

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025

A Bill

SENATE BILL 266

4
5 By: Senator J. Dotson
6 By: Representative Breaux

For An Act To Be Entitled

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8
9 AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL CHAPLAINS; AND FOR OTHER
10 PURPOSES.

Subtitle

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14 TO AUTHORIZE A PUBLIC SCHOOL TO ADOPT A
15 POLICY FOR ONE OR MORE SCHOOL CHAPLAINS.

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17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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19 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 17, Subchapter 3, is amended
20 to add an additional section to read as follows:

21 6-17-311. School chaplain – Definitions.

22 (a) A public school may adopt a policy for one (1) or more school
23 chaplains to provide support, services, and programs for enrolled students,
24 staff employed by the public school, and parents of enrolled students as
25 assigned by the public school.

26 (b) A policy adopted under subsection (a) of this section shall
27 include the following without limitation:

28 (1) A description of the support, services, or programs to which
29 a school chaplain may be assigned;

30 (2) A requirement that a public school superintendent or
31 director, as relevant, that has a school chaplain or school chaplains under
32 this section inform all parents of the availability of the support, services,
33 and programs provided by the school chaplain or school chaplains; and

34 (3)(A) A requirement that a public school receive parental
35 consent before a student participates in or receives support, services, and
36 programs provided by a school chaplain.



1 (B) If a public school has more than one (1) school
 2 chaplain, then a parental consent form required under subdivision (b)(3)(A)
 3 of this section shall allow a parent to select a school chaplain from a list
 4 provided by a public school, which shall include the school chaplain's
 5 religious affiliation, if any.

6 (c) A public school that adopts a policy under subsection (a) of this
 7 section shall publish a list of school chaplains, including any religious
 8 affiliation, employed by or accepted as a volunteer at the public school
 9 under subsection (a) of this section on the website of the public school.

10 (d)(1) Before a school chaplain under this section is permitted access
 11 to public school grounds when public school students are present and before
 12 he or she has direct contact with public school students, a public school
 13 shall pay the full cost of a:

14 (A) Statewide and nationwide criminal records check by the
 15 Identification Bureau of the Division of Arkansas State Police, which shall
 16 conform to the applicable federal standards and include the taking of the
 17 school chaplain's fingerprints; and

18 (B) Child Maltreatment Central Registry check by the
 19 Department of Human Services.

20 (2) Upon completion of the statewide and nationwide criminal
 21 records checks and the Child Maltreatment Central Registry check, the
 22 Identification Bureau of the Division of Arkansas State Police and the
 23 department shall forward all releasable information to the public school and
 24 to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

25 (3) A public school shall not employ or accept as a volunteer a
 26 school chaplain who has registered or is required to register as a sex
 27 offender under the Sex Offender Registration Act of 1997, § 12-12-901 et seq.

28 (e) As used in this section:

29 (1) "Parent" means a parent, legal guardian, or person standing
 30 in loco parentis to a student;

31 (2) "Public school" means:

32 (A) A school operated by a public school district; or

33 (B) An open-enrollment public charter school; and

34 (3) "School chaplain" means a member of the clergy who
 35 volunteers or is employed by a public school who:

36 (A) Functions in a pluralistic environment; and

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(B) Directly and indirectly supports the free exercise of religion by all individuals in a public school.