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SENATE BILL DRS35210-NHa-127

Short Title: Safe Schools Transparency Act.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senators Bradley, Salvador, and Everitt (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO REQUIRE PARENTAL NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL THREATS AND
SAFETY PLANS, TO CREATE PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO NOTIFY PARENTS OF
SCHOOL THREATS, TO REINSTATE THE TASK FORCE FOR SAFER SCHOOLS,
AND TO ESTABLISH THE SCHOOL SAFETY FUND.

Whereas, North Carolina schools have faced an increase in threats, including the
recent case in Charlotte, where a suspect was arrested for allegedly threatening to harm students
and staff at multiple schools; and

Whereas, parents are not consistently informed about threats to school safety, which
prevents them from taking necessary precautions to protect their children; and

Whereas, building on Senate Bill 74 (2023), this act establishes a parent's right to be
notified of any credible threats against their child, their child's school, or the local school district;
and

Whereas, schools must transparently communicate with parents and guardians while
ensuring law enforcement can respond effectively to threats; Now, therefore,
The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**PART I. REQUIRE PARENTAL NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL THREATS AND
SAFETY PLANS**

SECTION 1. Article 7B of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by
adding a new Part to read:

"Part 7. School Safety Transparency.

"§ 115C-77.1. Mandatory notification of threats.

(a) Required Notices. – The parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in a public
school shall be immediately notified of any credible threat that meets any of the following
criteria:

- (1) Targets the parent or guardian's child, including threats of violence and
bullying.
- (2) Targets the student body, faculty, or school campus, including planned attacks
and bomb threats.
- (3) Involves a student bringing a weapon to school or a student causing other
security risks.
- (4) Requires law enforcement intervention, including a lockdown or evacuation.

(b) Notice Policy. – The governing body of a public school unit shall adopt a policy for
the provision of notices required under this section. At a minimum, the policy shall do the
following:



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- (1) Identify the school employees or administrators responsible for providing the notices required by this section.
- (2) Define high-level emergency.
- (c) Means of Notice. – Notifications required under this section shall be made by text message, email, phone call, or by posting an update on the school's website. Each notification must be made through at least two different means. For high-level emergencies, one of the two notices must be by phone call.
- (d) Notice Contents. – Notifications made pursuant to this section shall include details of the threat, including actions taken and school response. Updates shall be provided as new information becomes available.
- (e) Notice Timing. – A school must provide initial notification within one hour of law enforcement confirmation of a credible threat, unless threat notification interferes with an active law enforcement investigation in which case notice shall occur one hour after arrest or resolution of investigation as determined by law enforcement.
- "§ 115C-77.2. Failure to notify.**
- (a) Filing Complaint. – The parent of a student who is enrolled in a public school who alleges that the student's school failed to notify the parent of a threat as required by G.S. 115C-77.1 may file a complaint with the Department of Public Instruction.
- (b) Investigation. – Upon receiving a complaint that a school has violated G.S. 115C-77.1, the Department shall forward the complaint to the Center for Safer Schools, and the Center for Safer Schools shall conduct an investigation to determine whether a school abided by the school's notification policy.
- (c) Report. – No later than 60 days from the date the Center for Safer Schools receives the complaint, the Center shall report the findings of the investigation to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education. The State Board shall schedule consideration of the report no later than the next regular meeting occurring more than five days after submission of the report.
- (d) State Board Findings; Penalty. – If the State Board of Education, by a majority vote, finds that a school has not complied with the notice requirements of G.S. 115C-77.1, the State Board shall instruct the Department to reduce the public school unit's central office administration allotment by up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) and transfer the funds to the School Security Fund.
- (e) Repeated Failure to Notify. – If the State Board of Education finds that a school has failed to comply with the notice requirements of G.S. 115C-77.1 for more than one threat, then the State Board may do any of the following:
- (1) Issue a corrective action plan for the public school unit.
- (2) Require additional mandatory training for public school unit administrators.
- (3) Withhold additional administrative funds from the central office administration allotment.
- (f) Administrative Penalties for Administrators. – If during the review of an investigation of an alleged violation of G.S. 115C-77.1 the State Board of Education finds that specific school administrators were responsible for the violation, the State Board may do any of the following for those administrators specifically:
- (1) Issue a written reprimand and performance review.
- (2) Require the administrator to attend additional school safety training.
- (3) If the administrator has been identified as being involved in a violation of G.S. 115C-77.1 for more than one threat, order the public school unit to end the employment of the administrator.
- (g) A school administrator that knowingly conceals a credible threat from the parent of a student that attends the school where the threat occurred may be charged with a Class A1 misdemeanor for endangering students if the threat results in injury.

