

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

3 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR ENGROSSED  
4 HOUSE BILL 1417

By: West (Josh) of the House

5 and

6 Weaver and Hines of the  
Senate

7

8

9 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

10 [ school safety - School Access For Emergency  
Response Act - grant program - School Access For  
11 Emergency Response Revolving Fund - effective date ]

12

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

14 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
15 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-149.5 of Title 70, unless  
16 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:  
17 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "School Access  
18 For Emergency Response Act" or the "SAFER Act".

19 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
20 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-149.6 of Title 70, unless  
21 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:  
22 As used in the School Access For Emergency Response Act:  
23 1. "Best practices in interoperable emergency communications"  
24 means to identify the interoperable emergency communications needs

1 at a school level; to help target technical assistance, funding, and  
2 other support; and to prepare for next-generation communications  
3 technologies as exemplified by interoperable communications  
4 technologies to enhance and better ensure school safety throughout  
5 this state;

6 2. "Board" means the State Board of Education;

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

10 The key elements of a crisis management plan shall include, but  
11 not be limited to:

- 12 a. threat assessment, recurring risk assessment, and  
13 proactive identification following such assessments,
- 14 b. crisis response team structure,
- 15 c. communication protocols including implementation,  
16 training, maintenance, and timely upgrading of  
17 interoperable communication systems,
- 18 d. emergency response procedures,
- 19 e. resource allocation guidelines, and
- 20 f. recovery and continuity strategies;

21 4. "Department" means the State Department of Education;

22 5. "Grant program" means the School Access For Emergency  
23 Response Grant Program created in Section 3 of this act;

1       6. "Incident Command System" (ICS) means the standardized  
2 approach to incident management as set forth by the Federal  
3 Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Manual IS-0100.c: An Introduction  
4 to the Incident Command System. ICS shall be adopted by grant  
5 applicants as a precedent to be considered for funding through this  
6 act. The manual includes:

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

13       7. "Interoperability" means the ability of one or more radio  
14 systems to communicate with another radio system in real time.

15 Interoperability includes the teamwork that occurs over real-time  
16 radio broadcast channels between school safety teams and  
17 professional emergency responders;

18        8. "Interoperable communications provider" means the supplier  
19 or suppliers of interoperable communications technology, both  
20 hardware and software, as well as related training, maintenance, and  
21 upgrades of interoperable communications systems;

22        9. "Interoperable technology" means software and hardware that  
23        enables two different radio systems and other communications devices

1 to communicate seamlessly in real time via radio broadcast channels  
2 regardless of underlying technologies or manufacturers;

3       10. "Memorandum of understanding" (MOU) means an agreement  
4 between two or more parties that is designed and intended to  
5 formalize a working relationship. Among other components as  
6 identified by the stakeholders, the MOU is designed and intended to  
7 outline the identified parties' agreement to share private, assigned  
8 Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licensed radio frequencies  
9 or channels as well as other protocols and technologies needed to  
10 achieve two-way radio interoperability as contemplated by NIMS IS-  
11 0100.c for schools;

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

- 16                   (1) enumerated core capabilities of prevention,  
17                           protection, mitigation, response, and recovery,
- 18                   (2) a component of the National Strategy for Homeland  
19                           Security that establishes a comprehensive,  
20                           national, all-hazards approach to domestic  
21                           incident response,
- 22                   (3) an explanation of the roles and responsibilities  
23                           of federal, state, local, and 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 for small, medium, and large schools and associated public safety agencies.

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

- (1) enumerates the interrelationship between school access for emergency response and the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and
  - (2) outlines the operation of the 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 wired or wireless communication network, that allows for real-time voice or data transmissions between a public safety answering point, specific school safety team members, and first responders;

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

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

8       17. "School" means a public school district or a brick-and-  
9 mortar charter school established pursuant to the Oklahoma Charter  
10 Schools Act; and

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

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

17       A. There is hereby created in the State Department of Education  
18 the School Access For Emergency Response Grant Program to provide  
19 grants to schools for needed interoperable communication hardware,  
20 software, equipment maintenance, and training to allow for seamless  
21 communications between first responder communications systems and  
22 new or existing school communications systems.

