

House File 884 - Reprinted

HOUSE FILE 884
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 334)

(As Amended and Passed by the House March 26, 2025)

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:

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
5 as 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
10 without compensation or remuneration, in the same manner as a
11 school 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 a
14 chaplain, or engage a chaplain to serve without compensation or
15 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 do
31 any of the following:

32 *a.* Require or coerce a student to utilize the support,
33 services, or programs provided by a chaplain who is employed
34 or engaged by the board of directors of the school district
35 pursuant to this section.

1 *b.* Employ or engage a chaplain in lieu of a school counselor
2 or a qualified guidance counselor licensed by the board of
3 educational examiners under chapter 256, subchapter VII, part
4 3.