

# VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2019 SESSION

## CHAPTER 456

*An Act to amend and reenact §§ 9.1-184 and 22.1-79.4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety; threat assessment; case management tool.*

[H 1734]

Approved March 18, 2019

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 9.1-184 and 22.1-79.4 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 9.1-184. Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety created; duties.**

A. From such funds as may be appropriated, the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (the Center) is hereby established within the Department. The Center shall:

1. Provide training for Virginia public school personnel in school safety, on evidence-based antibullying tactics based on the definition of bullying in § 22.1-276.01, and in the effective identification of students who may be at risk for violent behavior and in need of special services or assistance;

2. Serve as a resource and referral center for Virginia school divisions by conducting research, sponsoring workshops, and providing information regarding current school safety concerns, such as conflict management and peer mediation, bullying as defined in § 22.1-276.01, school facility design and technology, current state and federal statutory and regulatory school safety requirements, and legal and constitutional issues regarding school safety and individual rights;

3. Maintain and disseminate information to local school divisions on effective school safety initiatives in Virginia and across the nation;

4. *Develop a case management tool for the collection and reporting of data by threat assessment teams pursuant to § 22.1-79.4;*

5. Collect, analyze, and disseminate various Virginia school safety data, including school safety audit information submitted to it pursuant to § 22.1-279.8, collected by the Department;

~~5.~~ 6. Encourage the development of partnerships between the public and private sectors to promote school safety in Virginia;

~~6.~~ 7. Provide technical assistance to Virginia school divisions in the development and implementation of initiatives promoting school safety, including threat assessment-based protocols with such funds as may be available for such purpose;

~~7.~~ 8. Develop a memorandum of understanding between the Director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Superintendent of Public Instruction to ensure collaboration and coordination of roles and responsibilities in areas of mutual concern, such as school safety audits and crime prevention;

~~8.~~ 9. Provide training for and certification of school security officers, as defined in § 9.1-101 and consistent with § 9.1-110;

~~9.~~ 10. Develop, in conjunction with the Department of State Police, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and the Department of Education, a model critical incident response training program for public school personnel and others providing services to schools that shall also be made available to private schools in the Commonwealth; and

~~10.~~ 11. In consultation with the Department of Education, provide schools with a model policy for the establishment of threat assessment teams, including procedures for the assessment of and intervention with students whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of school staff or students.

B. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall cooperate with the Center and, upon request, assist the Center in the performance of its duties and responsibilities.

**§ 22.1-79.4. Threat assessment teams and oversight committees.**

A. Each local school board shall adopt policies for the establishment of threat assessment teams, including the assessment of and intervention with individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of school staff or students consistent with the model policies developed by the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (*the Center*) in accordance with § 9.1-184. Such policies shall include procedures for referrals to community services boards or health care providers for evaluation or treatment, when appropriate.

B. The superintendent of each school division may establish a committee charged with oversight of the threat assessment teams operating within the division, which may be an existing committee established by the division. The committee shall include individuals with expertise in human resources, education, school administration, mental health, and law enforcement.

C. Each division superintendent shall establish, for each school, a threat assessment team that shall include persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and law enforcement. Threat assessment teams may be established to serve one or more schools as determined by the division

superintendent. Each team shall (i) provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self; (ii) identify members of the school community to whom threatening behavior should be reported; and (iii) implement policies adopted by the local school board pursuant to subsection A.

D. Upon a preliminary determination that a student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to self or others, a threat assessment team shall immediately report its determination to the division superintendent or his designee. The division superintendent or his designee shall immediately attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude school division personnel from acting immediately to address an imminent threat.

E. Each threat assessment team established pursuant to this section shall *collect and report to the Center* quantitative data on its activities ~~according to guidance~~ *using the case management tool* developed by the ~~Department of Criminal Justice Services Center~~.

F. Upon a preliminary determination by the threat assessment team that an individual poses a threat of violence to self or others or exhibits significantly disruptive behavior or need for assistance, a threat assessment team may obtain criminal history record information, as provided in §§ 19.2-389 and 19.2-389.1, and health records, as provided in § 32.1-127.1:03. No member of a threat assessment team shall redisclose any criminal history record information or health information obtained pursuant to this section or otherwise use any record of an individual beyond the purpose for which such disclosure was made to the threat assessment team.