

Lisa Cataldi

From: Caroline Geaber <geabercaroline@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2026 12:53 PM
To: House Education Committee
Subject: Please Support H7526 – Classroom Safety

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Please Support H7526 – Classroom Safety

Dear Chair McNamara and Members of the House Education Committee,
My name is Caroline Geaber, and I am a kindergarten teacher in Cranston Public Schools. I am writing to ask for your support of **H7526**, legislation that would give teachers the authority to remove students from classrooms when behavior creates safety risks or major disruptions for the rest of the class. Educators are responsible for maintaining safe and productive learning environments. When serious disruptions occur, teachers must be able to respond quickly in order to protect students and staff and ensure that learning can continue for the rest of the class. The learning loss of an entire class due to the behaviors of one student is very disruptive to the remaining students. The bill also helps ensure that students who are removed from the classroom receive appropriate support and intervention before returning, so they can successfully re-engage in the learning environment, therefore helping them become ready to participate in the learning environment as well, in a state where they are ready to learn.

Personal experience:

In my work as an educator, I have seen situations where classroom disruptions or unsafe behavior made it difficult to continue instruction. For example:

Several times throughout the previous school year, I had to take my entire class out to the hallway, while one student was throwing materials, knocking over desks, chairs, and furniture. Not only is it disruptive to the other students' learning, it is impactful to their feeling of safety in their own classroom, when finally able to return to find the room they felt safe learning in, had been destroyed. More learning time loss trying to put it back together, regrouping students who had just experienced intense emotional and violence from their fellow peers. The mix of emotions for a young adult would be difficult to process, as a 5 or 6 year old, it is confusing, scary, and incredibly disruptive to their idea of safety in their learning environment. As an educator, it weighed significantly on me that I could not keep the other students from feeling unsafe or limit their exposure to violence. It was one of the toughest years of my 21 years of teaching. ALL students deserve a safe, violence free learning environment, and teachers deserve a violence free work environment as well. Having the student with the significant behavioral issues, leave the classroom and be in a place where they can process safely and work through their emotions, is also significantly better for the student. I know that being in the room, throwing and tearing the class apart, did not feel good or safe for that student either.

Providing educators with clear authority to address these situations will help ensure that classrooms remain safe and supportive places for all students to learn. It will send a message to the students of RI that everybody's safety matters, every student's access to learning matters. That year, during one of my students' significant behavioral moments, they smashed their shoe down onto my foot. It took 6 months for 2 of my toes to fully recover. The safety of everyone in the classroom matters, supporting this bill clearly shows that you believe that as well.

Thank you for considering this legislation.

Sincerely,

Caroline Geaber, Kindergarten Teacher
Cranston Public Schools