

ACT No. 821

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 624

BY REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:416.16(A)(1)(a) through (c), (2), and (4), (B)(2) and (3), (C),
3 (D)(1), (F), (G)(introductory paragraph), and (J) and 3996(B)(33) and to repeal
4 17:416.16(G)(4) and (5), relative to school emergency operations plans; to provide
5 for plan components; to provide for the personnel participating in the development
6 and execution of the plan; to provide for emergency preparedness activities; to
7 provide for definitions; to revise terminology; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 17:416.16(A)(1)(a) through (c), (2), and (4), (B)(2) and (3), (C),
10 (D)(1), (F), (G)(introductory paragraph), and (J) and 3996(B)(33) are hereby amended and
11 reenacted to read as follows:

12 §416.16. School ~~crisis management and response~~ emergency operations plans

13 A.(1) For the purposes of this Section, the following terms shall have the
14 following meanings:

15 (a) "~~Crisis management and response~~ Emergency operations plan" shall
16 mean a plan to address school safety and the incidence of a shooting or other
17 violence at schools, on school buses, and at school-related activities; to respond
18 effectively to any incidents; and to ensure that every student, teacher, and school
19 employee has access to a safe, secure, and orderly school that is conducive to
20 learning. The plan shall also address the management of any other emergency
21 situation.

22 (b) "District ~~threat assessment~~ safety and emergency team" shall mean a
23 team established by each governing authority of public elementary and secondary
24 schools. The team shall include, at a minimum, the local school superintendent; ~~the~~
25 ~~principal of each school; a person with responsibility over the school facilities; a~~
26 ~~mental health professional employed by the governing authority, or, if the governing~~

1 authority has no such employee, a mental health professional selected by the local
 2 school superintendent; any school resource officer employed by the governing
 3 authority; any Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps instructor employed by the
 4 governing authority, and the emergency preparedness and recovery point of contact.
 5 a representative from school facilities, transportation, school nutrition, curriculum,
 6 student services, athletics, logistics, mental health, medical services, technology, and
 7 special education; the emergency response coordinator; the public information
 8 officer; and an elementary school principal, middle school principal, and high school
 9 principal.

10 (c) "Emergency ~~preparedness and recovery point of contact~~ response
 11 coordinator" shall mean a person selected by the local school superintendent to serve
 12 as a point of contact with local and state officials and the media in the event of an
 13 emergency. who oversees the development of the emergency operations plan and any
 14 associated training.

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16 (2)(a) A school ~~crisis management and response~~ emergency operations plan
 17 shall be prepared by each public school principal jointly with local law enforcement,
 18 fire, public safety, and emergency preparedness officials. The plan shall seek to
 19 utilize resources and information available through the Louisiana Commission on
 20 School and Nonprofit Security, R.S. 29:726.5 et seq.

21 (b) In preparing or revising the plan, the principal shall consult with the
 22 district ~~threat assessment~~ safety and emergency team. The principal and the ~~threat~~
 23 ~~assessment~~ team shall determine whether to consider input from students enrolled
 24 in the school and their parents, teachers at the school, other school employees, and
 25 community leaders.

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27 (4) The plan shall provide for an all-hazards approach response plan for
 28 emergency events including any event with a hostage, an active ~~shooter,~~ assailant,
 29 or a building lockdown.

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B.

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(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection, when conducting the annual review of the ~~crisis management and response~~ emergency operations plan for a high school, the school principal shall seek and consider input from the students enrolled in the school who shall be represented by either the president of the senior class or the president of the student council and at least one other responsible student selected by the principal.

(3) ~~The local school superintendent shall make an annual report to the public school governing authority on the status of the plan of each school under the governing authority's jurisdiction and shall submit a copy of the report to the state Department of Education and the Center for Safe Schools provided for in R.S. 29:276.5.1.~~ Each public school shall complete an annual school safety questionnaire developed and distributed by the Louisiana Center for Safe Schools in partnership with the state Department of Education. The questionnaire shall request information related to the school's compliance with plan requirements, completion of required drills, and identified needs related to emergency response and preparedness. Upon completion of the school-level questionnaire by each school, each public school governing authority shall complete a district-level questionnaire. Both the school-level and district-level questionnaires shall be submitted to the department and the center at a date and frequency to be determined.

