

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

4 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
5 HOUSE BILL NO. 1417

By: West (Josh) of the House

6 and

7 **Weaver** of the Senate

8

9 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

10 An Act relating to school safety; creating the School
Access for Emergency Response Act; defining terms;
creating the School Access for Emergency Response
Grant Program within the State Department of
Education; construing grant program purposes;
prohibiting impacts to current public safety system
loading capabilities; prescribing the administration
and implementation of the grant program; creating the
grant selection committee; requiring promulgation of
rules; prescribing certain rule requirements;
directing the appointment of committee members;
implementing certain grant eligibility criteria;
requiring certain applicant considerations;
specifying award and distribution dates; requiring
school districts to report on the grant program;
mandating reporting to the Legislature; creating the
School Access for Emergency Response Revolving Fund;
specifying fund sources; allowing appropriation;
clarifying fund purpose; prescribing fund expenditure
limitations; construing disbursement of fund amounts;
providing for codification; and providing an
effective date.

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23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

1 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-149.5 of Title 70, unless
3 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "School Access
5 for Emergency Response Act" or the "SAFER Act".

6 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
7 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-149.6 of Title 70, unless
8 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

9 As used in the School Access For Emergency Response Act:

10 1. "Best practices in interoperable emergency communications"
11 means to identify the interoperable emergency communications needs
12 at a school level, to help target technical assistance, funding, and
13 other support, and to prepare for next-generation communications
14 technologies as exemplified by interoperable communications
15 technologies to enhance and better ensure school safety throughout
16 the State of Oklahoma;

17 2. "Board" may alternately or jointly reference the State Board
18 of Education and the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security;

19 3. "Crisis management plan" means a plan including tactical
20 strategies and actions for responding to an emergency as set forth
21 by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Manual IS-0100.C.

22 The key elements of a crisis management plan shall include, but
23 not necessarily be limited to:

- a. threat assessment, recurring risk assessment, and proactive identification following said assessments,
 - b. crisis response team structure,
 - c. communication protocols, including implementation, training, as well as maintenance and timely upgrading of interoperable communication systems,
 - d. emergency response procedures,
 - e. resource allocation guidelines, and
 - f. recovery and continuity strategies;

4. "Department" may alternately or jointly reference the State

Board of Education and the State Office of Homeland Security;

5. "Grant program" means the School Access for Emergency

Response Grant Program created in Section 3 of this act;

6. "Incident Command System" (ICS) means the standardized

approach to incident management as set forth by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Manual IS-0100.C: An Introduction to the Incident Command System. ICS shall be adopted by grant applicants as a precedent to be considered for funding through this act. The Manual includes:

- a. unified command structure,
- b. common terminology,
- c. modular organization,
- d. integrated communications via interoperable technology, equipment, and training, and

1 e. comprehensive resource management;

2 7. "Interoperability" means the ability of one or more radio

3 systems to communicate with another radio system in real-time.

4 Interoperability includes the teamwork that occurs over real-time

5 radio broadcast channels between school district safety teams,

6 school-based safety teams, and professional emergency responders;

7 8. "Interoperable communications provider" means the supplier

8 or suppliers of interoperable communications technology, both

9 hardware and software, as well as related training, maintenance, and

10 upgrades of interoperable communications systems;

11 9. "Interoperable technology" means software and hardware that

12 enables two different radio systems and other communications devices

13 to communicate seamlessly in real time via radio broadcast channels

14 regardless of underlying technologies or manufacturers;

15 10. "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) means an agreement

16 between two or more parties that is designed and intended to

17 formalize a working relationship. Among other components as

18 identified by the stakeholders, the MOU is designed and intended to

19 outline the identified parties agreement to share private, assigned

20 Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licensed radio frequencies

21 or channels as well as other protocols and technologies needed to

22 achieve two-way radio interoperability as contemplated by NIMS IS-

23 0100.C for schools;

24

11. a. "National Response Framework" (NRF) means the manner in which the United States responds to all types of disasters and emergencies and includes the following key elements:

- (1) enumerated core capabilities of prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery,
 - (2) a component of the National Strategy for Homeland Security that establishes a comprehensive, national, all-hazards approach to domestic incident response,
 - (3) an explanation of the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, local, tribal governments, private sector, and non-governmental organizations in disaster response, and
 - (4) scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordination structures to align key roles and responsibilities across the nation, including (and specifically for the purposes of this act) for small, medium, and large school districts and associated public safety agencies;

b. For the purposes of the School Access for Emergency Response Act, NRF:

- (1) enumerates the interrelationship between school access for emergency response and the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and
- (2) outlines the operation of NIMS Incident Command System in relations to school access for emergency response;

12. "Public safety answering point" means a facility equipped and staffed to provide emergency telephone service;

