

2021 -- H 6023

LC001904

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Introduced By: Representatives Noret, Casimiro, Vella-Wilkinson, and Solomon

Date Introduced: February 26, 2021

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-21-23 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-21 entitled "Health and
2 Safety of Pupils" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **16-21-23. School safety teams, school crisis response teams, and school safety**
4 **assessments.**

5 (a) Each school district of each town, city, and regional school department shall conduct a
6 school safety assessment in conjunction with local police, fire, school safety team pursuant to the
7 provisions of this section and any other expert said school department deems necessary. The
8 assessment shall examine the current status of each school building's safety and shall be performed
9 within thirty (30) days of passage of this act, and every three (3) years thereafter.

10 (1) There shall be a Rhode Island school safety committee whose functions shall include,
11 but not be limited to, providing training to law enforcement, school administrators, and teachers;
12 collecting and reviewing all hazard safety security assessments; and offering recommendations and
13 assistance to each school district of every town, city, and regional school department, in an effort
14 to increase the safety of students and faculty. The committee shall be comprised of twelve (12)
15 members as follows: the superintendent of the Rhode Island state police or designee, who shall
16 serve as chairperson of the committee; the president of the Police Chiefs' Association, or designee;
17 the director of the Rhode Island emergency management agency, or designee; the commissioner of
18 the department of elementary and secondary education, or designee; a representative from the
19 Rhode Island School Superintendents' Association, to be selected by the association; the director

1 of the department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals, or designee;
2 the state fire marshal, or designee; a representative of the Rhode Island Association of School
3 Maintenance Directors, to be selected by the association; a representative from the Rhode Island
4 Association of School Principals, to be selected by the association; a representative from the Rhode
5 Island Association of School Committees, to be selected by the association; a representative from
6 the National Education Association of Rhode Island ("NEARI"), who shall be a full-time classroom
7 teacher, to be selected by the president of NEARI; and one representative from the Rhode Island
8 Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals ("RIFTHP"), who shall be a full-time classroom
9 teacher, to be selected by the president of the RIFTHP.

10 (2) Each school department of each town, city, and regional school district shall complete
11 the emergency action plan and shall submit the all hazards site safety survey report to the Rhode
12 Island school safety committee every three (3) years for the committee's review and
13 recommendation.

14 (3) The assessment shall be completed by November 1 of the year mandated, and by
15 December 31 of that year, the commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall report to
16 the speaker of the house, the senate president, and the governor that the assessments have been
17 completed. Assessments performed within a year of the date of passage of this act shall satisfy this
18 requirement.

19 (4) All meetings regarding the school safety assessment are not subject to the open
20 meetings law pursuant to chapter 46 of title 42, and documents produced including, but not limited
21 to, meeting minutes and the school safety assessment are not subject to the access to public records
22 law pursuant to chapter 2 of title 38.

23 (b) The school committee of each town, city, and regional school department shall review
24 and adopt in executive session a comprehensive school safety plan regarding crisis intervention,
25 emergency response, and management. The plan shall be developed by a school safety team
26 comprised of representatives of the school committee; representatives of student, teacher, and
27 parent organizations; school safety personnel; school administration; and members of local law
28 enforcement, fire, and emergency personnel. Members of the school safety team shall be appointed
29 by the school committee and/or school superintendent of the town, city, or regional school district.
30 In creating the school safety plan, the school safety team(s) shall consult the model school safety
31 plan developed by the department of elementary and secondary education pursuant to § 16-21-23.1.

32 (c) The school crisis response team shall be comprised of those selected school personnel
33 willing to serve as members of a psychological response team to address the psychological and
34 emotional needs of the school community, and may seek mental health resources from the

1 department of elementary and secondary education. Members of the school crisis response team
2 may coordinate mental health services for those students and school employees affected by acts of
3 violence in the schools, using resources available through the department of elementary and
4 secondary education.

5 (d) There shall be established a Rhode Island school security committee whose principal
6 function shall include, but not be limited to, developing, implementing and reporting to the Rhode
7 Island general assembly on or before January 31 of each year, as to school facility and security
8 measures. This committee shall facilitate the providing of armed security personnel and security
9 for all kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) schools along with additional security devices and
10 plans.

11 (1) Said committee shall be comprised of thirteen (13) members as follows: the
12 superintendent of the Rhode Island state police or designee, who shall serve as chairperson of the
13 committee; the president of the Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association or designee; the director
14 of the Rhode Island emergency management agency or designee; the commissioner of the
15 department of elementary and secondary education or designee; a representative from the Rhode
16 Island School Superintendents' Association, to be selected by the association; the director of the
17 department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals or designee; the state
18 fire marshal or designee; a representative of the Rhode Island Association of School Maintenance
19 Directors, to be selected by the association; a representative from the Rhode Island Association of
20 School Principals, to be selected by the association; a representative from the National Education
21 Association of Rhode Island ("NEARI"), who shall be a full-time classroom teacher, to be selected
22 by the president of NEARI; one representative from the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and
23 Health Professionals ("RIFTHP"), who shall be a full-time classroom teacher, to be selected by the
24 president of the RIFTHP; and two (2) representatives from the firearms community chosen by the
25 National Rifle Association state association.

26 (2) The committee shall report on the creation and implementation of a five (5) year plan
27 which shall include the following school security measures:

28 (i) The limiting and securing of primary access to all school facilities, including, but not
29 limited to, employee, visitor and student ID access cards, bullet resistant film and/or glass,
30 surveillance and camera systems.

31 (ii) Secondary classroom security measures, including, but not limited to, breach resistant
32 doors and devices, ballistic film on glass along with alarm systems.

33 (3) The committee shall coordinate with the Rhode Island sheriff's department, Rhode
34 Island capitol police, state police, National Guard and local law enforcement to develop a schedule

1 for armed security coverage for the schools.

2 (4) The committee shall meet every three (3) months and shall report to the Rhode Island
3 legislature, by January 31 of each year, the additional cost per year to add additional armed security.

4 (5) The cost of the security shall be split between the state of Rhode Island and cities and
5 towns school committee(s).

6 (6) An individual with a valid concealed carry weapons permit, shall upon entering a school
7 facility building, communicate to the principal of the school, the senior administrator at the facility
8 or the security officer that they are in possession of a firearm.

9 (a) An individual who intentionally fails to inform the principal, senior administrator or the
10 security officer, may be charged under § 11-47-60.

11 (7) All meetings regarding the school security committee are not subject to chapter 46 of
12 title 42 ("open meetings"), and documents produced including, but not limited to, meeting minutes
13 and the school security measures are not subject to chapter 2 of title 38 ("public records").

14 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION - HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

1 This act would create the Rhode Island school security committee to develop, implement,
2 and report to the general assembly as to the school facility and security measures. The committee
3 would be comprised of thirteen (13) members and would meet every three (3) months. Additionally,
4 the committee would report to the general assembly its findings on or before January 31 of each
5 year.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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