

RCW 28A.300.630 School safety center. (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the superintendent of public instruction shall establish a school safety center as provided in this section.

(2) The center, working in conjunction with the regional school safety centers established in RCW 28A.310.510, forms a statewide network for school safety.

(3) The center, in collaboration with staff in the office of the superintendent of public instruction, must:

(a) Serve as a clearinghouse for information regarding comprehensive school safety planning and practice;

(b) Disseminate information regarding school safety incidents in Washington and across the country;

(c) Develop and maintain a public website to increase the availability of information, research, and other materials related to school safety;

(d) Serve as the lead school safety center, and work in conjunction with the regional school safety centers, to support school districts efforts to meet state requirements regarding school safety including the development and implementation of:

(i) Comprehensive safe school plans as required by RCW 28A.320.125; and

(ii) Plans for recognition, initial screening, and response to emotional or behavioral distress in students as required by RCW 28A.320.127;

(e) Develop model school safety policies and procedures and identify best practices in school safety;

(f) Work in conjunction with the regional school safety centers to plan for the provision of school safety trainings and to provide technical assistance;

(g) Hold an annual school safety summit as required by RCW 28A.300.273;

(h) Support the required activities of the regional school safety centers, established in RCW 28A.310.510; and

(i) Perform other functions consistent with the purpose of the center, as described in this section. [2019 c 333 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 333: "(1) The legislature recognizes that school safety supports effective teaching and learning by creating and promoting a physically, emotionally, socially, behaviorally, and academically secure climate for students, staff, and visitors. Keeping a school safe involves planning for the prevention of, intervention in, mitigation of, protection from, response to, and recovery from various natural, physical, social, emotional, biological, and technological threats and trauma to an individual, the school, and the community.

(2) The legislature has taken steps over the years to improve the safety of public school students by, for example: (a) Requiring schools and school districts to have school safety plans in place; (b) requiring school districts to have plans for recognition, initial screening, and response to emotional or behavioral distress in students, including indicators of possible substance abuse, violence, youth suicide, and sexual abuse; (c) requiring the use of a statewide first responder building mapping information system; (d) requiring school districts to adopt policies and procedures to prevent harassment, intimidation, and bullying, including cyberbullying; and

(e) prohibiting firearms and other dangerous weapons on school premises.

(3) The legislature finds that many school districts need additional supports to keep their schools safe. The legislature intends to establish a statewide network of the structural components necessary to enhance student safety in schools so that students have a sense of well-being and can focus on learning. This network, or system, of comprehensive school safety supports is based on the work of the state school safety center, which supports the regional school safety centers at each educational service district. The regional school safety centers, in collaboration with community school safety stakeholders, support the efforts of the local school districts and schools to bring best practices in school safety to every school and classroom in the state. The school safety and student well-being advisory committee provides ongoing advice to the state and regional school safety centers, as well as public and private schools. The state and regional school safety centers, together with the school safety and student well-being advisory committee, bring together caring adults, including those who work directly with students every day, to define school safety problems at the state and local levels and identify solutions to those problems, such as creating needed programs and identifying necessary supports. Creating a system of comprehensive school safety supports will maximize the use of state and local resources so that every student can attend a school with a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment." [2019 c 333 § 1.]

Intent—2019 c 333: See note following RCW 28A.320.124.