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273.2 Area education agencies established -- powers -- services and programs.

1. There are established throughout the state fifteen area education agencies, each of which is governed by an area education agency board of directors. The boundaries of an area education agency shall not divide a school district. The director of the department of education shall change boundaries of area education agencies to take into account mergers of local school districts and changes in boundaries of local school districts, when necessary to maintain the policy of this chapter that a local school district shall not be a part of more than one area education agency.

2. An area education agency established under this chapter is a body politic as a school corporation for the purpose of exercising powers granted under this chapter, and may sue and be sued. An area education agency may hold property and execute lease-purchase agreements pursuant to section 273.3, subsection 7, and if the lease exceeds ten years or the purchase price of the property to be acquired pursuant to a lease-purchase agreement exceeds twenty-five thousand dollars, the area education agency shall conduct a public hearing on the proposed lease-purchase agreement and receive approval from the area education agency board of directors and the director of the department of education before entering into the agreement.

3. The area education agency board shall furnish educational services and programs as provided in sections 273.1 to 273.9 and chapter 256B to the pupils enrolled in public or nonpublic schools located within its boundaries which are on the list of accredited schools pursuant to section 256.11. The programs and services provided shall be at least commensurate with programs and services existing on July 1, 1974. The programs and services provided to pupils enrolled in nonpublic schools shall be comparable to programs and services provided to pupils enrolled in public schools within constitutional guidelines.

4. The area education agency board shall provide for special education services and media services for the local school districts in the area and shall encourage and assist school districts in the area to establish programs for gifted and talented children. The board shall assist in facilitating interlibrary loans of materials between school districts and other libraries. Each area education agency shall include as a member of its media center advisory committee a library service area trustee or library service area staff member, who is appointed to the committee by the commission of libraries.

5. The area education agency board may provide for the following programs and services to local school districts, and at the request of local school districts to providers of child

development services who have received grants under chapter 256A from the child development coordinating council, within the limits of funds available:

a. In-service training programs for employees of school districts and area education agencies, provided at the time programs and services are established they do not duplicate programs and services available in that area from the universities under the state board of regents and from other universities and four-year institutions of higher education in Iowa. The in-service training programs shall include but are not limited to regular training

concerning mental or emotional disorders which may afflict children and the impact children with such disorders have upon their families.

b. Educational data processing pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 11.

c. Research, demonstration projects and models, and educational planning for children under five years of age through grade twelve and children requiring special education as defined in section 256B.2 as approved by the state board of education.

d. Auxiliary services for nonpublic school pupils as provided in section 256.12. However, if auxiliary services are provided their funding shall be based on the type of service provided.

e. Other educational programs and services for children under five years through grade twelve and children requiring special education as defined in section 256B.2 and for employees of school districts and area education agencies as approved by the state board of education.

6. The board of directors of an area education agency shall not establish programs and services which duplicate programs and services which are or may be provided by the community colleges under the provisions of chapter 260C. An area education agency shall contract, whenever practicable, with other school corporations for the use of personnel, buildings, facilities, supplies, equipment, programs, and services.

Section History: Early form

[C66, 71, 73, § 280A.25(3); C75, 77, 79, 81, § 273.2, 280A.25(3); 82 Acts, ch 1006, § 1, 2, ch 1136, § 1]

Section History: Recent form

84 Acts, ch 1103, § 1; 85 Acts, ch 195, § 30; 86 Acts, ch 1245, § 1457; 87 Acts, ch 115, § 39; 89 Acts, ch 135, §57; 95 Acts, ch 182, §20; 2001 Acts, ch 158, §23

273.3 Duties and powers of area education agency board.

The board in carrying out the provisions of section 273.2 shall:

1. Determine the policies of the area education agency for providing programs and services.
2. Be authorized to receive and expend money for providing programs and services as provided in sections 273.1 to 273.9, and chapters 256B and 257. All costs incurred in providing the programs and services, including administrative costs, shall be paid from funds received pursuant to sections 273.1 to 273.9 and chapters 256B and 257.
3. Provide data and prepare reports as directed by the director of the department of education.
4. Provide for advisory committees as deemed necessary.
5. Be authorized, subject to rules of the state board of education, to provide directly or by contractual arrangement with public or private agencies for special education programs and services, media services, and educational programs and services requested by the

local boards of education as provided in this chapter, including but not limited to contracts for the area education agency to provide programs or services to the local school districts and contracts for local school districts, other educational agencies, and public and private agencies to provide programs and services to the local school districts in the area education agency in lieu of the area education agency providing the services. Contracts may be made with public or private agencies located outside the state if the programs and services comply with the rules of the state board. Rules adopted by the state board of education shall be consistent with rules, adopted by the board of educational examiners, relating to licensing of practitioners.

6. Area education agencies may cooperate and contract between themselves and with other public agencies to provide special education programs and services, media services, and educational services to schools and children residing within their respective areas. Area education agencies may provide print and nonprint materials to public and private colleges and universities that have teacher education programs approved by the state board of education.

