

By Senator Arrington

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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 terms; requiring public  
4           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           SAFE team; providing requirements for the plan;  
8           requiring the SAFE team to create student-specific  
9           elopement quick reference guides for certain students;  
10          providing requirements for such guides; requiring  
11          public schools to annually provide their plans to the  
12          district school board; authorizing the State Board of  
13          Education to 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, an 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

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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 familiarize  
42 such personnel with the school elopement plan and all necessary  
43 procedures, including, but not limited to, the search grid  
44 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 begin searching immediately  
56 for the student. The 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

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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. The 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

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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, 2025.