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*Area Education Agency
Accreditation*

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDE –
AEA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa

Fall 1999 (Revised)

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State of Iowa
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa
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Acknowledgements

Jane Caraway
AEA 10 – Grant Wood Area Education Agency
4401 6th Street SW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404

Larry Erion
AEA 6
21 West Ingledue
Marshalltown, Iowa 50158

O. J. Fargo
AEA 14 – Green Valley Area Education Agency
1405 North Lincoln
Creston, Iowa 50801

Linda Madison
AEA 12 – Western Hills Area Education Agency
1520 Morningside Avenue
Sioux City, Iowa 51106

Al Wood
AEA 3 – Lakeland Area Education Agency
Highway 18 & 2nd Street
Cylinder, Iowa 50528

Lana Michelson
Bureau of Children, Family and Community Services
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Jim Reese
Bureau of Instructional Services
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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OVERVIEW – Discussion of the revisions incorporated in this Technical Assistance Guide

This technical assistance guide is intended to help in the development of AEA comprehensive plans. It has been revised based upon input from representatives from area education agencies. Observations made by Department of Education staff have been considered as the guide has been revised. The revision of this manual incorporates the concept of continuous improvement as we collectively work through the implementation and refinement of comprehensive planning. Subsequent technical assistance guides will incorporate additional modifications, as the planning and implementation process is refined.

In focusing on comprehensive planning, area education agency and departmental staff members should consider 72.1 of the Iowa Administrative Code (IAC). This rule is stated as follows:

281-72.1 (273) Scope. The purpose of Iowa's early childhood through twelfth grade educational system is to support learning for all students. Area education agencies, as part of that system, exist to provide school improvement leadership and services to schools and school districts in order to enable every learner to perform at higher education levels. The programs and services of an area education agency are subject to accreditation by the state board of education as specified in Iowa Code section 273.10. These rules apply to the accreditation of area education agency programs and services.

The area education staff of each agency needs to consider how its agency fits into the total educational system in light of the purpose of Iowa's elementary and secondary educational system. The staff needs to consider how each of the programs and services is being provided to the school districts and accredited nonpublic schools with the focus being on improving student learning. As each staff is collectively considering its agency's impact and effect on students, the staff should think in terms of all students and the diverse needs of each student or subgroups of students in lieu of thinking in terms of programs. With this in mind, each AEA will need to give consideration as to how the identified needs of special populations or age groups are accommodated in the agency's comprehensive plan.

In this revision of the technical assistance manual, it is recommended that programs or activities addressing the needs of special populations or subgroups of students be incorporated into each of the mandated programs and services areas rather than treated separately within the discretionary programs. Examples of the various population or age groups could be students enrolled in the primary grades (early childhood), middle school students, students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, at-risk students, or others as identified.

In keeping with the previous paragraphs, as each AEA rewrites the three-year comprehensive plan, it will be expected that multicultural, gender fair issues will be incorporated. This incorporation will occur for each of the six programs and services as well as the Discretionary (refer to Section 3) and Other (Optional – refer to Section 4) Programs and Services. In this revision of the technical assistance manual, the separate stand-alone Section 6 relates to multicultural, gender fair issues for the internal operation of the agency.

The revised Section 1, which will serve as the foundation for the comprehensive plan, is now a combination of the old Sections 1 and 4 from the 1997 version of the technical assistance manual. Included in this revised section is the focus on continuous improvement including data driven organizations and a reference to the five indicators of quality.

Section 2 of this guide contains the six mandated programs and services with the inclusion of all students as described previously in this overview.

In this revision of the technical assistance guide, discretionary programs are being treated as a separate section. In new comprehensive plans this third section may be shorter than in previous plans if the AEA chooses to incorporate special populations throughout the mandated programs and services areas. The programs and services offered in the section will vary from one agency to another.

Section 4 is an optional section that the area education agency staff may wish to include in its comprehensive plan as the agency considers all of the mandates that are required of an AEA.

Section 5, Organizational Structure, remains as a separate stand-alone section in this guide. Included in this section should be the internal capacity building that needs to be considered and implemented for the agency staff to effectively and efficiently deliver the needed programs and services to the schools. With the inclusion of internal capacity building activities in the agency's plan, the AEA would be modeling a comprehensive plan that includes the needed professional development experiences to be provided in order that AEA staff members may deliver the programs and services as identified in Sections 2,3, and 4.

Budget information is included in Section 7.

NOTES: The following three items are provided for the consideration of the users of this guide.

1. As the staff from the fifteen area education agencies in Iowa use this revised manual, there may be times that they wish to refer to parts of the narrative that was included in the original technical assistance manual published in August 1997.

For example, integration of technology appears in the Curriculum Program and Service Area – Standard 7, Instructional Media Services Program and Service Area – Standard 1, and School Technology Program and Service Area – Standard 2. Another example is the identification of educational needs of students found in School-Community Planning Program and Service Area – Standard 2, Curriculum Program and Service Area – Standard 1, and Special Education Program and Service Area – Standard 1. If an agency so chooses, there could be references from one of the six programs and services areas to another one to show where specific intended results may be supportive of or related to each other. These references between or among any of the programs and services areas would allow for eliminating the duplication of intended results across areas.

The hints in the chart are only suggestions and are only provided to show where there may be similarities between or among standards across the programs and services areas. As each area education agency's plan is written to deliver the various programs and services to meet the identified needs of the schools within its geographical boundary, it is anticipated that the similarities between and among the six programs and services would also vary.

The right column contains a crosswalk to accreditation requirements for school districts and accredited nonpublic schools. This crosswalk primarily focuses on Chapter 72 (IAC) and Chapter 12 (IAC). It does not contain all of the state and federal requirements for LEAs. Agencies using the crosswalk contained in this section are encouraged not to limit themselves to providing programs and services that address only the minimum requirements as noted in the crosswalk.

The layout for this section of the agency's comprehensive plan may be either vertically (as was shown in the 1997 technical assistance guide) or horizontally on the page. The categories for each program and service are the same as in the 1997 version of the technical assistance guide. These categories are as follows:

1. Data Demonstrating Need – identifies the needs (including data sources and a summary of the findings from the sources that identify the needs) that the *intended results* will address.
2. Intended Results – identifies the expected outcome. An intended result may be written to address one or more standards. As the agency's comprehensive plan is being rewritten or updated, there are questions that should be asked regarding intended results. The questions to ask –

are the intended results written in terms of what a recipient of a program and service (action) will know and be able to do?

how are intended results stated so that they are proactive and action oriented rather than being reactive and passively stated?

3. Annotated Description of Programs and Services – describes the *actions* the agency will take to accomplish the Intended Results.

Included in this category of a new comprehensive plan would be the incorporation of the *actions* related to multicultural and gender fair issues as well as the diverse learning needs of students.

4. Collaborative Efforts – identifies and describes the involvement and relationship with other agencies in the development or delivery of *actions*. The collaborative efforts could be combined with or incorporated into item three.
5. Data for Demonstrating Progress – describes the assessment measures and strategies (including the type of information to be obtained) for assessing progress on *intended results*. In applying the agency's continuous improvement cycle the data demonstrating progress would be used for future planning by looping it back to item two in this list – data demonstrating need.
6. Support Materials – identifies or provides additional information or resources that clarifies or further explains *actions*. These materials are to be kept on file at the AEA, but do not need to be sent to the Department. These materials will be reviewed during the site visit.

School-Community Planning – 72.4(2)

AEA Responsibilities	LEA and Accredited Nonpublic School Requirements
<p>The AEA provides programs and services that include methods and processes to support and facilitate school-community planning. Standards for this program and service area include, but are not limited to:</p>	<p>Crosswalk* with requirements for school districts and accredited, nonpublic schools.</p> <p>*NOTE: the crosswalk may not be all-inclusive. This can be refined in future revisions of the technical assistance manual.</p>
<p>1. Assist schools in conducting needs assessment.</p>	<p>12.8(1)“a”(1) Local Community, 12.8(1)“b”(1) Policy, and 12.8(1)“b”(2) Long-range data collection and analysis.</p>
<p>2. Assist school in determining the educational needs of students.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning with Curriculum, Standard 1 and Special Education, Standard 1 – Child Find.)</p>	<p>12.8(1)“a”(2) School improvement advisory committee, 12.8(1)“b”(2) Long-range data collection and analysis, and 12.8(1)“b”(4) Annual data collection and analysis.</p>
<p>3. Assist schools in developing long range goals.</p>	<p>12.8(1)“a”(1)“3” Student learning goals, 12.8(1)“b”(3) Long-range goals, and 12.8(1)“b”(5) Annual improvement goals.</p>
<p>4. Assist schools in establishing and implementing plans to meet goals</p>	<p>12.8(1)“d” Determination and implementation of actions to meet the needs, 12.8(1)“e” Evaluation of the comprehensive school improvement plan, 12.8(1)“f” Assessment of student progress, and 12.8(1)“g” Assurances and supports.</p>
<p>5. Assist schools in evaluating and reporting progress to the public.</p>	<p>12.5 (10) Technology integration, 12.5(18) Early Intervention Program, 12.8 (1)“b”(1) Policy, and 12.8(3) Annual reporting requirements including 12.8(3)“a” State indicators and 12.8(3)“b” Annual progress report.</p>
<p>6. Create collaborative relationships with other community agencies to provide services to students and families.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning with Special Education, Standard 1 – Child Find.)</p>	<p>12.5(13) Provisions for at-risk students.</p>

Professional Development* – 72.4(3) and 72.4(5)“f”

*Please note in the August 1997 version of the technical assistance guide there were nine standards for professional development including the one standard for special education. In this October 1999 version of the technical assistance guide there are six standards for professional development. No requirements have been eliminated. The wording of the standards have been revised to better reflect the rules.

In this version the special education standard is not being treated separately as it was in the previous guide. The reader and user of this technical assistance guide are requested to notice that the special education standard is being incorporated into Standards 1, 2, and 3. Consequently it will not be a separate stand alone standard within this program and service area.

AEA Responsibilities	LEA and Accredited Nonpublic School Requirements
<p>The AEA provides programs and services that facilitate professional growth. Standards for this program and service area include, but are not limited to:</p>	<p>Crosswalk* with requirements for school districts and accredited, nonpublic schools.</p> <p>*NOTE: the crosswalk may not be all-inclusive. This can be refined in future revisions of the technical assistance manual.</p>
<p>1. Facilitate professional growth of instructional personnel through the development of skills, techniques, knowledge, and understanding of educational research and best practice, and model best practice in professional and organizational development.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning with Standard 5 from this area.)</p> <p>(Note: The staff development requirements for instructional personnel as specified in 72.4(5)“f” should in this incorporated with this standard.)</p>	<p>12.5(12) Provisions for gifted and talented education, 12.7(1) Provisions for staff development, 12.8(1)“c”(2) Content standards and benchmarks, 12.8(1)“d”(1) Actions for improvement of curricular and instructional practices, and 12.8(1)“f” Assessment of student progress.</p>

<p>2. Facilitate professional growth of administrative personnel through the development of skills, techniques, knowledge, and understanding of educational research and best practice, and model best practice in professional and organizational development.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning with Standard 5 from this area.)</p> <p>(Note: The staff development requirements for administrative personnel as specified in 72.4(5)“f” should in this incorporated with this standard.)</p>	<p>12.7(1) Provisions for staff development 12.8(1)“c”(2) Content standards and benchmarks, 12.8(1)“d”(1) Actions for improvement of curricular and instructional practices, and 12.8(1)“f” Assessment of student progress.</p>
<p>3. Facilitate professional growth of support* personnel through the development of skills, techniques, and knowledge.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning with Standard 6 from this area.)</p> <p>(Note: The staff development requirements for support personnel as specified in 72.4(5)“f” should in this incorporated with this standard.)</p> <p>*For the purpose of the Fall 1999 version of the technical assistance guide, “support staff” will mean classified staff employed in school districts and accredited nonpublic schools, not AEA Special Education Support Staff.</p>	<p>12.7(1) Provisions for staff development.</p>
<p>4. Support school improvement processes and practices.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning this with School-Community Planning, Curriculum, Instructional Media, and School Technology Programs and Services Areas.)</p>	<p>12.8(1) Comprehensive school improvement, 12.8(2) Submission of a comprehensive school improvement plan.</p>
<p>5. Provide for development of leadership in education.</p>	<p>12.7(1) Provisions for staff development.</p>

<p>6. Address professional development activities as required by Iowa Code or administrative rule.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning, as appropriate, this standard with standards 1, 2, and 3 from this area.)</p> <p>(Note: The staff development requirements for support personnel as specified in 72.4(5)“f” should in this incorporated with this standard.)</p>	<p>Iowa Administrative Code. Requirements established by the State Board of Education – 12.4(9) Educational assistant, 12.5(12) and 59.5(8) Provisions for gifted and talented, 12.7(1) To implement multicultural, gender fair approaches to the educational program, 95.4(5) Affirmative Action training for all staff who hire or supervise employees, and 102.5(4) Level 1 Investigator training,</p> <p>Code of Iowa – 232.69(3) Mandatory Reporting training for child abuse, and 279.50(2) Human growth and development.</p> <p>Federal requirements – Bloodborne Pathogens, 29CFR Part 1110.1030</p> <p>Other requirements include training regarding Asbestos and Hazardous Chemicals/Chemical Right-to-Know.</p>
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Curriculum – 72.(4)

AEA Responsibilities	LEA and Accredited Nonpublic School Requirements
<p>The programs and services support and facilitate curriculum development, instruction, and assessment in the areas of reading, language arts, mathematics, and science. The standards for this program and service area include, but are not limited to providing assistance and training in the:</p>	<p>Crosswalk* with requirements for school districts and accredited, nonpublic schools.</p> <p>*NOTE: the crosswalk may not be all-inclusive. This can be refined in future revisions of the technical assistance manual.</p>
<p>1. Collection and analysis of student achievement data.</p>	<p>12.8(1)“b” Data collection, analysis and goal setting.</p>
<p>2. Establishment of rigorous and meaningful standards in reading, language arts, mathematics, and science.</p>	<p>12.8(1)“c” Content standards and benchmarks.</p>
<p>3. Development of knowledge of best practices in the areas of reading, language arts, mathematics, and science.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning this with Professional Development.)</p>	<p>12.5(3)“a” English-language arts, “c” mathematics, “d” science; 12.5 (4) “a” English-language arts, “c” mathematics, “d” science; 12.5(5) “a” English-language arts, “c” mathematics, “d” science; 12.7(1) Provisions for professional development; and 12.8(1)“d”(1) Actions for improvement of curriculum and instructional practices.</p>
<p>4. (a) Application of appropriate and effective instructional practice and content expertise in reading, language arts, mathematics, and science; (b) including the integration and application of knowledge and skills in applied learning, and (c) which addresses the diverse learning needs of students.</p>	<p>12.5(9) Special education, 12.5(12) Provisions for gifted and talented students, 12.5(13) Provisions for at-risk students, 12.7(1) Provisions for staff development, 12.8(1)“c”(2) Content standards and benchmarks, and 12.8(1)“d”(1) Actions for improvement of curriculum and instructional practices.</p>
<p>5. Use of qualitative and quantitative assessment techniques and activities for reading, language arts, mathematics, and science.</p>	<p>12.7(1) Provisions for staff development, and 12.8(1)“f” Assessment of student progress.</p>

<p>6. Application of curriculum development processes.</p> <p>(Hint: The fulfillment of this standard could be accomplished as the agency provide programs and services related to standards 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.)</p>	<p>12.7 (1) Provisions for staff development, and 12.8 (1)“c”(1) Policy.</p>
<p>7. Provide assistance and training in the integration of technology.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning with Professional Development and School Technology.)</p>	<p>12.5(10) Technology integration, 12.7(1) Provisions for staff development, and 12.8(1)“c”(2) Content standards and benchmarks.</p>
<p>8. Provide assistance and training in the application of curriculum development processes, standards setting, and assessment practices to other curriculum areas.</p> <p>(Hint: This standard is the area education agency’s opportunity to address other curriculum areas as are the focus of standards 2 through 7 for reading, language arts, mathematics, and science. This could be here in lieu of in the discretionary section.)</p>	<p>12.5(1) Pre-kindergarten programs, 12.5(2) Kindergarten program, 12.5(3) Refer to all definitions except English-language arts, science, and mathematics. 12.5(4) Refer to all definitions except English-language arts, science, and mathematics. 12.5 (5) Refer to all definitions except English-language arts, science, and mathematics. 12.8(1)“c”(1) Policy; and 12.8(1)“c”(2) Content standards and benchmarks.</p>

Special Education* – 72.4(5) excluding 72.4(5)“f”

*Please note in the August 1997 version of the technical assistance guide that special education had six standards that were distributed over five mandated programs and services areas “A through E.” In this version special education is being presented as one program and service area. Also note that the new standard 6 was contained in the rules, but not included in the first technical assistance guide.

