

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to student elopement; creating s.
3 1003.211, F.S.; providing definitions; requiring
4 public schools to create a School Staff Assistance for
5 Emergencies (SAFE) Team and a school elopement plan;
6 providing requirements for the plan; providing for
7 membership and responsibilities of the SAFE team;
8 requiring the SAFE team to create student-specific
9 elopement quick reference guides for certain students;
10 providing requirements for such guides; requiring
11 public schools to annually submit their plans to the
12 district school board; authorizing the State Board of
13 Education to adopt rules; providing an effective date.

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15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 **Section 1. Section 1003.211, Florida Statutes, is created**
18 **to read:**

19 1003.211 School elopement plans.—

20 (1) For purposes of this section, the term:

21 (a) "Disability" means, for a student in kindergarten
22 through grade 12, an autism spectrum disorder, as defined in the
23 Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth
24 Edition, published by the American Psychiatric Association, or
25 an intellectual disability, as defined in s. 393.063.

26 (b) "Elopement" means when a student with autism or
27 another disability, who has a documented history of elopement or
28 an identified safety risk related to elopement, leaves a safe or
29 designated area, the supervision of school staff, or school
30 grounds without authorization or awareness of potential risk.
31 The term may include wandering, walking away, running away, or
32 otherwise departing an assigned location unsupervised or
33 unnoticed. This term only applies when the behavior is connected
34 to the student's disability-related needs and poses a safety
35 concern. The term does not include intentional class skipping or
36 other nondisability-related absences.

37 (2) To ensure the safety of students with disabilities at
38 risk of elopement, each public school shall create a School
39 Staff Assistance for Emergencies (SAFE) Team and a school
40 elopement plan. The plan must include:

41 (a) Procedures for immediately contacting the student's
42 parent or guardian if a student with disabilities elopes.

43 (b) Procedures for conducting an immediate, coordinated
44 on-campus search and contacting emergency services only when the
45 student is reasonably believed, based on verified information or
46 direct observation, to have left school grounds and to be at
47 risk of harm.

48 (3) The school principal and an assistant principal shall
49 serve on the SAFE Team and the school principal shall appoint at
50 least three other members to serve on the team, including the

51 school resource officer. The SAFE Team shall:

52 (a) Create and annually update the school elopement plan
53 and respond to all elopements.

54 (b) Provide training to all school personnel to
55 familiarize such personnel with the school elopement plan and
56 all necessary procedures.

57 (4) (a) If a student with disabilities is prone to
58 elopement, the SAFE Team, in coordination with the student's
59 parent, must create a student-specific elopement quick reference
60 guide. The elopement quick reference guide must include all of
61 the following:

62 1. The student's identifying information.

63 2. A current photograph of the student.

64 3. The student's level of communication.

65 4. A list of the student's interests, behaviors,
66 preferences, and aversions.

67 5. Any health considerations for the student.

68 6. A list of any GPS technology that could be used to help
69 locate the student.

70 7. A list of possible locations where the student may go
71 when eloping.

72 (b) The SAFE Team must distribute a student's elopement
73 quick reference guide to the student's parent and all relevant
74 school personnel.

75 (5) Each public school must annually provide its elopement

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76 | plan to the district school board.

77 | (6) The state board may adopt rules to administer this
78 | section.

79 | **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.