



# Safety



## H.B. 40 Sub 1 - School Safety Amendments - Rep. Ryan Wilcox Support with Comment




Utah PTA supports the intent of this school safety bill, as it includes critical measures to protect students and staff. Our schools need the necessary **resources** to implement these measures successfully. We urge lawmakers to allocate the **proper funding** to ensure these vital protections become a reality.




This bill enhances children's safety by strengthening school security measures, improving emergency preparedness, and expanding mental health and abuse prevention training. It requires annual school safety assessments, stricter cybersecurity standards, and increased physical security. By improving school safety and law enforcement coordination, the bill helps create a safer learning environment for all students.


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**Background: H.B. 84 (2024 General Session) created multiple school safety and security requirements for public education. Notably, the bills required all schools in the state's public education system to have armed security: a school resource officer, a guardian – a trained volunteer school employee – or a trained private security guard. The bill also required the state security chief to establish school building safety and security standards and required each local education agency to have a school safety and security director, among other things.**



School Guardians were established in last years bill HB84. This bill does some clarification and modifications of who can be a school guardian, but the guardian position is already in code.



The School Security Task Force – Education Advisory Board was created. It includes a parent representative from a school community council or parent teacher organization, whom the state security chief selects;

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## What this bill does:

*School Safety Needs Assessments* This bill requires local education agencies (LEAs) to:

- ★ Include cybersecurity preparedness, cardiac emergency preparedness, and compliance with universal access key box requirements in their school safety needs assessment.
- ★ Complete the need assessment by October 15 annually using a standardized needs assessment selected by the State Security Chief (currently required once by December 31, 2024).

## *School Safety Personnel*

- ★ Allows a principal or teacher to be a school guardian in schools with 350 or fewer students. • Clarifies that school guardians and contracted security guards must complete an initial “fit to carry” assessment and comply with the mental health screening requirements for law enforcement officers.
- ★ Amends the training requirements for school safety and security directors, a mandatory position for each LEA.

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## *Building Safety Standards and Incident Response System*

- ★ Requires security glazing or ballistic windows on all exterior and interior windows in a school (previously ground-level windows only).
- ★ Requires camera feeds and wearable panic alert devices to communicate directly with public safety answering points.
- ★ Requires each school building to have a universal access key box, accessible only to first responders, at the main entry point with master keys providing emergency responders complete access to all areas of the school.
- ★ Requires schools to (1) use an incident response system or method selected by the State Security Chief, and (2) physically mark doorways and halls based on this system.

## *Local Education Agency Compliance with School Safety Requirements*

- ★ Directs the state security chief and School Safety Center to create an escalating system of technical assistance, intervention, and corrective action for LEAs not complying with school safety requirements.

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## *Cybersecurity and Local Education Agencies*

- ★ Requires the state security chief, the School Safety Center, and the Utah Education and Telehealth Network to:
  - Establish minimum cybersecurity standards for LEAs.
  - Complete a gap analysis of LEA cybersecurity practices by December 31, 2025.

## *Mental Health and Sexual Abuse Prevention Training Requirements*

- ★ Current law requires LEAs to provide students with training on sexual abuse prevention every three years. This bill (1) requires the training to include responding to sexual extortion incidents, and (2) directs LEAs to offer the training yearly.
- ★ Allows LEAs to provide existing parent seminars on health and safety issues online.

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## *Automated External Defibrillators*

- ★ Requires each school to have an automated external defibrillator (AED) and directs the School Safety Center to provide support on AED operation certification and placement.
- ★ Directs the State Board of Education to require student CPR training to include instruction on AED use, when possible.

## *School Safety Foundation*

- ★ Allows a nonprofit foundation to fundraise for and donate school safety products to schools. • The foundation may access a state cooperative contract and must coordinate purchases and donations with the state security chief and School Safety Center.
- ★ The state security chief authorizes the foundation, which must meet certain requirements.

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## *Higher Education Requirements*

*In addition to the School Security Task Force changes detailed above, this bill: • Requires all public institutions of higher education to complete a safety needs assessment – annually by October 15.*

I did not include the requirements for higher education in my presentation except to list that they are present in the bill