As AEA staff members consider the revision and rewriting of this portion of the AEA comprehensive plan, they are expected to go beyond compliance and move toward continuous improvement and school improvement by determining what specific programs and services will be delivered that are based on data demonstrating need. Thus the agency staff members need to analyze and prioritize existing data and use this information for the development of this portion of the agency’s comprehensive plan.

Hence the AEA staff need to write this portion of the comprehensive plan in the same manner that the other five mandated programs and services areas are developed. The layout of this section including the categories as discussed in the introduction of this section should be consistent with the other five mandated programs and services areas as well as reflecting the agency’s continuous improvement model.

Receipt of Part B special education dollars will be fulfilled through the submission of eligibility documents fulfilling the requirements as identified in the Reauthorization of IDEA ‘97 and the proposed rules in Chapter 41(IAC).

AEA Responsibilities	LEA and Accredited Nonpublic School Requirements
The standards for this program and service area include, but are not limited to:	Crosswalk* with requirements for school districts and accredited, nonpublic schools. *NOTE: the crosswalk may not be all-inclusive. This can be refined in future revisions of the technical assistance manual.
1. Implementation of a process to identify students who require special education. (Hint: Consider aligning with School-Community Planning, Standards 2 and 6, and Professional Development.)	12.8(1)“b”(2) Long-range data collection and analysis and 12.8(1)“b”(4) Annual data collection and analysis.
2. Provision of support services and itinerant services in accordance with the least restrictive environment. (Hint: Consider aligning with School-Community Planning, Standard 6.)	12.8(1)“c” Content standards and benchmarks, 12.8(1)“f” Assessment of student progress, and 12.8(1)“d”(2) Actions to meet the improvement of curricular and instructional practices.

3. Implementation of procedures for developing, reviewing, and revising individualized education programs.	12.8(1)“c” Content standards and benchmarks, 12.8(1)“f” Assessment of student progress, and 12.8(1)“d”(2) Actions to meet the improvement of curricular and instructional practices.
4. Implementation of a process for evaluating the effectiveness of special education services.	12.8(1)“f” Assessment of student progress and 12.8(1)“e” Evaluation of the comprehensive school improvement plan.
5. Implementation of policies and procedures that are consistent with federal and state law.	12.3(2) Policy manual and 12.5(9) Special Education.
6. Integration of special education and related services with other AEA programs and services, including a process that facilitates school district efforts in evaluating the effectiveness of special education services. Note: This standard was omitted from the August 1997 of the technical assistance guide even though it appeared in the rules.	12.8(1) Comprehensive school improvement, subrules “a” through “g” and 12.8(3) Annual reporting requirements subrules “a” and “b.”
7. Process for monitoring of school district compliance with the provisions all federal and state statutes.	12.8(4)“a”(1) Annual comprehensive desk audit and 12.8(4)“a”(2) Comprehensive site visit

Instructional Media Services – 72.4(6)

AEA Responsibilities	LEA and Accredited Nonpublic School Requirements
<p>The AEA provides programs and services that supplement and support the media centers and services of schools. Standards for this program and service area include, but are not limited to:</p>	<p>Crosswalk* with requirements for school districts and accredited, nonpublic schools.</p> <p>*NOTE: the crosswalk may not be all-inclusive. This can be refined in future revisions of the technical assistance guide.</p>
<p>1. Consultation that provides awareness of, information about, and guidance for materials use, technology integration and use, facilities planning, collection development, media management, hardware and curriculum support.</p> <p>(NOTE: For the purpose of the Fall 1999 version of the technical assistance guide, the focus of “integration of technology” will be on curriculum, student learning, and student use in lieu of the perspective of hardware and software networks.)</p>	<p>12.5(10) Technology integration, 12.7 Staff development, and 12.8(1)“c”(2) Content standards and benchmarks, and 12.8(1)“d”(1) Actions to improve curriculum and instructional practices.</p>
<p>2. Delivery of information and resources both physically and electronically</p>	
<p>3. Information services which include educational or education-related research, information retrieval, and electronic distribution.</p>	<p>12.7 Staff development and 12.8(1)“d”(1) Actions to improve curriculum and instructional practices.</p>
<p>4. Instructional resources which provide print, nonprint, and electronic resources that support professional development, and teaching and learning through provision of a lending library, cooperative buying, preview capabilities, and duplication and distribution</p>	<p>12.7 Staff development and 12.8(1)“d”(1) Actions to improve curriculum and instructional practices.</p>

5. Producing, duplicating, and preparing materials to include publishing, production of instructional materials, production of educational support materials, and teacher production and work area.

School Technology – 72.4(7)

AEA Responsibilities	LEA and Accredited Nonpublic School Requirements
<p>The AEA provides programs and services that supplement and support school improvement efforts and provides for technology support, products and services. The standards for this program and service area include, but are not limited to:</p>	<p>Crosswalk* with requirements for school districts and accredited, nonpublic schools.</p> <p>*NOTE: the crosswalk may not be all-inclusive. This can be refined in future revisions of the technical assistance manual.</p>
<p>1. Consultation and technical services that focus on technology plan development, technology and learning, advancements in technology, technology infrastructure requirements and design, and technology resource requirements.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning “technology and learning” with curriculum and other programs and services areas as appropriate.)</p>	<p>12.5(10) Technology integration.</p>
<p>2. Professional development that emphasizes training in the general uses of technology, the integration of technology with curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices, and the use of technology as a professional productivity tool.</p> <p>(Hint: Consider aligning “integration of technology” with Professional Development and Curriculum.</p> <p>(NOTE: For the purpose of the Fall 1999 version of the technical assistance guide, the focus of “integration of technology” will be on curriculum, student learning, and student use in lieu of the perspective of hardware and software networks.)</p>	<p>12.7 Staff development, 12.8(1)“c”(2) Content standards and benchmarks, 12.8(1)“d”(1) Actions to improve curriculum and instructional practices, and 12.8(1)“f” Assessment of student progress.</p>

SECTION 3 – Discretionary Programs and Services

DIRECTIONS: These are programs and services that are requested by the schools, but not addressed in the IAC 72.1 Scope. Services may include, but are not limited to –

- ◆ Areas of management,
- ◆ Coop food purchasing,
- ◆ Others as identified based upon individual AEA needs, and
- ◆ Organizational culture and climate – Area education agency staff are encouraged to incorporate this item into the Professional Development Program and Service Area and then apply the knowledge and skills acquired into other areas such as School-Community Planning.

The layout for this section of the agency's comprehensive plan should be consistent with the format and layout for the required programs and services. The categories for each program and service remain the same: intended results, data demonstrating need, annotated description of programs and services, collaborative efforts, data demonstrating progress, and support materials.

SECTION 4 – Other (Optional) Programs and Services

Area education agency staff may choose to include the other requirements mandated for area education agencies in the comprehensive plan for the agency. The citation identified may not be all inclusive. Other areas that the area education agency has responsibility for as mandated by the Code of Iowa include the following –

- ◆ Chapter 282.30, Code of Iowa – Special Programs. Educational programs in approved or licensed shelter care homes or in approved juvenile detention homes,
- ◆ Chapter 299A.4 Annual achievement evaluations – requirements and procedures. Competent private instruction programs,
- ◆ Chapter 285.9 Powers and duties of area boards. School transportation issues, and
- ◆ Chapter 275, Code of Iowa – School Reorganization.

DIRECTIONS: If the area education agency chooses to include programs and services for all of the mandates for an agency, then the layout for this section of the agency's comprehensive plan should be consistent with the format and layout as used in Section 2.

SECTION 5 – Organizational Structure

DIRECTIONS: Describe the agency's organizational structure including administrative structure and staffing pattern(s). Describe how the organizational structure supports the agency's continuous improvement model and demonstrates proactive leadership. In addition, describe how the organizational structure facilitates delivery of the programs and services described in Section 2, 3, and 4. This description could be provided as a narrative, a visual representation, or a combination.

This section now includes how the agency will address the professional development needs for the area education agency staff. Effective delivery of the programs and services to school districts and accredited nonpublic schools requires that AEA staff can demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to meet the standards.

Some questions or ideas to consider as the agency develops this section are as follows:

- ◆ For Chapter 294A – Educational Excellence Program - Teachers (Phase I, II, and III), how is this funding stream supporting internal capacity building for agency staff to deliver programs and services to schools?
- ◆ An example of internal capacity building is the CSI (Connecting School Improvement) seminars and ICN sessions being held during the 1999-2000 school year. These sessions are focusing on the rules contained in Division VIII of the Chapter 12 – General Accreditation Standards. These activities are scheduled to involve DE and AEA Staff.
- ◆ What internal capacity building is occurring that is unique to each AEA or is being done collectively involving a cluster of AEAs?
- ◆ How is attendance at state, regional, and national professional conferences being tied to the standards in each program and service area?

If the organizational structure of the agency has changed since the initial comprehensive plan that received State Board approval in March 1998, then include a rationale for changing the organizational structure and the timeline for development and implementation.

Include in this section the number and location of agency offices.

SECTION 6 – Multicultural, Gender Fair

DIRECTIONS: Multicultural, gender fair issues are to be incorporated throughout the sections of the agency's comprehensive plan describing the delivery of programs and services (Section 2, 3, and 4) to the schools. Throughout this incorporation consideration shall be given to the needs of special populations and subgroups of students in order to accommodate the diverse learning needs of students, including the integration of general education and special education.

Section 6 is to contain the agency's description of how it internally incorporates multicultural, gender fair approaches and issues into its long-term and day-to-day operations as an agency. Included in this incorporation would be the agency's affirmative action plan as required in Chapter 95, IAC that includes general policies related to hiring practices, assignment, and evaluation of personnel.

Questions or issues that agency staff may consider with respect to internal operations and delivery of activities to school districts and accredited nonpublic schools are as follows:

- ◆ How multicultural, gender fair approaches are integrated into the design and delivery of programs and services.
- ◆ How the diverse educational needs of adult learners are accommodated in personnel and professional development services.
- ◆ How the diverse educational needs of students are considered in the design and delivery of programs and services, including the integration of general education and special education.
- ◆ Internal capacity building for agency staff with respect to multicultural, gender fair approaches as it relates to the planning and delivery of programs and services.

NOTE: The language "gender fair" in lieu of "nonsexist" has been incorporated into this section of the technical assistance guide even through the 72.9(1)"d" of the IAC (rules) still contains the terminology "nonsexist." The use of "gender fair" terminology in this guide is for the purpose of being compatible with the expectations being placed on the schools.

SECTION 7 – Budget

DIRECTION: The agency will follow the instructions accompanying the budget forms that have been sent to each agency by the Department of Education's Finance Team.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Chapter 72
Accreditation of Area Education Agency Programs and Services

281-72.1(273) **Scope.** The purpose of Iowa's early childhood through twelfth grade educational system is to support learning for all students. Area education agencies, as part of that system exist to provide school improvement leadership and services to schools and school districts in order to enable every learner to perform at higher education levels. The programs and services of an area education agency are subject to accreditation by the state board of education as specified in Iowa Code section 273. 10. These rules apply to the accreditation of area education agency programs and services.

281-72.2(273) Definitions.

"AEA" is an acronym for area education agency.

"Board" means the Iowa state board of education.

"Department" means the state department of education.

"Director" means the state director of the department of education.

"Schools" mean accredited public and nonpublic schools located within the boundaries of an area education agency in accord with Iowa Code chapter 273.

281-72.3(273) Accreditation components. To be accredited by the board and maintain accreditation status, an AEA shall have an approved three-year comprehensive plan, an approved annual budget and plan update, and approved programs and services following a comprehensive onsite review.

281-72.4(273) Standards. These standards list the requirements for the educational, special education, and media services provided by an AEA. The following standards shall be used to accredit AEA programs and services.

72.4(1) *General.* The AEA's programs and services provide leadership in the area of school improvement, support proven or emerging educational practices, and are designed to enhance the learning opportunities of students.

a. The programs and services are:

(1) Accessible to all accredited public and nonpublic schools located within the AEA's boundaries in accord with Iowa Code chapter 273.

(2) Coordinated with other agencies, such as postsecondary institutions, community services, other AEAs, and schools.

b. The AEA may use consultation, information retrieval and dissemination, and continuing education and other processes to deliver programs and services.

c. The programs and services may be delivered directly, through contractual agreements, and through collaborative arrangements with other educational or community agencies.

72.4(2) *School-community planning.* The AEA provides programs and services that support and facilitate school-community planning. These programs and services include, but are not limited to:

a. Methods and processes which assist schools in conducting needs assessment, determining the major educational needs of students, developing long-range goals, establishing and

implementing plans to meet the goals, and evaluating and reporting progress to the public.

b. Creating collaborative relationships with other community agencies to provide services to students and families.

