

1 HB97
2 204375-3
3 By Representative Morris
4 RFD: Education Policy
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ENROLLED, An Act,

Relating to school safety, to amend Section 16-1-44, Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended by Act 2019-533, 2019 Regular Session, to require mental health awareness to be included in the annual training session for employees of each public K-12 school.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Section 16-1-44, Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended by Act 2019-533, 2019 Regular Session, is amended to read as follows:

"§16-1-44.

"(a) (1) Each local board of education shall develop and adopt a comprehensive school emergency operations plan for each school under the authority of the board.

"(2) The local board or its agent shall examine the conditions and operations of each school under the authority of the local board to determine hazards to student and staff safety and shall propose changes, if needed to promote the prevention of dangerous problems and circumstances.

"(3) In developing the plan for each school, the local board or its agent shall involve community law enforcement and safety officials, including community fire and emergency management assigned to the school.

1 "(b) (1) The board shall incorporate into each
2 comprehensive school emergency operations plan the following:

3 "a. Protocols for addressing each type of serious
4 threats to the safety of school property, students, employees,
5 or administrators which shall include, but not be limited to:
6 Security-related threats addressed within a school lockdown
7 plan, fire-related threats addressed within a fire safety
8 plan, and severe weather-related threats addressed within a
9 severe weather safety plan.

10 "b. A protocol for responding to emergency events
11 that compromise the safety of school property, students, and
12 employees.

13 "(2) Each protocol shall include procedures for
14 notification and responding to threats and emergency events,
15 respectively, including such action as notification of
16 appropriate law enforcement and emergency response personnel
17 for assistance, and informing parents of affected students.

18 "(3) Each comprehensive school emergency operations
19 plan shall include and use the following four alert levels,
20 along with set plans of notification, action, and procedures
21 for school personnel to follow in each circumstance:

22 "1. Heightened Awareness. This means a potential may
23 exist for an unusual situation and all parties should have
24 heightened awareness to react as needed.

1 "2. Secure Your Area of Responsibility. This means a
2 specific incident has occurred, such as a medical emergency or
3 a threat to one's self, and school personnel shall secure
4 their area of responsibility in order to decrease risk of
5 further incidents.

6 "3. Secure Perimeter. A potential threat or danger
7 does exist or has occurred within the community or
8 neighborhood, and all parties should be aware to react as
9 needed.

10 "4. Lockdown. Recognition of potential immediate
11 danger. Take immediate action using the safest and best option
12 for survival.

13 "(c) (1) The board shall update the emergency
14 operations plan whenever a major modification to the building
15 requires changes in the procedures outlined in the plan and at
16 other necessary times. The school emergency operations safety
17 plan shall be reviewed and revised annually, as needed, by the
18 local board of education in consultation with the principal,
19 administrative staff, faculty, and employees of the school.

20 "(2) Upon request of law enforcement or safety
21 officials, or both, the local board shall provide a copy of
22 the current school emergency operations plan, which shall be
23 kept in a secure place and not considered public record.

24 "(d) The local board shall grant access to each
25 school under its control to law enforcement and fire

1 department personnel to enable them to prepare for responding
2 to threats and emergency events affecting the school.

3 "(e) The principal or his or her designee shall
4 instruct and train students concerning procedures to be used
5 for emergency drills and evacuations. The principal or his or
6 her designee shall ensure that all safety and security drills
7 and procedures are conducted and performed no less than what
8 is required by state or federal law, or both. The doors and
9 exits of each school may be locked from the outside but shall
10 allow for immediate egress by those inside the building during
11 school hours and at all school functions. An emergency drill
12 shall include, but not be limited to, safety, security, severe
13 weather, fire, and school lockdown drills.

14 "(f) In conjunction with drills or evacuations
15 required by subsection (e), a principal or his or her designee
16 shall instruct students in safety precautions to be taken in
17 case of a severe weather watch, alert, or warning. A principal
18 or his or her designee shall designate, in accordance with
19 standards prescribed by the local superintendent of education
20 in conjunction with local public safety officials and the fire
21 marshal, or appropriate local fire safety official in counties
22 that do not have a fire marshal, appropriate locations to be
23 used to shelter students in case of a severe weather watch,
24 alert, or warning.

1 "(g) In the event of an immediate threat to a school
2 involving acts of violence, such as terrorism, a person
3 possessing a firearm or a deadly weapon, or any other threat
4 of violence, any person who perceives the threat, or his or
5 her designee, may institute a lockdown alert level for the
6 school. In addition to the requirements of subsection (e), the
7 principal or his or her designee shall conduct a school
8 lockdown drill during the first six weeks of the fall and
9 spring semesters of each school year to provide students with
10 instruction in the procedures to follow in the case of a
11 school lockdown. The principal or his or her designee shall
12 hold an annual training session for employees of the school
13 regarding the school lockdown plan, drills, and procedures to
14 be conducted during a school year. The annual training session
15 shall include mental health awareness.

16 "(h) Appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken
17 against any principal or his or her designee who knowingly
18 neglects or refuses to comply with the requirements of this
19 section.

20 "(i) This section shall be read in pari materia with
21 other laws relating to school safety and emergency planning."

22 Section 2. This act shall become effective on August
23 1, 2021, following its passage and approval by the Governor or
24 its otherwise becoming law.

