

House File 620 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 620
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 367)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act prohibiting school districts and charter schools from
2 taking disciplinary action against employees, contractors,
3 or students for the use of legal names or for the failure
4 to use personal pronouns in official communications, and
5 providing civil penalties.

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

1 Section 1. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, Code 2023, is
2 amended by adding the following new paragraph:

3 NEW PARAGRAPH. *Oj.* Be subject to and comply with the
4 requirements of section 279.77 relating to the prohibition on
5 disciplinary action for the use of legal names and for the
6 failure to use personal pronouns in official communications in
7 the same manner as a school district.

8 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. **279.77 Prohibition on disciplinary**
9 **action — use of legal names — failure to use personal pronouns.**

10 1. The board of directors of each school district shall
11 not take any disciplinary action against an employee of the
12 school district, a contractor hired by the school district,
13 or a student enrolled in the school district for addressing
14 other employees, contractors, or students using the employee's,
15 contractor's, or student's legal name.

16 2. The board of directors of each school district shall not
17 take any disciplinary action against an employee of the school
18 district, a contractor hired by the school district, or a
19 student enrolled in the school district for failing to disclose
20 or use any personal pronouns in the greeting or signature block
21 of any form of official communication, including letters,
22 forms, notes, or electronic mail.

23 3. An employee whose employment is terminated in violation
24 of this section may enforce this section through a civil action
25 under section 70A.29, subsection 3.

26 4. For purposes of this section, "*disciplinary action*"
27 includes termination of employment or the contractual
28 relationship, suspension from employment or the contractual
29 relationship, demotion, expulsion from school, suspension from
30 school, detention, financial penalties, and written or verbal
31 reprimands.

32 EXPLANATION

33 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
34 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

35 This bill prohibits school districts and charter schools

1 from taking disciplinary action against employees, contractors,
2 or students for the use of legal names or for the failure to use
3 personal pronouns in official communications.

4 The bill prohibits the board of directors of school
5 districts and the governing boards of charter schools from
6 taking any disciplinary action against an employee, contractor,
7 or student for addressing other employees, contractors, or
8 students using the employee's, contractor's, or student's legal
9 name.

10 The bill prohibits the board of directors of school
11 districts and the governing boards of charter schools from
12 taking any disciplinary action against an employee, contractor,
13 or student for failing to disclose or use any personal pronouns
14 in the greeting or signature block of any form of official
15 communication.

16 The bill allows an employee whose employment is terminated
17 in violation of these provisions to enforce the provisions
18 through a civil action which allows the aggrieved employee to
19 receive reinstatement, with or without back pay, civil damages
20 in an amount not to exceed three times the aggrieved employee's
21 annual wages and benefits, and any other equitable relief the
22 court deems appropriate, including attorney fees and costs.
23 Injunctive relief is also available.

24 The bill defines "disciplinary action" to include
25 termination of employment or the contractual relationship,
26 suspension from employment or the contractual relationship,
27 demotion, expulsion from school, suspension from school,
28 detention, financial penalties, and written or verbal
29 reprimands.