

House Bill 297

By: Representatives Bazemore of the 63rd, Alexander of the 66th, Smith of the 41st, Taylor of the 79th, and Belton of the 112th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, so as to
2 provide requirements for safety plans in early care and education programs; to revise the
3 requirements for school safety plans at public elementary and secondary schools; to provide
4 a short title; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

7 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Child Safety and Emergency Preparedness
8 Act."

9 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 2.**

10 Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, is amended in
11 Article 1 of Chapter 1A, relating to general provisions pertaining to early care and learning,
12 by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

13 "20-1A-19.

14 (a) By January 1, 2018, early care and education programs shall prepare a safety plan to
15 provide a safe care and learning environment for Georgia's children by addressing
16 preparedness for emergencies, including but not limited to preparedness for fire, floods,
17 tornadoes, snow and ice storms, earthquakes, chemical spills, and acts of violence. Such
18 plan shall be prepared in consultation with parents and legal guardians of children enrolled
19 in such early care and education programs and teachers and staff of such early care and
20 education programs. Such plan may be prepared in consultation with community leaders
21 and local law enforcement, fire service, public safety, and emergency management
22 agencies. Such plan shall be submitted to the local emergency management agency. The
23 requirements for such plan as provided for by this Code section shall be evaluated as a part
24 of any licensing or regulatory reviews conducted by the department.

25 (b) The safety plan provided for by subsection (a) of this Code section shall include:

26 (1) Procedures for personnel to notify parents and legal guardians in cases of emergency;
27 (2) The development of designated relocation sites and evacuation routes to such sites;
28 (3) Reunification plans for children with parents and legal guardians in cases where such
29 children require sheltering in place or relocation in cases of emergency; and
30 (4) Written individualized plans for accommodating special needs of children in early
31 care and education programs in cases of emergency.

32 (c) The safety plan provided for by subsection (a) of this Code section shall be reviewed
33 and, if necessary, updated monthly by early care and education programs. Early care and
34 education programs shall maintain documentation that the safety plan is reviewed monthly.

35 (d) Early care and education programs shall train teachers, staff, and other personnel on
36 the prepared safety plan as provided for by this Code section at least once each calendar
37 year.

38 (e) Early care and education programs shall implement the emergency procedures
39 provided for in the prepared safety plan as provided for by this Code section through
40 practice drills. Early care and education programs shall maintain documentation of such
41 drills for one year after the completion of each such drill. Such drills shall be as provided
42 for by local and state law and shall also include:

43 (1) The conducting of at least one fire drill each calendar month, which shall be
44 alternated to cover each shift and time of day that children are present at the location of
45 the early care and education program, including extended care hours; and

46 (2) The conducting of at least one drill other than a fire drill every six months.

47 All drills required under this subsection shall be conducted in such a way as to simulate,
48 as closely as is practical, conditions of a real emergency with alarms to be utilized and
49 evacuation plans to be practiced.

50 (f)(1) Emergency telephone numbers for local and state emergency entities shall be
51 posted immediately next to all landline telephones located within early care and education
52 programs and be readily available to all staff of early care and education programs. Such
53 local and state emergency entities that shall have telephone numbers posted shall include
54 the:

55 (A) Local fire department;

56 (B) Local police and sheriff's departments;

57 (C) Nearest hospital emergency room;

58 (D) Abuse hotline of the Department of Human Services;

59 (E) Local emergency management agency;

60 (F) Local ambulance or rescue squad;

61 (G) Poison control center; and

62 (H) Child care complaint hotline of the Department of Human Services.

63 (2) If a generic emergency number, including but not limited to 9-1-1, is operable for the
 64 location of the early care and education program, then such number shall be posted
 65 immediately next to all landline telephones located within each such early care and
 66 education program.

67 (g) All contact information for parents and legal guardians of children enrolled in an early
 68 care and education program shall be readily available to all staff of such early care and
 69 education program."

