

SB 658-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-3256

12/07

SENATE BILL        **658-FN**

AN ACT            authorizing the department of education to establish a safe and resilient schools advisory council.

SPONSORS:        Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Rosenwald, Dist 13; Sen. Fenton, Dist 10; Sen. Long, Dist 20; Sen. Perkins Kwoka, Dist 21

COMMITTEE:      Education

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ANALYSIS

This bill authorizes the department of education to establish a safe and resilient schools advisory council to review existing resources and data and develop a safe and resilient schools framework.

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Explanation:      Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.  
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~  
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six*

AN ACT authorizing the department of education to establish a safe and resilient schools advisory council.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 1 Statement of Purpose. School safety and resilience for New Hampshire schools enables  
2 schools and students to prevent and respond to crises and disruptive behaviors and to avoid  
3 escalation. Warning signs, social isolation, bullying, or untreated emotional distress can be  
4 identified, and schools can replace or supplement punitive or exclusionary discipline to avoid  
5 amplifying alienation, which can increase the risk for both suicidality and targeted aggression. In  
6 New Hampshire, collaborative partnerships among schools, police, and youth service agencies have  
7 already reduced juvenile justice placements and repeat behavioral incidents through proactive,  
8 trauma-informed engagement. Moreover, increasing awareness and training relating to  
9 neurodivergent students can also replace or supplement punitive or exclusionary discipline. Schools  
10 with safety and resilience programs have recorded increased instructional time and improved  
11 behavioral health outcomes. New Hampshire can build on this success by establishing a voluntary  
12 school safety and resilience program to create standards uniting safety and support.

13 2 New Sections; Safe and Resilient Schools Advisory Council. Amend RSA 193-F by inserting  
14 after section 10 the following new sections:

15 193-F:11 Safe and Resilient Schools Advisory Council.

16 I. The department of education shall establish an advisory council to develop guidelines  
17 concerning best practices for safe and resilient schools, including education and training for  
18 identification, prevention, and early intervention for students in mental health crisis and other  
19 behavioral issues, as well as best practices, identification, and early intervention for students who  
20 may be neurodivergent. Such guidelines shall include models of parental or guardian involvement  
21 and collaboration with partners, including law enforcement.

22 II. The members of the advisory council shall be as follows:

23 (a) The commissioner of the department of education, or designee.

24 (b) A representative of the department of health and human services (DHHS), with  
25 expertise in data management and analysis related to student health, appointed by the  
26 commissioner of the department.

27 (c) A school superintendent, appointed by the New Hampshire School Administrators  
28 Association.

29 (d) A school resource officer, appointed by the New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of  
30 Police.

**SB 658-FN - AS INTRODUCED**

**- Page 2 -**

1 (e) The director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness - New Hampshire, or  
2 designee.

3 (f) The director of the Disability Rights Center of New Hampshire, or designee.

4 (g) A director of an organization providing treatment and education for neurodivergent  
5 children, appointed by the commissioner of the department of education.

6 (h) Two parents of school-age children with experience in mental health or  
7 neurodivergence, appointed by the commissioner of the department of education.

8 III. The advisory council shall:

9 (a) In order to determine how past activities provide a framework for safe and resilient  
10 schools' voluntary, sustainable standards, review:

11 (1) Current and previous department of education programs, grants, training,  
12 toolkits, and reports.

13 (2) The activities of the office of student and educator wellness.

14 (3) The 2018 report of the governor's school safety preparedness task force.

15 (4) Adverse childhood experiences training.

16 (5) Reports from the multi-tiered system of supports for behavioral health and  
17 wellness (MTSS-B) technical assistance center.

18 (b) Develop a safe and resilient schools framework, including, but not limited to:

19 (1) Recommended training for school personnel, police, school resource officers, and  
20 mental health partners to ensure unified understanding and collaboration.

21 (2) Training modules on pathways to violence and threat identification, distress  
22 indicators, trauma-responsive discipline, and referral protocols.

23 (3) Classroom supports, including micro-lessons on student needs, requesting  
24 breaks, supports, and universal accommodations.

25 (4) Staff training to stabilize, de-escalate, and coordinate care for students to replace  
26 or supplement punitive or exclusionary discipline.

27 (5) A credentialing requirement for continuing education on neurodiversity and  
28 classroom management.

29 (c) Collaborate with the police standards and training council on police academy training  
30 and continuing education on school crisis response.

31 (d) Establish guidelines for data collection on recommended programs and standards,  
32 including, but not limited to, the number of staff trained, students reached, and office discipline  
33 referrals.

34 IV. The commissioner of the department of education shall serve as chairperson of the  
35 advisory council. The first meeting of the advisory council shall be called by the chairperson and be  
36 held within 45 days of the effective date of this section. Five members shall constitute a forum.

**SB 658-FN - AS INTRODUCED**

**- Page 3 -**

1           V. The advisory council shall submit its findings and any recommendations for proposed  
2 legislation to the house committees on education funding and education policy and administration,  
3 the senate committees on education and education finance, the house clerk, and the senate clerk on  
4 November 1, 2026, and annually thereafter.

5           193-F:12 New Hampshire Safe and Resilient Schools Fund.

6           I. There is established in the office of the state treasurer a fund to be known as the New  
7 Hampshire safe and resilient schools fund. The moneys in the fund shall be nonlapsing. The state  
8 treasurer may invest moneys in the fund as provided by law, with interest received on such  
9 investment credited to the fund.

10          II. The fund shall include any sums appropriated for such purpose, including:

11           (a) Available federal and state grants.

12           (b) Private sector grants, gifts, or donations of any kind.

13          III. Any fund expenditures shall require approval by the commissioner of the department of  
14 education, in consultation with the safe and resilient schools advisory council, and approval by the  
15 joint fiscal committee of the general court.

16          3 New Subparagraph; Application of Receipts; New Hampshire Safe and Resilient Schools  
17 Fund. Amend RSA 6:12, I by inserting after subparagraph 410 the following new subparagraph:

18           (411) Moneys deposited in the New Hampshire safe and resilient schools fund as  
19 established in RSA 193-F:12.

20          4 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

**SB 658-FN- FISCAL NOTE  
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT authorizing the department of education to establish a safe and resilient schools advisory council.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This bill establishes a Safe and Resilient Schools Advisory Council within the Department of Education and creates a nonlapsing New Hampshire Safe and Resilient Schools Fund to support the Council's efforts, which may receive state, federal, or private funding. Any fund expenditures shall require approval by the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Council, and approval by the Joint Legislative Fiscal Committee. The Department has identified no costs relative to this bill and to the extent no appropriation is given to the new fund, this bill is not expected to have any fiscal impact.

**AGENCIES CONTACTED:**

Department of Education