



Florida Counseling Association

A Branch of the American Counseling Association

HB 1059/SB 1634: Parental Rights

The Florida Counseling Association opposes this bill as the vague language of the bill is cause for concern regarding a student's confidentiality when working with their school counselor. Maintaining confidentiality is an ethical responsibility of every counselor unless a student is in danger of harming themselves or others. This bill would limit the student/counselor relationship and force a school counselor to break confidentiality.

- SB 1634 states "The Legislature further finds that important information relating to a minor child should not be withheld either inadvertently or purposefully, from his or her parent, including information related to the minor child's health, well-being and education, while the minor child is in the custody of the school district."

LGBTQ+ students are often not ready to talk with their parents about sexual orientation. According to the Human Rights Campaign, 26% of LGBT youth say their biggest problems are not feeling accepted by their family, trouble at school/bullying, and a fear to be out/open. Due to the vague nature of this bill, school counselors may be required to "out" their students to parents that can impact their relationship with family and friends.

- SB 1634 also states "The state (...) may not infringe on the fundamental rights of a parent to direct the upbringing, education, health care, and mental health of his or her minor child without demonstrating that such action is reasonable and necessary to achieve a compelling state interest and that such action is narrowly tailored and is not otherwise served by a less restrictive means."

School counselors are often one of the only means of mental health support immediately at their disposal. In a crisis situation at school, school counselors and other administration act immediately to ensure student safety and well-being. Daily, school counselors talk with students about stress management, coping skills, resolving interpersonal conflicts and safety. This bill seeks to limit access for students to get needed support in times of crisis.

The Florida Counseling Association asks you to vote oppose this bill. Please contact us below with any questions or concerns.

305-814-9460

fcaoffice@flacounseling.org

www.flacounseling.org

2750 Taylor Ave Suite A36 Orlando, Florida 32806

