

K-12 CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
SENATE AND HOUSE COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION

Submitted to the General Assembly
January, 1980

F I N A L R E P O R T
K-12 CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
SENATE AND HOUSE COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION

January, 1980

The K-12 Curriculum Subcommittee of the Senate and House Committees on Education was established by the Legislative Council to study the educational program requirements listed in section 257.25 and chapter 280 of the Code.

Members serving on the Subcommittee were:

Senator Willard R. Hansen, Cedar Falls
Senator Joe Brown
Senator Clarence Carney
Senator John Jensen
Senator Joann Orr
Representative Warren Johnson
Representative Wally Horn
Representative Daniel Jay
Representative Tom Lind
Representative Ruhl Maulsby

The Subcommittee was authorized three meetings which were held August 16, September 11, and October 9. At the first meeting Senator Hansen was elected Chairperson and Representative Johnson was elected Vice Chairperson.

The Subcommittee was provided copies of all bills introduced in the General Assembly in 1979 which related to the school curriculum and it voted to hear testimony in a number of areas about the current practice among the school districts and probable consequences of mandating that certain additional subject areas be offered by the school districts.

Representatives from the Department of Public Instruction reviewed the development of school standards, subjects required, and actual practices among the school districts. The departmental representatives stressed that subjects offered, requirements for graduation in addition to one year of American History, one-half year of government, and physical education, and content of course offering are the decision of the school district board of directors. In addition information was provided about North Central Association approval of schools.

The following persons made presentations to the Subcommittee and a brief description of their remarks and the proposed legislation introduced in 1979 are included:

1. Economics.

John Martin, Dick Gage, Department of Public Instruction.
Don Davison, Iowa Council on Economic Education.

The Department and the Iowa Council for Economic Education described the work being accomplished to develop activities and materials for teaching economic concepts at all levels of instruction. Bills were introduced to require that one-half unit of economics with emphasis on the free-enterprise economic system be taught during grades nine through twelve.

2. Creationism as a theory of the origin of the earth.

Jack Gerlovich, Department of Public Instruction
Harry Bert Wagoner, Ron Lee, interested persons.

The Department presented its position paper on the teaching of creationism in the public schools. The position paper states "Teaching religious doctrine is not the science teacher's responsibility. Teachers should recognize the personal validity of alternative beliefs, but should then direct student inquiries to the appropriate institution for counseling or further explanation." It was noted that the theory of scientific creationism can currently be taught in a school district in this state if the local board of directors votes to do so. Mr. Wagoner presented a portion of a filmstrip comparing the creation and evolution theories and described other materials explaining the creation theory which are available to school districts. Bills were introduced mandating that if the evolution theory of the origin of the earth is taught, the creation theory must also be taught.

3. Marriage and family living, including consumer economics.

Gladys Grabbe, Department of Public Instruction.
Tom Sandell, Trudy Yoder, Fort Dodge Community School District.
Jerelyn Schultz, Iowa State University.

Representatives from the Department and employees of school districts described the different kinds of courses in both the social studies and home economics curricula which include instruction relating to marriage and family living and consumer education. It was noted that two hundred fifty school districts receive federal funds under a grant from Public Law 94-482 for a vocational home economics program. The federal law specifies that a vocational home economics program must include instructional programs, services, and activities in consumer education, family living and parenthood education, child development and guidance. The bills introduced require that a one-half unit course on marriage and family living be taught.

4. Environmental awareness.

Duane Toomsen, Department of Public Instruction.
Carolyn Benne, AEA 12
Judy Bierman, Cherokee Community School District.

The representatives from the Department and from an area education agency and local district described the development of materials and activities to teach energy conservation and environmental awareness at all levels of the school program. It was noted that section 257.25 of the Code requires that conservation of natural resources and environmental awareness be taught in grades one through six and seven and eight. The bill introduced requires that a one-half unit course in energy conservation be taught during grades nine through twelve.

5. Fine arts.

Laura Magee, Department of Public Instruction.

The representative from the Department of Public Instruction stated that both art and music are taught in all public high schools in this state. Section 257.25 specifies that units or partial units in the fine arts may be taught. The bill that was introduced requires that one unit of art, one-fourth unit of vocal music and one-fourth unit of instrumental music be taught in grades nine through twelve.

At its final meeting the Subcommittee discussed each of the areas in which presentations had been made and in addition discussed the following areas in which legislative changes may be warranted:

1. Educational and licensing requirements relating to operating motor vehicles, motorcycles and motorized bicycles. It was noted that successful completion of a driver education instruction course is required before a person between the ages of sixteen and eighteen years can be issued an operator's license for a motor vehicle, but there are no instructional courses required for operation of a motorcycle or motorized bicycle.

2. Elimination of physical education requirements for twelfth grade students who are enrolled in work-study or cooperative programs and spend only a portion of their day at school.

3. Adding to the social studies requirement for grades nine through twelve that one year of world history must be taken by all students.

4. Waiver of the foreign language requirement in grades nine through twelve if there are no students enrolled in a foreign language course.

