

Viewpoints

Iowa Legislature Passes School Safety Assessment Bill



This week, the Iowa Legislature passed Senate File 583, a bill that allows K–12 schools to form “School Safety Assessment Teams” aimed at improving information sharing and proactive intervention when students demonstrate potentially threatening behavior. The bill passed the House 91-0 and the Senate 48-0 and now heads to Governor Kim Reynolds for her signature.

Under the legislation, public, accredited nonpublic schools, and charter schools may voluntarily establish multidisciplinary teams—including school officials, law enforcement, mental health professionals, social service providers, and juvenile court representatives—to assess risks, implement early interventions, and coordinate services. The bill addresses what it considers one of the most common barriers to school safety collaboration: the difficulty of sharing relevant information across agencies.

While the bill facilitates better communication among team members, it maintains compliance with federal student privacy laws such as FERPA.

If signed into law, Senate File 583 will give Iowa schools a new and structured way to act early and engage in prevention efforts.

“The inability to share information with one another is the most common barrier encountered by these multidisciplinary teams,” he said. “All this bill does ... is if a school chooses to participate, it will give that school a tool that they can utilize to break that communication barrier

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