapter 256E (charter schools —
9 school board and founding group models). The division also
10 organizes the current Code sections within Code chapter 256E
11 into a new subchapter I.

12 Current law provides that the state board of education is
13 the sole authorizer of charter schools under Code section 256E,
14 subchapter I. The division provides that the university of
15 northern Iowa may also authorize charter schools under Code
16 section 256E, subchapter I.

17 Current law provides that the term of a charter school
18 contract entered into between the board of directors of a
19 school district that has established a charter school under
20 Code chapter 256F and the state board of education shall be
21 four years. The division provides that the term of such a
22 contract shall be five years. The division also requires such
23 a contract to incorporate a performance framework in the same
24 manner as a Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school's
25 contract is required to do so under Code section 256E.9
26 (performance framework). In addition, the division provides
27 that an approved charter school opens on the first day of the
28 school year that is two school years immediately subsequent
29 to the school year in which the charter school contract
30 is executed; provided, however, that the approved charter
31 school may open on the first day of the school year that is
32 immediately subsequent to the school year in which the charter
33 school contract is executed if the approved charter school
34 demonstrates adequate preparation to the state board. If the
35 charter school requires an opening delay of more than two

1 school years immediately subsequent to the school year in which
2 the charter school contract is executed, the charter school may
3 request an extension from the state board. These provisions
4 apply to charter school contracts under Code chapter 256F that
5 are renewed on or after the effective date of the division.

6 The division provides that the governing board of a charter
7 school that is approved under Code section 256E.5 (founding
8 group-state board model) is a local education agency for the
9 purpose of receiving federal funds for all attendance centers
10 that are under the jurisdiction of the governing board.

11 Code section 256.163 establishes requirements for teacher
12 licensure beyond a temporary initial license or an initial
13 license. Pursuant to current Code section 256.163, the
14 requirements for teacher licensure beyond a temporary initial
15 license or an initial license include successful completion
16 of a beginning teacher mentoring and induction program; two
17 years of successful teaching experience in a school district
18 with approved career paths, leadership roles, and compensation
19 framework; or evidence of not less than three years of
20 successful teaching experience at certain specified schools or
21 programs. The division modifies Code section 256.163 to add
22 charter schools, established pursuant to Code chapter 256E,
23 subchapter I, to this list of schools or programs, allowing a
24 teacher to attain licensure beyond a temporary initial license
25 or an initial license if the teacher completes not less than
26 three years of successful teaching experience at such a charter
27 school.

28 Current law provides that one of the purposes of charter
29 schools established under Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, is
30 to accelerate student learning to prevent learning loss during
31 the COVID-19 pandemic and other significant disruptions to
32 student learning. The division modifies this provision to
33 provide that one of the purposes of such charter schools is to
34 accelerate student learning to prevent learning loss during
35 significant disruptions to student learning.

1 The division makes conforming changes.

2 DIVISION II — FUNDING AND AREA EDUCATION AGENCY SERVICES.

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

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

1 DIVISION III — EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES. This division
2 requires the board of directors of a school district to allow a
3 student who resides within the district, and who is enrolled
4 in a Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school, to
5 participate in any extracurricular interscholastic athletic
6 contest or competition, and any extracurricular activity,
7 including theater, show choir, and band, that is provided by
8 the school district pursuant to the terms of an agreement
9 between the board of directors of the school district and the
10 governing board of the charter school if the extracurricular
11 interscholastic athletic contest or competition or
12 extracurricular activity has not been provided by the charter
13 school during the two immediately preceding school years and
14 if the charter school has not entered into an agreement under
15 Code section 280.13A (sharing interscholastic activities)
16 with another school district, nonpublic school, or charter
17 school that provides for the eligibility of students enrolled
18 in the charter school to participate in the extracurricular
19 interscholastic athletic contest or competition or any
20 extracurricular activity that is being provided by that school.

21 The division requires the board of directors of a school
22 district to allow a student who resides within a contiguous
23 school district, and who is enrolled in a Code chapter
24 256E, subchapter I, charter school, to participate in any
25 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition
26 and any extracurricular activity that is provided by the school
27 district pursuant to the terms of an agreement between the
28 board of directors of the school district and the governing
29 board of the charter school that provides for the eligibility
30 of the student if the extracurricular interscholastic athletic
31 contest or competition or extracurricular activity has not been
32 provided by the charter school, or by the student's school
33 district of residence, during the two immediately preceding
34 school years, and if the charter school has not entered into
35 an agreement under Code section 280.13A with another school

1 district, nonpublic school, or charter school that provides
2 for the eligibility of students enrolled in the charter school
3 to participate in the extracurricular interscholastic athletic
4 contest or competition or extracurricular activity that is
5 being provided by that school.

