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HOUSE BILL NO. 2609

Offered January 9, 2019

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 9.1-184 of the Code of Virginia, relating to school resource officers; training.*

Patrons—Jones, J.C. and Keam

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 9.1-184 of the Code of Virginia is 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. 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. Encourage the development of partnerships between the public and private sectors to promote school safety in Virginia;

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

9. *Provide training to each school resource officer employed by a local law-enforcement agency before such officer begins his assignment in a public elementary or secondary school, unless the Center lacks the capacity to provide training for each such officer or other circumstances exist that prevent any such officer from completing such training. The Center shall encourage administrators who are employed at a school to which a school resource officer is assigned to attend such training with such school resource officer;*

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.

INTRODUCED

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