

**House File 2538 - Reprinted**

HOUSE FILE 2538  
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 2122)

(As Amended and Passed by the House March 9, 2026)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to education, including by modifying provisions  
2 related to the duties of the department of education, the  
3 discipline of students enrolled in school districts, charter  
4 schools, and innovation zone schools who exhibit disorderly  
5 conduct in the classroom, the responsibilities and powers  
6 of the department of education, school district teachers,  
7 and other educational staff related to students who have  
8 individualized education programs or plans under section  
9 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, and school district  
10 professional development plans, and authorizing teachers to  
11 request a meeting of a student's individualized education  
12 program team.

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

1 Section 1. Section 256.9, Code 2026, is amended by adding the  
2 following new subsection:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 80. Develop and distribute to school  
4 districts a training program and training materials for members  
5 of a student's individualized education program team that is  
6 related to the least restrictive environment requirements under  
7 the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20  
8 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.

9 Sec. 2. Section 256.11, subsection 10, unnumbered paragraph  
10 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

11 The state board shall establish, and the department shall use,  
12 for the school year commencing July 1, 2021, and each succeeding  
13 school year, an accreditation, monitoring, and enforcement  
14 process for school districts and nonpublic schools seeking  
15 accreditation pursuant to this subsection and subsections 11 and  
16 12. In applying and taking monitoring and enforcement action  
17 under this subsection and subsections 11 and 12, the department  
18 shall consider the timeliness and accuracy of the information a  
19 school district or nonpublic school provides to the department,  
20 including potential underreporting or late reporting of data  
21 related to school discipline and school safety necessary to  
22 monitor and implement the provisions of chapter 280. The process  
23 established shall include all of the following requirements:

24 Sec. 3. Section 256E.7, subsection 2, Code 2026, is amended  
25 by adding the following new paragraph:

26 NEW PARAGRAPH. 0n. Be subject to and comply with the  
27 requirements of section 279.65B relating to the discipline of  
28 students who exhibit disorderly conduct in the classroom in the  
29 same manner as a school district.

30 Sec. 4. Section 256F.4, subsection 2, Code 2026, is amended  
31 by adding the following new paragraph:

32 NEW PARAGRAPH. v. Be subject to and comply with the  
33 requirements of section 279.65B relating to the discipline of  
34 students who exhibit disorderly conduct in the classroom in the  
35 same manner as a school district.

1 Sec. 5. Section 279.65A, subsection 3, Code 2026, is amended  
2 to read as follows:

3 3. The policies must be consistent with ~~the~~ all of the  
4 following:

5 a. The provisions of chapter 256B, and the administrative  
6 rules adopted by the state board for purposes of chapter 256B,  
7 the.

8 b. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act,  
9 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq., ~~and the~~

10 c. The federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended and  
11 codified in 29 U.S.C. §701 et seq.

12 d. Section 279.65B.

13 Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. **279.65B Discipline of students for**  
14 **disorderly conduct.**

15 1. As used in this section:

16 a. "*Disorderly conduct*" means intentional conduct to which  
17 any of the following applies:

18 (1) Constitutes violent behavior or a threat of violent  
19 behavior.

20 (2) Disrupts, disturbs, or interferes with any services  
21 provided by the school district.

22 (3) Disturbs the peace, order, or discipline within the  
23 classroom.

24 b. "*Principal*" means the same as defined in section 256.145.  
25 "*Principal*" includes all of the following:

26 (1) An assistant principal.

27 (2) A vice principal.

28 (3) An administrator who is responsible for the day-to-day  
29 operations of an attendance center.

30 c. "*Teacher*" means the same as defined in section 256.145.

31 2. a. A teacher may exclude from the teacher's classroom and  
32 place under the supervision of the principal any student who does  
33 any of the following while in the teacher's classroom:

34 (1) Engages in disorderly conduct.

35 (2) Threatens, abuses, intimidates, or attempts to intimidate

1 another student or any school employee.

2 (3) Uses abusive or profane language.

3 b. (1) A student who is enrolled in kindergarten through  
4 grade five, and who was excluded from a teacher's classroom  
5 pursuant to paragraph "a", shall not be readmitted to the  
6 teacher's classroom until after the principal and teacher meet to  
7 discuss the readmission of the student.

