

House File 859 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 859
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO HSB 217)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act requiring school districts, charter schools, and
2 innovation zone schools to adopt policies related to carrying
3 out a reduction in force.
4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, Code 2025, is
2 amended by adding the following new paragraph:

3 NEW PARAGRAPH. *Or.* Be subject to and comply with the
4 requirements of section 279.87 relating to the adoption and
5 publication of a policy related to carrying out a reduction in
6 force in the same manner as a school district.

7 Sec. 2. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, Code 2025, is amended
8 by adding the following new paragraph:

9 NEW PARAGRAPH. *Op.* Be subject to and comply with the
10 requirements of section 279.87 relating to the adoption and
11 publication of a policy related to carrying out a reduction in
12 force in the same manner as a school district.

13 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. **279.87 Reduction in force policies.**

14 1. As used in this section:

15 a. "*Administrative staff member*" means a school district
16 employee who does not hold a license, certificate, authorization,
17 or statement of recognition issued by the board of educational
18 examiners.

19 b. "*Practitioner*" means a school district employee who is
20 an administrator, teacher, or other professional licensed by the
21 board of educational examiners, including an individual who holds
22 a statement of professional recognition, who provides educational
23 assistance to students.

24 c. "*Practitioner performance*" means an assessment of the
25 quality of the practitioner that is measured using factors that
26 include all of the following:

27 (1) Student academic performance.

28 (2) Student growth measures.

29 (3) Performance evaluations.

30 d. "*Reduction in force*" means the termination of a
31 practitioner's employment due to economic reasons that include
32 any of the following:

33 (1) Decreased funding.

34 (2) Decreased enrollment, including enrollment in a
35 particular program, grade, or attendance center.

1 (3) The closure or reorganization of schools in the school
2 district.

3 2. The board of directors of each school district shall adopt
4 a policy related to carrying out a reduction in force and publish
5 the policy on the school district's internet site within ten days
6 after adoption. The policy must satisfy all of the following
7 requirements:

8 a. Require the board of directors of the school district to
9 consider whether to terminate the employment of administrative
10 staff members prior to carrying out a reduction in force.

11 b. Require the board of directors of the school district to
12 use practitioner performance as the sole factor or a primary
13 factor when carrying out a reduction in force.

14 c. Identify the factor or factors that are used to measure
15 practitioner performance for purposes of carrying out a reduction
16 in force, and the weight the board of directors of the school
17 district assigns to each factor, if more than one factor is used.

18 d. Prohibit the board of directors of the school district
19 from using a practitioner's seniority or tenure as the sole
20 factor or a primary factor when carrying out a reduction in
21 force.

22 e. Include a timeline for notifying practitioners who may
23 be affected by a reduction in force and practitioners whose
24 employment has been terminated due to a reduction in force.

25 f. Include a description of any grievance procedures
26 available to a practitioner whose employment is terminated due
27 to a reduction in force, including any rights available to
28 the practitioner under sections 279.15, 279.16, 279.18, 279.24,
29 279.25, and 279.27, as applicable.

30 EXPLANATION

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

33 This bill requires school districts, charter schools, and
34 innovation zone schools to adopt policies related to carrying out
35 a reduction in force.

1 The bill defines "administrative staff member" as a school
2 employee who does not hold a license, certificate, authorization,
3 or statement of recognition issued by the board of educational
4 examiners (BOEE). The bill defines "practitioner" as a school
5 employee who is an administrator, teacher, or other professional
6 licensed by the BOEE who provides educational assistance to
7 students. The bill also defines "practitioner performance" as
8 an assessment of the quality of the practitioner that is measured
9 using factors that include student academic performance, student
10 growth measures, and performance evaluations. Additionally,
11 the bill defines "reduction in force" as the termination of a
12 practitioner's employment due to economic reasons that include
13 decreased funding, decreased enrollment, and the closure or
14 reorganization of schools in the school system.

15 The bill requires schools to adopt a policy related to
16 carrying out a reduction in force and publish the policy on the
17 school's internet site within 10 days after adoption. The policy
18 must require the school to consider whether to terminate the
19 employment of administrative staff members prior to carrying out
20 a reduction in force. The policy must also require the school
21 to use practitioner performance as the sole factor or a primary
22 factor when carrying out a reduction in force. Additionally,
23 the policy must identify the factor or factors that are used to
24 measure practitioner performance for purposes of carrying out a
25 reduction in force. The policy must prohibit the school from
26 using a practitioner's seniority or tenure as the sole factor or
27 a primary factor when carrying out a reduction in force. Also,
28 the policy must include a timeline for notifying practitioners
29 who may be affected by a reduction in force and practitioners
30 whose employment has been terminated due to a reduction in
31 force. Finally, the policy must include a description of any
32 grievance procedures available to a practitioner whose employment
33 is terminated due to a reduction in force.