(h) If the State Board takes action under this section, the State Board of Education shall report the action to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee within 60 days of the action. The General Assembly shall consider, no later than the next session of the General Assembly, the future governance of the identified public school unit.

"§ 115C-77.3. Annual school safety report and policies.

(a) The governing body of a public school unit shall ensure that each school within the school unit publishes an annual school safety report on its website and shall notify parents of the availability of the report.

(b) The annual school safety report shall include at least the following:

(1) The number of threats, lockdowns, and evacuations in the prior year.

(2) Status of school security enhancements and equipment, including security cameras and Student Resource Officers.

(3) Summary of school safety policies and response procedures.

(c) The governing body of a public school unit shall ensure that each school within the school unit publishes its school safety policies on its website and shall notify parents of the availability of the policies.

(d) The website shall include the following school safety policies:

(1) Emergency response plans, except a school may exclude sensitive security details.

(2) Student safety policies, including procedures for handling threats.

(3) Available mental health and counseling resources for at-risk students.

"§ 115C-77.4. Reporting of annual school safety reports.

(a) The governing body of each public school unit shall provide a copy of the annual school safety report required under G.S. 115C-77.3 to the Department of Public Instruction no later than December 1 of each year.

(b) The Department shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee no later than February 1 of each year, including a summary of the reports received pursuant to this section and on the rate of compliance with the notification requirements in G.S. 115C-77.1."

PART II. REINSTATE TASK FORCE FOR SAFER SCHOOLS

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 115C-105.55 is reenacted as it existed immediately prior to its repeal.

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 115C-105.56 is reenacted as it existed immediately prior to its repeal.

SECTION 2.(c) G.S. 115C-105.56, as reenacted by this act, reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-105.56. Task Force for Safer Schools; powers and duties.

The Task Force shall have all of the following duties:

(1) To serve as an advisory board to the Center for Safer Schools.

(2) To provide guidance and recommendations to the Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the General Assembly to improve statewide policy to enhance statewide and local capacities to create safer schools.

(3) To encourage interagency collaboration among State and local government agencies to achieve effective policies and streamline efforts to create safer schools.

(4) To Assist the Center for Safer Schools in collecting and disseminating information on recommended best practices and community needs related to creating safer schools in North Carolina.

(5) Other duties as assigned by the State Board of Education.

(6) To collect and analyze data to monitor public school unit compliance with G.S. 115C-77.1."

1 **SECTION 2.(d)** The members of the Task Force for Safer Schools at the time of its
2 dissolution shall be offered to return to the Task Force to serve an amount of time equivalent to
3 the amount of time that remained on that member's term at the time the Task Force was dissolved.
4 If a member chooses not to return to the Task Force, the resultant vacancy shall be filled by the
5 original appointing authority.

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7 **PART III. ESTABLISH SCHOOL SECURITY FUND**

8 **SECTION 3.(a)** Part 3 of Article 8C of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is
9 amended by adding a new section to read:

10 **"§ 115C-105.70. School Safety Fund.**

11 (a) There is established under the control and direction of the State Board of Education
12 the School Safety Fund. This fund shall be a nonreverting special revenue fund consisting of any
13 monies appropriated to it by the General Assembly and any monies credited to it under
14 G.S. 115C-77.2 for failure to comply with G.S. 115C-77.1.

15 (b) Funds in the School Safety Fund shall be allocated to local school administrative units
16 on the basis of average daily membership.

17 (c) Public school units may use funds received pursuant to this section for any of the
18 following purposes:

19 (1) For the public school unit to provide or contract to provide services for
20 students in crisis, including any of the following:

21 a. Crisis respite services for parents or guardians of an individual student
22 to prevent more intensive or costly levels of care.

23 b. Training and expanded services for therapeutic foster care families and
24 licensed child placement agencies that provide services to students
25 who (i) need support to manage their health, welfare, and safety and
26 (ii) have any of the following:

27 1. Cognitive or behavioral problems.

28 2. Developmental delays.

29 3. Aggressive behavior.

30 c. Evidence-based therapy services aligned with targeted training for
31 students and their parents or guardians, including any of the following:

32 1. Parent-child interaction therapy.

33 2. Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy.

34 3. Dialectical behavior therapy.

35 4. Child-parent psychotherapy.

36 d. Any other crisis service, including peer-to-peer mentoring, that is
37 likely to increase school safety.

38 (2) The purchase of safety equipment for school buildings and any training
39 associated with the use of the safety equipment."

40 **SECTION 3.(b)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
41 Public Instruction the sum of twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000) in nonrecurring funds to
42 be allocated to the School Safety Fund.

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44 **PART IV. EFFECTIVE DATE**

45 **SECTION 4.** Section 3 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2025. The remainder of
46 this act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.