
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

Bill No: SB 1443 **Hearing Date:** August 7, 2018
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Version: June 11, 2018
Urgency: Yes **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Brandon Darnell

Subject: School safety: the County of Riverside school metal detector pilot program.

SUMMARY

This bill, an urgency measure, establishes the County of Riverside school metal detector pilot program for purposes of assisting public schools within the county to purchase metal detectors.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires a petition for the establishment of a charter school to include the procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. (Education Code § 47605)
- 2) Requires each school district and county office of education to be responsible for the overall development of all comprehensive school safety plans for its schools operating kindergarten or any of grades 1 through 12. The schoolsite council or a school safety planning committee is responsible for developing the comprehensive school safety plan. (EC § 32281)
- 3) Requires school safety plans to include, among other things:
 - a) An assessment of the current status of school crime committed on school campuses and at school-related functions.
 - b) Identification of appropriate strategies and programs that will provide or maintain a high level of school safety and address the school's procedures for complying with existing laws related to school safety, including, among other things:
 - i) Procedures to notify teachers of dangerous students.
 - ii) Procedures for safe ingress and egress of students, parents, and school employees to and from school.
 - iii) A safe and orderly environment conducive to learning.
 - iv) The rules and procedures on school discipline. (EC § 32282)

- 4) Authorizes the portions of a school safety plan that include tactical responses to criminal incidents to be developed by school district or county office administrators in consultation with law enforcement officials and with a representative of the employee bargaining unit, if he or she chooses to participate. (EC § 32281)
- 5) Requires each school to adopt its school safety plan by March 1 and review and update its plan annually by March 1. Each school is required to annually report, in July, on the status of its school safety plan, including a description of key elements of the school safety plan in the annual school accountability report card. (EC § 32286)
- 6) Requires the schoolsite council or school safety planning committee to hold a public meeting before adopting the school safety plan. Each school is required to forward its school safety plan to the school district or county office for approval, and school districts or county offices are required to annually notify the California Department of Education, by October 15, of any school that is not in compliance. (EC § 32288)
- 7) Authorizes a student to be suspended from school or recommendation for expulsion if the principle of the school or the superintendent of the school district determines, among other things, that the student possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object. (EC § 48900)

ANALYSIS

This bill, an urgency measure, establishes the County of Riverside school metal detector pilot program for purposes of assisting public schools within the county to purchase metal detectors. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Establishes the County of Riverside school metal detector pilot program, which would be voluntary on the part of the Riverside County Office of Education.
- 2) If the County of Riverside County Office of Education chooses to undertake the pilot program:
 - a) Authorizes the Riverside County Office of Education to accept donations from private individuals and entities for the purpose of assisting public schools located within the County of Riverside to purchase metal detectors.
 - b) Authorizes a public school located within the County of Riverside to apply to the Riverside County Office of Education for a grant to purchase metal detectors for the public school.
 - c) Requires the Riverside County Office of Education to review submitted applications and award grants to applicant public schools with the moneys donated from private individuals or entities and appropriated by the state.

- 3) Appropriates one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) from the General Fund to the Riverside County Office of Education for the purpose of assisting public schools located within the County of Riverside purchase metal detectors if county office of education receives nine hundred thousand dollars (\$900,000) in donations for that purpose.
- 4) Specifies that the \$100,000 appropriation described above shall count toward the Proposition 98 guarantee.
- 5) Require the California Department of Education (CDE), within two years after the effective date of the bill, to do both of the following:
 - a) Review the implementation of the pilot program and determine whether the pilot program was successful.
 - b) If CDE determines that the pilot program was successful, to submit a recommendation, as specified, to the Legislature to enact legislation to expand the pilot program to other counties.
- 6) Defines “public school” for purposes of the bill to mean “a school of a school district, a school of a county office of education, and a charter school that operates kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive.”
- 7) Sunsets these provisions six years after the effective date of the bill.
- 8) States Legislative findings and declarations that a special statute is necessary because of the unique security needs of public schools in the County of Riverside.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “keeping our kids safe in school is paramount. One such way would be to install metal detectors in schools. While the Senator realizes that local school districts already have the capability to raise funds to put metal detectors in schools, there does not seem to be a mechanism to leverage state assistance.”

While it is true that there is no mechanism for state funding specific to metal detectors, the local control funding formula (LCFF) does afford local educational agencies flexibility to allocate their state funding as they see fit, consistent with the goals and actions specified in their local control and accountability plans, which are tied to the eight state priorities, including the school climate priority. *The committee may wish to consider* whether the LCFF provides sufficient flexibility to local educational agencies to fund this activity, if they so choose.

- 2) ***Do metal detectors have the intended effect?*** In 2005, the CDE published its fourth *Getting Results* update, *Violence Prevention and Safe Schools*, which presented recently published research about youth violence and efforts to create safe schools. It was intended to “provide schools with up-to-date information about effective, research-proven violence prevention programs and strategies so

that students and staff can feel safe at school and focus on academic and social tasks.” According to the that report, “it appears that procedures that focus primarily on altering physical aspects on the school campus, such as locking doors, installing metal detectors, and so forth, seem to have the opposite effect of increasing adverse student behaviors.”

- 3) **Research on metal detectors in schools indeterminate?** A 2010 research article published in the *Journal of School Health*, “Impacts of Metal Detector Use in Schools: Insights From 15 Years of Research,” concluded that “there is insufficient data in the literature to determine whether the presence of metal detectors in schools reduces the risk of violent behavior among students, and some research suggests that the presence of metal detectors may detrimentally impact student perceptions of safety.”
- 4) **Current metal detector practices.** At least some schools in California use metal detectors. The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), in Policy Bulletin 5424.2, requires “all secondary schools must conduct daily random metal detector searches of students. That bulletin specifies that “search operations should be conducted at various hours of the school day to avoid predictability” and applies to all secondary schools operated by LAUSD or on behalf of LAUSD or located on LAUSD property, including affiliated and independent charter schools.
- 5) **School violence prevention audit.** An audit by the California State Auditor, released in 2017, cites FBI data showing that active shooter incidents became more common between 2000 and 2015, and kindergarten through grade 12 facilities and higher education institutions have been the second most common location for these shootings to occur, both nationally and within California. The report notes that state law does not require schools to include procedures for responding to active shooter events in their school safety plans and that state law could improve these plans by requiring the inclusion of procedures to respond to active shooter incidents.
- 6) **Related legislation.** SB 1203 (Bates, 2018) would require all public and private schools to have procedures for conducting lockdown training. SB 1203 is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 1747 (Rodriguez, 2018) would, among other things, require local educational agencies, including charter schools, to conduct drills, not less than once per year, on their tactical responses to criminal incidents.

SUPPORT

None received

OPPOSITION

None received