

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 322**

FINAL READING

Introduced by Williams, 36; Murman, 38; Hunt, 8; Blood, 3; Hansen, M.,  
26.

Read first time January 13, 2021

Committee: Education

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to schools; to amend section 79-2,144, Revised  
2 Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2020; to adopt the School Safety and  
3 Security Reporting System Act; to harmonize provisions; to provide  
4 an operative date; to repeal the original section; and to declare an  
5 emergency.

6 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1           Section 1. Sections 1 to 7 of this act shall be known and may be  
2 cited as the School Safety and Security Reporting System Act.

3           Sec. 2. The Legislature finds that the COVID-19 pandemic has  
4 impacted the health and well-being of students throughout Nebraska,  
5 resulting in the need for a scalable support system and report line to  
6 enhance the safety and well-being of students in each elementary and  
7 secondary school.

8           Sec. 3. For purposes of the School Safety and Security Reporting  
9 System Act:

10           (1) Concerning behavior includes, but is not limited to, suicide,  
11 bullying, stalking behavior, cyber or electronic harassment, bomb threat,  
12 family violence, physical or sexual abuse, threat to property, behavior  
13 indicative of terrorism, assault or attack, inappropriate weapons use,  
14 concern about mental health or substance use, sexual exploitation or  
15 predation, and any direct or indirect threatening statement;

16           (2) Department means the State Department of Education or the state  
17 school security director;

18           (3) Mental health professional means a school psychologist, social  
19 worker, or licensed mental health professional;

20           (4) Report line staff means the staff of the Safe2HelpNE report line  
21 as provided in subsection (4) of section 4 of this act;

22           (5) Safe2HelpNE report line means the reporting system established  
23 pursuant to section 4 of this act;

24           (6) Threat assessment means an evidence-based process to reduce  
25 potential risks and incidents of violence resulting in harm to one or  
26 more persons or school property; and

27           (7) Threat assessment team means a school-based team of at least  
28 five members who have completed the training required pursuant to section  
29 5 of this act and includes, but is not limited to, the principal or  
30 principal's designee, a mental health professional, and a member of the  
31 school staff.

1           Sec. 4. (1) The department shall establish the Safe2HelpNE report  
2 line as a statewide, anonymous reporting system to support threat  
3 assessment teams and reduce potential risks and incidents of violence  
4 resulting in harm to self, others, or school property.

5           (2) The Safe2HelpNE report line shall be multi-modal to allow  
6 students, school staff, parents, and community members to anonymously  
7 report concerns and information about concerning behavior or possible  
8 harm to persons or property by telephone call, mobile application, web  
9 site, or email without charge. The Safe2HelpNE report line shall be  
10 available to any public or nonpublic school that has a threat assessment  
11 team and that maintains a current list of the contact information for at  
12 least five team members designated to receive alerts from staff at any  
13 time of the day or night.

14           (3) Except as otherwise required by law, the identity of any  
15 individual who contacts the Safe2HelpNE report line shall be confidential  
16 and shall not be revealed.

17           (4) The Safe2HelpNE report line shall be staffed seven days per week  
18 and twenty-four hours per day by professionals trained to receive  
19 concerns, use de-escalation techniques to minimize law enforcement  
20 involvement, and alert the appropriate threat assessment team for review,  
21 assessment, and action to protect persons and property. The report line  
22 staff shall also be trained in threat assessment and management  
23 processes, suicide prevention, recognizing mental illness and emotional  
24 disturbance, and applicable confidentiality and privacy laws. The report  
25 line staff shall have access to clinical consultation and support seven  
26 days per week and twenty-four hours per day from a licensed mental health  
27 professional.

28           (5) The report line staff shall immediately alert the appropriate  
29 threat assessment team of any concern directly regarding a student,  
30 school staff member, or school property or that is likely to impact a  
31 student, school staff member, or school property. If there is an

1 immediate life safety concern, emergency services shall be contacted  
2 prior to any threat assessment team. Each alert that is not referred to  
3 emergency services, law enforcement, or child protective services shall  
4 be assessed by the threat assessment team receiving such alert. If a  
5 threat assessment team decides a report regarding a student is credible,  
6 a representative of the school administration shall, within a reasonable  
7 period of time, attempt to notify a parent or guardian of the student  
8 except when such notification could reasonably be believed to contribute  
9 to the endangerment of the student or others. Such notification or  
10 attempted notification shall be documented in a manner prescribed by the  
11 department.