72.4(3) Professional development. The AEA provides programs and services which facilitate professional growth of instructional, administrative and support personnel. These programs and services develop skills, techniques, knowledge, and understanding of educational research and best practice, and model best practices in professional and organizational development. The programs and services support school improvement processes and practices, provide for the development of leadership in education, and address professional development activities as required by code or administrative rule.

72.4(4) Curriculum. The AEA's programs and services support and facilitate curriculum development, instruction, and assessment in the areas of reading, language arts, mathematics and science. These programs and services advance research-based methodologies and include, but are not limited to, providing assistance and training in the:

a. Collection and annuluses of student achievement data.

b. Establishment of rigorous and meaningful standards in reading, language arts, mathematics and science.

c. Development of a knowledge base of best practices in the areas of reading, language arts, mathematics and science.

d. Application of appropriate and effective instructional practices and content expertise for reading, language arts, mathematics and science; including the integration and application of knowledge and skills in applied learning, and which address the diverse learning needs of students.

e. Use of qualitative and quantitative assessment techniques and activities for reading, language arts, mathematics and science.

f. Application of curriculum development processes.

g. Integration of technology.

h. Application of curriculum development processes, standard setting, and assessment practices to other curricular areas.

72.4(5) Special education. The AEA provides services that support and assist schools in the provision of a free, appropriate education and full educational opportunity to children, between birth and the age of 21 and to the maximum allowable age in accord with Iowa Code section 256B.8, who require special education. These services include:

a. Implementation of a process to identify students who require special education that meets all the requirements of 281- Chapter 41, Division V11.

b. Provision of support services and itinerant services and, as required by code.administrative rule, or contract, other services described in 281 - Chapter 41, Division IX, and in accordance with the least restrictive environment provisions of 281- Chapter 41, Division VI.

c. Implementation of procedures for developing, reviewing and revising individualized education programs that meet all the requirements of 281- Chapter 41, Division VIII.

d. Implementation of a process for evaluating the effectiveness of special education services.

e. Implementation of policies and procedures in accordance with the provisions of rules 281-41.18 and 281-41.22.

f. Provision of professional development opportunities consistent with the requirements of rule281-41.20.

g. Integration of special education and related services with other AEA programs and services, including a process that facilitates school district efforts in evaluating the effectiveness of special education services.

h. Process for monitoring of school district compliance with the provisions of all federal and state statutes, regulations and rules applicable to the provision of special education at least once every three years as described in subrule 281--41.18(4).

72.4(6) instructional media services. The AEA's programs and services supplement and support the media centers and services of schools. These programs and services include, but are not limited to:

a. Consultation that provides awareness of, information about, and guidance for materials use, technology integration and use, facilities planning, collection development, media management, hardware and curriculum support.

b. Delivery of information and resources both physically and electronically.

c. Information services which include educational or education related research, information retrieval, and electronic distribution.

d. Instructional resources which provide print, nonprint and electronic resources that support professional development, and teaching and learning through provision of a lending library, cooperative buying, preview capabilities, and duplication and distribution.

e. Producing, duplicating, and preparing materials to include publishing, production of instructional materials, production of educational support materials, and teacher production and work area.

72.4(7) School technology. The AEA has a technology plan that is based on the needs of the schools served and includes collaborative partnerships with schools and other AEAs in the provision of technology support, products and services. The AEA's technology services supplement and support school improvement efforts and include, but are not limited to:

a. Consultation and technical services that focus on technology plan development, technology and learning, advancements in technology, technology infrastructure requirements and design, and technology resource requirements.

b. Professional development that emphasizes training in the general uses of technology, the integration of technology with curriculum, instruction and assessment practices, and the use of technology as a professional productivity tool.

281- 72.5(273) Discretionary programs and services. The following programs and services are not required of an AEA, but may be provided as requested by schools. These may include, but are not limited to, areas of management, organizational culture and climate, early childhood, career preparation and other curriculum areas such as social studies, languages, fine and performing arts, and physical education.

281-72.6 Reserved.

281-72.7(273) Indicators of quality. The department shall use the following indicators of quality in evaluating an AEA's programs and services. The department, in cooperation with the AEAs, shall determine and periodically update appropriate methods and criteria to document progress.

a. The programs and services address specific student, teacher and school needs evidenced in local school improvement plans.

b. The programs and services assist schools in improving student learning evidenced through student performance.

c. The programs and services assist schools in improving teaching evidenced through the adoption or application of practices, strategies, and information.

d. The programs and services are cost efficient and timely.

e. Levels of use and quality measures are used to determine customer satisfaction with programs and services.

281-72.8 Reserved.

281-72.9(273) Comprehensive plan. Each AEA, using forms provided by the department, shall submit to the department a comprehensive plan describing its programs and services.

72.9(1) Plan contents. At a minimum, the three-year comprehensive plan for an AEA shall include:

- a. A summary of results from needs assessments conducted to collect input from schools which help determine appropriate programs and services.
- b. A description of the agency's programs and services, including how the programs and align with school improvement plans.
- c. A description of the organizational structure that supports the efficiency and effectiveness of services.
- d. A description of how the agency addresses and supports multicultural, nonsexist approaches and the diverse educational needs of students.
- e. A description of the intended results.
- f. A description of the implementation of the plan, including personnel, budget, collaborative efforts with other agencies, and the method of service delivery for each intended result.
- g. A description of the evaluation system.

72.9(2) Plan submission and cycle. In order to provide a three-year approval cycle, each AEA will submit a plan by January 1, 1998, for the period July 1 through June 30, according to this schedule:

- a. Five AEAs, identified by the department, will submit a plan for a two-year period, and for a three-year period thereafter.
- b. Five AEAs, identified by the department, will submit a plan for a three-year period and for a three-year period thereafter.
- c. Five AEAs, identified by the department, will submit a plan for a four-year period and for a Three-year period thereafter.

72.9(3) Approval process.

- a. The comprehensive plan of an AEA shall be reviewed by a team of department staff members appointed by the director. Following the review of an AEA's plan, the team shall recommend to the director whether the plan meets the requirements of this chapter. The AEA shall be provided with the opportunity to respond to the review team's report.
- b. The director shall present the review team's findings and recommend action by the board. The board shall determine whether an AEA's comprehensive plan is approved. A plan may be approved in part and subject to the remedying of deficiencies or omissions.

281-72.10(273) Annual budget and plan update. Each AEA shall submit to the board an annual budget as required by section 273.3 and a progress report on the agency's three year plan.

72.10(1) Annual budget. An annual budget shall be submitted to the board, on forms provided by the department, no later than March 15 preceding the next fiscal year for approval. The board shall review the proposed budget and agency plan and shall, before April 1, either grant approval or return the budget without approval with comments of the board included. An unapproved budget shall be resubmitted to the board for final approval no later than April 15. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1999, and each succeeding fiscal year, the board shall give final approval only to budgets:

a. Submitted by an AEA accredited by the board or that have been given conditional accreditation by the board as described in Iowa Code chapter 273.3(12) and subrule 72.7(4).

b. Demonstrate support for the agency comprehensive plan and yearly update.

72.10(2) Plan update. An AEA shall submit with its annual budget a written progress report on the agency's three year plan on forms provided by the department . The report shall identify the agency's progress on the plan's intended results and any changes or modifications to the plan :in response to the agency's ongoing monitoring of progress. The report shall be reviewed

by a team of department staff members appointed by the director of the department. The review team shall report to the director its findings and recommendation regarding approval of the report.

The AEA shall be provided with the opportunity to respond to the review team's report. The director shall present the review team's findings to the board and recommend action by the board. The board shall determine whether an AEA's annual report is approved. An annual report may be approved in part and subject to the remedying of deficiencies or omissions.

281-72.11(273) Site review.

72.11(1) Onsite review. An accreditation team shall conduct one or more on-site reviews of the AEA for evaluation of its programs and service. Prior to an onsite review to an AEA, the accreditation team shall have aces the AEA's three-year plan and annual plan updates as well as any other information collected by the department relating to the AEA.

72.11(2) Accreditation team. The membership of the accreditation team shall be determined by the director. Each team member should have appropriate competencies, background, and experiences to enable the member to contribute to the evaluation visit. The team shall include at least 4 members, but not more than 7 members. The team shall include, but is not limited to:

a. Department staff members.

b. Representatives from large and small schools served by the AEA being evaluated.

c. AEA staff members from AEA's other than the AEA that is being evaluated for accreditation.

d Other members with expertise as deemed appropriate by the director.

72.11(3) Accreditation team action. After an onsite review of an AEA, the accreditation team shall determine whether the requirements of this chapter have been met, and shall make a report to the director with a recommendation as to whether the AEA program should receive initial accreditation or remain accredited. The accreditation team shall report strengths and weaknesses, if any, for each accreditation standard, and shall advise the AEA of available resources and technical assistance to further enhance the strengths and improve areas of weakness. An AEA may respond to the accreditation team's report.

72.11(4) State board consideration of accreditation. All AEA's shall be deemed accredited upon the date of implementation of these rules. The board shall determine whether an AEA's programs and services shall remain accredited. Approval of an AEA's programs and services by the board shall be based on the recommendation of the director after study of the factual and evaluative evidence on record about the standards as described in this chapter, and based upon the timely submission of information required by the department on forms provided by the department.

a. Accreditation granted. Continuation of accreditation, if granted, shall be for a term of three years; however, approval for a lesser term may be granted by the board if it determines conditions so warrant.

b. Accreditation denied or conditional accreditation. If the board denies accreditation or grants conditional accreditation, the department shall notify the administrator of the

AEA, each member of the board of directors of the AEA, and the schools served by the AEA within 15 days. The notice shall contain a description, of the areas in which improvement or changes are essential for approval.

The AEA shall be given the opportunity to present factual information concerning its services at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the board.

c. Remediation plan. Upon denial of accreditation or the granting of conditional accreditation by the board, the director, in cooperation with the board of directors of the AEA, shall establish a remediation plan. The remediation plan shall describe how the AEA will correct deficiencies to meet accreditation standards and shall establish a timeline and deadline date for correction of the deficiencies. The remediation plan is subject to the approval of the board. Upon approval by the board, the AEA shall send copies of the remediation plan to the schools served by the AEA. The AEA shall remain accredited during the implementation of the remediation plan.

d. Implementation of remediation plan. At intervals prescribed in the remediation plan or at the request of the director, the accreditation team shall revisit the AEA and shall determine whether the deficiencies in the accreditation standards are being or have been corrected and shall make a report and recommendation to the director and the board. The board shall review this report and recommendations and shall determine whether the deficiencies have been corrected.

e. Failure to correct deficiencies. If the deficiencies have not been corrected within the time stipulated in the remediation plan, the board shall remove accreditation of the deficient programs and services. At the hearing before the board, the AEA may be represented by counsel and may present evidence. The board may provide for the hearing to be recorded or reported. If requested by the AEA at least ten days before the hearing, the board shall provide for the hearing to be recorded or reported at the expense of the AEA. Within 30 days after the hearing, the board shall render a written decision approving or removing the accreditation. Action by the board at this time is final agency action for the purposes of chapter 17A. The department shall notify the AEA of the decision of the board.

f. Required response to removal of accreditation. The AEA board of directors shall take one of the following actions within sixty days from removal of accreditation:

- (1) Merge the deficient programs and services with another accredited and contiguous AEA.
- (2) Contract with another accredited and contiguous AEA or other public educational institution to provide the required programs and services.

f. Required response to removal of accreditation. The AEA board of directors shall take one of the following actions within 60 days after removal of accreditation:

- (1) Merge the deficient programs and services with another accredited and contiguous AEA.
- (2) Contract with another accredited and contiguous AEA or other public educational institution to provide the required programs and services.

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TITLE XIV

TEACHERS AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING

(Effective October 12, 1988)

CHAPTER 73

ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES AND ENDORSEMENTS

[Prior to 9/7/88, see Public Instruction Department[670]Ch 70]

[Transferred to Educational Examiners[282]Ch 14, IAB 10/3/90, effective 9/14/90]

CHAPTER 74

RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATES

[Prior to 9/7/88, see Public Instruction Department[670]Ch 71]

[Transferred to Educational Examiners[282]Ch 17, IAB 10/3/90, effective 9/14/90]

CHAPTER 75

CONVERSION INFORMATION

[Prior to 9/7/88, see Public Instruction Department[670]Ch 72]

[Transferred to Educational Examiners[282]Ch 18, IAB 10/3/90, effective 9/14/90]

CHAPTER 76

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

[Prior to 9/7/88, see Public Instruction Department[670]Ch 75]

Rescinded IAB 10/2/91, effective 11/6/91

Appendix B

chapter 12
GENERAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
[Prior to 9/7/88, see Public Instruction Department[670] Ch 4]

PREAMBLE

The goal for the early childhood through twelfth grade educational system in Iowa is to improve the learning, achievement, and performance of all students so they become successful members of a community and workforce. It is expected that each school and school district shall continue to improve its educational system so that more students will increase their learning, achievement, and performance.

Accreditation focuses on an ongoing school improvement process for schools and school districts. However, general accreditation standards are the minimum requirements that must be met by an Iowa public school district to be accredited. A public school district that does not maintain accreditation shall be merged, by the state board of education, with one or more contiguous school districts as required by Iowa Code subsection 256.11(12). A nonpublic school must meet the general accreditation standards if it wishes to be designated as accredited for operation in Iowa.

General accreditation standards are intended to fulfill the state's responsibility for making available an appropriate educational program that has high expectations for all students in Iowa. The accreditation standards ensure that each child has access to an educational program that meets the needs and abilities of the child regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, marital status, geographic location, or socioeconomic background.

With local community input, school districts and accredited nonpublic schools shall incorporate accountability for student achievement into comprehensive school improvement plans designed to increase the learning, achievement, and performance of all students. As applicable, and to the extent possible, comprehensive school improvement plans shall consolidate federal and state program goal setting, planning, and reporting requirements. Provisions for multicultural and gender fair education, technology integration, global education, gifted and talented students, at-risk students, students with disabilities, and the professional development of all staff shall be incorporated, as applicable, into the comprehensive school improvement plan. See subrules 12.5(8) to 12.5(13), 12.7(1), and 12.8(1).

DIVISION I
GENERAL STANDARDS

281—12.1(256) General standards.

12.1(1) *Schools and school districts governed by general accreditation standards.* These standards govern the accreditation of all prekindergarten, if offered, or kindergarten through grade 12 school districts operated by public school corporations and the accreditation, if requested, of prekindergarten or kindergarten through grade 12 schools operated under nonpublic auspices. Each school district shall take affirmative steps to integrate students in attendance centers and courses. Schools and school districts shall collect and annually review district, attendance center, and course enrollment data on the basis of race, national origin, gender, and

disability. Equal opportunity in programs shall be provided to all students regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, or creed. Nothing in this rule shall be construed as prohibiting any bona fide religious institution from imposing qualifications based upon religion when such qualifications are related to a bona fide religious purpose.

