

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 19-45 (Ensuring the Safety of Our Children in Our Schools)

WHEREAS, on February 14, 2018, fourteen students and three staff members were murdered at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida; and

WHEREAS, following this massacre, the Florida Legislature passed Senate Bill 7026 during the 2018 Legislative Session and allocated significant financial resources toward improving the safety of Florida's schools; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 7026 (2018) established the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (the Commission) to "investigate system failures in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting and prior mass violence incidents in this state and develop recommendations for system improvements"; and

WHEREAS, the Commission issued its Initial Report on January 2, 2019 advising that school safety in Florida can and must be improved, and outlining extensive recommendations to accomplish this objective; and

WHEREAS, implementing many of the recommendations requires an action of the Legislature, but some recommendations can be implemented through actions of the Executive Branch, particularly by the Department of Education and the Department of Juvenile Justice; and

WHEREAS, there is still confusion amongst some school district superintendents as to how to implement the requirements of Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes, regarding safe-school officers (school resource officers) and guardians, in a manner that best serves the safety of Florida's students; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 1001.212(6)-(9), Florida Statutes, by December 1, 2018 the Department of Education was supposed to coordinate with the Department of Law Enforcement to provide a centralized, integrated data repository and data analytics resources to include access to timely school safety information, and this deadline has passed and yet the requirements have still not been met 75 days later, which is unacceptable; and

WHEREAS, we must dedicate the attention and resources necessary to improve safety at our schools.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RON DESANTIS, as Governor of Florida, by virtue of the authority vested in me by Article IV, Section (1)(a) of the Florida Constitution, and all other applicable laws, do hereby issue the following Executive Order, to take immediate effect:

I hereby direct the Commissioner of Education and the Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Justice to ensure the following objectives are completed:

- A. The Department of Education shall conduct an immediate statewide audit of all 67 county school districts to ascertain any and all types of school-based discipline diversion programs in place, such as the "PROMISE" program. The audit should determine their requirements for eligibility and operations, their stated impact on school and public safety, their costs, and whether there is evidence to support their continuation, closure or regulation in law. The Department should direct the school districts to expeditiously provide all requested information.
- B. The Department of Education shall work in partnership with the Department of Juvenile Justice to review and analyze these programs. The assessment must, at a minimum, determine whether there is adequate information or evidence available to draw an informed conclusion about the efficacy of these programs and their impact

on school and public safety. The Departments shall further work together to develop best practices and consistent criteria for school-based discipline diversion programs. The Department of Juvenile Justice shall complete a report on their findings related to these programs to be submitted to the Executive Office of the Governor and the Legislature, by July 1, 2019.


- C. The Commissioner of Education shall reopen and extend the application period for participation in the Coach Aaron Feis Guardian Program to April 1, 2019, allowing sheriffs who wish to participate in the program the opportunity to apply.
- D. The Department of Education shall develop best practices for school hardening and harm mitigation to be submitted to the Executive Office of the Governor and the Legislature by July 1, 2019. These best practices shall, at a minimum, incorporate a tiered approach to school hardening, ranging from basic harm mitigation strategies to more advanced security measures, as identified in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission's Initial Report.
- E. The Commissioner of Education shall immediately communicate to all school district superintendents how to implement compliance with Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes, regarding safe-school officers (school resource officers) and guardians.
- F. The Department of Education shall immediately take any and all steps necessary to implement Section 1001.212(6)-(9), Florida Statutes, to provide a centralized, integrated data repository and data analytics resources to include access to timely school safety information, by August 1, 2019, prior to the 2019-2020 school year, with the full support of the Departments of Children and Families, Law Enforcement

and Juvenile Justice, and the courts pursuant to requirements of Section 1001.212(6)(a)-(e), Florida Statutes.

These actions will continue the process of ensuring the safety of our children in schools across the State of Florida.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed, at Tallahassee, this 13th day of February, 2019.


GOVERNOR

ATTEST:


SECRETARY OF STATE

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