

By Senator Book

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

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

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

20 1003.211 School elopement plans.-

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

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

27 (b) "Elopement" means when a student with a disability
28 wanders away, walks away, runs away, escapes, or otherwise
29 leaves the supervision of school staff or leaves school grounds

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30 unsupervised or unnoticed before the end of his or her scheduled
31 school day.

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

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

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

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

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

49 (a) A search grid of the school campus and surrounding
50 areas. The search grid must include all bodies of water,
51 intersections, train tracks and stations, parks, playgrounds,
52 and other features that may present a greater risk for students
53 with disabilities at risk of elopement.

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

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59 school resource officer or school safety officer and local law
60 enforcement agencies.

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

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

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

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

74 1. The student's personal 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 of 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 within the search grid
83 where the student may go.

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

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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.