8 (2) A student who is enrolled in grades six through twelve,  
9 and who was excluded from a teacher's classroom pursuant  
10 to paragraph "a", shall not be readmitted to the teacher's  
11 classroom until after the principal and teacher meet to discuss  
12 the readmission of the student. Such student shall not be  
13 readmitted to the teacher's classroom until, at the earliest, the  
14 immediately subsequent school day.

15 3. a. If the principal determines that disciplinary action  
16 should be taken against a student who was excluded from a  
17 teacher's classroom pursuant to subsection 2, then the principal  
18 shall do all of the following:

19 (1) Take such disciplinary action.

20 (2) Provide written and, if possible, electronic notice of  
21 such disciplinary action to the student's parent or guardian.

22 b. (1) If a student was excluded from a teacher's classroom  
23 for the remainder of a school day pursuant to subsection 2 two or  
24 more times in a semester, or the trimester or quarter equivalent,  
25 then the principal shall discipline the student by doing any of  
26 the following:

27 (a) Assigning the student to either in-school or  
28 out-of-school suspension.

29 (b) Recommending to the superintendent that the student be  
30 located in an alternative learning environment that has been  
31 approved by the superintendent.

32 (2) If a student was excluded from a teacher's classroom  
33 pursuant to subsection 2 because the student's conduct,  
34 statements, or other actions were severe or pervasive, and,  
35 if requested by the teacher, then the principal shall impose

1 the maximum amount of punishment applicable to such conduct,  
2 statements, or other actions as provided in policies adopted by  
3 the board of directors of the school district, including placing  
4 the student in an alternative learning environment that has been  
5 approved by the superintendent.

6 4. a. The board of directors of a school district shall  
7 require each attendance center within the school district  
8 to create an oversight review committee that is responsible  
9 for developing a policy, consistent with this section, that  
10 establishes when a student who has been excluded from the  
11 classroom pursuant to subsection 2 may be readmitted to the  
12 classroom.

13 b. The oversight review committee must consist of all of the  
14 following members:

15 (1) Two teachers who work in the attendance center and who  
16 must be selected by the teachers of the attendance center.

17 (2) One professional staff member who works in the attendance  
18 center and who must be selected by the principal of the  
19 attendance center.

20 5. If a student who has an individualized education program  
21 was excluded from a teacher's classroom pursuant to subsection 2,  
22 then all of the following shall apply:

23 a. (1) All of the following individuals shall, if  
24 practicable, participate in the meeting of the student's  
25 individualized education program team that takes place  
26 immediately subsequent to the student's exclusion from the  
27 classroom:

28 (a) The teacher who excluded the student from the classroom  
29 pursuant to subsection 2.

30 (b) Any teacher who is not described in subparagraph division  
31 (a) and who provides classroom instruction to the student.

32 (c) Any other employee of the school district who does not  
33 hold a license issued by the board of educational examiners,  
34 including para-educators and bus drivers, and who was directly  
35 involved in the student's conduct, statements, or other actions

1 that led to the student's exclusion from the classroom.

2 (2) If a teacher or other employee is not able to participate  
3 in the meeting of the student's individualized education program  
4 team that takes place immediately subsequent to the student's  
5 exclusion from the classroom, as required under subparagraph (1),  
6 then the teacher or other employee shall review the minutes or  
7 summary of the meeting prepared by the individualized education  
8 program team pursuant to paragraph "b", subparagraph (2), and  
9 shall provide written notice to the student's individualized  
10 education program team indicating that the teacher or other  
11 employee has read the minutes or summary.

12 b. (1) In the meeting of the student's individualized  
13 education program team that takes place immediately subsequent  
14 to the student's exclusion from the classroom, the student's  
15 individualized education program team shall discuss all of the  
16 following:

17 (a) The appropriateness of the student's current educational  
18 programming.

19 (b) Whether adjustments need to be made to the student's  
20 individualized education program to address the student's  
21 behaviors.

22 (c) Whether the student's current placement or an alternative  
23 learning environment would best provide the student with a free  
24 appropriate public education.

25 (d) The accommodations, modifications, and adaptations that  
26 are required to allow the student to be successful in a general  
27 education setting, what supports are needed to assist the  
28 teacher and other school district employees in providing those  
29 accommodations, modifications, and adaptations, and whether it  
30 is possible for the school district to provide those supports,  
31 accommodations, modifications, and adaptations.

32 (e) Whether and to what extent the provision of special  
33 education services and activities in the general education  
34 environment will impact the student and the other students in the  
35 classroom.

