MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents
    Charter School Leaders

FROM: Tim Hay, Executive Director
      Office of Safe Schools

DATE: September 15, 2023


On August 23, 2023, the State Board of Education approved rules that improve safety for Florida’s schools. The changes impact School Safety Requirements and Monitoring (amended Rule 6A-1.0018, F.A.C.), Threat Management (new Rule 6A-1.0019, F.A.C.) and the Florida Safe Schools Canine Program (new Rule 6A-1.0020, F.A.C.). All three rules have an effective date of September 26, 2023. The purpose of this memorandum is to outline these changes.

School Safety Requirements and Monitoring (amended Rule 6A-1.0018, F.A.C.)
Amendments to Rule 6A-1.0018, F.A.C., include removing all requirements related to threat assessment (these are now in the new Threat Management rule), removing obsolete emergency drill requirements and referencing requirements for reporting certain incidents to law enforcement.

Threat Management (new Rule 6A-1.0019, F.A.C.)
This new rule addresses the requirements contained in Chapter 2023-18, Laws of Florida: https://laws.flrules.org/2023/18 for the Office of Safe Schools to “develop a statewide behavioral threat management operational process to guide school districts, schools, charter school governing boards, and charter schools through the threat management process.”

The legislation further requires development of “a Florida-specific behavioral threat assessment instrument for school districts, schools, charter school governing boards, and charter schools to use to evaluate the behavior of students who may pose a threat to the school, school staff, or students and to coordinate intervention and services for such students.”

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Information on Florida Model training dates and locations will be shared at a later date.

**Florida Safe Schools Canine Program (new Rule 6A-1.0020, F.A.C.)**

The Florida Safe Schools Canine Program also originated with House Bill 543 (Chapter 2023-18, Laws of Florida: https://laws.flrules.org/2023/18). The new law requires the Office of Safe Schools to “establish the Florida Safe Schools Canine Program for the purpose of designating a person, school, or business entity as a Florida Safe Schools Canine Partner if the person, school, or business entity provides a monetary or in-kind donation to a law enforcement agency to purchase, train, or care for a firearm detection canine.”

Rule 6A-1.0020, F.A.C., sets forth requirements for the Florida Safe Schools Canine Program including Program eligibility, the process for nomination or application for Program partner status, designation as a Florida Safe Schools Canine Partner and appropriate use of the Program logo. Florida Safe Schools Canine Program information and forms are available on the Office of Safe Schools website: https://www.fldoe.org/safe-schools/canine.

cc: School District School Safety Specialists  
    School District Threat Management Coordinators  
    Florida Sheriffs Association  
    Florida Police Chiefs Association