MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents
FROM: Tim Hay, Executive Director
DATE: September 2, 2022
SUBJECT: Amendments to School Safety Requirements and Monitoring


Amendments to Rule 6A-1.0018, F.A.C., incorporate new requirements as a result of House Bill 1421. Specific areas addressed within this rule include the following additional requirements:

Monitoring by the Office of Safe Schools – Process [Rule (6A-1.0018(5)(h), F.A.C.]

(h) Compliance with school safety requirements set forth in this rule and in statute are subject to enforcement by the Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education using mechanisms provided in section 1008.32, Florida Statute (F.S.).

Safe-School Officer [Rule (6A-1.0018(7)(d)(e), F.A.C.]

(d) District school safety specialists must ensure that each safe-school officer in the district that is a sworn law enforcement officer, as defined under sections 1006.12(1) and (2), F.S., has completed mental health crisis intervention training through a curriculum developed by a national organization with expertise in mental health crisis intervention. The training must meet the requirements set forth in section 1006.12(6)(a), F.S.

(e) District school safety specialists must ensure that each safe-school officer that is a school guardian, as defined under section 1006.12(3), F.S., or a school security guard, as defined under section 1006.12(4), F.S., has completed training to improve the officer’s knowledge and skills necessary to respond to and de-escalate incidents on school premises. The training must include age and developmentally appropriate strategies for incident response and de-escalation, including interaction with students with disabilities. This training must be completed within thirty (30) days of being hired as a safe-school officer and must be renewed in accordance with recommendations from the training course selected by the district, but at least every three (3) years.
FortifyFL [Rule (6A-1.0018(9)(c)4, F.A.C.]  
(c)4. Advertise that someone who knowingly submits a false tip through FortifyFL may be subject to further investigation by law enforcement, and may be subject to criminal penalties under section 837.05, F.S.

Threat Assessment Teams [Rule (6A-1.0018(10)(c)(d), F.A.C.]  
(c) Composition. Each school’s threat assessment team must include persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and law enforcement, as provided in section 1006.07(7)(a), F.S. All members of the team must be involved in the threat assessment process and final decision-making.  

(d) Instrument. Each school-based threat assessment team must use the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) model to assess the behavior of persons who may pose a threat to school staff or students and to coordinate intervention and services for such persons. All reported threats, even those determined not to be a threat, must be documented by the threat assessment team. Documentation must include the evaluation process and any resultant action. Because the purpose of the threat assessment is to identify and intervene in response to threats to school safety, completing a threat assessment does not require parental consent; however, a student’s parent must be notified if the threat assessment process reveals information about a student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being, or results in a change in related services or monitoring. Threat assessment teams must follow local district policies and procedures for required parent notification.

Emergency Drills [Rule (6A-1.0018(15)(d), F.A.C.]  
(d) District school safety specialists must coordinate with the sheriff in their county to determine what law enforcement officers are responsible for responding to each school in their district in the event of an active assailant emergency and must provide those officers a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours notice prior to conducting an active assailant emergency drill, pursuant to section 1006.07(4)(a), F.S. These law enforcement officers must be physically present on each school campus and directly involved in the execution of active assailant emergency drills, unless their presence is determined to be unnecessary by the sheriff.

Family Reunification Plans [Rule (6A-1.0018(17), F.A.C.]  
(17) Family Reunification Plans. Each district school board must adopt, in coordination with local law enforcement agencies and local governments, a family reunification plan to reunite students and employees with their families in the event that a school is closed or unexpectedly evacuated due to a natural or manmade disaster. This reunification plan must be reviewed annually and updated, as needed. Individual school plans must be consistent with district policies. At a minimum, district reunification plans must address:
(a) Identification of potential reunification sites;
(b) Training for employees;
(c) Multiple methods to effectively communicate with family members of students and staff; and
(d) Methods to aid law enforcement in student and staff identification.

We encourage your district and schools to review the additions to these requirements to ensure compliance is met at all levels. If you have any questions regarding school safety requirements and monitoring, please contact the Office of Safe Schools at SafeSchools@fldoe.org or at 850-245-5173.

TH/br

cc: School District School Safety Specialists
    Charter School Governing Boards