12 (6) The department shall track and evaluate the effectiveness and  
13 usage of the Safe2HelpNE report line. The report line staff shall report  
14 the number of calls received, disposition of calls, referrals made to  
15 threat assessment teams, and other metrics as determined by and in the  
16 manner prescribed by the department.

17 (7) Any information or material in the possession of the threat  
18 assessment team shall remain separate from educational records and shall  
19 be considered security records.

20 Sec. 5. The department shall provide training for the members of  
21 any threat assessment team serving a public or nonpublic school. Such  
22 training shall provide the knowledge and skill to allow threat assessment  
23 teams to work collaboratively to conduct threat assessments, engage in  
24 crisis intervention, increase awareness of concerning behavior among  
25 school staff, students, and the public, and interrupt violence in the  
26 planning stage to thwart potential harm to persons and property.

27 Sec. 6. It is the intent of the Legislature that federal funds  
28 shall be used to implement the School Safety and Security Reporting  
29 System Act for fiscal years 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24. The  
30 Commissioner of Education shall electronically report data, a cost-  
31 benefit analysis, and a funding recommendation regarding the continued

1 viability of the Safe2HelpNE report line to the Appropriation Committee  
2 of the Legislature and the Education Committee of the Legislature on or  
3 before January 5, 2024.

4 Sec. 7. The department may adopt and promulgate rules and  
5 regulations to carry out the School Safety and Security Reporting System  
6 Act.

7 Sec. 8. Section 79-2,144, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,  
8 2020, is amended to read:

9 79-2,144 The state school security director appointed pursuant to  
10 section 79-2,143 shall be responsible for providing leadership and  
11 support for safety and security for the public schools. Duties of the  
12 director include, but are not limited to:

13 (1) Collecting safety and security plans, required pursuant to rules  
14 and regulations of the State Department of Education relating to  
15 accreditation of schools, and other school security information from each  
16 school system in Nebraska. School districts shall provide the state  
17 school security director with the safety and security plans of the school  
18 district and any other security information requested by the director,  
19 but any plans or information submitted by a school district may be  
20 withheld by the department pursuant to subdivision (8) of section  
21 84-712.05;

22 (2) Recommending minimum standards for school security on or before  
23 January 1, 2016, to the State Board of Education;

24 (3) Conducting an assessment of the security of each public school  
25 building, which assessment shall be completed by August 31, 2019;

26 (4) Identifying deficiencies in school security based on the minimum  
27 standards adopted by the State Board of Education and making  
28 recommendations to school boards for remedying such deficiencies;

29 (5) Establishing security awareness and preparedness tools and  
30 training programs for public school staff;

31 (6) Establishing research-based model instructional programs for

1 staff, students, and parents to address the underlying causes for violent  
2 attacks on schools;

3 (7) Overseeing suicide awareness and prevention training in public  
4 schools pursuant to section 79-2,146;

5 (8) Establishing tornado preparedness standards which shall include,  
6 but not be limited to, ensuring that every school conducts at least two  
7 tornado drills per year;

8 (9) Responding to inquiries and requests for assistance relating to  
9 school security from private, denominational, and parochial schools;~~and~~

10 (10) Recommending curricular and extracurricular materials to assist  
11 school districts in preventing and responding to cyberbullying and  
12 digital citizenship issues; and -

13 (11) Carrying out the department's responsibilities under the School  
14 Safety and Security Reporting System Act.

15 Sec. 9. This act becomes operative on July 1, 2021.

16 Sec. 10. Original section 79-2,144, Revised Statutes Cumulative  
17 Supplement, 2020, is repealed.

18 Sec. 11. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when  
19 passed and approved according to law.