

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

H

1

HOUSE BILL 989

Short Title: Build Safer Communities and Schools Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Clark, Logan, F. Jackson, and Budd (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 14, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO CODIFY SCHOOL SAFETY GRANTS.
The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

CODIFY SCHOOL SAFETY GRANTS

SECTION 1.(a) Part 3 of Article 13A of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes, as enacted by S.L. 2024-57, is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 143B-1209.61. School safety grants for students in crisis, training, and equipment.

(a) Definitions. – For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) Community partner. – A public or private entity, including, but not limited to, a nonprofit corporation or a local management entity/managed care organization (LME/MCO), that partners with a public school unit to provide services or pay for the provision of services for the unit.

(2) School health support personnel. – School nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers.

(b) Program; Purpose. – The Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools shall establish the School Safety Grants Program (Program). To the extent funds are made available for the Program, its purpose shall be to improve safety in public school units by providing grants for (i) services for students in crisis, (ii) school safety training, and (iii) safety equipment in schools.

(c) Grant Applications. – A public school unit may submit an application to the Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools for one or more grants pursuant to this section. The application shall include an assessment, to be performed in conjunction with a local law enforcement agency, of the need for improving school safety within the public school unit that would receive the funding or services. The application shall identify current and ongoing needs and estimated costs associated with those needs.

(d) Criteria and Guidelines. – The Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools shall develop criteria and guidelines for the administration and use of the grants pursuant to this section, including any documentation required to be submitted by applicants. In assessing grant applications, the Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools shall consider at least the following factors:

(1) The level of resources available to the public school unit that would receive the funding.

(2) Whether the public school unit has received other grants for school safety.



- 1 (3) The overall impact on student safety in the public school unit if the identified
2 needs are funded.
- 3 (e) Grants for Students in Crisis. – Of the funds appropriated to the State Bureau of
4 Investigation for the grants provided in this subsection, the Executive Director of the Center for
5 Safer Schools, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, shall award
6 grants to public school units to contract with community partners to provide or pay for the
7 provision of any of the following crisis services:
- 8 (1) Crisis respite services for parents or guardians of an individual student to
9 prevent more intensive or costly levels of care.
- 10 (2) Training and expanded services for therapeutic foster care families and
11 licensed child placement agencies that provide services to students who (i)
12 need support to manage their health, welfare, and safety and (ii) have any of
13 the following:
- 14 a. Cognitive or behavioral problems.
15 b. Developmental delays.
16 c. Aggressive behavior.
- 17 (3) Evidence-based therapy services aligned with targeted training for students
18 and their parents or guardians, including any of the following:
- 19 a. Parent-child interaction therapy.
20 b. Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy.
21 c. Dialectical behavior therapy.
22 d. Child-parent psychotherapy.
- 23 (4) Any other crisis service, including peer-to-peer mentoring, that is likely to
24 increase school safety. Of the funds appropriated to the Bureau for grants
25 pursuant to this subsection, the Executive Director of the Center for Safer
26 Schools shall not use more than three hundred fifty thousand dollars
27 (\$350,000) per fiscal year for the services identified in this subsection.
- 28 (f) Grants for Training to Increase School Safety. – Of the funds appropriated to the State
29 Bureau of Investigation for the grant provided in this subsection, the Executive Director of the
30 Center for Safer Schools, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services,
31 shall award grants to public school units to contract with community partners to address school
32 safety by providing training to help students develop healthy responses to trauma and stress. The
33 training shall be targeted and evidence-based and shall include any of the following services:
- 34 (1) Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) training for school health
35 support personnel, local first responders, and teachers on the topics of suicide
36 prevention and reducing access by students to lethal means.
- 37 (2) Training for school health support personnel on comprehensive and
38 evidence-based clinical treatments for students and their parents or guardians,
39 including any of the following:
- 40 a. Parent-child interaction therapy.
41 b. Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy.
42 c. Behavioral therapy.
43 d. Dialectical behavior therapy.
44 e. Child-parent psychotherapy.
- 45 (3) Training for students and school employees on community resilience models
46 to improve understanding and responses to trauma and significant stress.
- 47 (4) Training for school health support personnel on Modular Approach to
48 Therapy for Children with Anxiety, Depression, Trauma, or Conduct
49 problems (MATCH-ADTC), including any of the following components:
- 50 a. Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy.
51 b. Parent and student coping skills.

c. Problem solving.

d. Safety planning.

(5) Any other training, including the training on the facilitation of peer-to-peer mentoring, that is likely to increase school safety. Of the funds appropriated to the Bureau for grants pursuant to this subsection, the Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools shall use no more than three hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000) per fiscal year for the services identified in this subsection.

(g) Grants for Safety Equipment. – Of the funds appropriated to the State Bureau of Investigation for the grant provided in this subsection, the Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools shall award grants to public school units for (i) the purchase of safety equipment for school buildings and (ii) training associated with the use of safety equipment purchased pursuant to this subsection. Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-218.105(b), charter schools may receive grants for school safety equipment pursuant to this subsection. In assessing grant applications, the Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools shall prioritize applications for the purchase of any of the following school safety equipment:

(1) Exterior doors with push bars.

(2) Erected vehicle barriers.

(3) Security systems that monitor and record school entrances, exits, and hallways.

(4) Campus-wide active shooter alarm systems that are separated from fire alarms.

(5) Two-way radio systems.

(6) Perimeter security fencing.

(7) Bullet-resistant glass or film for school entrances.

(8) Door-locking systems.

(h) Supplement Not Supplant. – Grants provided to public school units or community partners pursuant to the Program shall be used to supplement and not to supplant State or non-State funds already provided for these services.

(i) Administrative Costs. – Of the funds appropriated to the State Bureau of Investigation for the grants provided pursuant to this section, the Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools may retain a total of up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) per fiscal year for administrative costs associated with the Program.

(j) Disbursement. – The Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools may enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Public Instruction to disburse grants awarded under this section.

(k) Report. – No later than April 1 of each fiscal year in which funds are awarded pursuant to the Program, the Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools shall report on the Program to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety, the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations, the Senate Appropriations/Base Budget Committee, the House Committee on Appropriations, and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall include at least the following information:

(1) The identity of each public school unit and community partner that received grant funds through the Program.

(2) The amount of funding received by each entity identified pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(3) The services, training, and equipment purchased with grant funds by each entity that received a grant.

(4) Recommendations for the implementation of additional effective school safety measures."

1 **SECTION 1.(b)** The Executive Director of the Center for Safer Schools shall
2 establish the School Safety Grants Program as directed by G.S.143B-1209.61, as enacted by this
3 section, and have the application for the Program available to public school units no later than
4 August 1, 2025.

5 **SECTION 1.(c)** There is appropriated from the ARPA Temporary Savings Fund to
6 the State Bureau of Investigation the sum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) in nonrecurring
7 funds for each year of the 2025-2027 fiscal biennium to fund the School Safety Grants Program
8 under G.S. 143B-1209.61, as enacted by this section. It is the intent of the General Assembly to
9 fund the Program with recurring funds beginning with the 2027-2029 fiscal biennium.

10 **SECTION 1.(d)** This section becomes effective July 1, 2025.

11
12 **SEVERABILITY CLAUSE AND EFFECTIVE DATE**

13 **SECTION 2.(a)** If any section or provision of this act is declared unconstitutional or
14 invalid by the courts, it does not affect the validity of this act as a whole or any portion other than
15 the portion declared to be unconstitutional or invalid.

16 **SECTION 2.(b)** Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes
17 law.