The Subcommittee makes the following recommendations to the House and Senate Committees on Education:

1. That the physical education requirement for high school students be allowed to be waived by the principal of a school for twelfth grade students participating in cooperative or work-study programs.

2. That language be added to the science requirement for grades nine through twelve that the units of science shall include instruction in the conservation of natural resources and environmental awareness.

3. That the Senate and House Committees on Education, in cooperation with the Senate and House Committees on Transportation, study the issue of requiring the completion of instructional programs for operating motor vehicles, motorcycles, and motorized bicycles.

4. (House only) That the Department of Public Instruction be allowed to waive the foreign language requirement in grades nine through twelve for school districts if there are no students enrolled in the foreign language course even though a teacher is available, the class is properly scheduled, and students are aware the class is scheduled.

PROPOSED HOUSE/SENATE FILE _____

By (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
BILL RECOMMENDED BY THE K-12
CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE)

Passed House, Date _____ Passed Senate, Date _____

Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____

Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the educational program of schools, includ-
2 ing course requirements relating to physical education,
3 science, and foreign languages.

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

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Section 1. Section two hundred fifty-seven point twenty-
2 five (257.25), subsection six (6), paragraphs a, f and g,
3 Code 1979, are amended to read as follows:

4 a. Four units of science including physics and chemistry;
5 the units of physics and chemistry may be taught in alternate
6 years. The units of science shall include instruction in
7 the conservation of natural resources and environmental
8 awareness.

9 f. Two units of one foreign language; the units of foreign
10 language may be taught in alternate years, provided there
11 is no break in the progression of instruction from one year
12 to the next. However, the department may waive the foreign
13 language requirement upon the request of the board of directors
14 of a school district if the board is able to prove that a
15 certificated teacher was employed and assigned a schedule
16 that would have allowed students to enroll in a foreign
17 language class, the foreign language class properly was
18 scheduled, students were aware that a foreign language class
19 was scheduled and no students enrolled in the class.

20 g. All students physically able shall be required to
21 participate in physical education activities during each
22 semester a student is enrolled in school except as otherwise
23 provided in this paragraph. A minimum of one-eighth unit
24 each semester shall be required, except that any ~~pupit~~ student
25 participating in an organized and supervised high school
26 athletic program which requires at least as much time of
27 participation per week as one-eighth unit may be excused from
28 the physical education course during the time of his or her
29 participation in the athletic program. In addition, a twelfth
30 grade student who is enrolled in a cooperative or work-study
31 program may be excused from the physical education requirement
32 by the principal of the school in which the student is
33 enrolled. The principal of the school shall inform the
34 superintendent of the school district or nonpublic school
35 that the student has been excused. Physical education

1 activities shall emphasize leisure time activities which will
2 benefit the student outside the school environment and after
3 graduation from high school.

4 EXPLANATION

5 This bill requires that the units of science in grades
6 nine through twelve include instruction in the conservation
7 of natural resources and environmental awareness.

8 It allows the principal of a high school to excuse from
9 physical education requirements twelfth grade students who
10 are participating in cooperative or work-study programs and
11 allows school districts to waive the requirement that two
12 years of foreign language be taught if there are no students
13 signing up for the foreign language, but certain conditions
14 for offering the language must be met. The bill is effective
15 July first following its enactment.

16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35

PROPOSED SENATE/HOUSE FILE _____

By (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
BILL RECOMMENDED BY THE K-12
CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE)

Passed Senate, Date _____ Passed House, Date _____

Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____

Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the educational program of schools, includ-
2 ing course requirements relating to physical education and
3 science.

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

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 Section 1. Section two hundred fifty-seven point twenty-
2 five (257.25), subsection six (6), paragraphs a and g, Code
3 1979, are amended to read as follows:

4 a. Four units of science including physics and chemistry;
5 the units of physics and chemistry may be taught in alternate
6 years. The units of science shall include instruction in
7 the conservation of natural resources and environmental
8 awareness.

9 g. All students physically able shall be required to
10 participate in physical education activities during each
11 semester a student is enrolled in school except as otherwise
12 provided in this paragraph. A minimum of one-eighth unit
13 each semester shall be required, except that any ~~paper~~ student
14 participating in an organized and supervised high school
15 athletic program which requires at least as much time of
16 participation per week as one-eighth unit may be excused from
17 the physical education course during the time of his or her
18 participation in the athletic program. In addition, a twelfth
19 grade student who is enrolled in a cooperative or work-study
20 program may be excused from the physical education requirement
21 by the principal of the school in which the student is
22 enrolled. The principal of the school shall inform the
23 superintendent of the school district or nonpublic school
24 that the student has been excused. Physical education
25 activities shall emphasize leisure time activities which will
26 benefit the student outside the school environment and after
27 graduation from high school.

28 EXPLANATION

29 This bill requires that the units of science in grades
30 nine through twelve include instruction in the conservation
31 of natural resources and environmental awareness.

32 It allows the principal of a high school to excuse from
33 physical education requirements twelfth grade students who
34 are participating in cooperative or work-study programs.

35 The bill is effective July first following its enactment.