

SENATE/HOUSE FILE \_\_\_\_\_  
BY (PROPOSED DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION BILL)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to mandatory reporting to the board of  
2 educational examiners of licensed school employees who  
3 engage in grooming behavior toward students or the abuse of  
4 students.  
5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 256.160, subsection 1, paragraph a,  
2 subparagraph (1), subparagraph division (a), Code 2024, is  
3 amended by striking the subparagraph division and inserting in  
4 lieu thereof the following:

5 (a) Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating any of the  
6 following:

7 (i) A romantic or physical relationship with a student.

8 (ii) Grooming behavior toward a student.

9 (iii) An otherwise inappropriate relationship with a  
10 student.

11 Sec. 2. Section 256.160, subsection 1, paragraph a,  
12 subparagraph (1), Code 2024, is amended by adding the following  
13 new subparagraph division:

14 NEW SUBPARAGRAPH DIVISION. (e) Abusing a student.

15 Sec. 3. Section 256.160, subsection 1, paragraph a,  
16 subparagraph (2), Code 2024, is amended to read as follows:

17 (2) The board of directors of a school district or area  
18 education agency, the superintendent of a school district,  
19 the chief administrator of an area education agency, and  
20 the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school  
21 shall report to the board the nonrenewal or termination, for  
22 reasons of alleged or actual misconduct, of a person's contract  
23 executed under sections 279.12, 279.13, 279.15, 279.16, 279.18  
24 through 279.21, 279.23, and 279.24, and the resignation of  
25 a person who holds a license, certificate, or authorization  
26 issued by the board as a result of or following an incident  
27 or allegation of misconduct that, if proven, would constitute  
28 a violation of the rules adopted by the board to implement  
29 section 256.146, subsection 13, paragraph "b", subparagraph  
30 (1); soliciting, encouraging, or consummating a romantic or  
31 physical relationship with a student, grooming behavior toward  
32 a student, or an otherwise inappropriate relationship with  
33 a student; falsifying student grades, test scores, or other  
34 official information or material; ~~or~~ converting public property  
35 or funds to the personal use of the school employee; or abusing

1 a student, when the board or reporting official has a good  
2 faith belief that the incident occurred or the allegation is  
3 true. The board may deny a license or revoke the license  
4 of an administrator if the board finds by a preponderance  
5 of the evidence that the administrator failed to report the  
6 termination or resignation of a school employee holding a  
7 license, certificate, statement of professional recognition,  
8 or coaching authorization, for reasons of alleged or actual  
9 misconduct, as defined by this section.

10 Sec. 4. Section 256.160, subsection 1, paragraph c, Code  
11 2024, is amended by striking the paragraph.

12 Sec. 5. Section 256.160, Code 2024, is amended by adding the  
13 following new subsection:

14 NEW SUBSECTION. 5. For purposes of this section:

15 *a. "Grooming behavior"* means engaging in a pattern of  
16 flirtatious behavior, making any effort to gain unreasonable  
17 access to, or time alone with any student with no discernible  
18 educational purpose, engaging in any behavior that can  
19 reasonably be construed as involving an inappropriate, overly  
20 personal, or intimate relationship with or conduct toward or  
21 focus on a student, and engaging in any other individualized,  
22 special treatment not in compliance with generally accepted  
23 educational practices.

24 *b. "Misconduct"* means an action disqualifying an applicant  
25 for a license or causing the license of a person to be revoked  
26 or suspended in accordance with the rules adopted by the board  
27 to implement section 256.146, subsection 13, paragraph "b",  
28 subparagraph (1).

29

EXPLANATION

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

32 This bill relates to mandatory reporting to the board of  
33 educational examiners of licensed school employees who engage  
34 in grooming behavior toward students of the abuse of students.

35 Current law requires the board of directors of a school

1 district or area education agency, the superintendent of a  
2 school district, the chief administrator of an area education  
3 agency, and the authorities in charge of an accredited  
4 nonpublic school, to report to the board of educational  
5 examiners any instance of disciplinary action taken against a  
6 licensed school employee for conduct constituting soliciting,  
7 encouraging, or consummating a romantic or otherwise  
8 inappropriate relationship with a student. The bill adds that  
9 such a report is also required to be made for conduct that  
10 constitutes grooming behavior toward a student or for conduct  
11 that constitutes abusing a student.

12 The bill defines "grooming behavior" as engaging in a  
13 pattern of flirtatious behavior, making any effort to gain  
14 unreasonable access to, or time alone with any student with  
15 no discernible educational purpose, engaging in any behavior  
16 that can reasonably be construed as involving an inappropriate,  
17 overly personal, or intimate relationship with or conduct  
18 toward or focus on a student, and engaging in any other  
19 individualized, special treatment not in compliance with  
20 generally accepted educational practices.

21 The bill makes conforming changes, including by moving the  
22 definition of "misconduct" within Code section 256.160.