13. "Radio system" means a private network for voice communications;

14. "Real-time communications network" means private licensed radio frequencies, channels, or talk-groups, on either a wire or wireless communication network, that allows for real-time voice or data transmissions between a public safety answering point, specific school safety team members, school district safety teams, and first responders;

15. "Revolving fund" means the School Access for Emergency Response Revolving Fund created in Section 6 of this act;

16. "Safety team" means personnel who have a role in crisis management plans, including school district safety teams and school-based safety teams. In regard to school-based safety teams, training includes NIMS IS-0100.C protocols as well as training with interoperable communications technology itself;

1 17. "School" means elementary, middle, and secondary schools
2 supported by public taxation and shall include charter schools
3 established pursuant to the Oklahoma Charter Schools Act; and

4 18. "Standards-based" means radio specifications defined by a
5 national association of the telecommunications industry that every
6 manufacturer can follow to implement equipment interoperability.

7 SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
8 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-149.7 of Title 70, unless
9 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

10 A. There is hereby created in the State Department of Education
11 the School Access for Emergency Response Grant Program to provide
12 grants to schools for needed interoperable communication hardware,
13 software, equipment maintenance, and training to allow for seamless
14 communications between first responder communications systems, new
15 or existing school district communications systems, and new or
16 existing school-based systems.

17 B. Grant recipients may use the money received through the
18 grant program for the following purposes:

19 1. To deliver training programs to teach district safety teams
20 and security personnel as well as appropriate school-based safety
21 teams and other personnel basic procedures for effective
22 communications with first responders in an emergency. The training
23 shall be based upon Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
24 Manual IS-0100.C: An Introduction to the Incident Command System.

1 As required by federal law and associated regulations, these derived
2 training elements shall include:

- 3 a. completion of the entire course, which is usually
4 available online through the Federal Emergency
5 Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management
6 Institute (EMI) website,
- 7 b. an expectation of understanding the basic principles
8 and features of ISC, including its purpose,
9 organization, and the roles and responsibilities of
10 key positions within the structure established by the
11 FEMA Manual,
- 12 c. familiarization with how ISC is applied in various
13 types of school-based incidents, including planned
14 events, natural disasters, and other types of crisis
15 incidents or emergency situations,
- 16 d. scenario-based exercises to reinforce learning and
17 ensure comprehension of the material,
- 18 e. a final exam to assess the participant's understanding
19 of the course material. A passing score, often
20 seventy-five percent (75%) or higher, is necessary to
21 receive a certificate of completion,
- 22 f. a certification upon successful completion of the
23 course and final exam, which may be necessary for

1 certain federal positions or for compliance with
2 federal emergency management directives, and
3 g. periodic refresher courses or continuing education to
4 maintain certification and stay current with any
5 changes or updates to the system;

6 2. To implement an interoperable technology solution to provide

7 or to upgrade the following:

- 8 a. a system or technology that can be activated and
9 deactivated by a public safety answering point, a
10 network administrator, and a school over both the
11 radio system and other communications networks,
12 b. radio and other technology bridge ability that is
13 nonradio vendor specific for connecting independent
14 school networks, school district networks, and public
15 safety networks in the region, and
16 c. an interoperable real-time radio broadcast solution
17 that operates over specifically managed radio networks
18 and other proactively identified communications
19 networks; and

20 3. To maintain or improve a school's existing interoperable

21 communication hardware or software or to provide interoperable
22 communication hardware and software to a school that does not yet
23 have it.

1 C. The proposed interoperable communications solution shall not
2 increase or impact public safety system loading in existence at the
3 time of the enactment of this act. School-based and school district
4 interoperable communications systems shall consider coverage,
5 capacity, and related features in regard to any necessary radio
6 system capacity expansions where school loading is determined to
7 potentially have more than a negligible impact on preexisting public
8 safety system loading.

9 D. The State Department of Education shall administer the grant
10 program. Subject to the availability of funds, grants shall be paid
11 out of the "School Access for Emergency Response Revolving Fund"
12 created in Section 6 of this act.

13 E. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the grant
14 selection committee created in subsection F of this section, shall
15 implement the grant program in accordance with this act. The
16 Department shall promulgate rules necessary to implement the
17 requirements of this act. At minimum, such rules shall specify the
18 time frames for applying for grants, the form of the grant program
19 application, and the time frames for distributing grant money.
20 These rules shall require that school districts and schools making
21 application shall adopt the National Incident Management System
22 (NIMS) to train personnel in the Incident Command System (IS-0100.C)
23 and conduct joint exercises involving professional first responders

1 with schools and school districts to better coordinate teamwork and
2 overall response to incidents.