12.1(2) *School board.* Each school or school district shall be governed by an identifiable authority which shall exercise the functions necessary for the effective operation of the school and referred to in these rules as the “board.”

12.1(3) *Application for accreditation.* The board of any school or school district that is not accredited on the effective date of these standards and which seeks accreditation shall file an application with the director, department of education, on or before the first day of January of the school year preceding the school year for which accreditation is sought.

12.1(4) *Accredited schools and school districts.* Each school or school district receiving accreditation under the provisions of these standards shall remain accredited except when by action of the state board of education it is removed from the list of accredited schools maintained by the department of education in accordance with Iowa Code subsections 256.11(11) and 256.11(12).

12.1(5) *When nonaccredited.* A school district shall be nonaccredited on the day after the date it is removed from the list of accredited schools by action of the state board of education. A nonpublic school shall be nonaccredited on the date established by the resolution of the state board, which shall be no later than the end of the school year in which the nonpublic school is declared to be nonaccredited.

12.1(6) *Alternative provisions for accreditation.* School districts may meet accreditation requirements through the provisions of Iowa Code sections 256.13, nonresident students; 273.7A, services to school districts; 279.20, superintendent—term; 280.15, joint employment and sharing; 282.7, attending in another corporation—payment; and 282.10, whole grade sharing. Nonpublic schools may meet accreditation requirements through the provisions of Iowa Code section 256.12.

12.1(7) *Minimum school calendar and day of instruction.* Each board shall adopt a school calendar that identifies specific days for student instruction, staff development and in-service time, and time for parent-teacher conferences. The length of the school calendar does not dictate the length of contract or days of employment for instructional and noninstructional staff. The school calendar may be operated anytime during the school year of July 1 to June 30 as defined by Iowa Code section 279.10. A minimum of 180 days of the school calendar, for school districts beginning no sooner than a day during the calendar week in which the first day of September falls, shall be used for student instruction. However, if the first day of September falls on a Sunday, school may begin any day during the calendar week preceding September 1. These 180 days shall meet the requirements of “day of school” in subrule 12.1(8), “minimum school day” in subrule 12.1(9), and “day of attendance” in subrule 12.1(10). (Exception: A school or school district may, by board policy, excuse graduating seniors up to five days of instruction after school or school district requirements for graduation have been met.) If additional days are added to the regular school calendar because of inclement weather, a graduating senior who has met the school district’s requirements for graduation may be excused from attendance during the extended school calendar. A school or school district may begin its school calendar earlier for other educational purposes involving instructional and noninstructional staff.

12.1(8) Day of school. A day of school is a day during which the school or school district is in session and students are under the guidance and instruction of the instructional professional staff. School shall be considered in session during parent-teacher conferences as well as during activities such as field trips if students are engaged in programs or activities under the guidance and direction of the instructional professional staff. All grade levels of the school or school district must be operated and available for attendance by all students. An exception is if either the elementary or secondary grades are closed and provided that this time missed is made up at some other point during the school calendar so as to meet the minimum of 180 days of instruction for all grades 1 through 12. If a classroom or attendance center is closed for emergency health or safety reasons but the remainder of the school or school district is in operation, the day may be counted as a day of school.

12.1(9) Minimum school day. A school day shall consist of a minimum of 5½ hours of instructional time for all grades 1 through 12. The minimum hours shall be exclusive of the lunch period. Passing time between classes as well as time spent on parent-teacher conferences may be counted as part of the 5½-hour requirement. The school or school district may record a day of school with less than the minimum instructional hours if emergency health or safety factors require the late arrival or early dismissal of students on a specific day; or if the total hours of instructional time for all grades 1 through 12 in any five consecutive school days equal a minimum of 27½ hours, even though any one day of school is less than the minimum instructional hours because staff development is provided for the instructional professional staff or because parent-teacher conferences have been scheduled beyond the regular school day. Furthermore, if the total hours of instructional time for the first four consecutive days equal at least 27½ hours because parent-teacher conferences are held beyond the regular school day, a school or school district may record zero hours of instructional time on the fifth consecutive school day as a minimum school day.

12.1(10) Day of attendance. A day of attendance shall be a day during which students were present and under the guidance and instruction of the instructional professional staff. When staff development designated by the board occurs outside of the time required for a "minimum school day," students shall be counted in attendance. (Note exceptions in subrules 12.1(8) and 12.1(9).)

12.1(11) Kindergarten. The number of instructional days within the school calendar and the length of the school day for kindergarten shall be defined by the board. This subrule applies to an accredited nonpublic school only if it offers kindergarten.

DIVISION II DEFINITIONS

281—12.2(256) Definitions. For purposes of these rules, the following definitions shall apply:

"Annual improvement goals" means the desired one-year rate of improvement for students.

Data from multiple measures may be used to determine the rate of improvement.

"Baseline data" means information gathered at a selected point in time and used thereafter as a basis from which to monitor change.

"Benchmarks" means specific knowledge and skills anchored to content standards that a student needs to accomplish by a specific grade or grade span.

"Board" means the board of directors in charge of a public school district or the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school.

“*Comprehensive school improvement plan*” means a design that shall describe how the school or school district will increase student learning, achievement, and performance. This ongoing improvement design may address more than student learning, achievement, and performance.

“*Content standards*” means broad statements about what students are expected to know and be able to do.

“*Curriculum*” means a plan that outlines what students shall be taught. Curriculum refers to all the courses offered, or all the courses offered in a particular area of study.

“*Department*” means the department of education.

“*Districtwide*” means all attendance centers within a school district or accredited nonpublic school.

“*Districtwide assessments*” means large-scale achievement or performance measures. At least one districtwide assessment shall allow for the following: the comparison of the same group of students over time as they progress through the grades or the cross-sectional comparison of students at the same grades over multiple years.

“*Districtwide progress*” means the quantifiable change in school or school district student achievement and performance.

“*Educational program.*” The educational program adopted by the board is the entire offering of the school, including out-of-class activities and the sequence of curriculum areas and activities. The educational program shall provide articulated, developmental learning experiences from the date of student entrance until high school graduation.

“*Enrolled student*” means a person that has officially registered with the school or school district and is taking part in the educational program.

“*Incorporate*” means integrating career education, multicultural and gender fair education, technology education, global education, higher-order thinking skills, learning skills, and communication skills into the total educational program.

“*Indicators*” provide information about the general status, quality, or performance of an educational system.

“*Long-range goals*” means desired targets to be reached over an extended period of time.

“*Multiple assessment measures,*” for reporting to the local community or the state, means more than one valid and reliable instrument that quantifies districtwide student learning, including specific grade-level data.

“*Performance levels.*” The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires that at least three levels of performance be established to assist in determining which students have or have not achieved a satisfactory or proficient level of performance. At least two of those three levels shall describe what all students ought to know or be able to do if their achievement or performance is deemed proficient or advanced. The third level shall describe students who are not yet performing at the proficient level. A school or school district may establish more than three performance levels that include all students for districtwide or other assessments.

“*Proficient,*” as it relates to content standards, characterizes student performance at a level that is acceptable by the school or school district.

“*School*” means an accredited nonpublic school.

“*School district*” means a public school district.

"School improvement advisory committee" means a committee, as defined in Iowa Code section 280.12, that is appointed by the board. Committee membership shall include students, parents, teachers, administrators, and representatives from the local community which may include business, industry, labor, community agencies, higher education, or other community constituents. To the extent possible, committee membership shall have balanced representation of the following: race, gender, national origin, and disability. The school improvement advisory committee as defined by Iowa Code section 280.12 and the board are also part of, but not inclusive of, the local community.

"Student learning goals" means general statements of expectations for all graduates.

"Students with disabilities" means students who have individualized education programs regardless of the disability.

"Subgroups" means a subset of the student population that has a common characteristic. Subgroups include, but are not limited to, gender, race, students with disabilities, and socioeconomic status.

"Successful employment in Iowa" may be determined by, but is not limited to, reviewing student achievement and performance based on locally identified indicators such as earnings, educational attainment, reduced unemployment, and the attainment of employability skills.

DIVISION III ADMINISTRATION

281—12.3(256) Administration. The following standards shall apply to the administration of accredited schools and school districts.

12.3(1) Board records. Each board shall adopt by written policy a system for maintaining accurate records. The system shall provide for recording and maintaining the minutes of all board meetings, coding all receipts and expenditures, and recording and filing all reports required by the Iowa Code or requested by the director of the department of education. Financial records of school districts shall be maintained in a manner as to be easily audited according to accepted accounting procedures.

12.3(2) Policy manual. The board shall develop and maintain a policy manual which provides a codification of its policies, including the adoption date, the review date, and any revision date for each policy. Policies shall be reviewed at least every five years to ensure relevance to current practices and compliance with the Iowa Code, administrative rules and decisions, and court decisions.

12.3(3) Personnel evaluation. Each board shall adopt evaluation criteria and procedures for all contracted staff. The evaluation processes shall conform to Iowa Code sections 272.33, 279.14, and 279.23A.

12.3(4) Student records. Each board shall require its administrative staff to establish and maintain a system of student records. This system shall include for each student a permanent office record and a cumulative record.

The permanent office record shall serve as a historical record of official information concerning the student's education. At a minimum, the permanent office record should contain evidence of attendance and educational progress, serve as an official transcript, contain other data for use in planning to meet student needs, and provide data for official school and school district reports. This record is to be permanently maintained and stored in a fire-resistant safe or vault or can be maintained and stored electronically with a secure back-up file.

The cumulative record shall provide a continuous and current record of significant information on progress and growth. It should reflect information such as courses taken, scholastic progress, school attendance, physical and health record, experiences, interests, aptitudes, attitudes, abilities, honors, extracurricular activities, part-time employment, and future plans. It is the "working record" used by the instructional professional staff in understanding the student. At the request of a receiving school or school district, a copy of the cumulative record shall be sent to officials of that school when a student transfers.

For the sole purpose of implementing an interagency agreement with state and local agencies in accordance with Iowa Code section 280.25, a student's permanent record may include information contained in the cumulative record as defined above.

The board shall adopt a policy concerning the accessibility and confidentiality of student records that complies with the provisions of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and Iowa Code chapter 22.

12.3(5) Requirements for graduation. Each board providing a program through grade 12 shall adopt a policy establishing the requirements students must meet for high school graduation. This policy shall make provision for early graduation and shall be consistent with these requirements and Iowa Code section 280.14.

12.3(6) Student responsibility and discipline. The board shall adopt student responsibility and discipline policies as required by Iowa Code section 279.8. The board shall involve parents, students, instructional and noninstructional professional staff, and community members in the development and revision of those policies where practicable or unless specific policy is mandated by legislation. The policies shall relate to the educational purposes of the school or school district. The policies shall include, but are not limited to, the following: attendance; use of tobacco; the use or possession of alcoholic beverages or any controlled substance; harassment of or by students and staff; violent, destructive, and seriously disruptive behavior; suspension, expulsion, emergency removal, weapons, and physical restraint; out-of-school behavior; participation in extracurricular activities; academic progress; and citizenship.

The policies shall ensure due process rights for students and parents, including consideration for students who have been identified as requiring special education programs and services.

The board shall also consider the potential, disparate impact of the policies on students because of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, or socioeconomic background.

The board shall publicize its support of these policies; its support of the staff in enforcing them; and the staff's accountability for implementing them.

12.3(7) Health services. The board shall adopt a policy for the implementation of a school health services program consistent with the provisions of 281—41.96(256B).

12.3(8) Audit of school funds. This subrule applies to school districts. The results of the annual audit of all school district funds conducted by the state auditor or a private auditing firm shall be made part of the official records of the board as described in Iowa Code section 11.6.

12.3(9) School or school district building grade-level organization. The board shall adopt a grade-level organization for the buildings under its jurisdiction as described in Iowa Code section 279.39.

12.3(10) Report on accredited nonpublic school students. Between September 1 and October 1 of each year, the board secretary of each school district shall secure from each accredited nonpublic school located within its boundaries information about enrolled students as required

by Iowa Code section 299.3. Each accredited nonpublic school shall submit the required information in duplicate. The board secretary of each school district shall send one copy to the board secretary of the area education agency within which the school district is located.

Within ten days of receipt of notice, each accredited nonpublic school shall send a report to the board secretary of the school district within which the accredited nonpublic school is located. This report shall conform to the requirements of Iowa Code section 299.3.

DIVISION IV SCHOOL PERSONNEL

281—12.4(256) School personnel. License/certificate and endorsement standards required in this rule relate to licenses/certificates and endorsements issued by the state board of educational examiners. The following standards shall apply to personnel employed in accredited schools.

12.4(1) *Instructional professional staff.* Each person who holds a license/certificate endorsed for the service for which that person is employed shall be eligible for classification as a member of the instructional professional staff.

12.4(2) *Noninstructional professional staff.* A person who holds a statement of professional recognition, including but not limited to a physician, dentist, nurse, speech therapist, or a person in one of the other noninstructional professional areas designated by the state board of education, shall be eligible for classification as a member of the noninstructional professional staff.

12.4(3) *Basis for approval of professional staff.* Each member of the professional staff shall be classified as either instructional or noninstructional. An instructional professional staff member shall be regarded as approved when holding either an appropriate license/certificate with endorsement or endorsements, or a license/certificate with an endorsement statement, indicating the specific teaching assignments that may be given. A noninstructional professional staff member shall be regarded as approved when holding a statement of professional recognition for the specific type of noninstructional professional school service for which employed.

12.4(4) *Required administrative personnel.* Each board that operates both an elementary school and a secondary school shall employ as its executive officer and chief administrator a person who holds a license/certificate endorsed for service as a superintendent. The board of a school district may meet this requirement by contracting with its area education agency for "superintendency services" as provided by Iowa Code section 273.7A. The individual employed or contracted for as superintendent may serve as elementary principal in that school or school district provided that the superintendent holds the proper licensure/certification but cannot also serve as a high school principal in that school or school district. For purposes of this subrule, high school means a school which commences with either grade 9 or grade 10, as determined by the board of directors of the school district, or by the governing authority of the nonpublic school in the case of nonpublic schools. Boards of school districts may jointly employ a superintendent, provided such arrangements comply with the provisions of Iowa Code subsection 279.23(4).

12.4(5) *Staffing policies—elementary schools.* The board operating an elementary school shall develop and adopt staffing policies designed to attract, retain, and effectively utilize competent personnel. Each board operating an elementary school shall employ at least one elementary principal. This position may be combined with that of secondary principal or with a teaching assignment at the elementary or secondary level, provided the individual holds the proper licenses/certificates and endorsements.

