
DIGEST

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Hensgens

HB No. 718

Abstract: Provides relative to the preparation, content, rehearsal, review, revision, approval, and provision of copies of school crisis management and response plans; requires training; applicable to all public schools, including charter schools.

Definition

Present law defines a "crisis management and response plan" as a plan to:

- (1) Address school safety and the incidence of violence, at schools, on school buses, and at school-related activities.
- (2) Respond effectively to such incidents.
- (3) Ensure that every student, teacher, and school employee has access to a safe, secure, and orderly school that is conducive to learning.

Further requires that a plan also address the management of any other emergency situation.

Proposed law retains present law and specifically adds shootings to the incidences of violence a plan shall address.

Plan preparation

Present law requires each public school principal to prepare a plan in accordance with school board policy and to consider and include, if appropriate, input from students and their parents, teachers and other school employees, community leaders, local law enforcement, and fire, public safety, and emergency preparedness officials.

Proposed law requires the principal to prepare the plan jointly with -- not just consider and include input from -- local law enforcement, fire, public safety, and emergency preparedness officials. Deletes the requirement that the plan be prepared in accordance with school board policy. Retains the requirement relative to the consideration and inclusion, if appropriate, of input from teachers and other school employees, students and their parents, and community leaders. Adds that if a school has a resource officer or Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps instructor, he shall join the principal and such officials in preparing the plan and participate in plan review and revision.

Plan content

Present law requires the plan to detail school employees' roles and responsibilities and coordination agreements, services, and security measures in the event of a violent incident or emergency situation.

Proposed law additionally provides that the plan:

- (1) Shall focus on preventing loss of life and injury.
- (2) Shall provide that classroom doors with locks in compliance with fire safety standards remain locked during instructional time and that locked doors shall not obstruct egress.

Present law authorizes the plan to include provision for encouraging peer helper programs and identifying students who may have experienced rejection or other traumatic life events. Proposed law additionally authorizes the plan to provide for student counseling in the event of a shooting or other violent incident or emergency situation.

Plan review, revision, and approval and reporting requirements

Present law requires each public school to review the plan annually. Proposed law specifically requires each principal, jointly with local law enforcement, fire, public safety, and emergency preparedness officials, to review the plan at least once annually and revise it as necessary and, as in initial plan preparation, to consider and include, if appropriate, input from teachers and other school employees, students and their parents, and community leaders in plan review and revision.

Present law requires each school to submit the plan and resubmit any revised plan to the local school board for approval. Proposed law requires each school principal:

- (1) To submit the plan in writing to the local school superintendent for approval, rather than the school board, at least once annually, including upon each revision.
- (2) To notify all teachers and other school employees regarding plan revisions.

Proposed law additionally requires the local superintendent to report annually to the public school governing authority on the status of the plan of each school under the governing authority's jurisdiction.

Plan rehearsal

Proposed law requires each public school principal:

- (1) To conduct a safety drill to rehearse plan components within the first 30 days of each school year.

- (2) To submit a written report summarizing drill details to the local superintendent not later than seven days after the drill; authorizes the superintendent to comment on the drill to the principal, who may incorporate such comments into a revised version of the plan.

Providing training on and distributing copies of the plan

Proposed law requires each principal to provide:

- (1) In-service training each school year, which may be incorporated into a meeting or training session held for another purpose, for all school employees pertaining to the plan; authorizes the principal to involve local law enforcement, fire, public safety, and emergency preparedness officials in the training.
- (2) A copy of the plan to (a) the president of the local school board, (b) the local school superintendent, and (c) the local police chief or sheriff, as applicable, as well as the local fire chief, each of whom shall be responsible for keeping a readily accessible copy of the plan in his respective office.

Rules and regulations

Proposed law authorizes the governing authority of each public elementary and secondary school to adopt rules and regulations to provide for proposed law implementation.

Charter schools

Proposed law is applicable to all public schools, including charter schools, and for proposed law purposes, "local superintendent" of a charter school means the chief executive officer of the school or other employee holding an equivalent position.

Public Records Law

Proposed law provides that in accordance with present law (R.S. 44:3.1, which provides relative to the disclosure of certain records pertaining to security procedures), school crisis management and response plans shall not be subject to the Public Records Law.
(Amends R.S. 17:416.16; Adds R.S. 17:3996(B)(33))