

1 HB387  
2 204375-1  
3 By Representative Morris  
4 RFD: Education Policy  
5 First Read: 05-MAR-20

SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, the principal of a school, or his or her designee, is required to hold an annual training session for employees of the school regarding the school lockdown plan, drills, and procedures to be conducted during a school year.

This bill would require mental health awareness to be included in the annual training session.

A BILL  
TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

Relating to school safety, to amend Section 16-1-44, Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended by Act 2019-533, 2019 Regular Session, to require mental health awareness to be included in the annual training session for employees of each public K-12 school.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

1           Section 1. Section 16-1-44, Code of Alabama 1975, as  
2           last amended by Act 2019-533, 2019 Regular Session, is amended  
3           to read as follows:

4           "§16-1-44.

5           "(a) (1) Each local board of education shall develop  
6           and adopt a comprehensive school emergency operations plan for  
7           each school under the authority of the board.

8           "(2) The local board or its agent shall examine the  
9           conditions and operations of each school under the authority  
10          of the local board to determine hazards to student and staff  
11          safety and shall propose changes, if needed to promote the  
12          prevention of dangerous problems and circumstances.

13          "(3) In developing the plan for each school, the  
14          local board or its agent shall involve community law  
15          enforcement and safety officials, including community fire and  
16          emergency management assigned to the school.

17          "(b) (1) The board shall incorporate into each  
18          comprehensive school emergency operations plan the following:

19                "a. Protocols for addressing each type of serious  
20                threats to the safety of school property, students, employees,  
21                or administrators which shall include, but not be limited to:  
22                Security-related threats addressed within a school lockdown  
23                plan, fire-related threats addressed within a fire safety  
24                plan, and severe weather-related threats addressed within a  
25                severe weather safety plan.

1           "b. A protocol for responding to emergency events  
2 that compromise the safety of school property, students, and  
3 employees.

4           "(2) Each protocol shall include procedures for  
5 notification and responding to threats and emergency events,  
6 respectively, including such action as notification of  
7 appropriate law enforcement and emergency response personnel  
8 for assistance, and informing parents of affected students.

9           "(3) Each comprehensive school emergency operations  
10 plan shall include and use the following four alert levels,  
11 along with set plans of notification, action, and procedures  
12 for school personnel to follow in each circumstance:

13           "1. Heightened Awareness. This means a potential may  
14 exist for an unusual situation and all parties should have  
15 heightened awareness to react as needed.

16           "2. Secure Your Area of Responsibility. This means a  
17 specific incident has occurred, such as a medical emergency or  
18 a threat to one's self, and school personnel shall secure  
19 their area of responsibility in order to decrease risk of  
20 further incidents.

21           "3. Secure Perimeter. A potential threat or danger  
22 does exist or has occurred within the community or  
23 neighborhood, and all parties should be aware to react as  
24 needed.

25           "4. Lockdown. Recognition of potential immediate  
26 danger. Take immediate action using the safest and best option  
27 for survival.

1           "(c) (1) The board shall update the emergency  
2           operations plan whenever a major modification to the building  
3           requires changes in the procedures outlined in the plan and at  
4           other necessary times. The school emergency operations safety  
5           plan shall be reviewed and revised annually, as needed, by the  
6           local board of education in consultation with the principal,  
7           administrative staff, faculty, and employees of the school.

8           "(2) Upon request of law enforcement or safety  
9           officials, or both, the local board shall provide a copy of  
10          the current school emergency operations plan, which shall be  
11          kept in a secure place and not considered public record.

12          "(d) The local board shall grant access to each  
13          school under its control to law enforcement and fire  
14          department personnel to enable them to prepare for responding  
15          to threats and emergency events affecting the school.

16          "(e) The principal or his or her designee shall  
17          instruct and train students concerning procedures to be used  
18          for emergency drills and evacuations. The principal or his or  
19          her designee shall ensure that all safety and security drills  
20          and procedures are conducted and performed no less than what  
21          is required by state or federal law, or both. The doors and  
22          exits of each school may be locked from the outside but shall  
23          allow for immediate egress by those inside the building during  
24          school hours and at all school functions. An emergency drill  
25          shall include, but not be limited to, safety, security, severe  
26          weather, fire, and school lockdown drills.

1           "(f) In conjunction with drills or evacuations  
2 required by subsection (e), a principal or his or her designee  
3 shall instruct students in safety precautions to be taken in  
4 case of a severe weather watch, alert, or warning. A principal  
5 or his or her designee shall designate, in accordance with  
6 standards prescribed by the local superintendent of education  
7 in conjunction with local public safety officials and the fire  
8 marshal, or appropriate local fire safety official in counties  
9 that do not have a fire marshal, appropriate locations to be  
10 used to shelter students in case of a severe weather watch,  
11 alert, or warning.

12           "(g) In the event of an immediate threat to a school  
13 involving acts of violence, such as terrorism, a person  
14 possessing a firearm or a deadly weapon, or any other threat  
15 of violence, any person who perceives the threat, or his or  
16 her designee, may institute a lockdown alert level for the  
17 school. In addition to the requirements of subsection (e), the  
18 principal or his or her designee shall conduct a school  
19 lockdown drill during the first six weeks of the fall and  
20 spring semesters of each school year to provide students with  
21 instruction in the procedures to follow in the case of a  
22 school lockdown. The principal or his or her designee shall  
23 hold an annual training session for employees of the school  
24 regarding the school lockdown plan, drills, and procedures to  
25 be conducted during a school year. The annual training session  
26 shall include mental health awareness.

1               "(h) Appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken  
2               against any principal or his or her designee who knowingly  
3               neglects or refuses to comply with the requirements of this  
4               section.

5               "(i) This section shall be read in pari materia with  
6               other laws relating to school safety and emergency planning."

7               Section 2. This act shall become effective on August  
8               1, 2020, following its passage and approval by the Governor or  
9               its otherwise becoming law.