



# School Safety Bills

School Security Task Force | May 16, 2023

## H.B. 61 School Safety Requirements

### **School Security Task Force - [§ 53-22-104](#)**

H.B. 61 (2023 General Session) created the School Security Task Force. The task force is comprised of 18 members, including representation from legislators, the Department of Public Safety, the Utah School Superintendents Association, the Chiefs of Police Association, the Sheriffs Association, the Utah Association of Public Charter Schools, the Utah Division of Juvenile Justice Youth Services, and other school safety experts.

The following are the task force's statutory duties:

- Determine the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of the state security chief
- Create statewide standardized training requirements and hiring policies for school resource officers
- Review and revise, if necessary, the model critical incident response training program developed under [Section 53G-8-802](#)
- Develop training standards for active threats and emergency response in schools
- Recommend standards for the use of school security specialists
- Recommend safety and security protocols for the design, construction, and reconstruction of new and existing schools
- Develop legislation for introduction in the 2024 General Session
- Prepare a report and present any legislation developed to the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Committee by November 30, 2023

### **School Safety and Support Grant Program - [§ 53F-5-220](#)**

H.B. 61 appropriates \$75,000,000 in one-time funding to the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) to create the School Safety and Support Grant Program. USBE may grant an award to an LEA to provide a school with SRO services, school safety specialists, communication equipment, enhanced physical security, first-aid or bleeding control kits, or training for law enforcement, school safety specialists, or first responder communication systems. USBE shall prioritize LEAs with low student counts that also have designated school safety specialists in each school. An LEA may not apply for this grant to fund an existing service, but it may request to expand or enhance the service.

### **USBE Procurement for Security Software - [§ 53F-4-208](#)**

H.B. 61 requires USBE to issue a request for proposals and enter into a contract with a private vendor for patented firearm detection software that detects and alerts personnel and first responders about visible, unholstered firearms on school property. An LEA may also enter into the contract in order to obtain the software at its schools. The software must be able to integrate with existing school security cameras and include a training database populated with frames of firearm videos in relevant environments. It must also be developed in the United States, designated as anti-terrorism technology, and used in other states and schools. The vendor must directly manage the software through a constantly monitored operations center staffed by trained analysts who can rapidly communicate possible threats.



### **Threat Assessments and School Safety Specialists - [§ 53G-8-701.5](#)**

H.B. 61 requires every public school to conduct a threat assessment as described in [Subsection 53G-8-802\(2\)\(g\)\(i\)](#). Schools must also designate a school safety specialist, which H.B. 61 defines as “a school employee who is responsible for supporting school safety initiatives including the threat assessment.” These are not new positions at the schools; serving as the school safety specialist is an additional responsibility for an employee.

### **State Security Chief & County Sheriffs - [§§ 53-22-102, 53-22-103](#)**

H.B. 61 creates the State Security Chief position, appointed by the commissioner of the Department of Public Safety. The commissioner and the School Security Task Force will determine the chief’s qualifications, duties, and responsibilities. H.B. 61 also requires each county sheriff to identify an individual to coordinate responsibilities between the state security chief, the county sheriff’s office, and the corresponding police chiefs who have public schools within their jurisdictions.

## **Additional School Safety-Related Legislation**

### **[H.B. 140 Standard Response Protocol to Active Threats in Schools \(2023\)](#)**

This legislation requires the state board to make rules requiring LEAs to develop emergency preparedness and response plans that include developmentally appropriate training on active threats, emergency preparedness, drills, and standard response protocols.

### **[H.B. 428 School Safety Amendments \(2022\)](#)**

Requires the state board and LEAs to report data on demographics bullying, hazing, etc. victims; requires LEAs to review this data and adopt a plan for discrimination- and harassment-free learning. Requires the state board to provide administrators with training on state and federal laws on bullying, civil rights, and special education requirements, among others.

### **[H.B. 345 School Resource Officers Amendments \(2021\)](#)**

Statute requires the state board to provide a training program for administrators and school resource officers. This bill requires school personnel to also attend, and requires the training program to include: developing relationships with students, and the legal parameters of searching and questioning students on school property.

### **[H.B. 171 School Threat Amendments \(2020\)](#)**

Creates the crime of threats against schools, including private or public preschools, elementary, and secondary schools. Creates a penalty for individuals who make threats against a school, including by in-person or electronic means, and establishes what constitutes a threat. Provides penalties and reduces the penalty for minor students.

### **[H.B. 120 Student and School Safety Assessment \(2019\)](#)**

Requires various state and local entities to establish policies and procedures for school resource officers.



Created the State Safety and Support Program (program) within the state board, requiring the Department of Public Safety to provide a public safety liaison and the Department of Health and Human Services to provide a school-based mental health specialist.

Tasked the program with:

- Creating a critical incident response training program.
- Developing model LEA student safety and support policies, such as evidence-based procedures for assessing and intervening with a person who poses a threat to school safety.
- Providing training in school safety and approaches to improve school climate.
- Disseminating research on school safety issues and effective initiatives.
- Creating a model school climate survey.