C.(1) For purposes of planning, training, and evaluation, emergency preparedness activities conducted by a school shall be classified as either discussion-based exercises or operations-based exercises, as follows:

(a) Discussion-based exercises are designed to increase understanding of emergency plans, roles, and decisionmaking processes without requiring physical response activities or simulated movement of students or staff. These exercises may include:

(i) Orientation or seminars, which introduce emergency plans, roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

1 (ii) Workshops, which are used to develop, review, or refine emergency
2 plans, procedures, or interagency agreements.

3 (iii) Tabletop exercises, in which participants discuss response actions,
4 coordination, and decisionmaking during a simulated emergency scenario.

5 (b) Operations-based exercises are designed to test and validate emergency
6 response procedures through action-based activities. These exercises may include:

7 (i) Drills, which test a single emergency function, such as evacuation,
8 lockdown, or shelter-in-place but which shall not involve the use of blanks,
9 simulated weapons, or the active participation of community emergency response
10 partners reenacting response actions.

11 (ii) Functional exercises, which test command, control, coordination, and
12 communication during a simulated incident and may involve limited participation
13 by community partners reenacting their specific response roles, without full
14 deployment of personnel or equipment.

15 (iii) Full-scale exercises, which involve a simulated emergency scenario
16 using personnel, equipment, and the coordinated participation of all community
17 partners that would be expected to respond to that specific incident.

18 (†) (2) Within the first thirty instructional days of each school year, each
19 public school principal shall conduct a safety drill to rehearse the components of the
20 plan, including an active ~~shooter~~ assailant scenario. In addition, each school year,
21 each principal shall conduct at least one additional drill during high traffic or
22 transition points in the school day. Not later than seven days after each drill, the
23 principal shall submit a written report summarizing the details of the drill to the local
24 school superintendent. The superintendent or emergency response coordinator shall
25 ~~comment~~ provide feedback on the drill to the principal, who shall consider the
26 ~~comments~~ feedback in revising the plan.

27 (2) (3) Each public school principal shall notify all teachers and other school
28 employees regarding revisions made to the plan.

29 D. Each plan shall provide that:

1 (1) The door of each classroom and other instructional space shall be locked
2 and secured to prevent entry into the room when it is occupied by students, except
3 between class periods when students are moving between classrooms and other
4 instructional spaces. If a classroom or other instructional space is left unlocked or
5 open for any other reason, the door shall be actively staffed by an authorized person
6 standing or seated at the door. Classroom doors with locks shall be in compliance
7 with legislatively enacted code requirements and all fire safety standards
8 promulgated by the office of state fire marshal. Each plan shall provide that a locked
9 door shall not obstruct egress. code enforcement and building safety of the
10 ~~Department of Public Safety and Corrections and shall remain locked during~~
11 ~~instructional time. Each plan shall provide that a locked door shall not obstruct~~
12 ~~egress.~~ For purposes of this Paragraph, "locked and secured" means that no devices
13 or obstacles are present which would prevent the door locking mechanism from
14 being fully engaged as originally designed or intended.

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16 F. Each school year, each public school principal shall be responsible for
17 ~~providing in-service training,~~ a workshop, which may be incorporated into a meeting
18 or training session held for another purpose, for all teachers and school employees
19 pertaining to the plan and shall involve local law enforcement, fire, public safety, and
20 emergency preparedness officials in the preparation and presentation of the training.
21 The training shall include an active ~~shooter~~ assailant exercise. The training shall be
22 reported to the local school superintendent and the state Department of Education.

23 G. Each public school principal shall keep a copy of the approved plan in his
24 office. The plan shall be accessible to the state Department of Education and
25 Louisiana Center for Safe Schools upon request. ~~and~~ The principal shall provide a
26 copy to the following individuals, each of whom shall be responsible for keeping in
27 his respective office a copy of the plan that is readily accessible in the event of a
28 school shooting or other violent incident or emergency situation:

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