When grades seven and eight are part of an organized and administered junior high school, the staffing policies adopted by the board for secondary schools shall apply. When grades seven and eight are part of an organized and administered middle school, the staffing policies adopted by the board for elementary schools shall apply.

12.4(6) Staffing policies—secondary schools. The board operating a secondary school shall develop and adopt staffing policies designed to attract, retain, and effectively utilize competent personnel. Each board operating a secondary school shall employ at least one secondary principal. This position may be combined with that of elementary principal or with a teaching assignment at the elementary or secondary level, provided the individual holds the proper licenses/certificates and endorsements. This position cannot be combined with that of superintendent.

12.4(7) Principal. “Principal” means a licensed/certificated member of a school’s instructional staff who serves as an instructional leader, coordinates the process and substance of educational and instructional programs, coordinates the budget of the school, provides formative evaluation for all practitioners and other persons in the school, recommends or has effective authority to appoint, assign, promote, or transfer personnel in a school building, implements the local school board’s policy in a manner consistent with professional practice and ethics, and assists in the development and supervision of a school’s student activities program.

12.4(8) Teacher. A teacher shall be defined as a member of the instructional professional staff who holds a license/certificate endorsed for the type of position in which employed. A teacher diagnoses, prescribes, evaluates, and directs student learnings in terms of the school’s objectives, either singly or in concert with other professional staff members; shares responsibility with the total professional staff for developing educational procedures and student activities to be used in achieving the school’s objectives; supervises educational aides who assist in serving students for whom the teacher is responsible; and evaluates or assesses student progress during and following instruction in terms of the objectives sought, and uses this information to develop further educational procedures.

12.4(9) Educational assistant. An educational assistant shall be defined as an employee who, in the presence or absence of an instructional professional staff member but under the direction, supervision, and control of the instructional professional staff, supervises students or assists in providing instructional and other direct educational services to students and their families. An educational assistant shall not substitute for or replace the functions and duties of a teacher as established in subrule 12.4(8).

During the initial year of employment, an educational assistant shall complete staff development approved by the board as provided in subrule 12.7(1).

12.4(10) Record of license/certificate or statement of professional recognition. The board shall require each administrator, teacher, support service staff member, and noninstructional professional staff member on its staff to supply evidence that each holds a license/certificate or statement of professional recognition which is in force and valid for the type of position in which employed.

12.4(11) Record required regarding teacher and administrative assignments. The board shall require its superintendent or other designated administrator to maintain a file for all regularly employed members of the instructional professional staff, including substitute teachers. The file shall consist of complete official transcripts of the preparation of these staff members and their legal licenses/certificates or copies thereof showing that they are eligible for the

position in which employed. The official shall also maintain on file a legal license/certificate or statement of professional recognition as defined in subrule 12.4(2) for each member of the noninstructional professional staff. These records shall be on file at the beginning of and throughout each school year and shall be updated annually to reflect all professional growth.

On December 1 of each year, the official shall verify to the department of education the licensure/certification and endorsement status of each member of the instructional and administrative staff. This report shall be on forms provided by the department of education and shall identify all persons holding conditional authorizations and their specific assignment(s) with the conditional authorization(s).

12.4(12) Nurses. Each board that employs a nurse shall require a current license to be filed with the superintendent or other designated administrator as specified in subrule 12.4(10).

12.4(13) Prekindergarten staff. Prekindergarten teachers shall hold a license/certificate valid for the prekindergarten level. The board shall employ personnel as necessary to provide effective supervision and instruction in the prekindergarten program.

12.4(14) Physical examination. Except as otherwise provided in 281—43.15(285), the local board shall require each employee to file with it certification of fitness to perform the tasks assigned which shall be in the form of a written report of a physical examination, including a check for tuberculosis, by a licensed physician and surgeon, osteopathic physician and surgeon, osteopath, or qualified doctor of chiropractic, licensed physician assistant, or advanced registered nurse practitioner. A report shall be filed at the beginning of service and at three-year intervals.

Each doctor of chiropractic licensed as of July 1, 1974, shall affirm on each certificate of physical examination that the affidavit required by Iowa Code section 151.8 is on file with the Iowa board of chiropractic examiners.

12.4(15) Support staff. The board shall develop and implement procedures for the use of educational support staff to augment classroom instruction and to meet individual student needs. These staff members may be employed by the board or by the area education agency.

12.4(16) Volunteer. A volunteer shall be defined as an individual who, without compensation or remuneration, provides a supportive role and performs tasks under the direction, supervision, and control of the school or school district staff. A volunteer shall not work as a substitute for or replace the functions and duties of a teacher as established in subrule 12.4(8).

DIVISION V EDUCATION PROGRAM

281—12.5(256) Education program. The following education program standards shall be met by schools and school districts for accreditation with the start of the 1989–1990 school year.

12.5(1) Prekindergarten program. If a school offers a prekindergarten program, the program shall be designed to help children to work and play with others, to express themselves, to learn to use and manage their bodies, and to extend their interests and understanding of the world about them. The prekindergarten program shall relate the role of the family to the child's developing sense of self and perception of others. Planning and carrying out prekindergarten activities designed to encourage cooperative efforts between home and school shall focus on community resources. A prekindergarten teacher shall hold a license/certificate licensing/certifying that the holder is qualified to teach in prekindergarten. A nonpublic school which offers only a prekindergarten may, but is not required to, seek and obtain accreditation.

12.5(2) Kindergarten program. The kindergarten program shall include experiences designed to develop healthy emotional and social habits and growth in the language arts and communication skills, as well as a capacity for the completion of individual tasks, and protect and increase physical well-being with attention given to experiences relating to the development of life skills and human growth and development. A kindergarten teacher shall be licensed/certificated to teach in kindergarten. An accredited nonpublic school must meet the requirements of this subrule only if the nonpublic school offers a kindergarten program.

12.5(3) Elementary program, grades 1–6. The following areas shall be taught in grades one through six: English–language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, health, human growth and development, physical education, traffic safety, music, and visual art.

In implementing the elementary program standards, the following general curriculum definitions shall be used.

a. English–language arts. English–language arts instruction shall include the following communication processes: speaking; listening; reading; writing; viewing; and visual expression and nonverbal communication. Instruction shall incorporate language learning and creative, logical, and critical thinking. The following shall be taught: oral and written composition; communication processes and skills, including handwriting and spelling; literature; creative dramatics; and reading.

b. Social studies. Social studies instruction shall include citizenship education, history, and social sciences. Democratic beliefs and values, problem–solving skills, and social and political participation skills shall be incorporated. Instruction shall encompass geography, history of the United States and Iowa, and cultures of other peoples and nations. American citizenship, including the study of national, state, and local government; and the awareness of the physical, social, emotional and mental self shall be infused in the instructional program.

c. Mathematics. Mathematics instruction shall include number sense and numeration; concepts and computational skills with whole numbers, fractions, mixed numbers and decimals; estimation and mental arithmetic; geometry; measurement; statistics and probability; and patterns and relationships. This content shall be taught through an emphasis on mathematical problem solving, reasoning, and applications; language and symbolism to communicate mathematical ideas; and connections among mathematical topics and between mathematics and other disciplines. Calculators and computers shall be used in concept development and problem solving.

d. Science. Science instruction shall include life, earth, and physical science and shall incorporate hands–on process skills; scientific knowledge; application of the skills and knowledge to students and society; conservation of natural resources; and environmental awareness.

e. Health. Health instruction shall include personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; substance abuse and nonuse, encompassing the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and poisons on the human body; human sexuality, self–esteem, stress management, and interpersonal relationships; emotional and social health; health resources; and prevention and control of disease, and the characteristics of communicable diseases, including acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

f. Physical education. Physical education instruction shall include movement experiences and body mechanics; fitness activities; rhythmic activities; stunts and tumbling; simple games and relays; sports skills and activities; and water safety.

g. Traffic safety. Traffic safety instruction shall include pedestrian safety; bicycle safety; auto passenger safety; school bus passenger safety; seat belt use; substance education; and the application of legal responsibility and risk management to these concepts. IAC 3/2/94, 11/19/97

h. Music. Music instruction shall include skills, knowledge, and attitudes and shall include singing and playing music; listening to and using music; reading and writing music; recognizing the value of the world's musical heritage; respecting individual musical aspirations and values; and preparing for consuming, performing, or composing.

i. Visual art. Visual art instruction shall include perceiving, comprehending, and evaluating the visual world; viewing and understanding the visual arts; developing and communicating imaginative and inventive ideas; and making art.

12.5(4) Junior high program, grades 7 and 8. The following shall be taught in grades 7 and 8: English–language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, health, human growth and development, physical education, music, visual art, family and consumer education, career education, and technology education. Instruction in the following areas shall include the contributions and perspectives of persons with disabilities, both men and women, and persons from diverse racial and ethnic groups, and shall be designed to eliminate career and employment stereotypes.

In implementing the junior high program standards, the following general curriculum definitions shall be used.

a. English–language arts. Same definition as in 12.5(3)“a” with the exclusion of handwriting.

b. Social studies. Social studies instruction shall include citizenship education, history and social sciences. Democratic beliefs and values, problem–solving skills, and social and political participation skills shall be incorporated. Instruction shall encompass history, economics, geography, government including American citizenship, behavioral sciences, and the cultures of other peoples and nations. Strategies for continued development of positive self–perceptions shall be infused.

c. Mathematics. Mathematics instruction shall include number and number relationships including ratio, proportion, and percent; number systems and number theory; estimation and computation; geometry; measurement; statistics and probability; and algebraic concepts of variables, patterns, and functions. This content shall be taught through an emphasis on mathematical problem solving, reasoning, and applications; language and symbolism to communicate mathematical ideas; and connections among mathematical topics and between mathematics and other disciplines. Calculators and computers shall be used in concept development and problem solving.

d. Science. Same definition as in 12.5(3)“d.”

e. Health. Health instruction shall include personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; substance abuse and nonuse, encompassing the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and poisons on the human body; human sexuality, self–esteem, stress management, and interpersonal relationships; emotional and social health; health resources; and prevention and control of disease and the characteristics of communicable diseases, including sexually transmitted diseases and acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

f. Physical education. Physical education shall include the physical fitness activities that increase cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, and flexibility; sports and games; tumbling and gymnastics; rhythms and dance; water safety; leisure and lifetime activities.

g. Music. Same definition as in 12.5(3) "h" with the addition of using music as an avocation or vocation.

h. Visual art. Same definition as in 12.5(3) "i" with the addition of using visual arts as an avocation or vocation.

i. Family and consumer education. Family and consumer education instruction shall include the development of positive self-concept, understanding personal growth and development and relationships with peers and family members in the home, school and community, including men, women, minorities and persons with disabilities. Subject matter emphasizes the home and family, including parenting, child development, textiles and clothing, consumer and resource management, foods and nutrition, housing, and family and individual health. This subrule shall not apply to nonpublic schools.

j. Career education. Career education instruction shall include exploration of employment opportunities, experiences in career decision making, and experiences to help students integrate work values and work skills into their lives. This subrule shall not apply to nonpublic schools. However, nonpublic schools shall comply with subrule 12.5(7).

k. Technology education. Technology education instruction shall include awareness of technology and its impact on society and the environment; furthering students' career development by contributing to their scientific principles, technical information and skills to solve problems related to an advanced technological society; and orienting students to technologies which impact occupations in all six of the required service areas. The purpose of this instruction is to help students become technologically literate and become equipped with the necessary skills to cope with, live in, work in, and contribute to a highly technological society. This subrule shall not apply to nonpublic schools.

12.5(5) High school program, grades 9–12. In grades 9 through 12 a unit is a course or equivalent related components or partial units taught throughout the academic year as defined in subrule 12.5(18). The following shall be offered and taught as the minimum program: English–language arts, six units; social studies, five units; mathematics, six units as specified in 12.5(5) "c"; science, five units; health, one unit; physical education, one unit; fine arts, three units; foreign language, four units; and vocational education, 12 units as specified in 12.5(5) "i."

In implementing the high school program standards, the following curriculum standards shall be used.

a. English–language arts (six units). English–language arts instruction shall include the following communication processes: speaking; listening; reading; writing; viewing; and visual expression and nonverbal communication. Instruction shall incorporate language learning and creative, logical, and critical thinking. The program shall encompass communication processes and skills; written composition; speech; debate; American, English, and world literature; creative dramatics; and journalism.

b. Social studies (five units). Social studies instruction shall include citizenship education, history, and the social sciences. Instruction shall encompass the history of the United States and the history and cultures of other peoples and nations including the analysis of persons, events, issues, and historical evidence reflecting time, change, and cause and effect. Instruction in United States government shall include an overview of American government through the study of the United States Constitution, the bill of rights, the federal system of government, and the structure and relationship between the national, state, county, and local governments; and voter education including instruction in statutes and procedures, voter registration requirements, the use of paper ballots and voting machines in the election process, and the method of acquiring and casting an absentee ballot. Students' knowledge of the Constitution and the bill of rights shall be assessed. Economics shall include comparative and consumer studies in relation to the market and command economic systems. Geography shall include the earth's physical and cultural features, their spatial arrangement and interrelationships, and the forces that affect them. Sociology, psychology, and anthropology shall include the scientific study of the individual and group behavior(s) reflecting the impact of these behaviors on persons, groups, society, and the major institutions in a society. Democratic beliefs and values, problem-solving skills, and social and political skills shall be incorporated. All students in grades nine through twelve must, as a condition of graduation, complete a minimum of one-half unit of United States government and one unit of United States history and receive instruction in the government of Iowa.

c. Mathematics (six units). Mathematics instruction shall include:

- (1) Four sequential units which are preparatory to postsecondary educational programs. These units shall include strands in algebra, geometry, trigonometry, statistics, probability, and discrete mathematics. Mathematical concepts, operations, and applications shall be included for each of these strands. These strands shall be taught through an emphasis on mathematical problem solving, reasoning, and structure; language and symbolism to communicate mathematical ideas; and connections among mathematical topics and between mathematics and other disciplines. Calculators and computers shall be used in concept development and problem solving.
- (2) Two additional units shall be taught. These additional units may include mathematical content as identified in, but not limited to, paragraphs 12.5(3) "c," 12.5(4) "c," and 12.5(5) "c"(1). These units are to accommodate the locally identified needs of the students in the school or school district. This content shall be taught through an emphasis on mathematical problem solving, reasoning, and structure; language and symbolism to communicate mathematical ideas; and connections among mathematical topics and between mathematics and other disciplines. Calculators and computers shall be used in concept development and problem solving.

d. Science (five units). Science instruction shall include biological, earth, and physical science, including physics and chemistry. Full units of chemistry and physics shall be taught but may be offered in alternate years. All science instruction shall incorporate hands-on process skills; scientific knowledge; the application of the skills and knowledge to students and society; conservation of natural resources; and environmental awareness.

e. Health (one unit). Health instruction shall include personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; human growth and development; substance abuse and nonuse; emotional and social health; health resources; and prevention and control of disease, including sexually transmitted diseases and acquired immune deficiency syndrome, current crucial health issues, human sexuality, self-esteem, stress management, and interpersonal relationships.

f. Physical education (one unit). Physical education shall include the physical fitness activities that increase cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and flexibility; sports and games; tumbling and gymnastics; rhythms and dance; water safety; leisure and lifetime activities.

