This law, adopted in 1999, provides guidelines and instructions regarding school safety plans as well as resources that are available to schools from Georgia Emergency Management Agency-Homeland Security. In addition to those mentioned in the law, the GEMA-HS School Safety Unit provides additional services.

In order to obtain approval for the school safety plan, a school must meet the minimum requirements as described by this law. Yet, school safety evolves and as new “best practices” are discovered, school safety coordinators are available to assist in improving plans and protocols to meet the obstacles and threats faced by schools today.

In order to obtain detailed information about these services, contact your Area School Safety Coordinator or call 1-800-TRY-GEMA for more information.

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a.) Every public school shall prepare a school safety plan to help curb the growing incidence of violence in school schools, to respond effectively to such incidents, and to provide a safe learning environment for Georgia’s children, and teachers, and other school personnel. Such plan shall also address preparedness for natural disasters, hazardous materials or radiological accidents, acts of violence, and acts of terrorism. School safety plans of public schools shall be prepared with input from students enrolled in that school, parents or legal guardians of such students, teachers in that school, community leaders, other school employees and school district employees, and local law enforcement, fire service, public safety, and emergency management agencies. School safety plans of private schools may be prepared with input from students enrolled in that school, parents or legal guardians of such students, teachers in that school, other school employees, and local law enforcement, fire service, public safety, and emergency management agencies. Such plans shall be reviewed and, if necessary, updated annually. Such plans of public schools shall be submitted to the local emergency management agency.

(b) A public school may request funding assistance from the state for the installation of safety equipment including, but not limited to, video surveillance cameras, metal detectors, and other similar security devices. Funding may be provided to a public school in accordance with a school safety plan prepared by the school and approved by the local board of education, and the Department of Education, and the Georgia Emergency Management Agency.

(c) School safety plans prepared by public schools shall address security issues in school safety zones as defined in paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 16-11-127.1. School safety plans should also address security issues involving the transportation of pupils to and from school and school functions when such transportation is furnished by the school or school system and school functions held during non-instructional hours.

(d) The Georgia Emergency Management Agency shall provide training and technical assistance to public school systems, and may provide this same training and technical assistance to private school systems, and independent private schools throughout this state in the area of emergency management and safe school operations. This training and technical assistance shall include, but not be limited to, crisis response team development, site surveys and safety audits, crisis management planning, exercise design, safe school planning, emergency operations planning, search and seizure, bomb threat management, and model school safety plans."

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