6 The division provides that if the board of directors of
7 a school district has established a fee for the cost of a
8 student's participation in an extracurricular interscholastic
9 athletic contest or competition or extracurricular activity,
10 a student who is enrolled in a Code chapter 256E, subchapter
11 I, charter school and is participating in an extracurricular
12 interscholastic athletic contest or competition or
13 extracurricular activity at a public school pursuant to the
14 division's provisions, or the student's parent or guardian,
15 shall be responsible for the payment of such fee.

16 The division requires a student who is enrolled in a Code
17 chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school and is participating
18 in an extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or
19 competition or extracurricular activity at a public school
20 pursuant to the division's provisions to participate under the
21 same conditions as a student who is enrolled in the school
22 district, including meeting the school district's student code
23 of conduct requirements.

24 The division provides that a student who participates in an
25 extracurricular interscholastic athletic contest or competition
26 or extracurricular activity pursuant to the division's
27 provisions is deemed to satisfy the residence requirements for
28 purposes of Code section 256.46 (rules for participation in
29 extracurricular activities by certain children).

30 DIVISION IV — DRIVER EDUCATION. Current law requires every
31 public school district in Iowa to offer or make available to
32 all students residing in the school district, including Iowa
33 students attending a nonpublic school or receiving competent
34 private instruction or independent private instruction, in
35 the district, an approved course in driver education. This

1 division requires Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter
2 schools to offer or make available such courses to students
3 attending the charter school. In addition, the division
4 requires every public school district in Iowa to offer or make
5 available to all Iowa students residing in the school district
6 who attend a Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school
7 an approved course in driver education pursuant to policies
8 established by the school district. The charter school is
9 responsible for the payment of all of the school district's
10 costs associated with providing the approved course in driver
11 education to such students.

12 DIVISION V — IOWA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM.

13 This division provides that persons employed by Code chapter
14 256E, subchapter I, charter schools that satisfy all applicable
15 requirements under federal law for participation in the
16 retirement system are employees for purposes of the provisions
17 of the Iowa public employees' retirement system (IPERS).
18 Additionally, the division provides that Code chapter 256E,
19 subchapter I, charter schools that satisfy all applicable
20 requirements under federal law for participation in the
21 retirement system are employers for purposes of the provisions
22 of IPERS.

23 The division provides that in the event of a Code chapter
24 256E, subchapter I, charter school closure, the assets of the
25 charter school shall be, after payroll obligations but prior
26 to paying creditors, used to satisfy any liabilities due and
27 owing to IPERS.

28 DIVISION VI — CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES REVOLVING LOAN
29 PROGRAM. This division establishes a charter school facilities
30 revolving loan program fund within the Iowa finance authority
31 (IFA) to assist Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter
32 schools in acquiring suitable school facilities. The moneys
33 in the funds are appropriated to the IFA for use in the
34 development and operation of a charter school facilities
35 revolving loan program to assist charter schools in purchasing,

1 acquiring, developing, reconstructing, remodeling, or replacing
2 school buildings. The division also allows the IFA to make or
3 enter into a liquidity or credit enhancement agreement with
4 a Code chapter 256E, subchapter I, charter school to assist
5 the charter school in purchasing, acquiring, developing,
6 reconstructing, remodeling, or replacing school buildings.

7 DIVISION VII — EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS. The education
8 savings account program is a program that provides funds to
9 pupils who attend nonpublic schools to pay for qualified
10 educational expenses, including but not limited to tuition,
11 tutoring or cognitive skill training fees, educational therapy
12 costs, software expenses, and expenses related to course
13 materials. Under current law, the parent or guardian of a
14 pupil is required to submit an application for payment under
15 the education savings account program to the department of
16 education on or after January 1, but on or before June 30,
17 preceding the school year for which the education savings
18 account payment is requested. This division allows the parent
19 or guardian of a pupil to submit such an application on or
20 after October 15, but on or before November 15, preceding the
21 semester for which the education savings account payment is
22 requested. Additionally, under current law, each education
23 savings account payment is equal to the regular program state
24 cost per pupil for the same school budget year. The division
25 provides that, if the parent or guardian of a pupil submitted
26 such an application on or after December 1, but on or before
27 December 20, preceding the semester for which the education
28 savings account payment is requested, the education savings
29 account payment for such pupil is equal to 50 percent of the
30 regular program state cost per pupil for the same school budget
31 year.