All physically able students shall be required to participate in the program for a minimum of one-eighth unit during each semester they are enrolled except as otherwise provided in this paragraph. A twelfth-grade student may be excused from this requirement by the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled under one of the following circumstances:

(1) The student is enrolled in a cooperative, work-study, or other educational program authorized by the school which requires the student's absence from the school premises during the school day.

(2) The student is enrolled in academic courses not otherwise available.

(3) An organized and supervised athletic program which requires at least as much time of participation per week as one-eighth unit of physical education.

Students in grades nine through eleven may be excused from the physical education requirement in order to enroll in academic courses not otherwise available to the student if the board of directors of the school district in which the school is located, or the authorities in charge of the school, if the school is a nonpublic school, determine that students from the school may be permitted to be excused from the physical education requirement.

A student may be excused by the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled, in consultation with the student's counselor, for up to one semester, trimester, or the equivalent of a semester or trimester, per year if the parent or guardian of the student requests in writing that the student be excused from the physical education requirement. The student seeking to be excused from the physical education requirement must, at some time during the period for which the excuse is sought, be a participant in an organized and supervised athletic program which requires at least as much time of participation per week as one-eighth unit of physical education.

The student's parent or guardian must request the excuse in writing. The principal shall inform the superintendent that the student has been excused.

g. Fine arts (three units). Fine arts instruction shall include at least two of the following:

(1) Dance. Dance instruction shall encompass developing basic movement skills; elementary movement concepts; study of dance forms and dance heritage; participating in dance; and evaluating dance as a creative art; and using dance as an avocation or vocation.

(2) Music. Music instruction shall include skills, knowledge, and attitudes and the singing and playing of music; listening to and using music; reading and writing music; recognizing the value of the world's musical heritage; respecting individual musical aspirations and values; preparing for consuming, performing, or composing; and using music as an avocation or vocation.

- (3) Theatre. Theatre instruction shall encompass developing the internal and external resources used in the theatre process; creating theatre through artistic collaboration; relating theatre to its social context; forming aesthetic judgments; and using theatre as an avocation or vocation.
- (4) Visual art. Visual art instruction shall include developing concepts and values about natural and created environments; critiquing works of art; evaluating relationships between art and societies; analyzing, abstracting, and synthesizing visual forms to express ideas; making art; and using visual art as an avocation or vocation.

h. Foreign language (four units). The foreign language program shall be a four-unit sequence of uninterrupted study in at least one language. Foreign language instruction shall include listening comprehension appropriate to the level of instruction; rateable oral proficiency; reading comprehension appropriate to the level of instruction; writing proficiency appropriate to the level of instruction and cultural awareness.

All high schools shall offer and teach the first two units of the sequence. The third and fourth units must be offered. However, the department of education may, on an annual basis, waive the third and fourth unit requirements upon the request of the board. The board must document that a licensed/certificated teacher was employed and assigned a schedule that would have allowed students to enroll, that the class was properly scheduled, that students were aware of the course offerings, and that no students enrolled.

i. Vocational education—school districts (three units each in at least four of the six service areas). A minimum of three sequential units, of which only one may be a core unit, shall be taught in four of the following six service areas: agricultural education, business and office education, health occupations education, home economics education, industrial education, and marketing education. The instruction shall be competency-based; shall provide a base of knowledge which will prepare students for entry level employment, additional on-the-job training, and postsecondary education within their chosen field; shall be articulated with postsecondary programs of study, including apprenticeship programs; shall reinforce basic academic skills; shall include the contributions and perspectives of persons with disabilities, both men and women, and persons from diverse racial and ethnic groups. Vocational core courses may be used in more than one vocational service area. Multioccupations may be used to complete a sequence in more than one vocational service area; however, a core course(s) and multioccupations cannot be used in the same sequence. If a district elects to use multioccupations to meet the requirements in more than one service area, documentation must be provided to indicate that a sufficient variety of quality training stations be available to allow students to develop occupational competencies. A district may apply for a waiver if an innovative plan for meeting the instructional requirement for the standard is submitted to and approved by the director of the department of education.

The instructional programs also shall comply with the provisions of Iowa Code chapter 258 relating to vocational education. Advisory committee/councils designed to assist vocational education planning and evaluation shall be composed of public members with emphasis on persons representing business, agriculture, industry, and labor. The membership of local advisory committees/councils will fairly represent each gender and minority residing in the school district. The accreditation status of a school district failing to comply with the provisions of this subrule shall be governed by 281—subrule 46.7(10), paragraph “g.”

(1) A service area is the broad category of instruction in the following occupational cluster areas (definitions are those used in these rules):

(2) "Agricultural education programs" prepare individuals for employment in agriculture-related occupations. Such programs encompass the study of applied sciences and business management principles, as they relate to agriculture. Agricultural education focuses on, but is not limited to, study in horticulture, forestry, conservation, natural resources, agricultural products and processing, production of food and fiber, aquaculture and other agricultural products, mechanics, sales and service, economics marketing, and leadership development.

(3) "Business and office education programs" prepare individuals for employment in varied occupations involving such activities as planning, organizing, directing, and controlling all business office systems and procedures. Instruction offered includes such activities as preparing, transcribing, systematizing, preserving communications; analyzing financial records; receiving and disbursing money; gathering, processing and distributing information; and performing other business and office duties.

(4) "Health occupations education programs" prepare individuals for employment in a variety of occupations concerned with providing care in the areas of wellness, prevention of disease, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation. Instruction offered encompasses varied activities in such areas as dental science, medical science, diagnostic services, treatment therapy, patient care areas, rehabilitation services, record keeping, emergency care, and health education. Many occupations in this category require licensing or credentialing to practice, or to use a specific title.

(5) "Home economics education programs" encompass two categories of instructional programs:

1. "Consumer and family science" programs may be taught to prepare individuals for a multiple role of homemaker and wage earner and may include such content areas as food and nutrition; consumer education; family living and parenthood; child development and guidance; family and individual health; housing and home management; and clothing and textiles.

2. "Home economics occupations programs" prepare individuals for paid employment in such home economics-related occupations as child care aide/assistant, food production management and services, and homemaker/home health aide.

(6) "Industrial education programs" encompass two categories of instructional programs— industrial technology and trade and industrial. Industrial technology means an applied discipline designed to promote technological literacy which provides knowledge and understanding of the impact of technology including its organizations, techniques, tools, and skills to solve practical problems and extend human capabilities in areas such as construction, manufacturing, communication, transportation, power and energy. Trade and industrial programs prepare individuals for employment in such areas as protective services, construction trades, mechanics and repairers, precision production, transportation, and graphic communications. Instruction includes regular systematic classroom activities, followed by experiential learning with the most important processes, tools, machines, management ideas, and impacts of technology.

(7) "Marketing education programs" prepare individuals for marketing occupations, including merchandising and management—those activities which make products and services readily available to consumers and business. Instruction stresses the concept that marketing is the bridge between production (including the creation of services and ideas) and consumption. These activities are performed by retailers, wholesalers, and businesses providing services in for-profit and not-for-profit business firms.

(8) "Sequential unit" applies to an integrated offering, directly related to the educational and occupational skills preparation of individuals for jobs and preparation for postsecondary education. Sequential units provide a logical framework for the instruction offered in a related occupational area and do not require prerequisites for enrollment. A unit is defined in subrule 12.5(18).

(9) "Competency" is a learned student performance statement which can be accurately repeated and measured. Instruction is based on incumbent worker-validated statements of learner results (competencies) which clearly describe what skills the students will be able to demonstrate as a result of the instruction. Competencies function as the basis for building the instructional program to be offered. Teacher evaluation of students, based upon their ability to perform the competencies, is an integral part of a competency-based system.

(10) "Minimum competency lists" contain competencies validated by statewide technical committees, composed of representatives from appropriate businesses, industries, agriculture, and organized labor. These lists contain essential competencies which lead to entry level employment and are not intended to be the only competencies learned. Districts will choose one set of competencies per service area upon which to build their program or follow the process detailed in 281—subrule 46.7(2) to develop local competencies.

(11) "Clinical experience" involves direct instructor supervision in the actual workplace, so that the learner has the opportunity to apply theory and to perfect skills taught in the classroom and laboratory.

"Field training" is an applied learning experience in a nonclassroom environment under the supervision of an instructor.

"Lab training" is experimentation, practice or simulation by students under the supervision of an instructor.

"On-the-job training" is a cooperative work experience planned and supervised by a teacher-coordinator and the supervisor in the employment setting.

(12) "Coring" is an instructional design whereby competencies common to two or more different vocational service areas are taught as one course offering. Courses shall be no longer than one unit of instruction. Course(s) may be placed wherever appropriate within the program offered. This offering may be acceptable as a unit or partial unit in more than one vocational program to meet the standard.

(13) "Articulation" is the process of mutually agreeing upon competencies and performance levels transferable between institutions and programs for advanced placement or credit in a vocational program. An articulation agreement is the written document which explains the decisions agreed upon and the process used by the institution to grant advanced placement or credit.

(14) "Multioccupational courses" combine on-the-job training in any of the occupational areas with the related classroom instruction. The instructor provides the related classroom instruction and coordinates the training with the employer at the work site. A multioccupational course may only be used to complete a sequence in more than one vocational service area if competencies from the appropriate set of minimum competencies are a part of the related instruction.

j. Vocational education/nonpublic schools (five units). A nonpublic school which provides an educational program that includes grades 9 through 12 shall offer and teach five units of occupational education subjects, which may include, but are not limited to, programs, services, and activities which prepare students for employment in business or office occupations, trade and industrial occupations, consumer and family sciences or home economics occupations, agricultural occupations, marketing occupations, and health occupations. By July 1, 1993, instruction shall be competency-based, articulated with postsecondary programs of study, and may include field, laboratory, or on-the-job training.

12.5(6) *Physical education and health courses exemption.* A pupil shall not be required to enroll in either physical education or health courses if the pupil's parent or guardian files a written statement with the school principal that the course conflicts with the pupil's religious beliefs.

12.5(7) *Career education.* Each school or school district shall incorporate school-to-career educational programming into its comprehensive school improvement plan. Curricular and cocurricular teaching and learning experiences regarding career education shall be provided from the prekindergarten level through grade 12. Career education shall be incorporated into the total educational program and shall include, but is not limited to, awareness of self in relation to others and the needs of society; exploration of employment opportunities, at a minimum, within Iowa; experiences in personal decision making; experiences that help students connect work values into all aspects of their lives; and the development of employability skills. In the implementation of this subrule, the board shall comply with Iowa Code section 280.9.

12.5(8) *Multicultural and gender fair approaches to the educational program.* The board shall establish a policy to ensure that students are free from discriminatory practices in the educational program as required by Iowa Code section 256.11. In developing or revising the policy, parents, students, instructional and noninstructional staff, and community members shall be involved. Each school or school district shall incorporate multicultural and gender fair goals for the educational program into its comprehensive school improvement plan. Incorporation shall include the following:

a. Multicultural approaches to the educational program. These shall be defined as approaches which foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, including race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, and socioeconomic background. The contributions and perspectives of Asian Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, European Americans, and persons with disabilities shall be included in the program.

b. Gender fair approaches to the educational program. These shall be defined as approaches which foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of women and men to society. The program shall reflect the wide variety of roles open to both women and men and shall provide equal opportunity to both sexes.

12.5(9) *Special education.* The board of each school district shall provide special education programs and services for its resident children which comply with rules of the state board of education implementing Iowa Code chapters 256, 256B, 273, and 280.

12.5(10) *Technology integration.* Each school or school district shall incorporate into its comprehensive school improvement plan demonstrated use of technology to meet its student learning goals. As described in Iowa Code section 295.3, progress with the use of technology shall be included in the school district's annual progress report.

12.5(11) *Global education.* Each school or school district shall incorporate global education into its comprehensive school improvement plan as required by Iowa Code section 256.11. Global education shall be incorporated into all areas and levels of the educational program so students have the opportunity to acquire a realistic perspective on world issues, problems, and the relationship between an individual's self-interest and the concerns of people elsewhere in the world.

12.5(12) *Provisions for gifted and talented students.* Each school district shall incorporate gifted and talented programming into its comprehensive school improvement plan as required by Iowa Code section 257.43. The comprehensive school improvement plan shall include the following gifted and talented program provisions: valid and systematic procedures, including multiple selection criteria for identifying gifted and talented students from the total student population; goals and performance measures; a qualitatively differentiated program to meet the students' cognitive and affective needs; staffing provisions; an in-service design; a budget; and qualifications of personnel administering the program. Each school district shall review and evaluate its gifted and talented programming. This subrule does not apply to accredited nonpublic schools.

12.5(13) *Provisions for at-risk students.* Each school district shall make provisions in its comprehensive school improvement plan for meeting the needs of at-risk students. Valid and systematic procedures and criteria shall be used to identify at-risk students within the school district's school-age population. Provisions for at-risk students shall include the following: modified instructional practices; specialized curriculum; parental involvement; and in-school and community-based support services as required in Iowa Code sections 256.11, 280.19, and 280.19A. Each school district shall review and evaluate its at-risk program. This subrule does not apply to accredited nonpublic schools.

For those school districts requesting to use additional allowable growth for its at-risk program, the comprehensive school improvement plan shall incorporate the requirements specified in Iowa Code sections 257.38 to 257.40.

12.5(14) *Unit.* A unit is a course which meets one of the following criteria: it is taught for at least 200 minutes per week for 36 weeks; it is taught for the equivalent of 120 hours of instruction; or it is an equated requirement as a part of an innovative program filed as prescribed in rule 12.9(256). A fractional unit shall be calculated in a manner consistent with this subrule. Multiple-section courses taught at the same time in a single classroom situation by one teacher do not meet this unit definition for the assignment of a unit of credit. However, the third and fourth years of a foreign language may be taught at the same time by one teacher in a single classroom situation each yielding a unit of credit.

12.5(15) Credit. A student shall receive a credit or a partial credit upon successful completion of a course which meets one of the criteria in subrule 12.5(14). The board may award credit on a performance basis through the administration of an examination, provided the examination covers the content ordinarily included in the regular course.

