

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to student elopement; creating s.  
 3           1003.211, F.S.; providing definitions; requiring  
 4           public schools to create a School Staff Assistance for  
 5           Emergencies (SAFE) Team and a school elopement plan;  
 6           providing for membership and responsibilities of the  
 7           team; providing requirements for the plan; requiring  
 8           the team to create student-specific elopement quick  
 9           reference guides for certain students; providing  
 10          requirements for such guides; requiring public schools  
 11          to annually submit their plans to the district school  
 12          board; authorizing the State Board of Education to  
 13          adopt rules; providing an effective date.

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 15   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 17          Section 1.   Section 1003.211, Florida Statutes, is created  
 18          to read:

19                 1003.211 School elopement plans.—

20                 (1) For purposes of this section, the term:

21                 (a) "Disability" means, for a student in kindergarten  
 22                 through grade 12, autism spectrum disorder, as defined in the  
 23                 Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth  
 24                 Edition, published by the American Psychiatric Association, or  
 25                 an intellectual disability, as defined in s. 393.063.

26        (b) "Elopement" means when a student with disabilities  
 27 wanders away, walks away, runs away, escapes, or otherwise  
 28 leaves the supervision of school staff or leaves school grounds  
 29 unsupervised or unnoticed before the end of his or her scheduled  
 30 school day.

31        (2) To ensure the safety of students with disabilities at  
 32 risk of elopement, each public school shall create a School  
 33 Staff Assistance for Emergencies (SAFE) Team and a school  
 34 elopement plan.

35        (3) The school principal and assistant principal shall  
 36 serve on the SAFE Team and the school principal shall appoint at  
 37 least five other members to serve on the team. The SAFE Team  
 38 shall:

39        (a) Create and annually update the school elopement plan  
 40 and respond to all elopements.

41        (b) Provide training to all school personnel to  
 42 familiarize such personnel with the school elopement plan and  
 43 all necessary procedures, including, but not limited to, the  
 44 search grid established pursuant to paragraph (4)(a) and any  
 45 responsibilities of such personnel if an elopement occurs.

46        (4) In developing the school elopement plan, the SAFE Team  
 47 must include all of the following:

48        (a) A search grid of the school campus and surrounding  
 49 areas. The search grid must include all bodies of water,  
 50 intersections, train tracks and stations, parks, playgrounds,

51 and other features that may present a greater risk for students  
52 with disabilities at risk of elopement.

53 (b) Procedures for school personnel to notify school  
54 administrators if a student with disabilities elopes and  
55 procedures for school personnel to immediately begin searching  
56 for such student. Such procedures must specify that upon  
57 notification of an elopement, the SAFE Team must notify the  
58 school resource officer or school safety officer and local law  
59 enforcement.

60 (c) Procedures for a coordinated response to an elopement,  
61 including, but not limited to, announcing a Code Gray, which  
62 will alert all school personnel to the elopement, and  
63 immediately contacting the student's parent.

64 (d) The names, positions, and contact information for all  
65 members of the SAFE Team.

66 (e) Other information or procedures that the SAFE Team,  
67 district school board, or State Board of Education deems  
68 necessary.

69 (5)(a) If a student with disabilities is prone to  
70 elopement, the SAFE Team, in coordination with the student's  
71 parent, must create a student-specific elopement quick reference  
72 guide. Such elopement quick reference guide must include all of  
73 the following:

- 74 1. The student's identifying information.  
75 2. A current photograph of the student.

76       3. The student's level of communication.

77       4. A list of the student's interests, behaviors,  
78 preferences, and aversions.

79       5. Any health considerations for the student.

80       6. A list of any GPS technology that could be used to help  
81 locate the student.

82       7. A list of possible locations where the student may go  
83 within the search grid.

84       (b) The SAFE Team must distribute a student's elopement  
85 quick reference guide to the student's parent and all relevant  
86 school personnel.

87       (6) Each public school must annually provide its elopement  
88 plan to the district school board.

89       (7) The state board may adopt rules to administer this  
90 section.

91       Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.