

HB 706 -- SAFE SCHOOLS

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This bill modifies current language regarding school discipline and safety to include charter schools. The bill also allows for a website posting to serve as sufficient notice in lieu of a written copy.

The bill removes specific references to reportable crimes and replaces it with broader language requiring reporting for criminal offenses causing serious physical injury, involving sexual contact, or that involve weapons or illegal drugs.

School districts and charter schools may enter into written agreements with law enforcement agencies as to the procedure for reporting criminal offenses.

The bill requires sexual misconduct reports to additionally be reported to the superintendent or charter school administrator, or their designee.

Responsibility is given to the Children's Division to determine if reported spanking or force followed school policy and was appropriate (Section 160.261, RSMo).

The bill requires schools to designate an employee to serve as the safety coordinator who will be reported to the Department of Public Safety. The duties of the school safety coordinator are specified in the bill (Section 160.660).

The bill establishes the "Missouri School Safety Task Force." The task force shall advise the Department of Public Safety and the center for education safety on resources and services needed to improve school safety, along with any barriers to safety. Recommendations from the task force shall be made to the Governor and General Assembly annually. The membership of the task force is outlined in the bill and includes but is not limited to a representative of local law enforcement and a representative of the juvenile and family court, both of which shall be appointed by the Governor (Section 160.662).

The bill requires school administrators to attend training, at least every four years, on improper sexual relationships in the school environment (Section 162.069).

The bill provides that prosecutors will now be required to notify schools within two business days when students are enrolled with a charge or indictment that would be a misdemeanor or felony or an

offense that would be a misdemeanor or felony if committed by an adult (Section 167.115).

The bill allows the Commissioner of Education to assign a student to another district or charter school due to an extreme hardship (Section 167.121).

Juvenile officers and employees of the Children's Division are required to notify the school or charter school when a charge or indictment has been filed against a student, this notice must be given within two days of enrollment. This notice may be used to provide the student educational services in an alternative environment (Section 167.122).

The bill expands the ability of school boards or governing boards of any charter school from mere suspension to include expulsion of students with felony charges (Section 167.161).

The bill removes student protections to free expression for symbolic emblems, insignias, and clothing that does not promote disruptive behavior (Section 167.166).

The bill requires that students suspended for more than 10 consecutive school days for an act of school violence cannot be enrolled or readmitted until a conference is held. The bill prohibits students from being admitted if found guilty of, pled guilty to, or pled nolo contendere to any act, or an attempt to commit any act as specified in the bill (Section 167.171).

This bill modifies the definition of "medication" to include additional chronic health conditions and allows schools to revoke authorization for students to use medication under certain situations specified in the bill (Section 167.627).

This bill allows the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to provide employing school districts criminal background check results at any time before the expiration of one year after the initial professional license application (Section 168.133).

The bill requires schools to train for active shooter scenarios, and responses to threatening situations. Drills with law enforcement shall occur at least every three years (Section 170.315).

The bill modifies when policies to govern school districts or charter schools take effect (Section 171.011).

The bill modifies the offense of unlawful use of weapons to exclude

those possessed by an adult or student for the purpose of facilitating or participating in a school-sanctioned firearm-related event or club event as long as the adult or student is authorized by the school to do so and follows school policy (Section 571.030).

The bill requires the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Public Safety to establish and maintain a dedicated behavioral health crisis hot line to assist those persons in a mental health crisis and others who are concerned that a person might be in danger and in need of mental health services. The Department of Mental Health shall advertise the hotline as detailed in the bill, and will annually report to the Governor and the General Assembly (Section 630.1020).

The bill directs the Department of Public Safety to create an initiative focused on maintaining and improving school safety (Section 650.040).