7. Be authorized to lease, subject to the approval of the director of the department of education and to receive by gift and operate and maintain facilities and buildings necessary to provide authorized programs and services. However, a lease for less than ten years and with an annual cost of less than twenty-five thousand dollars does not require the approval of the director. If a lease requires approval, the director shall not approve the lease until the director is satisfied by investigation that public school corporations within the area do not have suitable facilities available.

8. Be authorized, subject to the approval of the director of the department of education, to enter into agreements for the joint use of personnel, buildings, facilities, supplies, and equipment with school corporations as deemed necessary to provide authorized programs and services.

9. Be authorized to make application for, accept, and expend state and federal funds that are available for programs of educational benefit approved by the director of the department of education, and cooperate with the department in the manner provided in federal-state plans or department rules in the effectuation and administration of programs approved by the director, or approved by other educational agencies, which agencies have been approved as state educational authorities.

10. Be authorized to perform all other acts necessary to carry out the provisions and intent of this chapter.

11. Employ personnel to carry out the functions of the area education agency which shall include the employment of an administrator who shall possess a license issued under chapter 272. The administrator shall be employed pursuant to section 279.20 and sections 279.23, 279.24 and 279.25. The salary for an area education agency administrator shall be established by the board based upon the previous experience and education of the administrator. Section 279.13 applies to the area education agency board and to all teachers employed by the area education agency. Sections 279.23, 279.24 and 279.25 apply to the area education board and to all administrators employed by the area education agency.

12. Prepare an annual budget estimating income and expenditures for programs and services as provided in sections 273.1 to 273.9 and chapter 256B within the limits of funds provided under section 256B.9 and chapter 257. The board shall give notice of a public hearing on the proposed budget by publication in an official county newspaper in each county in the territory of the area education agency in which the principal place of business of a school district that is a part of the area education agency is located. The notice shall specify the date, which shall be not later than March 1 of each year, the time, and the location of the public hearing. The proposed budget as approved by the board shall then be submitted to the state board of education, on forms provided by the department, no later than March 15 preceding the next fiscal year for approval. The state board shall review the proposed budget of each area education agency and shall before April 1, either grant approval or return the budget without approval with comments of the state board included. An unapproved budget shall be resubmitted to the state board for final approval not later than April 15. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1999, and each succeeding fiscal year, the state board shall give final approval only to budgets submitted by area education agencies accredited by the state board or that have been given conditional accreditation by the state board.

13. Be authorized to pay, out of funds available to the board reasonable annual dues to an Iowa association of school boards. Membership shall be limited to those duly elected members of the area education agency board.

14. At the request of an employee through contractual agreement the board may purchase group or individual annuity contracts for employees, which annuity contracts are issued by a nonprofit corporation issuing retirement annuities exclusively for educational institutions and their employees or are purchased from any company the

employee chooses that is authorized to do business in this state or through an Iowa-licensed salesperson that the employee selects, on a group or individual basis, for retirement or other purposes. The board may make payroll deductions for the purpose of paying the entire premium due, and to become due, in accordance with the terms of the contract. The deductions shall be made in the manner which will qualify the annuity premiums for the benefits under section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, as defined in section 422.3. The employee's rights under the annuity contract are nonforfeitable except for the failure to pay premiums. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires, "*annuity contract*" includes any custodial account which meets the requirements of section 403(b)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code, as defined in section 422.3.

15. Be authorized to establish and pay all or any part of the cost of group health insurance plans, nonprofit group medical service plans and group life insurance plans adopted by the board for the benefit of employees of the area education agency, from funds available to the board.

16. Meet at least annually with the members of the boards of directors of the merged areas in which the area education agency is located to discuss co-ordination of programs and services and other matters of mutual interest to the boards.

17. Be authorized to issue warrants and anticipatory warrants pursuant to chapter 74. The

applicable rate of interest shall be determined pursuant to sections 74A.2, 74A.3, and 74A.7. This subsection shall not be construed to authorize a board to levy a tax.

18. Be authorized to issue school credit cards allowing area education agency employees to pay for the actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of work-related duties.

19. Pursuant to rules adopted by the state board of education, be authorized to charge user fees for certain materials and services that are not required by law or by rules of the state board of education and are specifically requested by a school district or accredited nonpublic school.

20. Be authorized to purchase equipment as provided in section 279.48.

21. Be authorized to sell, lease, or dispose of, in whole or in part, property belonging to the area education agency. Before the area education agency may sell property belonging to the agency, the board of directors shall comply with the requirements set forth in section 297.22. Before the board of directors of an area education agency may lease property belonging to the agency, the board shall obtain the approval of the director of the department of education.

22. Meet annually with the members of the boards of directors of the school districts located within its boundaries if requested by the school district boards.

