

CHAPTER 1181

EDUCATION — CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION, STATEWIDE LOWER DIVISION GENERAL EDUCATION FRAMEWORK, COMMON COURSE NUMBERING, AND STATEWIDE COREQUISITE MODEL

H.F. 2610

AN ACT relating to education programs and systems, including career and technical education expenditures and definitions, statewide lower division general education framework and common course numbering systems, and the implementation of a statewide corequisite model in Iowa community colleges.

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

Section 1. Section 256.9, subsection 70, paragraph a, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

a. Develop and make available on the department's internet site a list of industry-recognized credentials or certifications that are attainable by students enrolled in grades nine through twelve and that are aligned with career and technical education service content areas.

Sec. 2. Section 256.11, subsection 4, paragraph b, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

b. Computer science instruction incorporating the standards established under section 256.7, subsection 26, paragraph "a", subparagraph (4), shall be offered in at least one grade level commencing with the school year beginning July 1, 2023. Career exploration and development shall be designed so that students are appropriately prepared to create an individual career and academic plan pursuant to section 279.61, incorporate foundational career and technical education concepts aligned with the six career and technical education service content areas as defined in subsection 5, paragraph "h", incorporate relevant twenty-first century skills to facilitate career readiness, and introduce students to career opportunities within the local community and across this state.

Sec. 3. Section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph h, subparagraph (1), Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

(1) A minimum of three sequential units in at least four of the following six career and technical education service content areas. The department shall ensure that the six career and technical education content areas are aligned to a national framework representative of all career pathways:

- (a) ~~Agriculture, food, and natural resources.~~
- (b) ~~Arts, communications, and information~~ Information systems.
- (c) ~~Applied sciences, technology, engineering, and manufacturing, including transportation, distribution, logistics, architecture, and construction.~~
- (d) Health sciences.
- (e) ~~Human services, including law, public safety, corrections, security, government, public administration, and education and training.~~
- (f) ~~Business, finance, marketing, and management.~~

Sec. 4. Section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph h, subparagraph (3), Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

(3) The department of education shall permit school districts, in meeting the requirements of this section, to use career and technical education core courses in more than one career and technical education service content area and to use multi-occupational courses to complete a sequence in more than one career and technical education service content area.

Sec. 5. Section 256.125, subsection 5, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

5. “*Career and technical education service content area*” means any one of the service content areas specified in section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph “h”.

Sec. 6. Section 256.125, Code 2026, is amended by adding the following new subsections:

NEW SUBSECTION. 5A. “*High-demand occupation*” means an occupation in which state, local, or regional labor market forecasting shows occupational demand exceeds the overall state, local, or regional employer demand metrics, including in openings, numeric change, and growth.

NEW SUBSECTION. 5B. “*High-skill occupation*” means an occupation with education or training requirements, including the completion of an apprenticeship program, an industry-recognized credential, a short-term college credential such as a certificate or diploma, a noncredit college credential or certification, an associate degree or higher, on-the-job training, or on-the-job credential or certification.

NEW SUBSECTION. 5C. “*High-wage occupation*” means an occupation for which at least three of five hourly wage or annual salary measurements for that occupation exceed the hourly wage or annual salary for all occupations in the state or region.

Sec. 7. Section 256.129, subsection 2, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

2. Adopt rules prescribing standards for teachers in the six career and technical education service content areas specified in section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph “h”, in approved programs.

Sec. 8. Section 256.130, subsection 5, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

5. Make recommendations to the board of educational examiners relating to the enforcement of rules prescribing standards for teachers of career and technical education service content areas.

Sec. 9. Section 256.136, subsection 6, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

6. A regional career and technical education partnership may use funds received from state and federal sources on behalf of school districts and community colleges participating in the regional career and technical education planning partnership to convene, lead, and staff the regional career and technical education planning partnership; to offer regional career and technical education professional development opportunities; to coordinate and maintain a career guidance system pursuant to section 279.61; to purchase career and technical education equipment; and to purchase standard classroom consumable supplies other than consumable supplies that will be made into products to be sold or used personally by students, teachers, and other persons. The regional career and technical education partnership shall demonstrate that all expenditures are aligned with high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations as defined in section 256.125.

Sec. 10. **NEW SECTION. 256.139 Statewide lower division general education and common course numbering systems.**

1. To support student transfer and academic transparency, statewide lower division general education framework and common course numbering systems shall be implemented by the department of education, in coordination with the Iowa community colleges and in consultation with the state board of regents, for coursework offered by Iowa community colleges.

2. The common course numbering system must do all of the following:

a. Assign each course an alphanumeric prefix and number reflecting subject area and level.

b. Identify equivalent courses across institutions. Each course shall have a common description and common course outcomes developed by faculty from community colleges, with consultation from the board of regents.

c. Be used in all course catalogs, registration systems, and transcripts.

3. The department shall maintain a statewide course numbering directory and shall establish a faculty-led process for determining course equivalency.

4. For the school year beginning July 1, 2027, and each succeeding school year, the lower division general education framework shall apply to all community college general education coursework, inclusive of a common set of general education learning requirements, and shall be built upon the existing statewide transfer pathways used by public institutions of higher education in the state. This process shall preserve institutional autonomy over course delivery and content while ensuring transfer consistency.

5. The department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to administer this section.

Sec. 11. NEW SECTION. 256.140 Statewide corequisite model.

1. By the 2028-2029 school year, all Iowa community colleges shall replace traditional, prerequisite remedial coursework in mathematics and English with corequisite models.

2. The department of education, in consultation with Iowa community colleges, shall by rule establish a statewide framework for corequisite developmental education.

Sec. 12. NEW SECTION. 256.141 Statewide occupation definitions.

The department of education, in consultation with the Iowa workforce development board, shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to administer the process of selecting the occupations that qualify as a high-demand occupation, high-skill occupation, or high-wage occupation, each as defined in section 256.125, for purposes of use by government agencies and statewide programs.

Sec. 13. Section 257.11, subsection 3, paragraph c, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

Notwithstanding paragraph “b”, subparagraph (1), a school district that otherwise meets the requirements of this subsection may enter into a sharing agreement with a community college under which the community college may offer, or provide a community college-employed instructor to teach, one of the science or one of the mathematics units in accordance with section 256.11, subsection 5, and one or more units in only one of the six career and technical education service content areas in accordance with section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph “h”. Pupils enrolled in a unit in accordance with this paragraph shall be assigned additional weighting in accordance with this subsection if the number of pupils enrolled in such a unit exceeds five and the school district’s total enrollment does not exceed six hundred pupils. A school district that enters into a sharing agreement with a community college under this paragraph to provide a unit of science or mathematics in accordance with section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph “a”, “d”, or “e”, shall be deemed to have met the requirement that the school district offer and teach such a unit under the educational standards of section 256.11, subsection 5, paragraph “a”, “d”, or “e”. However, the provisions of this paragraph “c” relating to a sharing agreement for a unit of science or mathematics are applicable only if all of the following conditions are met:

Sec. 14. Section 260C.14, Code 2026, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

NEW SUBSECTION. 27. Comply with the requirements of section 256.140, including by replacing traditional, prerequisite remedial coursework in mathematics and English with corequisite models, and by assisting the department of education in the implementation of a statewide framework for corequisite developmental education.

Sec. 15. **IMPLEMENTATION OF A COMMON COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM STUDY.** By December 31, 2026, the department of education, in consultation with the state board of regents, shall submit to the general assembly a study on the systemic implementation considerations of statewide lower division general education framework and common course numbering systems across public institutions of higher education, including Iowa community colleges and the institutions governed by the state board of regents.

Approved June 2, 2026