3 F. There is hereby created the grant selection committee to
4 work with the State Board of Education to determine whether a grant
5 applicant satisfies the criteria to receive a grant. The committee
6 shall be composed of seven (7) members appointed as specified in
7 this subsection. The members of the committee shall serve without
8 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for all actual and necessary
9 expenses incurred while engaged in the discharge of official duties
10 pursuant to this act in accordance with the State Travel
11 Reimbursement Act. Members of the committee shall meet as often as
12 deemed necessary by the Board to accomplish the work of the
13 committee. Members of the committee shall be appointed on or before
14 November 1, 2025, as follows:

15 1. The Governor shall appoint one member;

16 2. The Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives shall
17 appoint one member who represents urban or suburban school
18 districts, and one member who represents the chiefs of police;

19 3. The President Pro Tempore of the Oklahoma State Senate shall
20 appoint one member who represents rural school districts, and one
21 member who represents county sheriffs;

22 4. The Commissioner of Public Safety shall appoint one member;
23 and

1 5. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall appoint
2 one member.

3 SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
4 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-149.8 of Title 70, unless
5 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

6 A. A school is required to have a Memorandum of Understanding,
7 as defined in Section 2 of this act, with its regional public safety
8 answering point and the local law enforcement agency or agencies
9 that serve the school for communications interoperability to be
10 eligible to apply for a grant under this act. To receive a grant, a
11 school must submit an application to the Department in accordance
12 with rules promulgated by the Department. At minimum, the
13 application must include the following information:

14 1. A description of the school's current interoperable
15 communication technology, if any;

16 2. A description of efforts that the school has taken to
17 coordinate emergency communication with law enforcement, 9-1-1
18 system administrators, and other schools; and

19 3. A description of the purpose or purposes for which the
20 school would plan to use the grant money, including, but not limited
21 to, proposed training programs, joint exercise plans, and
22 interoperability technology solutions.

23 B. The grant selection committee created in Section 3 of this
24 act shall review the applications received pursuant to this section.

1 In awarding grants, the grant selection committee shall consider
2 whether the school has a crisis management plan in place with safety
3 team members designated for communications with first responders.

4 C. Subject to the availability of funds, on or before June 30,
5 2026, and on or before June 30 each year thereafter for the duration
6 of the grant program, the Board shall award grants as provided in
7 this act. The Board shall distribute the grant money within thirty
8 (30) days after the grants are awarded.

9 SECTION 5. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
10 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-149.9 of Title 70, unless
11 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

12 A. On or before January 15, 2028, and on or before January 15
13 each year thereafter for the duration of the grant program, each
14 school district with schools that received a grant through the grant
15 program provided in this act shall submit a report to the
16 Department. At minimum, the report shall include the following
17 information:

18 1. The number of schools within the district that used grant
19 money to provide training programs to appropriate personnel
20 regarding effective communications with first responders in an
21 emergency;

22 2. The number of schools within the district that used grant
23 money to provide or upgrade its interoperable technology, including
24 interoperable communication hardware or software; and

1 3. The estimated number of enrolled students that benefitted or
2 will benefit from how the grant money was utilized.

3 B. On or before May 30, 2028, and on or before May 30 each year
4 thereafter for the duration of the grant program, the Department
5 shall present a summarized report of the activities of the grant
6 program to the Oklahoma Legislature.

7 SECTION 6. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
8 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-149.10 of Title 70, unless
9 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

10 A. There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving
11 fund for the State Department of Education to be designated the
12 "School Access for Emergency Response Revolving Fund". The fund
13 shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations,
14 and shall consist of all monies received by the Department of
15 Education from:

16 1. Reimbursements, grants, or other monies received from other
17 state agencies and entities for establishing or maintaining
18 interoperable communication between schools and public safety
19 officials;

20 2. Gifts, donations, and bequests; and

21 3. Monies appropriated or apportioned by the Legislature.

22 B. All monies accruing to the credit of the School Access for
23 Emergency Response Revolving Fund are hereby appropriated and may be
24 budgeted and expended by the State Department of Education for the

1 purpose of providing grants for the School Access for Emergency
2 Response Grant Program as created in Section 3 of this act.

3 C. Expenditures from the School Access for Emergency Response
4 Revolving Fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the State
5 Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the
6 Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services for
7 approval and payment. Expenditures from the School Access for
8 Emergency Response Revolving Fund shall not exceed Five Million
9 Dollars (\$5,000,000.00) in any fiscal year and shall be divided
10 equally among grant applicants who were approved by the State Board
11 of Education and grant selection committee as provided for in
12 Section 3 of this act.

13 SECTION 7. This act shall become effective November 1, 2025.
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15 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND BUDGET, dated
16 03/06/2025 - DO PASS, As Amended and Coauthored.
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