12.5(16) Subject offering. A subject shall be regarded as offered when the teacher of the subject has met the licensure and endorsement standards of the state board of educational examiners for that subject; instructional materials and facilities for that subject have been provided; and students have been informed, based on their aptitudes, interests, and abilities, about possible value of the subject.

A subject shall be regarded as taught only when students are instructed in it in accordance with all applicable requirements outlined herein. Subjects which the law requires schools and school districts to offer and teach shall be made available during the school day as defined in subrules 12.1(8) to 12.1(10).

12.5(17) Educational excellence program—Phase III. Educational excellence funds received by school districts shall support the school district's comprehensive school improvement plan according to the intent of the general assembly as described in Iowa Code section 294A.12. When Phase III funds are used to support the district's comprehensive school improvement plan, the school district shall submit the Phase III budget on forms supplied by the department.

12.5(18) Early intervention program. Each school district receiving early intervention program funds shall make provisions to meet the needs of kindergarten through grade 3 students. The intent of the early intervention program is to reduce class size, to achieve a higher level of student success in the basic skills, and to increase teacher-parent communication and accountability. Each school district shall develop a class size management strategy by September 15, 1999, to work toward, or to maintain, class sizes in basic skills instruction for kindergarten through grade 3 that are at the state goal of 17 students per teacher. Each school district shall incorporate into its comprehensive school improvement plan goals and activities for kindergarten through grade 3 students to achieve a higher level of success in the basic skills, especially reading. A school district shall, at a minimum, biannually inform parents of their individual child's performance on the results of diagnostic assessments in kindergarten through grade 3. If intervention is appropriate, the school district shall inform the parents of the actions the school district intends to take to improve the child's reading skills and provide the parents with strategies to enable the parents to improve their child's skills.

DIVISION VI ACTIVITY PROGRAM

281—12.6(256) Activity program. The following standards shall apply to the activity program of accredited schools and school districts.

12.6(1) General guidelines. Each board shall sponsor a pupil activity program sufficiently broad and balanced to offer opportunities for all pupils to participate. The program shall be supervised by qualified professional staff and shall be designed to meet the needs and interests and challenge the abilities of all pupils consistent with their individual stages of development; contribute to the physical, mental, athletic, civic, social, moral, and emotional growth of all pupils; offer opportunities for both individual and group activities; be integrated with the

instructional program; and provide balance so a limited number of activities will not be perpetuated at the expense of others.

12.6(2) *Supervised intramural sports.* If the board sponsors a voluntary program of supervised intramural sports for pupils in grades seven through twelve, qualified personnel and adequate facilities, equipment, and supplies shall be provided. Middle school grades below grade seven may also participate.

DIVISION VII STAFF DEVELOPMENT

281—12.7(256) Staff development. The following standards shall apply to staff development for accredited schools and school districts.

12.7(1) *Provisions for staff development.* Each school or school district shall incorporate into its comprehensive school improvement plan provisions for the professional development of all staff. To meet the professional needs of all staff, staff development activities shall align with district goals; shall be based on student and staff information; shall prepare all employees to work effectively with diverse learners and to implement multicultural, gender fair approaches to the educational program; and shall emphasize the research-based practices to achieve increased student achievement, learning, and performance as stated in the comprehensive school improvement plan.

12.7(2) *Budget for staff development.* The board shall annually budget specified funds to implement the plan required in subrule 12.7(1).

DIVISION VIII ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

281—12.8(256) Accountability for student achievement. Schools and school districts shall meet the following accountability requirements for increased student achievement. Area education agencies shall provide technical assistance as required by 281—72.7(273).

12.8(1) *Comprehensive school improvement.* The general accreditation standards are minimum, uniform requirements. However, the department encourages schools and school districts to go beyond the minimum with their work toward ongoing improvement. As a means to this end, local comprehensive school improvement plans shall be specific to a school or school district and designed, at a minimum, to increase the learning, achievement, and performance of all students.

As a part of ongoing improvement in its educational system, the board shall adopt a written comprehensive school improvement plan designed for continuous school, parental, and community involvement in the development and monitoring of a plan that is aligned with school or school district determined needs. The plan shall incorporate, to the extent possible, the consolidation of federal and state planning, goal setting, and reporting requirements. The plan shall contain, but is not limited to, the following components:

a. *Community involvement.*

- (1) Local community. The school or school district shall involve the local community in decision-making processes as appropriate. The school or school district shall seek input from the local community about, but not limited to, the following elements at least once every five years:

1. Statement of philosophy, beliefs, mission, or vision;
 2. Major educational needs; and
 3. Student learning goals.
- (2) School improvement advisory committee. To meet requirements of Iowa Code section 280.12(2), the board shall appoint and charge a school improvement advisory committee to make recommendations to the board. Based on the committee members' analysis of the needs assessment data, they shall make recommendations to the board about the following components:
1. Major educational needs;
 2. Student learning goals; and
 3. Long-range goals that include, but are not limited to, the state indicators that address reading, mathematics, and science achievement.
- (3) At least annually, the school improvement advisory committee shall also make recommendations to the board with regard to, but not limited to, the following:
1. Progress achieved with the annual improvement goals for the state indicators that address reading, mathematics, and science in subrule 12.8(3);
 2. Progress achieved with other locally determined core indicators; and
 3. Annual improvement goals for the state indicators that address reading, mathematics, and science achievement.

b. Data collection, analysis, and goal setting.

- (1) Policy. The board shall adopt a policy for conducting ongoing and long-range needs assessment processes. This policy shall ensure involvement of and communication with the local community regarding its expectations for adequate preparation for all students as responsible citizens and successful wage earners. The policy shall include provisions for keeping the local community regularly informed of progress on state indicators as described in subrule 12.8(3), other locally determined indicators within the comprehensive school improvement plan as required by Iowa Code section 280.12, and the methods a school district will use to inform kindergarten through grade 3 parents of their individual child's performance biannually as described in 1999 Iowa Acts, House File 743. The policy shall describe how the school or school district shall provide opportunities for local community feedback on an ongoing basis.
- (2) Long-range data collection and analysis. The long-range needs assessment process shall include provisions for collecting, analyzing, and reporting information derived from local, state, and national sources. The process shall include provisions for reviewing information acquired over time on the following:
1. State indicators and other locally determined indicators;
 2. Locally established student learning goals; and
 3. Specific data collection required by federal and state programs.

Schools and school districts shall also collect information about additional factors influencing student achievement which may include, but are not limited to, demographics, attitudes, health, and other risk factors.

- (3) Long-range goals. The board, with input from its school improvement advisory committee, shall adopt long-range goals to improve student achievement in at least the areas of reading, mathematics, and science.

- (4) Annual data collection and analysis. The ongoing needs assessment process shall include provisions for collecting and analyzing annual assessment data on the state indicators, other locally determined indicators, and locally established student learning goals.
- (5) Annual improvement goals. The board, with input from its school improvement advisory committee, shall adopt annual improvement goals based on data from at least one districtwide assessment. The goals shall describe desired annual increase in the curriculum areas of, but not limited to, mathematics, reading, and science achievement for all students, for particular subgroups of students, or both. Annual improvement goals may be set for the early intervention program as described in subrule 12.5(18), other state indicators, locally determined indicators, locally established student learning goals, other curriculum areas, future student employability, or factors influencing student achievement.

c. Content standards and benchmarks.

- (1) Policy. The board shall adopt a policy outlining its procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating its total curriculum. The policy shall describe a process for establishing content standards, benchmarks, performance levels, and annual improvement goals aligned with needs assessment information.
- (2) Content standards and benchmarks. The board shall adopt clear, rigorous, and challenging content standards and benchmarks in reading, mathematics, and science to guide the learning of students from the date of school entrance until high school graduation. Standards and benchmarks may be adopted for other curriculum areas defined in 281—Chapter 12, Division V. The comprehensive school improvement plan submitted to the department shall contain, at a minimum, content standards for reading, mathematics, and science. The educational program as defined in 281—Chapter 12, Division II, shall incorporate career education, multicultural and gender fair education, technology integration, global education, higher-order thinking skills, learning skills, and communication skills as outlined in subrules 12.5(7), 12.5(8), 12.5(10), and 12.5(11), and subparagraph 12.8(1) “c”(1).

d. Determination and implementation of actions to meet the needs. The comprehensive school improvement plan shall include actions the school or school district shall take districtwide in order to accomplish its long-range and annual improvement goals as required in Iowa Code section 280.12(1) “b.”

- (1) Actions shall include, but are not limited to, addressing the improvement of curricular and instructional practices to attain the long-range goals, annual improvement goals, and the early intervention goals as described in subrule 12.5(18).
- (2) A school or school district shall document consolidation of state and federal resources and requirements, as appropriate, to implement the actions in its comprehensive school improvement plan. State and federal resources shall be used, as applicable, to support implementation of the plan.
- (3) A school or school district may have building-level action plans, aligned with its comprehensive school improvement plan. These may be included in the comprehensive school improvement plan or kept on file at the local level.

e. Evaluation of the comprehensive school improvement plan. A school or school district shall develop strategies to collect data and information to determine if the plan has accomplished the goals for which it was established.

f. Assessment of student progress. Each school or school district shall include in its comprehensive school improvement plan provisions for districtwide assessment of student progress for all students. The plan shall identify valid and reliable student assessments aligned with local content standards. These assessments are not limited to commercially developed measures. School districts receiving early intervention funding described in subrule 12.5(18) shall provide for diagnostic reading assessments for kindergarten through grade 3 students as described in 1999 Iowa Acts, House File 743.

- (1) State indicators. Using at least one districtwide assessment, a school or school district shall assess student progress on the state indicators in, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science as specified in subrule 12.8(3). At least one districtwide assessment shall allow for, but not be limited to, the comparison of the school or school district's students with students from across the state and in the nation in reading, mathematics, and science. A school or school district shall use additional assessments to measure progress on locally determined content standards in at least reading, mathematics, and science.
- (2) Performance levels. A school or school district shall establish at least three performance levels on at least one districtwide valid and reliable assessment in the areas of reading and mathematics for at least grades 4, 8, and 11 and science in grades 8 and 11 or use the achievement levels as established by the Iowa Testing Program to meet the intent of this subparagraph (2).

g. Assurances and support. A school or school district shall provide evidence that its board has approved and supports the five-year comprehensive school improvement plan and any future revisions of that plan. This assurance includes the commitment for ongoing improvement of the educational system.

12.8(2) Submission of a comprehensive school improvement plan. A school or school district shall submit to the department and respective area education agency a multiyear comprehensive school improvement plan on or before September 15, 2000. Beginning July 1, 2001, a school or school district shall submit a revised five-year comprehensive school improvement plan by September 15 of the school year following the comprehensive site visit specified in Iowa Code section 256.11 which incorporates, when appropriate, areas of improvement noted by the school improvement visitation team as described in subrule 12.8(4). A school or school district may, at any time, file a revised comprehensive school improvement plan with the department and respective area education agency.

12.8(3) Annual reporting requirements. A school or school district shall, at minimum, report annually to its local community about the progress on the state indicators and other locally determined indicators.

a. State indicators. A school or school district shall collect data on the following indicators for reporting purposes:

- (1) The percentage of all fourth, eighth, and eleventh grade students achieving proficient or higher reading status using at least three achievement levels and by gender, race, socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, and other subgroups as required by state or federal law.

- (2) The percentage of all fourth, eighth, and eleventh grade students achieving proficient or higher mathematics status using at least three achievement levels and for gender, race, socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, and other subgroups as required by state or federal law.
- (3) The percentage of all eighth and eleventh grade students achieving proficient or higher science status using at least three achievement levels.
- (4) The percentage of students considered as dropouts for grades 7 to 12 by gender, race, students with disabilities, and other subgroups as required by state or federal law.
- (5) The percentage of high school seniors who intend to pursue postsecondary education/training.
- (6) The percentage of high school students achieving a score or status on a measure indicating probable postsecondary success. This measure should be the measure used by the majority of students in the school, school district, or attendance center who plan to attend a postsecondary institution.
- (7) The percentage of high school graduates who complete a core program of four years of English–language arts and three or more years each of mathematics, science, and social studies.

b. Annual progress report. Each school or school district shall submit an annual progress report to its local community, its respective area education agency, and the department. That report shall be submitted to the department by September 15, 2000, and by September 15 every year thereafter. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

- (1) Baseline data on at least one districtwide assessment for the state indicators described in subrule 12.8(3). Every year thereafter the school or school district shall compare the annual data collected with the baseline data. A school or school district is not required to report to the community about subgroup assessment results when a subgroup contains fewer than ten students at a grade level. A school or school district shall report districtwide assessment results for all enrolled and tuitioned–in students.
- (2) Locally determined performance levels for at least one districtwide assessment in, at a minimum, the areas of reading, mathematics, and science. Student achievement levels as defined by the Iowa Testing Program may be used to fulfill this requirement.
- (3) Long–range goals to improve student achievement in the areas of, but not limited to, reading, mathematics, and science.
- (4) Annual improvement goals based on at least one districtwide assessment in, at a minimum, the areas of reading, mathematics, and science. One annual improvement goal may address all areas, or individual annual improvement goals for each area may be identified. When a school or school district does not meet its annual improvement goals for one year, it shall include in its annual progress report the actions it will take to meet annual improvement goals for the next school year.
- (5) Data on multiple assessments for reporting achievement for all students in the areas of reading and mathematics by September 15, 2001, and for science by September 15, 2003.

- (6) Results by individual attendance centers, as appropriate, on the state indicators as stated in subrule 12.8(3) and any other locally determined factors or indicators. An attendance center, for reporting purposes, is a building that houses students in grade 4 or grade 8 or grade 11.
- (7) Progress with the use of technology as required by Iowa Code section 295.3. This requirement does not apply to accredited nonpublic schools.
- (8) School districts are encouraged to provide information on the reading proficiency of kindergarten through grade 3 students by grade level. However, all school districts receiving early intervention block grant funds shall report to the department the progress toward achieving their early intervention goals.
- (9) Other reports of progress as the director of the department requires and other reporting requirements as the result of federal and state program consolidation.

12.8(4) Comprehensive school improvement and the accreditation process. All schools and school districts having accreditation on August 18, 1999, are presumed accredited unless or until the state board takes formal action to remove accreditation. The department shall use a Phase I and a Phase II process for the continued accreditation of schools and school districts as defined in Iowa Code section 256.11(10).

a. Phase I. The Phase I process includes ongoing monitoring by the department of each school and school district to determine if it is meeting the goals of its comprehensive school improvement plan and meeting the accreditation standards. Phase I contains the following two components:

- (1) **Annual comprehensive desk audit.** This audit consists of a review by the department of a school or school district's annual progress report. The department shall review the report as required by subrule 12.8(3) and provide feedback regarding the report. The audit shall also include a review by the department of other annual documentation submitted by a school or school district as required for compliance with the educational standards in Iowa Code section 256.11 and other reports required by the director.

