



THE FLORIDA SENATE
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For Immediate Release
April 2, 2025

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Strengthened School Safety Protections Pass Final Committee

SB 1470 by Senator Burgess enhances school safety requirements and improves statewide coordination to protect students and teachers

Tallahassee—The Senate Committee on Fiscal Policy, chaired by Senator Joe Gruters (R-Sarasota), today passed Senate Bill (SB) 1470, School Safety, by Senator Danny Burgess (R-Zephyrhills). SB 1470 strengthens school safety measures, expands oversight of school security personnel, and clarifies campus security requirements to safeguard students and faculty.

“Every Florida student deserves to feel safe at school. And every parent should be able to put their children on the school bus, or drop them off at school in the morning, without worrying about whether or not they will make it home that evening,” said Senator Burgess. “Safety should never be left up to chance. Strengthened security measures across Florida schools will foster a safer environment for students to learn. By improving coordination and creating more uniformity with how protocols are implemented, we can bolster campus protections and further prioritize the safety of both students and staff. Every year we are incorporating lessons learned and looking for improvements. Florida families expect us to get this right. We can’t and we won’t let them down.”

“Over the last several years, the Legislature has partnered with local school districts and law enforcement to determine steps we can take to keep our schools safe. With input from parents, teachers, school administrators, and law enforcement, including Sheriff Bob Gualtieri, who chairs the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission, this legislation builds on our track record of continuous improvement in school safety,” said Senate President Ben Albritton (R-Wauchula). “A secure school environment is vital to academic success for our students. Strengthening school safety training requirements will help safeguard students and faculty and give families peace of mind that their children are safe during the school day.”

Aligning Training and Reporting for School Safety Personnel

The bill aligns training and reporting requirements for school security guards and school guardians to support consistent procedures and best practices across the state.

Under the bill, Florida schools that contract for security guard services must have training provided by the Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel Guardian Program established by a sheriff. Private schools already authorized to work with their local county sheriff to establish a guardian program to train private school employees are now authorized to use trained school security guards.

Sheriffs must adhere to the training and screening requirements of the Guardian Program. Participants must pass rigorous firearms training, background screening, psychological evaluation, and a drug test. Once requirements are met, a sheriff will issue a school security guard certificate and maintain documentation on training, certification, weapon and equipment inspections, and firearms qualifications for each certified school security guard. School security guards must receive ongoing training, weapon inspections, and firearm qualifications provided by a sheriff or sheriff-approved program.

Certified school security guards must receive approval from the school's respective county sheriffs before being assigned to a school. Security guards must also submit their psychological evaluation results to the sheriff for review.

Streamlining Reporting Requirements

The bill aligns reporting and recordkeeping requirements for school security guards and guardians to streamline program oversight. SB 1470 also requires security agencies to report the last date of employment of a school security guard to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE).

Improving Communication with Law Enforcement During an Emergency

To improve communication between schools and emergency personnel, the Florida Department of Education (DOE) will establish and maintain a centralized system with interoperable panic alert systems and digital school maps for public schools, charter schools, and other educational institutions. Compatible panic alert systems will improve communication with law enforcement and emergency responders and provide real-time situational awareness through digital maps.

Clarifying District School Board Responsibilities

In response to feedback from parents and other stakeholders, the bill clarifies locked campus and building requirements for Florida district school boards to apply during school supervision hours and provides exceptions for certain campus areas and school buildings to remain unlocked under specific circumstances. School districts must also equip substitute teachers with all school safety protocols and policies before their first day of teaching at that school. SB 1470 also authorizes school districts to employ firearm detection canines for use by sworn law enforcement officers in K-12 schools.

Establishing an Institute of School Safety

Addressing the potential for further enhancements to school safety, the Office of Safe Schools (OSS) within DOE will create a workgroup comprised of representatives from post-secondary institutions, school administrators and facility staff, law enforcement and first responders, school safety specialists, school-based mental health professionals, and threat management practitioners. The workgroup must develop recommendations to establish a Florida Institute of School Safety. The OSS will submit its findings to the Governor, Senate President, and House Speaker no later than January 1, 2026.

For more information, please visit www.FLSenate.gov.

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