

Committee on Education Pre-K -12

CS/SB 1470 — School Safety

by Appropriations Committee on Pre-K – 12 Education and Senator Burgess

The bill expands the Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel School Guardian Program (school guardian program), clarifies perimeter and door security requirements, modifies training and oversight for school security guards, and refines procedures for threat assessment and emergency response.

School Guardian Program Options and Oversight

The bill aligns the training, certification, and oversight of school security guards with requirements for school guardians. Specifically, the bill:

- Requires all school security guard training, including initial and ongoing training, to be conducted or approved by a sheriff;
- Requires background screening, psychological evaluation, and drug testing before training;
- Prohibits sheriffs from waiving training or screening costs for security agencies;
- Requires sheriffs to maintain training, certification, and firearm qualification records for each certified guard; and
- Allows sheriffs to provide training to individuals legally allowed to carry a concealed firearm under Florida law, including under permitless carry provisions.

The bill authorizes child care facilities to participate in the school guardian program to the same extent as a private school.

Reporting Requirements for School Safety Personnel

The bill modifies existing reporting requirements for school guardians and school security guards, which:

- Aligns school security guards reporting to school guardian requirements;
- Requires security agencies, in addition to schools and sheriffs, to report school security guard employment and separation data to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE); and
- Directs the FDLE to maintain a consolidated statewide list of both school guardians and school security guards, including certification, appointment, and separation data, and any firearm discharges or misconduct reported under law.

Clarifications to Locked Campus and Access Requirements

The bill clarifies and modifies school perimeter and door security requirements. Specifically, the bill:

- Limits the school perimeter, locked access, and door security requirements to the time beginning 30 minutes before the school day and ending 30 minutes after;

- Allows doors or gates to remain unlocked if a locked barrier separates the space from student-occupied areas;
- Provides exemptions for:
 - Career and technical education spaces where locking doors would pose health or safety risks (with documentation in the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool);
 - Common areas such as cafeterias and media centers, except during instructional time or student testing; and
- Requires each substitute teacher to receive school safety protocols and procedures before his or her first day of substitute teaching.

Temporary Door Lock Use During Active Assailant Incidents

The bill allows classrooms with permanently installed door locks to also use temporary door locks during active assailant incidents if the devices:

- Can be removed from the egress side in a single operation without a key;
- Can be removed from the ingress side with a key or other credential;
- Comply with the Florida Fire Prevention Code, with allowance for installation at any height; and
- Are incorporated into the school's active assailant response plan.

Panic Alert and Digital Mapping System Integration

Subject to appropriation, the bill requires the Department of Education to establish and maintain a centralized system that integrates panic alert systems and digital maps used by public and charter schools. All such schools must connect their panic alert systems to the centralized system and ensure interoperability for real-time emergency coordination.

Behavioral Threat Management and Data Privacy

The bill clarifies the responsibilities of the Office of Safe Schools (OSS) regarding behavioral threat assessment and management. The bill codifies OSS's role in maintaining the statewide threat management process and the Florida-specific threat assessment instrument, and authorizes the State Board of Education to adopt rules governing access to threat assessment reports stored in the statewide threat management portal.

Florida Institute of School Safety Workgroup

The bill directs the OSS to convene a stakeholder workgroup to develop recommendations for the creation of a Florida Institute of School Safety. The workgroup must include law enforcement, school personnel, mental health professionals, and other experts. OSS must submit its recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by January 1, 2026.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2025.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 110-0