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

1       1. To deliver training programs to teach district safety teams  
2 and security personnel as well as appropriate school-based safety  
3 teams and other personnel basic procedures for effective  
4 communications with first responders in an emergency. The training  
5 shall be based upon the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
6 Manual IS-0100.c: An Introduction to the Incident Command System.  
7 As required by federal law and associated regulations, these  
8 training elements shall include:

- 9             a. completion of the entire course, available online  
10                 through the FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI)  
11                 website,
- 12             b. an expectation of understanding of the basic  
13                 principles and features of the ICS, including its  
14                 purpose, organization, and the roles and  
15                 responsibilities of key positions within the structure  
16                 established by the FEMA manual,
- 17             c. familiarization with how the ICS is applied in various  
18                 types of school-based incidents, including planned  
19                 events, natural disasters, and other types of crisis  
20                 incidents or emergency situations,
- 21             d. scenario-based exercises to reinforce learning and  
22                 ensure comprehension of the material,
- 23             e. a final exam to assess the participant's understanding  
24                 of the course material. A passing score of seventy-

1               five percent (75%) or higher is necessary to receive a  
2               certificate of completion,

- 3               f. a certification upon successful completion of the  
4               course and final exam, which may be necessary for  
5               certain federal positions or for compliance with  
6               federal emergency management directives, and  
7               g. periodic refresher courses or continuing education to  
8               maintain certification and stay current with any  
9               changes or updates to the system;

10          2. To implement an interoperable technology solution to provide

11          or to upgrade the following:

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

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

1 communication hardware or software or to provide interoperable  
2 communication hardware and software to a school that does not yet  
3 have it.

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

12 D. The State Department of Education shall administer the grant  
13 program. Subject to the availability of funds, grants shall be paid  
14 out of the School Access For Emergency Response Revolving Fund  
15 created in Section 6 of this act.

16 E. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the grant  
17 selection committee created in subsection F of this section, shall  
18 implement the grant program in accordance with this act. The Board  
19 shall promulgate rules necessary to implement the requirements of  
20 this act. At a minimum, such rules shall specify the time frames  
21 for applying for grants, the form of the grant program application,  
22 and the time frames for distributing grant money. These rules shall  
23 require that schools applying shall adopt the National Incident  
24 Management System (NIMS) to train personnel in the Incident Command

1 System (IS-0100.c) and conduct joint exercises involving  
2 professional first responders and schools to better coordinate  
3 teamwork and overall response to incidents.

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

16 1. The Governor shall appoint one member;

17 2. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint  
18 one member who represents an urban school and one member who  
19 represents chiefs of police;

20 3. The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint one  
21 member who represents a rural school and one member who represents  
22 county sheriffs;

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

1       5. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall appoint one  
2 member who represents a suburban school.

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 State Department of  
12 Education in accordance with rules promulgated by the State Board of  
13 Education. At minimum, the application must include the following  
14 information:

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

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

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

1       B. The grant selection committee created in Section 3 of this  
2 act shall review the applications received pursuant to this section.  
3 In awarding grants, the grant selection committee shall consider  
4 whether the school has a crisis management plan in place with safety  
5 team members designated for communications with first responders.

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

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

14       A. On or before January 15, 2028, and on or before January 15  
15 each year thereafter for the duration of the grant program, each  
16 grant recipient shall electronically submit a report to the State  
17 Department of Education. At a minimum, the report shall include the  
18 following information:

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

23           2. The number of schools within a public school district that  
24 used grant money to provide or upgrade their interoperable

1     communications technology including interoperable communication  
2     hardware or software; and

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

5                 B. On or before May 30, 2028, and on or before May 30 each year  
6     thereafter for the duration of the grant program, the Department  
7     shall electronically submit a summarized report of the activities of  
8     the grant program to the Legislature.

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

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

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

22                 2. Gifts, donations, and bequests; and  
23                 3. Monies appropriated or apportioned by the Legislature.

1       B. All monies accruing to the credit of the School Access For  
2 Emergency Response Revolving Fund are hereby appropriated and may be  
3 budgeted and expended by the State Department of Education for the  
4 purpose of providing grants for the School Access For Emergency  
5 Response Grant Program as created in Section 3 of this act.

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

16       SECTION 7. This act shall become effective November 1, 2025.  
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