1 (2) If a teacher or other employee is not able to participate  
2 in the meeting of the student's individualized education program  
3 team that takes place immediately subsequent to the student's  
4 exclusion from the classroom, as required under paragraph "a",  
5 subparagraph (1), then the student's individualized education  
6 program team shall prepare minutes or a summary of the meeting  
7 and provide the minutes or summary to the teacher or other  
8 employee.

9 c. If the student was excluded from the classroom five or  
10 more times within any fifteen-consecutive-school-day period, then  
11 the student's individualized education program team shall meet to  
12 discuss the student's behavior.

13 6. a. A teacher may appeal all of the following to the board  
14 of directors of the school district:

15 (1) A principal's refusal to allow the teacher to exclude a  
16 student from the teacher's classroom pursuant to subsection 2,  
17 paragraph "a".

18 (2) A principal's readmission of a student to the teacher's  
19 classroom prior to the time such student should have been  
20 readmitted pursuant to subsection 2, paragraph "b".

21 b. The board of directors of a school district shall not  
22 take any disciplinary action against a teacher for exercising the  
23 teacher's appeal rights described in paragraph "a". For purposes  
24 of this paragraph, "disciplinary action" includes termination  
25 of employment or the contractual relationship, suspension from  
26 employment, demotion, financial penalties, failing to take action  
27 regarding a teacher's promotion or proposed promotion, failing  
28 to provide an advantage in employment or the contractual  
29 relationship, and written or verbal reprimands.

30 c. All of the following shall apply if the board of directors  
31 of a school district violates paragraph "b":

32 (1) The teacher may enforce the teacher's rights under this  
33 section through a civil action.

34 (2) The board of directors of the school district is  
35 liable to the aggrieved teacher for affirmative relief including

1 reinstatement, with or without back pay, civil damages in an  
2 amount not to exceed three times the annual wages and benefits  
3 received by the aggrieved teacher prior to the violation of  
4 paragraph "b", and any other equitable relief the court deems  
5 appropriate, including attorney fees and costs.

6 (3) When the board of directors of a school district commits,  
7 is committing, or proposes to commit an act in violation of  
8 paragraph "b", an injunction may be granted through an action in  
9 district court to prohibit the board of directors of the school  
10 district from continuing such acts. The action for injunctive  
11 relief may be brought by an aggrieved teacher, the county  
12 attorney, or the person providing human resource management for  
13 the board of directors of the school district.

14 7. The board of directors of a school district shall  
15 immediately grant a teacher a leave of absence for physical and  
16 mental recovery with full pay for not more than five days if  
17 the teacher is injured due to a student's disorderly conduct;  
18 provided, however, that the board of directors of a school  
19 district may grant a teacher such a leave of absence for six or  
20 more days if the teacher provides to the board of directors of  
21 the school district a note from a physician indicating that such  
22 a leave of absence is needed.

23 8. Each principal shall carry out the principal's  
24 responsibilities under this section in an expeditious manner, and  
25 shall do all of the following in an expeditious manner:

26 a. Carry out all manifestation determination review meetings,  
27 as required under section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act,  
28 29 U.S.C. §794.

29 b. Impose the appropriate amount of punishment in accordance  
30 with policies adopted by the board of directors of the school  
31 district and federal law.

32 c. Perform functional behavior assessments as needed.

33 d. Adjust behavioral intervention plans as needed.

34 9. This section shall not be construed to do any of the  
35 following:

1 a. Infringe on any right provided to any student under  
2 federal law, including but not limited to all of the following:

3 (1) Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C.  
4 §794.

5 (2) The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act,  
6 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.

7 (3) The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20  
8 U.S.C. §1232g.

9 (4) The federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42  
10 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.

11 b. Supersede, abrogate, or preempt any federal law, rule, or  
12 regulation.

13 c. Relieve any person from any duties, obligations, or  
14 requirements imposed by federal law.

15 Sec. 7. NEW SECTION. **279.89 Teacher authority to request a**  
16 **meeting of a student's individualized education program team.**

17 1. For purposes of this section:

18 a. "Administrator" means the same as defined in section  
19 256.145.

20 b. "Teacher" means the same as defined in section 256.145.

21 2. A teacher may request a meeting of a student's  
22 individualized education program team at any time by submitting  
23 an electronic or written request to an administrator.

