



School Climate Legislative Agenda

The civil rights community came together to develop and release “[Civil Rights Principles for Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive School Climates](#),” a roadmap for policymakers concerned with the learning, well-being, and safety of all students in our nation’s schools. Congress has a responsibility to children and youth to end harmful policies and practices and, instead, invest in evidence-based policies and practices that keep children and staff safe, such as reserving federal funds for counselors, nurses, and those supportive adults who are specially trained to help build positive learning environments and support children’s success. Congress has an opportunity to advance the following federal policies that support practices and personnel that ensure students learn in safe, healthy, and inclusive environments.

The Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act (S. 2125/H.R. 4011)

The Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act prohibits the use of federal funds to support the hiring, recruitment, and placement of police officers on K-12 school campuses and, instead, establishes a \$5 billion grant program to invest in school districts that remove law enforcement so that schools can provide adequately trained personnel and trauma-informed services to improve the learning environment for children. The Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act aligns with our seventh principle in “Civil Rights Principles for Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive School Climates,” which explicitly calls for the elimination of school-based law enforcement.

- S. 2125: Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT), Pete Mills (pete_mills@murphy.senate.gov)
- H.R. 4011: Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), Sarah Groh (sarah.groh@mail.house.gov)

The Keeping All Students Safe Act (S. 1858/H.R. 3474)

The Keeping All Students Safe Act protects children and prohibits any school receiving federal funding from secluding a child; using mechanical restraint; using chemical restraint; and using prone, supine, or physical restraint that restricts breathing, stops blood flow to the brain, or is life threatening. The bill also provides grants to invest in professional development, training, and certification for evidence-based, effective school climate policies and procedures for school personnel. The Keeping All Students Safe Act aligns with our eighth principle in “Civil Rights Principles for Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive School Climates,” which explicitly calls for the elimination of threats to students’ health and safety.

- S. 1858: Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT), Pete Mills (pete_mills@murphy.senate.gov)
- H.R. 3474: Rep. Donald Beyer (D-VA), Kate Schisler (kate.schisler@mail.house.gov)



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The Protecting our Students in Schools Act (S. 2029/H.R. 3836)

The Protecting our Students in Schools Act prohibits the practice of corporal punishment in any school that receives federal funding, establishes a series of important and much-needed enforcement protections for students and families, and creates a federal grant program to assist states and school districts in improving the climate and culture of schools. There is never an educational justification for hitting children, and this legislation would end, once and for all, this harmful and dangerous practice, which is still explicitly allowed in 19 states and disproportionately harms Black children and children with disabilities. The Protecting our Students in Schools Act aligns with our eighth principle in “Civil Rights Principles for Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive School Climates,” which explicitly calls for the elimination of harm to students’ health, well-being, and safety.

- S. 2029: Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT), Pete Mills (pete_mills@murphy.senate.gov)
- H.R. 3836: Rep. Donald McEachin (D-VA), Jim McFeely (james.mcfeely@mail.house.gov)

The Safe Schools Improvement Act of 2021 (S. 2410/H.R. 4402)

The Safe Schools Improvement Act establishes federal standards to protect every student from bullying and harassment in K-12 schools, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion. Bullying can result in long-term social, academic, psychological, and physical consequences, including decreased interest in school, increased absences, and decreased concentration levels for students. The Safe Schools Improvement Act aligns with our fourth principle in “Civil Rights Principles for Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive School Climates,” which explicitly calls for enhancing protections against harassment and discrimination in school.

- S. 2410: Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA), Wesley Whistle (wesley_whistle@casey.senate.gov)
- H.R. 4402: Rep. Linda Sánchez (D-CA), Sarah Skirmont (sarah.skirmont@mail.house.gov)

The Ending PUSHOUT Act of 2021 (H.R. 2248)

The Ending Punitive, Unfair, School-based Harm that is Overt and Unresponsive to Trauma (Ending PUSHOUT) Act prevents the criminalization and pushout of students from school, especially Black and Brown girls, and instead establishes a grant program for school districts and nonprofit organizations to reduce exclusionary discipline practices, such as the suspension and expulsion of students. The bill also requires the Department of Education to collect discipline data annually under the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) and establishes a Federal Interagency Taskforce to End School Pushout. The Ending PUSHOUT Act aligns with our second principle in “Civil Rights Principles for Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive School Climates,” which explicitly calls for schools to implement comprehensive and supportive discipline practices.

- H.R. 2248: Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), Sarah Groh (sarah.groh@mail.house.gov)