32 Current law requires the department of education or a
33 third-party entity to notify the parent or guardian of each
34 pupil approved for the following school year or semester of the
35 amount of the education savings account payment for the pupil

1 within 30 days after the submission of an application. The
2 division strikes this 30-day deadline.

3 The division makes conforming changes.

4 DIVISION VIII — INDEPENDENT ACCREDITATION. This division
5 provides that if an approved independent accrediting agency
6 deaccredits a nonpublic school, the nonpublic school is
7 prohibited from seeking accrediting from an independent
8 accrediting agency for a period of three years. The division
9 authorizes such a nonpublic school to immediately seek
10 accreditation from the department of education.

11 Current law authorizes a nonpublic school to be accredited
12 by an approved independent accrediting agency instead of by the
13 state board of education if the nonpublic school is accredited
14 by an independent accrediting agency that is on a list of
15 approved independent accrediting agencies maintained by the
16 state board of education. The division provides that these
17 provisions shall not be construed to authorize the state or any
18 political subdivision of the state to exercise authority over
19 any nonpublic school or construed to require a nonpublic school
20 to modify its academic standards for admission or educational
21 program. The division also provides that these provisions
22 shall not be construed to expand the authority of the state or
23 any political subdivision of the state to impose regulations
24 upon any nonpublic school that are not necessary to implement
25 the state's educational standards. The division provides that
26 rules adopted by the state board of education to implement
27 these provisions that impose an undue burden on a nonpublic
28 school are invalid. The division requires that a nonpublic
29 school shall be given the maximum freedom possible to provide
30 for the educational needs of the school's students, consistent
31 with state and federal law.

32 DIVISION IX — SCHEDULE OF TEACHER TRAININGS AND LICENSURE
33 RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS. This division requires the department
34 of education to convene a task force to study the training
35 programs in which teachers in this state are required to

1 participate pursuant to state law and the requirements
2 associated with renewing a teaching license. The task force
3 is required to submit its findings and recommendations to
4 the general assembly on or before December 31, 2026. The
5 recommendations must include specific recommendations related
6 to how to change current law to create a more manageable
7 training program schedule and licensure renewal requirement
8 schedule for teachers.

9 DIVISION X — STATEWIDE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM. Under
10 current law, only school districts that meet certain
11 requirements established by the state board of education
12 are able to participate in the statewide preschool program
13 for four-year-old children established pursuant to Code
14 chapter 256C, although school districts may contract
15 with community-based providers. This division authorizes
16 community-based providers to directly participate in the
17 statewide preschool program for four-year-old children
18 established pursuant to Code chapter 256C by applying with the
19 department of education to implement a preschool program. The
20 state board is required to adopt rules to further define the
21 requirements of community-based providers implementing the
22 preschool program.

23 Under current law, state funding provided under the
24 statewide preschool program for four-year-old children is
25 provided to school districts based upon the number of eligible
26 students enrolled in the preschool programming provided by
27 the school district. Also under current law, if the school
28 district contracts with a community-based provider, state
29 funding passes from the school district to the community-based
30 provider. The division allows a community-based provider
31 approved to directly participate in the preschool program
32 to be paid preschool foundation aid directly in the same
33 manner as a school district. The division establishes the
34 amount of preschool foundation aid that is payable to such
35 a community-based provider for the initial school year for

1 which the community-based provider is approved to directly
2 participate in the preschool program, and for subsequent school
3 years.

4 The division makes conforming changes.

5 DIVISION XI — SCHOOL TUITION ORGANIZATIONS — PRESCHOOL
6 STARTUP COSTS. This division authorizes certain specified
7 school tuition organizations to provide funding to a preschool
8 in an amount up to the costs the preschool incurred in its
9 first year of operation related to the provision of preschool
10 services. The division defines "preschool" and "school tuition
11 organization".

12 DIVISION XII — MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS. This division
13 allows students from charter schools established pursuant
14 to Code chapter 256E, subchapters I and II, to access the
15 district-to-community college sharing or concurrent enrollment
16 program through the school district in which the charter school
17 is located. The division also allows students from online
18 charter schools to access the program through the students'
19 school district of residence.

20 Current law requires the board of directors of a receiving
21 district to enroll a pupil who has properly applied for open
22 enrollment for the following school year unless the receiving
23 district has insufficient classroom space or unless the
24 receiving district has prohibited the pupil from enrolling
25 because the pupil is truant. The division requires the
26 receiving district to document the reason for the denial of any
27 open enrollment request and submit information related to the
28 denial to the department of education.

29 DIVISION XIII — IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE. This division
30 provides that the entire bill takes effect upon enactment.