When the department determines a school or school district has areas of noncompliance, the department shall consult with the school or school district to determine what appropriate actions shall be taken by the school or school district. The department shall facilitate technical assistance when requested. When the department determines that a school or school district has not met compliance with one or more accreditation standards within a reasonable amount of time, the school or school district shall submit an action plan that is approved by the department. The action plan shall contain reasonable timelines for coming into compliance. If the department determines that the school or school district is not taking the necessary actions, the director of the department may place the school or school district in a Phase II accreditation process.

If a school or school district does not meet its stated annual improvement goals for at least two consecutive years in the areas of mathematics and reading and is not taking corrective steps, the department shall consult with the school or school district and determine whether a self-study shall be required. The department shall facilitate technical assistance when needed. The self-study shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. A review of the comprehensive school improvement plan.
2. A review of each attendance center's student achievement data.
3. Identification of factors that influenced the lack of goal attainment.
4. Submission of new annual improvement goals, if necessary.
5. Submission, if necessary, of a revised comprehensive school improvement plan.

Upon completion of a department-required self-study, the department shall collaborate with the school or school district to determine whether one or more attendance centers are to be identified as in need of improvement. For those attendance centers identified as being in need of improvement, the department shall facilitate technical assistance.

When a school or school district has completed a required self-study and has not met its annual improvement goals for at least two or more consecutive years, the department may conduct a site visit. When a site visit occurs, the department shall determine if appropriate actions were taken. If the site visit findings indicate that appropriate actions were taken, accreditation status shall remain.

(2) **Comprehensive site visit.** A comprehensive site visit shall occur at least once every five years as required by Iowa Code section 256.11(10) or before, if requested by the school or school district. The purpose of a comprehensive site visit is to assess progress with the comprehensive school improvement plan, to provide a general assessment of educational practices, to make recommendations with regard to the visit findings for the purposes of improving educational practices above the level of minimum compliance, and to determine that a school or school district is in compliance with the accreditation standards. The department and the school district or school may coordinate the accreditation with activities of other accreditation associations. The comprehensive site visit shall include the following components:

1. School improvement site visit team. The department shall determine the size and composition of the school improvement site visit team. The team shall include members of the department staff and may include other members such as, but not limited to, area education agency staff, postsecondary staff, and other school district or school staff.
2. Previsit actions. The school improvement team shall review the five-year comprehensive school improvement plan, annual progress reports, and any other information requested by the department.
3. The site visit report. Upon review of documentation and site visit findings, the department shall provide a written report to the school or school district based on the comprehensive school improvement plan and other general accreditation standards. The report shall state areas of strength, areas in need of improvement, and areas, if any, of noncompliance. For areas of noncompliance, the school or school district shall submit, within a reasonable time frame, an action plan to the department. The department shall determine if the school or school district is implementing the necessary actions to address areas of noncompliance. If the department determines that the school or school district is not taking the necessary actions, the director of the department may place the school or school district in a Phase II accreditation process.

b. Conditions under which a Phase II visit may occur. A Phase II accreditation process shall occur if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- (1) When either the annual monitoring or the comprehensive site visit indicates that a school or school district is deficient and fails to be in compliance with accreditation standards;
- (2) In response to a petition filed with the director of the department requesting such a committee visitation that is signed by 20 percent or more of the registered voters of a school district;
- (3) In response to a petition filed with the director of the department requesting such a committee visitation that is signed by 20 percent or more of the families having enrolled students in a school or school district; or
- (4) At the direction of the state board of education.

c. The Phase II process. The Phase II process shall consist of monitoring by the department. This monitoring shall include the appointment of an accreditation committee to complete a comprehensive review of the school or school district documentation on file with the department. The accreditation committee shall complete one or more site visits. The Phase II process shall include the following components:

- (1) Accreditation committee. The director of the department shall determine accreditation committee membership. The chairperson and majority of the committee shall be department staff. The committee may also include at least one representative from another school or school district, AEA staff, postsecondary education staff, board members, or community members. No member of an accreditation committee shall have a direct interest, as determined by the department, in the school or school district involved in the Phase II process. The accreditation committee shall have access to all documentation obtained from the Phase I process.
- (2) Site visit. The accreditation committee shall conduct one or more site visits to determine progress made on noncompliance issues.
- (3) Accreditation committee actions. The accreditation committee shall make a recommendation to the director of the department regarding accreditation status of the school or school district. This recommendation shall be contained in a report to the school or school district that includes areas of strength, areas in need of improvement, and, if any, the areas still not in compliance. The committee shall provide advice on available resources and technical assistance for meeting the accreditation standards. The school or school district may respond in writing to the director if it does not agree with the findings in the Phase II accreditation committee report.
- (4) State board of education actions. The director of the department shall provide a report and a recommendation to the state board as a result of the Phase II accreditation committee visit and findings. The state board shall determine accreditation status. When the state board determines that a school or school district shall not remain accredited, the director of the department shall collaborate with the school or school district board to establish an action plan that includes deadlines by which areas of noncompliance shall be corrected. The action plan is subject to approval by the state board.

- (5) Accreditation status. During the period of time the school or school district is implementing the action plan approved by the state board, the school or school district shall remain accredited. The accreditation committee may revisit the school or school district and determine whether the areas of noncompliance have been corrected. The accreditation committee shall report and recommend one of the following actions:
1. The school or school district shall remain accredited.
 2. The school or school district shall remain accredited under certain specified conditions.
 3. The school or school district shall have its accreditation removed as outlined in Iowa Code section 256.11(12).

The state board shall review the report and recommendation, may request additional information, and shall determine the accreditation status and further actions required by the school or school district as outlined in Iowa Code section 256.11(12).

DIVISION IX EXEMPTION REQUEST PROCESS

281—12.9(256) General accreditation standards exemption request. A school or school district may seek department approval for an exemption as stated in Iowa Code sections 256.9(48) and 256.11(8). The school or school district shall submit the exemption request to the director of the department with, at a minimum, the following: (1) the written request and (2) the standard exemption plan as described in subrule 12.9(1). For the 1999–2000 school year, the written request and plan shall be submitted before October 1, 1999. For subsequent school years, the written request and plan shall be submitted on or before January 1 preceding the beginning of the school year for which the exemption is sought. The exemption request may be approved for a time period not to exceed five years. The department may approve, on request of the school or school district, an extension of the exemption beyond the initial five-year period. The department shall notify the school or school district of the approval or denial of its exemption request not later than March 1 of the school year in which the request was submitted.

12.9(1) General accreditation standards exemption plan. The plan shall contain, but is not limited to, the following components:

- a. The standard or standards for which the exemption is requested.
- b. A rationale for each general accreditation standard identified in paragraph "a." The rationale shall describe how the approval of the request will assist the school or school district to improve student achievement or performance as described in its comprehensive school improvement plan.
- c. The sources of supportive research evidence and information, when appropriate, that were analyzed and used to form the basis of each submitted rationale.
- d. How the school or school district staff collaborated with the local community or with the school improvement advisory committee about the need for the exemption request.
- e. Evidence that the board approved the exemption request.
- f. A list of the indicators that will be measured to determine success.
- g. How the school or school district will measure the success of the standards exemption plan on improving student achievement or performance.

In its annual progress report as described in paragraph 12.8(3) "b," the school or school district that receives an exemption approval shall include data to support increased student learning, achievement, or performance that has resulted from the approved standards exemption.

12.9(2) *General accreditation standards exemption request and exemption plan review criteria.* The department shall use the information provided in the written request and exemption plan as described in subrule 12.9(1) to determine approval or denial of requests for exemptions from the general accreditation standards. The department will use the following criteria for approval or denial of an exemption plan:

- a. Components "a" through "g" listed in subrule 12.9(1) are addressed.
- b. Clarity, thoroughness, and reasonableness are evident, as determined by the department, for each component of the accreditation standards exemption plan.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 256.11, 280.23, and 256.7(21).

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Appendix C

ON-SITE ACCREDITATION VISIT EXPECTATIONS

Purpose of On-Site Visits

On-site visits are an essential part of the AEA Accreditation process. The rules for accreditation set the expectations for the visit (281 IAC 72.11):

- the accreditation team must have at least four but not more than seven members, selected by the Director of the Department of Education;
- the team conducts one or more on-site visits to evaluate AEA programs and services;
- the team determines whether the accreditation requirements have been met;
- the team reports strengths and weaknesses and makes recommendations to enhance strengths and improve areas of weakness, and
- the team recommends whether the AEA program should be accredited.

The Department of Education has developed the visitation process and provides training for team members. The intent was to develop a visitation method that could be applied with a degree of uniformity by different teams across all agencies. Team visit formats were standardized in terms of visit length, methods for determining strengths and weaknesses, selection of individuals to interview and schools to visit. Forms were created for AEAs to complete before the visits and for accreditation teams to use during the visit. Interview questions were developed. Finally, a standard outline for the accreditation reports was established.

The Accreditation Team utilizes seven resources to review and collect data for AEAs meeting the accreditation standards:

1. the AEA Accreditation Plan;
2. the pre-visit Status Reports completed by the AEA;
3. the AEA staff opening presentation to the Accreditation Team;
4. the AEA and LEA site interviews;
5. the AEA materials provided at the site visit;
6. the telephone call-in contacts; and
7. the evening open public forum.

Information obtained through these sources is used by the Accreditation Team to support and document meeting or not meeting the standards for of the programs and services areas.

Although the final outcomes is an accreditation decision the central purpose is a focus on helping the Area Education Agencies improve the quality of their programs and services, which will in turn assist schools and school districts to improve learning for students. Iowa's Area Education Agencies are essential parts of the support structure for schools and ultimately for children. With so much at stake, maintaining high standards of quality in programs and services is a priority.

Strengths and Weaknesses

As part of the development effort for the on-site visits, the Department's Core Committee (the group assigned to develop and implement the visitation process) set criteria for determining what should be considered as strengths or weaknesses. In order for an AEA activity, program, or service to be cited as a strength, it had to meet the following criterion:

A strength is considered to be something beyond the expectations laid out in law or rule. Strengths are levels of activity or quality beyond the minimum.

Activities and services of AEAs may meet the expectations and requirements in the accreditation standards, but that fact of itself would not cause the activity or service to be cited as a strength. Readers should not assume that an absence of strengths listed for an area means the agency is weak in that area. On the contrary, unless there is a citation of a weakness, the agency should be considered as having met expectations for the activity, program, or service.

The Core Committee also discussed the use of the term "weakness" in the visitation reports. It was felt that having to apply that term to facets of agencies' work would require that an activity, program or service be as far down on the continuum at the deficiency end as "strengths" were on the asset end. That would create a situation wherein visiting teams would be reluctant to cite things about which they had concerns, but which were not sufficiently serious to rise to the level of a weakness. The decision was made to use the term "concern" instead of "weakness" in the visit reports. Committee members believe this decision has resulted in greater detail in the reports and has opened the way for recommendations that would not have been made if the issue had had to be called a weakness. Greater detail and more recommendations for improvement seemed to the Core Committee to strengthen the usefulness of the visit reports, which in turn would yield increases in the quality and variety of AEA programs and services.

While conducting the site visit, the extent of the weaknesses found by the visiting team for a program and service area could cause an agency to receive conditional accreditation or denial of accreditation.

Levels of Accreditation

In the final section of this report, a recommendation is made about accreditation for each of the six required program and service areas. As an overview, the Committee's review of AEA Accreditation rules yields four levels the State Board may apply:

- accreditation for 3 years;
- accreditation for less than 3 years;
- conditional accreditation, or;
- denial of accreditation.

The following criteria is applied to each program and service area to determine the level of accreditation the team would recommend for that area:

1. The AEA meets the standards in the area of program and service.
2. The AEA shows evidence of continuous improvement as defined by the following components:

Continuous Improvement

- * The AEA has conceptualized and is implementing a model for continuous improvement that includes components relating to needs assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation.
- * The components of the model for continuous improvement are conceptually aligned with each other.
- * The evaluation plan within the model for continuous improvement demonstrates that data is used in the decision making process.
- * The AEA aligns resources to support continuous improvement.
- * The AEA provides internal support for its personnel to understand how their work supports continuous improvement.
- * The AEA can demonstrate actual alignment and integration of components.

AEA response to LEA needs

- * The AEA shows evidence of assessing LEA needs using multiple methods.
- * The AEA is developing and implementing activities to respond to identified needs.
- * LEAs agree their needs have been adequately assessed.
- * LEAs agree that resulting AEA services are supportive of their identified needs.

AEA demonstrates proactive leadership

- * The organizational structure of the AEA supports and shows evidence of anticipating future needs and educational trends.

AEA is data driven

- * The AEA collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative forms of data from multiple sources on an ongoing basis.
- * The evaluation of progress is both formative and summative.
- * Data collected, analyzed, and applied measure the intended results and progress toward the standard(s).
- * The AEA applies the data collected to organize and create present and future activities toward improved student learning.

The Core Committee determined that the criteria listed in the second item above are consistent with rule expectations for the development of Accreditation Plans by the AEAs. Applying these criteria across all six required program and service areas in each AEA provides consistency of team recommendations to the State Board of Education.

These criteria are applied to each program and service area to determine the level of accreditation the team would recommend for that area:

Action	Reasons
A. 3 year accreditation	The AEA's actions in the program and service area meet the following criteria: a) all standards and b) all four major headings for the continuous improvement criteria.
B. Less than 3 year accred.	The AEA's actions in the program and service area only meet: a) some but not all of the standards and/or b) some but not all of the four major headings for continuous improvement criteria. For identified concerns, a plan of remediation will be developed.
C. Conditional accred.	The AEA has not made satisfactory progress toward implementing the plan of remediation outlined for the areas of weakness in the program and service area in the event that the program and service area has received less than three-year accreditation.
D. Denial of accreditation	There are no actions occurring in the program and service area and the AEA is not engaged in a continuous improvement process in the program and service area.

Table 1 – AEA Plan and Site Visit Cycle

AEA	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04
3,6,10,12, 14	2 Year Plan 3-98	Site Visits ²	New 3 Year Plan Developed		Site Visits		
5,7,9,11, 15	3 Year Plan 3- 98		Site Visits ²	New 3 Year Plan Developed		Site Visits	
1,2,4,13, 16	4 Year Plan 3- 98			Site Visits ²	New 3 Year Plan Developed		Site Visits

¹ = Initial Comprehensive Plan approved by State Board of Education March 1998.

² = The site visit is structured to provide information that the AEA would find useful in developing its next 3 year plan. For this reason, the site visit occurs during the second year of plan implementation. (For the initial cycle, the site visit occurs during the first year of implementation for AEA's that write a 2-year plan; the site visit occurs during the third year of implementation for AEA's that write a 4 year plan.)

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