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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Introduced By: Representatives Read, Noret, Fascia, Corvese, Santucci, Donovan,
McNamara, Casey, Serpa, and Solomon

Date Introduced: February 12, 2026

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~~ year thereafter, on or before
10 September 1.

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 secondary education pursuant to § 16-21-23.1.

2 (c) The school crisis response team shall be comprised of those selected school personnel
3 willing to serve as members of a psychological response team to address the psychological and
4 emotional needs of the school community, and may seek mental health resources from the
5 department of elementary and secondary education. Members of the school crisis response team
6 may coordinate mental health services for those students and school employees affected by acts of
7 violence in the schools, using resources available through the department of elementary and
8 secondary education.

9 (d) There shall be established a Rhode Island school emergency response committee whose
10 principal function shall include, but not be limited to, developing and reporting to the Rhode Island
11 general assembly each January 31, school facility security measures, which need legislation for
12 implementation. This committee shall facilitate providing of armed security personnel and security
13 for all kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) schools, along with additional security devices
14 and plans.

15 (1) Said committee shall be comprised of eight (8) members as follows: the superintendent
16 of the Rhode Island state police, or designee, who shall serve as chairperson of the committee; the
17 president of the police chiefs' association, or designee; the director of the Rhode Island emergency
18 management agency, or designee; the commissioner of the department of elementary and secondary
19 education, or designee; a representative from the Rhode Island School Superintendents'
20 Association, to be selected by the association; the state fire marshal, or designee; two (2)
21 representatives from the firearms community with certifications chosen by the NRA state
22 association.

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

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

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

30 (iii) The mandating and scheduling of armed police coverage for the schools.

31 (3) The committee shall coordinate with the Rhode Island state police and local police
32 departments to develop a schedule for armed police coverage for the schools.

33 (4) The committee shall meet every three (3) months and shall report to the Rhode Island
34 general assembly, every January 31, the additional cost per year to add additional needed armed

1 security.

2 (5) There shall be included in the state budget a recurring yearly sum of five hundred
3 thousand dollars (\$500,000) to be specifically utilized for armed police coverage.

4 (i) Any additional armed police coverage costs shall be split between the Rhode Island state
5 police and the local city or town police department.

6 (6) All meetings regarding the school security committee are not subject to the open
7 meetings law, pursuant to chapter 46 of title 42, and documents produced including, but not limited
8 to, meeting minutes and the school security measures are not subject to the access to public records
9 law pursuant to chapter 2 of title 38.

10 (e) There shall be established a rapid response team/SWAT team for each city or town
11 police department, whose principal function shall include, but not be limited to, active shooter
12 training, sniper training, and securing SWAT team equipment and body armor.

13 (1) The rapid response team/SWAT team shall be created and administered by the Rhode
14 Island state police along with local police departments.

15 (2) The rapid response team/SWAT team shall develop active shooter training and
16 emergency response drills.

17 (3) Each local city and town police department rapid response team/SWAT team shall
18 consist of a minimum of six (6) officers.

19 (4) Each local city and town police department shall execute emergency response drills at
20 least three (3) times per year.

21 (5) There shall be included in the state budget a recurring yearly sum of five hundred
22 thousand dollars (\$500,000) to be specifically utilized for the procurement of rapid response
23 team/SWAT team weapons and equipment, along with training of the officers.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

1 This act would strengthen school security measures, including the establishment of an eight
2 (8) member Rhode Island school emergency response committee to develop additional
3 recommendations for school security measures and requiring an annual school safety assessment
4 by all school districts. The act would also establish a rapid response team/SWAT team for each city
5 or town police department, whose principal function shall include, but not be limited to, active
6 shooter training, sniper training, and securing SWAT team equipment and body armor. The act
7 would appropriate the annual sums of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) for the
8 strengthening of school security measures, as well as the rapid response teams/SWAT teams.

9 This act would take effect upon passage.

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