

**House File 884 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 884  
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 334)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act authorizing school districts, charter schools, and  
2 innovation zone schools to employ chaplains, or engage  
3 volunteer chaplains, to provide services to students.  
4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

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

3 NEW PARAGRAPH. j. Employ chaplains, or engage chaplains to  
4 serve without compensation or remuneration, in the same manner as  
5 a school district under section 279.87.

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

8 NEW SUBSECTION. 9. A charter school or innovation zone  
9 school may employ chaplains, or engage chaplains to serve without  
10 compensation or remuneration, in the same manner as a school  
11 district under section 279.87.

12 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. **279.87 School chaplains.**

13 1. The board of directors of a school district may employ  
14 a chaplain, or engage a chaplain to serve without compensation  
15 or remuneration, to provide support, services, and programs for  
16 students as assigned by the board of directors of the school  
17 district.

18 2. a. Subject to paragraph "b", the board of directors of  
19 a school district may establish qualifications, credentialing,  
20 and other requirements related to chaplains who are employed or  
21 engaged pursuant to this section.

22 b. The board of directors of a school district shall not  
23 require a chaplain employed or engaged under this section to  
24 have a license, endorsement, certification, authorization, or  
25 statement of recognition issued by the board of educational  
26 examiners.

27 3. The procedure for background investigations and  
28 termination established in section 279.69 shall apply to  
29 chaplains employed or engaged under this section.

30 4. The board of directors of a school district shall not  
31 require or coerce a student to utilize the support, services, or  
32 programs provided by a chaplain who is employed or engaged by  
33 the board of directors of the school district pursuant to this  
34 section.

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EXPLANATION

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

3       This bill authorizes school districts, charter schools,  
4 and innovation zone schools to employ chaplains, or engage  
5 volunteer chaplains, to provide support, services, and programs  
6 for students. These schools may establish qualifications,  
7 credentialing, and other requirements related to chaplains who  
8 are employed or engaged under the bill's provisions; however,  
9 such chaplains are not required to have a license, endorsement,  
10 certification, authorization, or statement of recognition issued  
11 by the board of educational examiners. The bill requires  
12 school districts, charter schools, and innovation zone schools  
13 to follow the background investigation and termination procedures  
14 established under Code section 279.69 when employing chaplains  
15 or engaging volunteer chaplains. The bill prohibits school  
16 districts, charter schools, and innovation zone schools from  
17 requiring or coercing a student to utilize the support, services,  
18 or programs provided by a chaplain.