

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3726

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 8, 2021

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 3726 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill requires that a school district must ensure that a school security drill that occurs when students are present:

- is conducted only after advance written notice has been provided to staff that such a drill has been scheduled;
- includes clear messaging to students and staff that the event is a drill and that no current danger exists;
- does not expose students to content or imaging that is not developmentally or age-appropriate;
- is paired with trauma-informed approaches to address any student inquiries or concerns which may arise as a result of a school security drill;
- does not include the use of fake blood, real or prop firearms, or the simulations of gun shots, explosions, or other sounds or visuals that may induce panic or a traumatic response from a student or school district employee;
- does not require a student to role play as a victim, but may include first aid training in which students participate; and
- is accessible to students with disabilities and mental health conditions, and provides all necessary accommodations for these students.

The bill requires a school district to provide written notification to the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the district following completion of a school security drill, with such notice being provided to the parent or guardian no later than the end of the school day on which the school security drill is conducted.

The bill provides that a school district may permit emergency personnel access to the buildings and grounds of its schools for school security drills that are scheduled outside of school hours and during such times as students are not present.

Under the bill, a school district must review and update its school security drill procedures every three years using a process that collects input from emergency personnel, parents and guardians of students enrolled in the district, teachers and staff employed in

the district, mental health professionals, and student government representatives from multiple grade levels.

Finally, a school district must annually track data on such measures and information as are required by the Commissioner of Education, and must report the data to the commissioner.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

(1) modify who must receive advance written notice that a school security drill has been scheduled;

(2) remove the provision prohibiting the presence of emergency personnel not typically present at school during school hours when conducting a school security drill that occurs when students are presents;

(3) require a school district to provide written notification to the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the district following completion of a school security drill, with such notice being provided to the parent or guardian no later than the end of the school day on which the school security drill is conducted; and

(4) provide that the data to be annually tracked by a school district be such measures and information as are required by the Commissioner of Education. The bill as introduced required a school district to annually track data on the efficacy and effects of the school security drills, including such measures and information as required by the Commissioner of Education.