24 3. An administrator may deny a teacher's request for a  
25 meeting of a student's individualized education program team  
26 submitted pursuant to subsection 2; provided, however, that such  
27 a denial must satisfy all of the following requirements:

28 a. Be provided to the teacher in writing.

29 b. Describe why applicable federal law does not require the  
30 meeting of the student's individualized education program team.

31 Sec. 8. NEW SECTION. **279.90 Individualized education**  
32 **programs and section 504 plan requirements.**

33 1. a. The board of directors of each school district shall  
34 ensure all of the following:

35 (1) That each student's individualized education program

1 is accessible to, and read by, each school district employee  
2 who is responsible for the implementation of the student's  
3 individualized education program, including regular education  
4 teachers, special education teachers, and any other service  
5 providers.

6 (2) Each teacher and service provider described in  
7 subparagraph (1) is informed of all of the following:

8 (a) The teacher's or service provider's specific  
9 responsibilities related to implementing the student's  
10 individualized education program.

11 (b) The specific accommodations, modifications, and supports  
12 that must be provided for the student in accordance with the  
13 student's individualized education program.

14 b. After a regular education teacher has read a student's  
15 individualized education program pursuant to paragraph "a", the  
16 regular education teacher shall provide written notice to the  
17 special education teacher who is on the student's individualized  
18 education program team indicating that the regular education  
19 teacher has read the individualized education program.

20 2. Each teacher employed by the school district who teaches  
21 a student who has a plan under section 504 of the federal  
22 Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. §794, shall read the plan. After  
23 the teacher has read the plan, the teacher shall provide written  
24 notice to any special education teacher who provides special  
25 education services to the student, or to the principal of the  
26 attendance center, indicating that the teacher has read the plan.

27 3. At least one para-educator or other employee of the  
28 school district who assists a teacher in providing classroom  
29 instruction to a student who has an individualized education  
30 program, or to a student who has a plan under section 504 of  
31 the federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. §794, shall attend  
32 all meetings related to the student's individualized education  
33 program or plan under section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation  
34 Act, 29 U.S.C. §794. If practicable, meetings related to a  
35 student's individualized education program or plan under section

1 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. §794, that a  
2 para-educator or other employee is required to attend pursuant to  
3 this subsection shall take place during normal business hours.

4 4. The board of directors of each school district shall  
5 provide training to all members of a student's individualized  
6 education program team related to the least restrictive  
7 environment requirements under the federal Individuals with  
8 Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq., that is  
9 based on the training program and training materials distributed  
10 by the director of the department of education to the school  
11 district pursuant to section 256.9, subsection 80.

12 Sec. 9. Section 284.6, subsection 3, Code 2026, is amended to  
13 read as follows:

14 3. A school district shall develop a district professional  
15 development plan. The district professional development plan  
16 ~~shall include~~ must satisfy all of the following requirements:

17 a. Include a description of the means by which the school  
18 district will provide access to all teachers in the district  
19 to professional development programs or offerings that meet the  
20 requirements of subsection 1. ~~The plan shall align~~

21 b. Align all professional development with the school  
22 district's long-range student learning goals and the Iowa  
23 teaching standards. ~~The plan shall indicate~~

24 c. Indicate the school district's approved professional  
25 development provider or providers.

26 d. Include programs and offerings for all teachers to support  
27 serving students with disabilities.

28 e. Include information related to all of the following:

29 (1) The general requirements related to providing a free  
30 appropriate public education, including the school district's  
31 obligation to identify and evaluate a student who may have a  
32 disability.

33 (2) The provision of supports and services through a  
34 student's individualized education program, including each  
35 individual teacher's responsibilities relating to the development

1 and implementation of a student's individualized education  
2 program.

3 (3) The general requirements related to providing education  
4 to a student with a disability consistent with the  
5 least restrictive environment requirements under the federal  
6 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et  
7 seq.

8 Sec. 10. STATE MANDATE FUNDING SPECIFIED. In accordance with  
9 section 25B.2, subsection 3, the state cost of requiring  
10 compliance with any state mandate included in this Act shall  
11 be paid by a school district from state school foundation aid  
12 received by the school district under section 257.16. This  
13 specification of the payment of the state cost shall be deemed  
14 to meet all of the state funding-related requirements of section  
15 25B.2, subsection 3, and no additional state funding shall  
16 be necessary for the full implementation of this Act by and  
17 enforcement of this Act against all affected school districts.