

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 516

Introduced by Walz, 15.

Read first time January 17, 2023

Committee: Education

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to schools; to amend section 79-2,143, Reissue
2 Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and section 79-3106, Revised Statutes
3 Cumulative Supplement, 2022; to provide a duty to the Commissioner
4 of Education and the state school security director; to change
5 funding intent for the School Safety and Security Reporting System
6 Act; to provide powers and duties to the State Department of
7 Education and State Board of Education; to provide grants to school
8 districts for security-related infrastructure projects; to provide
9 grants to educational service units and local public health
10 departments to hire school psychologists and licensed mental health
11 practitioners as prescribed; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal
12 the original sections.
13 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Section 79-2,143, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska,
2 is amended to read:

3 79-2,143 (1) The position of state school security director is
4 created within the State Department of Education. The Commissioner of
5 Education shall appoint the director based on experience, knowledge, and
6 skills in the field of school security.

7 (2) It is the intent of the Legislature that regionally focused
8 specialists be hired as employees to be placed to assist schools and to
9 increase the availability of training, provide tailored technical support
10 for the unique needs of each region, and serve as a central point of
11 contact for school districts. Such employees shall be placed under the
12 direction of the state school security director.

13 Sec. 2. Section 79-3106, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
14 2022, is amended to read:

15 79-3106 (1) It is the intent of the Legislature that federal funds
16 shall be used to implement the School Safety and Security Reporting
17 System Act for fiscal years 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24. The
18 Commissioner of Education shall electronically report data, a cost-
19 benefit analysis, and a funding recommendation regarding the continued
20 viability of the Safe2HelpNE report line to the Appropriations Committee
21 of the Legislature and the Education Committee of the Legislature on or
22 before January 5, 2024.

23 (2) Beginning in fiscal year 2024-25, it is the intent of the
24 Legislature to fund the School Safety and Security Reporting System Act
25 using General Funds.

26 Sec. 3. (1) The Commissioner of Education shall create and
27 administer a grant program to school districts for security-related
28 infrastructure projects. Such projects may include, but are not limited
29 to, surveillance equipment, door-locking systems, and double-entry doors
30 for school buildings. Subject to available appropriations, the department
31 shall provide a grant to any school district that applies for such grant

1 for use for qualifying projects. The amount of such grant shall be a
2 proportionate share of the total amount appropriated for such grants in
3 subsection (4) of this section. A school district's share shall be based
4 on the percentage of students attending such school district according to
5 the most recent enrollment data collected by the State Department of
6 Education.

7 (2) A school district may apply to the department for a grant on
8 forms and in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. A
9 school district receiving a grant under this section shall divide the use
10 of such grant funds as evenly as possible among all eligible school
11 buildings within such district.

12 (3) The State Board of Education may adopt and promulgate rules and
13 regulations to carry out this section.

14 (4) It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate fifteen
15 million dollars from the General Fund to the State Department of
16 Education to administer the grant program pursuant to this section.

17 Sec. 4. (1) The State Department of Education shall create and
18 administer a grant program to provide funding to hire mental health
19 practitioners and school psychologists to provide access to mental and
20 behavioral health supports to students at school and within the
21 community.

22 (2) A local public health department or an educational service unit
23 may apply to the department, on forms and in a manner prescribed by the
24 department, for a grant to hire a mental health practitioner or school
25 psychologist to provide mental and behavioral health supports to students
26 and serve as a liaison to school districts within the area served by such
27 local public health department or educational service unit.

28 (3) It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate five million
29 dollars from the General Fund to administer such grant program.

30 Sec. 5. Original section 79-2,143, Reissue Revised Statutes of
31 Nebraska, and section 79-3106, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,

1 2022, are repealed.