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H.B. 123
(I_133_0672-3
with AM0675)
133rd General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 123's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: In House Primary and Secondary Education

Primary Sponsors: Rep. G. Manning

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: Yes

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Highlights

- Public district and school costs will likely increase to pay \$1,000 to \$1,500 annually to each faculty advisor to any newly created student-led violence prevention clubs for buildings serving grades 6-12. Although, districts may be able to use existing clubs to satisfy the bill's requirements.
- Public districts and schools may also incur some additional administrative costs to carry out various requirements of the bill with respect to threat assessment teams and plans, the anonymous reporting program, and school curriculum.
- Mandatory school district participation in an anonymous reporting program of the district's choosing may increase the workload of the Department of Public Safety (DPS), which currently operates such a program for districts free of charge, to administer that program and will likely increase the workload for local law enforcement agencies to respond to reported information.
- The bill shifts administrative and rulemaking responsibilities, and potentially some associated costs, related to school emergency management plans from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to DPS.
- ODE, DPS, the Attorney General's Office, and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' (OhioMHAS) administrative responsibilities may increase to develop and maintain various lists of approved training programs and, for all but OhioMHAS, a model threat assessment plan for public schools.

Detailed Analysis

The bill makes various changes to the law regarding school security and youth suicide awareness education and training. Provisions with potential fiscal effects are discussed below.

Violence prevention clubs

The bill requires public districts and schools to designate a student-led violence prevention club for each building that serves grades 6-12. These student-led clubs must implement and sustain training and awareness activities related to social inclusion and suicide and violence prevention, be open to the entire student body, foster opportunities for leadership and development, and have at least one adult advisor. However, an existing club that is open to the entire student body and has at least one adult advisor may serve as the required violence prevention club, provided it also begins to satisfy the bill's requirements regarding training and awareness activities and opportunities for leadership after the bill's effective date. Typically, faculty members are paid to serve in advisory roles. Subject to collective bargaining agreements, this provision could cost anywhere from \$1,000 to \$1,500 per building per year to pay the additional amounts to the advisor for new clubs established under the bill.

School threat assessment teams

The bill requires public districts and schools, within two years of the effective date of the bill, to create a threat assessment team for each school building that serves grades 6-12. The team may consist of school administrators, mental health professionals, school resource officers, and other necessary personnel. Each member of the team must complete an approved training program every three years and the district must report on completion of the training through submission of its emergency management plan to the Department of Public Safety (DPS). If a school has an existing, similarly constituted safety team, that team may serve as the threat assessment team required by the bill provided it and the team members meet the bill's requirements. To assist public schools in meeting the threat assessment team requirement, the bill requires DPS, in consultation with the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and the Attorney General's Office (AGO), to develop, no later than two years after the bill's effective date, and then maintain a list of approved training programs for completion by school threat assessment team members, one of which must be free or of no cost to schools.

Public districts and schools may incur some minimal costs to provide administrative support to the teams if they do not have a similar team currently. Further, the workload of the personnel serving on the teams will increase, which could become a collective bargaining issue. However, there is likely little, if any, cost to obtain the required training, as no-cost training options are currently available. For example, the nonprofit Sandy Hook Promise organization provides an evidence-based Safety Assessment and Intervention program to school districts at no cost.¹ The organization provides a day-long workshop to identify existing gaps in current safety policy and code of conduct and help schools learn how to respond to reported threats, get to the root cause of threatening behavior, and keep the school community safe. Following the training program, the organization provides ongoing support and resources to the teams.

¹ https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/prevention_programs.

The organization is partnering with ODE to scale the program statewide through a recently awarded federal Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Act grant from the U.S. Department of Justice.

Oversight of emergency management plans; model threat assessment plan

The bill generally shifts the administrative responsibility for oversight and rulemaking of school emergency management plans from ODE to DPS, which may lead to a decrease in expenses for ODE and an increase in expenses for DPS. However, any fiscal effect resulting from this change may be limited, as the two departments work collaboratively in this area. For example, school districts must continue to submit their plans to ODE. As under current law, ODE must submit the information in the plans to DPS. Under current practice, Ohio Homeland Security officials within DPS review the emergency management plans submitted by schools and provide schools with feedback regarding best practices and plan improvement.

The bill also increases the administrative responsibilities of DPS, ODE, and AGO to develop a model threat assessment plan meeting certain requirements that may be included in each school building's emergency management plan required under continuing law. The model plan must be developed no later than two years after the bill's effective date. There also may be some additional administrative workload for public schools that opt to develop and administer their own threat assessment plans.

Anonymous reporting program

The bill requires school districts and community and STEM schools to enter into a contract with an anonymous reporting program of the district or school's choosing. The program must operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week ("24/7"), forward reported information to and coordinate with school threat assessment teams and law enforcement agencies, and submit annual reports to ODE and DPS regarding the number of reports made through the reporting program and the method by which they were received, disaggregated by school. The bill requires districts and schools to annually submit to ODE and DPS the following data resulting from anonymous reports: the number and type of disciplinary actions, the number and type of mental health referrals, and the race and gender of the students subject to disciplinary actions and mental wellness referrals.

Currently, DPS operates a statewide, anonymous, "24/7" school safety tip line.² SaferOH, launched by ODE and DPS, is free of charge to every school in the state. Schools need only to register online to allow individuals to anonymously share information with school officials and law enforcement about threats to student safety. DPS' Ohio Homeland Security Threat Assessment and Prevention Unit processes any tips, when necessary, forwards them to local school and law enforcement officials, and tracks their disposition. Presumably, participation in SaferOH would satisfy the requirements in the bill. However, there may be some additional administrative costs for districts and schools and DPS, if chosen, to enter into formal contracts and to compile the required annual reports. Greater participation in the DPS

² https://saferschools.ohio.gov/content/tip_line_information.

tip line or other reporting programs will likely increase the workload of all involved entities to administer the system and respond to reported information.

Curriculum-related provisions

ODE's administrative costs may increase to develop and maintain a list of approved training programs for instruction in each of the following topics: (1) suicide awareness and prevention and violence prevention and (2) social inclusion. Each list of training programs must include at least three approved options, at least one of which must be free or of no cost for schools. In addition, there may be some additional administrative costs for the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) and DPS to consult with ODE on the training programs.

The bill may minimally increase costs for school districts to update their curriculum to add at least one hour, or one standard class period, each of evidence-based suicide awareness and prevention, safety training and violence prevention, and social inclusion instruction. Some districts may already offer such instruction. However, the bill requires districts to use one of the training programs approved by ODE.