70 **SECTION 3.**

71 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-1185, relating to school safety
 72 plans, as follows:

73 "20-2-1185.

74 (a) Every public school shall prepare a school safety plan to help curb the growing
 75 incidence of violence in schools, to respond effectively to such incidents, and to provide
 76 a safe learning environment for Georgia's children, teachers, and other school personnel.
 77 Such plan shall also address preparedness for tornadoes, snow and ice storms, earthquakes,
 78 floods, other natural disasters, fires, hazardous materials or radiological accidents, acts of
 79 violence, and acts of terrorism. School safety plans of public schools shall be prepared
 80 with input from students enrolled in that school, parents or legal guardians of such students,
 81 teachers in that school, community leaders, other school employees and school district
 82 employees, and local law enforcement, fire service, public safety, and emergency
 83 management agencies. School safety plans of private schools may be prepared with input
 84 from students enrolled in that school, parents or legal guardians of such students, teachers
 85 in that school, other school employees, and local law enforcement, fire service, public
 86 safety, and emergency management agencies. Such plans shall be reviewed and, if
 87 necessary, updated annually. Such plans of public schools shall be submitted to the local
 88 emergency management agency.

89 (b) A public school may request funding assistance from the state for the installation of
 90 safety equipment, including, but not limited to, video surveillance cameras, metal detectors,
 91 and other similar security devices. Funding may be provided to a public school in
 92 accordance with a school safety plan prepared by the school and approved by the local
 93 board of education, the Department of Education, and the Georgia Emergency Management
 94 and Homeland Security Agency.

95 (c) School safety plans prepared by public schools shall address security issues in school
 96 safety zones as defined in Code Section 16-11-127.1. School safety plans ~~should~~ shall also
 97 address security issues involving the transportation of pupils to and from school and school

98 functions when such transportation is furnished by the school or school system and school
 99 functions held during noninstructional hours.

100 (c.1) By January 1, 2018, school safety plans prepared by public schools shall address:

101 (1) Evacuating and safely moving and transporting students to an alternate site. Such
 102 alternate site shall be at a location as centralized to the public school as possible and
 103 sufficiently large enough to house the enrollment of such public school in case such
 104 alternate site becomes the location for sheltering students;

105 (2) The training of staff on evacuation routes and procedures and the responsibilities of
 106 staff and students during an evacuation;

107 (3) Procedures for notifying parents and legal guardians of students in cases of
 108 emergency;

109 (4) Reunification of students with parents and legal guardians in cases where such
 110 students require sheltering in place or relocation in cases of emergency;

111 (5) Maintaining a list of telephone numbers and next of kin for each student obtained
 112 from the parent or legal guardian of each student for use in cases of emergency where
 113 contact cannot be made with the parent or legal guardian; and

114 (6) Accommodation of students and staff with disabilities who may require special
 115 access and needs.

116 (d) The Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency shall provide
 117 training and technical assistance to public school systems; and may provide this same
 118 training and technical assistance to private school systems; and independent private schools
 119 throughout this state in the area of emergency management and safe school operations.
 120 This training and technical assistance shall include, but not be limited to, crisis response
 121 team development, site surveys and safety audits, crisis management planning, exercise
 122 design, safe school planning, emergency operations planning, search and seizure, bomb
 123 threat management, and model school safety plans.

124 (e) On January 15 of each year, the director of emergency management and homeland
 125 security shall make an annual report to the General Assembly on school safety plans and
 126 the overall preparedness of schools in Georgia for emergencies as provided for by this
 127 Code section. Such report shall evaluate the preparedness of schools in Georgia as
 128 informed by the presidential policy directive, PPD-8, on national preparedness as signed
 129 by the President on March 30, 2011, and the Guide for Developing High-Quality School
 130 Emergency Operations Plans as issued by the United States Department of Education in
 131 June, 2013."

132 **SECTION 4.**

133 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.