

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 821 (HB 624)

2026 Regular Session

Mike Johnson

Existing law provides for plans for addressing emergencies at schools. Prior law referred to them as school "crisis management and response" plans. New law instead refers to them as school "emergency operations" plans.

Prior law required local superintendents to report to public school governing authorities on the status of each school's plan. New law instead requires schools and districts to complete school safety questionnaires and submit them to the state Dept. of Education (DOE) and the La. Center for Safe Schools (LCSS) and requires both the school-level and district-level questionnaires to be submitted to DOE and LCSS at a date and frequency to be determined.

New law requires school emergency preparedness exercises to be classified as either discussion-based exercises or operations-based exercises and gives examples of each.

Existing law requires that each plan provide that a locked door shall not obstruct egress and requires classroom doors with locks to be in compliance with all fire safety standards promulgated by the office of state fire marshal. New law additionally requires compliance with legislatively enacted code requirements.

Prior law required that doors remain locked during instructional time. New law instead provides that all school classrooms and other instructional spaces must be locked and secured to prevent entry into the room when it is occupied by students, except between class periods. Provides that if a classroom or other instructional space must be left unlocked or open for any other reason, the door must be actively staffed by an authorized person standing or seated at the door.

Existing law requires each principal to keep a copy of the approved plan in his office and provide a copy to the president of the local school board, the local school superintendent, the chief of police and local fire chief. Prior law also required him to provide a copy to DOE and LCSS. New law removes this requirement and instead requires that the plan be accessible to these entities on request.

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Amends R.S. 17:416.16(A)(1)(a)-(c), (2), and (4), (B)(2) and (3), (C), (D)(1), (F), (G)(intro. para.), and (J) and 3996(B)(33); Repeals R.S. 17:416.16(G)(4) and (5))