Schools face new anti-violence laws

By Amy Gilbier

New bills receiving overwhelming support in the Michigan legislature would hold school districts accountable for violence involving students. The bills, which were introduced in both the Senate and House of Representatives, would mandate the implementation of anti-violence programs in schools.

A new anti-violence law was introduced in the Michigan Senate by Senator John Stomp. The bill, Senate Bill 2022, would require school districts to develop and implement anti-violence programs that include bullying prevention, conflict resolution, and restorative justice practices.

The bill would also require school districts to provide training for teachers and staff on how to recognize and respond to bullying and other forms of violence. Additionally, the bill would create a student ombudsman program to provide a safe and confidential place for students to report incidents of violence.

In the House of Representatives, Representative Marianne Weir introduced House Bill 4567. The bill, which is similar to the Senate bill, would mandate the implementation of anti-violence programs in schools.

The House bill would also require school districts to provide training for teachers and staff on how to recognize and respond to bullying and other forms of violence. Additionally, the bill would create a student ombudsman program to provide a safe and confidential place for students to report incidents of violence.

The anti-violence bills have received widespread support from lawmakers and educators. Senator Stomp said, "Violence in our schools is an unacceptable problem and it is time for our state to take action. These bills will help ensure that our schools are safe and welcoming environments for all students."