

HB 1095

For the record, I am Representative Dwight Kiefert from District 24 which includes all of Barnes and Ransom Counties. I am here to present HB 1095 that will basically establish communications between our schools and Child Protective Services.

Presently schools are required to report suspected cases of abuse or neglect to CPS. After the report is filed they have no communication with CPS to know if anything is being done about the report or if its sitting on someone's desk. If they notice continued abuse or neglect, all they can do is file another report. Passage of this bill, which is permissive, would allow someone at the school to help monitor a situation and be in close contact with CPS. Often a student will come to a teacher or staff person at the school asking for help, some students have actually shown staff pictures of the drugs their parents are using in the home.

The bill easily passed in the House with 81 votes.

Our hope is to make our world a little safer place for our students in our school system. We feel that if this bill would have been implemented a few sessions ago could have very well saved the life of a 13year-old ND student.

The school made several reports of abuse to CPS not knowing if anything was being done to address the issue. Something was being done, but not by CPS. The parent pulled the student from the school and locked him in a room and starved him to death. The 13 year old weighed only 21 lbs when he was found. If the school could have been in contact with CPS they could have coordinated their efforts and possibly saved this child's life. I will attach a link to the news story.

https://bismarcktribune.com/mom-who-starved-son-says-it-wasn-t-murder/article_084083fc-8b2f-5e0a-9828-5b998c079973.html

The schools see the children every day they are in school, who better to help monitor them and alert CPS if they are absent.

We would like to give this bill the name of the student who lost his life in hopes this bill would help the schools and CPS prevent this tragic loss from ever happening again, it would be known as, "Aiden's Law".

Apparently West Fargo school already has this connection link established by employing a full time Human Services person at their school. Smaller schools just don't have the resources to do this.

Representative Dwight Kiefert