Section History: Early form

[C51, § 417; R60, § 648, 2074; C73, § 771, 1776; C97, § 2742, 2831, 2832; S13, § 2742, 2831, 2832; SS15, § 2734-b; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, § ~~4122, 4456--4458, 5232--5234~~; C46, § 273.4, 301.12--301.14, 340.13--340.15; C50, 54, 58, 62, § 273.12, 273.13; C66, § 273.12, 273.13, 273.22; C71, 73, § 273.12, 273.13, 273.22, 273.24; C75, 77, 79, 81, § 273.3; 81 Acts, ch 87, § 1; 82 Acts, ch 1080, § 1, ch 1136, § 2, 3]

Section History: Recent form

83 Acts, ch 2, § 1; 84 Acts, ch 1010, § 2; 84 Acts, ch 1315, § 34; 85 Acts, ch 138, §2, 3; 85 Acts, ch 212, §21; 86 Acts, ch 1213, § 5; 86 Acts, ch 1245, § 1458; 86 Acts, ch 1246, § 133; 87 Acts, ch 115, § 40; 87 Acts, ch 233, § 474, 475; 89 Acts, ch 135, §58; 89 Acts, ch 265, §34; 92 Acts, ch 1050, § 1; 92 Acts, ch 1227, § 17; 94 Acts, ch 1089, §1; 94 Acts, ch 1175, §5; 94 Acts, ch 1183, §63; 96 Acts, ch 1215, §47, 48; 97 Acts, ch 184, §2

273.5 Special education.

There shall be established a division of special education of the area education agency which shall provide for special education programs and services to the local school districts. The division of special education shall be headed by a director of special education who meets certification standards of the department of education. The director of special education shall have the responsibility for implementation of state regulations and guidelines relating to special education programs and services. The director of special education shall have the following powers and duties:

1. Properly identify children requiring special education.

2. Insure that each child requiring special education in the area receives an appropriate special education program or service.
3. Assign appropriate weights for each child requiring special education programs or services as provided in section 256B.9.
4. Supervise special education support personnel.
5. Provide each school district within the area served and the department of education with a special education weighted enrollment count, including the additional enrollment because of special education for December 1 of each year.
6. Submit to the department of education special education instructional and support program plans and applications, subject to criteria listed in chapter 256B and this chapter, for approval by February 15 of each year for the school year commencing the following July 1.
7. Co-ordinate the special education program within the area served.

Section History: Early form

[C75, 77, 79, 81, § 273.5]

Section History: Recent form

89 Acts, ch 135, §59

273.7 Additional services.

If sixty percent of the number of local school boards located in an area education agency, or if local school boards representing sixty percent of the enrollment in the school districts located in the agency, request in writing to the area education agency board that an additional service be provided them, for pupils in grades kindergarten through twelve or children requiring special education as defined in section 256B.2 or for employees or board members of school districts or area education agencies, the area education agency board shall arrange for the service to be provided to all school districts in the area within the financial capabilities of the area education agency.

Section History: Early form

[C75, 77, 79, 81, § 273.7]

273.7A Services to school districts.

The board of an area education agency may provide services to school districts located in the area education agency under contract with the school districts. These services may include, but are not limited to, superintendency services, personnel services, business management services, specialized maintenance services, and transportation services. In addition, the board of the area education agency may provide for furnishing expensive and specialized equipment for school districts. School districts shall pay to area education agencies the cost of providing the services.

The board of an area education agency may also provide services authorized to be

performed by area education agencies to other area education agencies in this state and to provide a method of payment for these services.

Section History: Recent form

87 Acts, ch 224, §45

273.9 Funding.

1. School districts shall pay for the programs and services provided through the area education agency and shall include expenditures for the programs and services in their budgets, in accordance with this section.
2. School districts shall pay the costs of special education instructional programs with the moneys available to the districts for each child requiring special education, by application of the special education weighting plan in section 256B.9. Special education instructional programs shall be provided at the local level if practicable, or otherwise by contractual arrangements with the area education agency board as provided in section 273.3, subsection 5, but in each case the total money available through section 256B.9 and chapter 257 because of weighted enrollment for each child requiring special education instruction shall be made available to the district or agency which provides the special education instructional program to the child, subject to adjustments for transportation or other costs which may be paid by the school district in which the child is enrolled. Each district shall co-operate with its area education agency to provide an appropriate special education instructional program for each child who requires special education instruction, as identified and counted within the certification by the area director of special education or as identified by the area director of special education subsequent to the certification, and shall not provide a special education instructional program to a child who has not been so identified and counted within the certification or identified subsequent to the certification.
3. The costs of special education support services provided through the area education agency shall be funded as provided in chapter 257. Special education support services shall not be funded until the program plans submitted by the special education directors of each area education agency as required by section 273.5 are modified as necessary and approved by the director of the department of education according to the criteria and limitations of chapters 256B and 257.
4. The costs of media services provided through the area education agency shall not be funded until the program plans submitted by the administrators of each area education agency as required by section 273.4 are modified as necessary and approved by the director of the department of education according to the criteria of section 273.6.

The state board of education shall adopt rules under chapter 17A relating to the approval of program plans under this section.

Section History: Early form

[C51, § 417; R60, § 648, 2074; C73, § 771, 1776; C97, § 2742, 2831, 2832; S13, § 2742, 2831, 2832; SS15, § 2734-b; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, § ~~4456--4458, 5232--5234~~; C46, §

301.12--301.14, 340.13--340.15; C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, § 273.13; C75, 77, 79, 81, § 273.9]

Section History: Recent form

86 Acts, ch 1245, § 1460; 89 Acts, ch 135, §60; 91 Acts, ch 97, §38