



*Note: This is Kentucky Youth Advocates' summary of select portions of 2019's Senate Bill 1 that address the Blueprint for Kentucky's Children 2019 priorities.*

The School Safety and Resiliency Act of 2019 ([Senate Bill 1](#)) is a comprehensive bill that ensures all students are able to learn in a safe and supportive school environment. It encompasses multiple areas of the school environment – both internal and external – by addressing best practices for securing the physical school buildings and implementing multiple trauma-informed practices and strategies for creating a school culture where students are connected, their social and emotional needs are met, and they can feel safe and focus on learning.

The uniqueness of this bill is its explicit look at the issue of school safety as both the “heart-ware” as much as the “hardware” of the school.

*Why is it good for Kentucky kids?*

Kentucky schools are safer when the focus is on connecting students with caring adults, addressing students' behavioral health needs, and utilizing proven strategies to address other safety measures within school buildings. A trauma-responsive school community creates a culture of respect and support for students to grow as resilient learners and community members. When kids go to a school that educates the entire staff to work with kids in recognizing, understanding, and addressing the learning needs of students impacted by trauma, ALL kids, including those who have been traumatized, will be safe and successful. When a child is known well by at least one adult in the school setting, he/she feels more connected and is more likely to respond to trauma or other stressors in a more resilient manner.

**The “Heart-ware” of School Safety:  
All public schools will adopt a trauma-informed approach**

*What is a trauma-informed approach?*

*“The General Assembly recognizes that all schools must provide a place for students to feel safe and supported to learn throughout the school day and that any trauma a student may have experienced can have a significant impact on the ability of a student to learn.”*

According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, one out of every four children attending school has been exposed to a traumatic event that can affect learning and/or behavior.

Both children *and* adults can be affected by traumatic stress. This stress can occur through a myriad of experiences such as potentially life-threatening natural events, death or loss of a loved one, witnessing domestic or community violence, school shootings, and even daily exposure to situations such as home instability, divorce, substance abuse, or having a close relative incarcerated.

### *How will this be done?*

- A **trauma-informed toolkit for schools** will be developed by the Kentucky Department of Education by July 1, 2020.
- A **plan for implementing a trauma-informed approach** must be created by the local Boards of Education by July 1, 2021. That plan is to include (but is not limited to):
  - Trauma-informed awareness within the community
  - Assessing the school climate, including inclusiveness and respect for diversity
  - Adopting trauma-informed discipline policies
  - Collaborating with local, county, and state law enforcement for notification of when a student has witnessed or been exposed to trauma
  - Providing services and programs designed to reduce the negative impact of trauma, support critical learning, and foster a positive and safe school environment for every student
- New goals for **school guidance counselors**:
  - One school counselor in each school per every 250 students
  - Spend at least 60% of their time on direct student services
- **School-based mental health service providers** employed or contracted by districts to:
  - Assist in the development and implementation of a trauma-informed approach
  - Enhance or expand student supports
- **Training in both recognition of symptoms of trauma and utilization of interventions/strategies** will be provided by school counselors and/or other school-based behavioral health specialists to all school staff.
- **Each school will create a trauma-informed team** to identify and assist students impacted by trauma. This team can be made up of administrators, school counselors, school nurses, family resource and youth services coordinators (FRYSCs), and school-based mental health services providers.
- **Suicide awareness and prevention trainings are expanded** to ensure that:
  - All students in grades 6 through 12 receive in-person, live-streamed, or video recorded training (versus the previously required 'dissemination of information')
  - All adults who have direct contact with students in grades 6 through 12 will receive at least one hour of suicide awareness and prevention training every other year by September 15<sup>th</sup>, which will now include **the recognition of signs and symptoms of possible mental illness**
- **School Resource Officers**, including any law enforcement employed or contracted within a district to be based at a school, have expanded **requirements and expectations to be trauma-informed**:
  - Expanded training hours to 40 hours each year for three years to equal 120 hours total
  - Defined specialized training for working with students, kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, which includes trauma-informed action, youth mental health awareness, diversity and bias awareness, and understanding students with special needs.

### **The "Hard-ware" of School Security:**

***Proven programs, procedures, and oversight are required and evaluated to strengthen school safety and security if a threat to schools occur.***

What does that mean?

**"School safety:** a program of prevention that protects students and staff from substance abuse, violence, bullying, theft, the sale or use of illegal substances, exposure to weapons and threats on school grounds, and injury from severe weather, fire, and natural disasters;

**School security:** procedures followed, and measures taken to ensure the security of school buildings, classrooms, and other school facilities and properties."

Senate Bill 1 designates a difference between school safety (prevention) and school security (protection). It also identifies that safety threats can either be from natural weather occurrences, or from people.

How will this be done?

- Creates a **state school security marshal** under the Department of Criminal Justice Training who:
  - Develops training and guidelines to assess school security by July 1, 2020
  - Monitors school safety and security initiatives
  - Conducts on-site school assessments annually beginning in the 2021-2022 school year
  - Reports to the Center for School Safety by September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year beginning July 1, 2019
- Clarifies **duties and roles for the Kentucky Center for School Safety**, such as:
  - Reporting on the number and placements of School Resource Officers in schools in Kentucky yearly
  - Developing and implementing a **School Safety Coordinator** training program that will feature policies, procedures, and preparation guidelines
- Assigns at least one **School Resource Officer** to each school district:
  - Each SRO will receive specialized training for certification levels—SRO Training I, II, and III—with each level requiring 40 hours per year for three years
- Requires schools to **control main entrances** with electronically locking doors, a camera, and intercom system:
  - Classrooms will be locked and closed during class time
  - Doors and windows will have material to be able to be covered during a lockdown
- By November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, a minimum of **one hour of training on active shooter situations** is required for all school district employees with direct contact with students.
- Each local school district will provide an **anonymous reporting tool** that allows students, parents, and community members to anonymously supply information concerning unsafe, potentially harmful, dangerous, violent, or criminal activities, or the threat of these activities, to appropriate public safety agencies and school officials:
  - The reporting tool shall be accessible at least by telephone call, electronic e-mail, and a mobile app.
  - Availability provided by Kentucky Office of Homeland Security, after collaborating with the Center for School Safety, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Department of Criminal Justice Training, and the Department of Kentucky State Police.