

Effective 5/1/2024

53G-8-211 Responses to school-based behavior.

(1) As used in this section:

- (a) "Evidence-based" means a program or practice that:
 - (i) has had multiple randomized control studies or a meta-analysis demonstrating that the program or practice is effective for a specific population;
 - (ii) has been rated as effective by a standardized program evaluation tool; or
 - (iii) is created and developed by a school or school district and has been approved by the state board.
- (b) "Habitual truant" means a school-age child who:
 - (i) is in grade 7 or above, unless the school-age child is under 12 years old;
 - (ii) is subject to the requirements of Section 53G-6-202; and
 - (iii)
 - (A) is truant at least 20 days during one school year; or
 - (B) fails to cooperate with efforts on the part of school authorities to resolve the school-age child's attendance problem as required under Section 53G-6-206.
- (c) "Minor" means the same as that term is defined in Section 80-1-102.
 - (i) "Mobile crisis outreach team" means the same as that term is defined in Section 26B-5-101.
- (d) "Prosecuting attorney" means the same as that term is defined in Subsections 80-1-102(65) (b) and (c).
- (e) "Restorative justice program" means a school-based program or a program used or adopted by a local education agency that is designed:
 - (i) to enhance school safety, reduce school suspensions, and limit referrals to law enforcement agencies and courts; and
 - (ii) to help minors take responsibility for and repair harmful behavior that occurs in school.
- (f) "School administrator" means a principal of a school.
- (g) "School is in session" means a day during which the school conducts instruction for which student attendance is counted toward calculating average daily membership.
- (h) "School resource officer" means a law enforcement officer, as defined in Section 53-13-103, who contracts with, is employed by, or whose law enforcement agency contracts with a local education agency to provide law enforcement services for the local education agency.
- (i) "School-age child" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-6-201.
- (j)
 - (i) "School-sponsored activity" means an activity, fundraising event, club, camp, clinic, or other event or activity that is authorized by a specific local education agency or public school, according to LEA governing board policy, and satisfies at least one of the following conditions:
 - (A) the activity is managed or supervised by a local education agency or public school, or local education agency or public school employee;
 - (B) the activity uses the local education agency's or public school's facilities, equipment, or other school resources; or
 - (C) the activity is supported or subsidized, more than inconsequentially, by public funds, including the public school's activity funds or Minimum School Program dollars.
 - (ii) "School-sponsored activity" includes preparation for and involvement in a public performance, contest, athletic competition, demonstration, display, or club activity.
- (k)
 - (i) "Status offense" means an offense that would not be an offense but for the age of the offender.

- (ii) "Status offense" does not mean an offense that by statute is a misdemeanor or felony.
- (2) This section applies to:
 - (a) a minor who is alleged to be a habitual truant; and
 - (b) a minor enrolled in school who is alleged to have committed an offense on school property where the student is enrolled:
 - (i) when school is in session; or
 - (ii) during a school-sponsored activity.
- (3) If a minor is alleged to have committed an offense on school property that is a class C misdemeanor, an infraction, or a status offense, or a minor is alleged to be a habitual truant, the school administrator, the school administrator's designee, or a school resource officer shall refer the minor:
 - (a) to an evidence-based alternative intervention, including:
 - (i) a mobile crisis outreach team;
 - (ii) a youth services center, as defined in Section 80-5-102;
 - (iii) a certified youth court, as defined in Section 80-6-901, or comparable restorative justice program;
 - (iv) an evidence-based alternative intervention created and developed by the school or school district;
 - (v) an evidence-based alternative intervention that is jointly created and developed by a local education agency, the state board, the juvenile court, local counties and municipalities, the Department of Health and Human Services;
 - (vi) a tobacco cessation or education program if the offense is a violation of Section 76-10-105; or
 - (vii) truancy mediation; or
 - (b) for prevention and early intervention youth services, as described in Section 80-5-201, by the Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services if the minor refuses to participate in an evidence-based alternative intervention described in Subsection (3)(a).
- (4) Except as provided in Subsection (6), if a minor is alleged to have committed an offense on school property that is a class C misdemeanor, an infraction, or a status offense, a school administrator, the school administrator's designee, or a school resource officer may refer a minor to a law enforcement officer or agency or a court only if:
 - (a) the minor allegedly committed an offense on school property on a previous occasion; and
 - (b) the minor was referred to an evidence-based alternative intervention, or to prevention or early intervention youth services, as described in Subsection (3) for the previous offense.
- (5) If a minor is alleged to be a habitual truant, a school administrator, the school administrator's designee, or a school resource officer may only refer the minor to a law enforcement officer or agency or a court if:
 - (a) the minor was previously alleged of being a habitual truant at least twice during the same school year; and
 - (b) the minor was referred to an evidence-based alternative intervention, or for prevention and early intervention youth services, as described in Subsection (3) for at least two of the previous habitual trancies.
- (6) If a minor is alleged to have committed a traffic offense that is an infraction, a school administrator, the school administrator's designee, or a school resource officer may refer the minor to a law enforcement officer or agency, a prosecuting attorney, or a court for the traffic offense.
- (7) Notwithstanding Subsections (4) and (5), a school resource officer may:

- (a) investigate possible criminal offenses and conduct, including conducting probable cause searches;
 - (b) consult with school administration about the conduct of a minor enrolled in a school;
 - (c) transport a minor enrolled in a school to a location if the location is permitted by law;
 - (d) take temporary custody of a minor in accordance with Section 80-6-201; or
 - (e) protect the safety of students and the school community, including the use of reasonable and necessary physical force when appropriate based on the totality of the circumstances.
- (8)
- (a) If a minor is referred to a court or a law enforcement officer or agency under Subsection (4) or (5), the school or the school district shall appoint a school representative to continue to engage with the minor and the minor's family through the court process.
 - (b) A school representative appointed under Subsection (8)(a) may not be a school resource officer.
 - (c) A school district or school shall include the following in the school district's or school's referral to the court or the law enforcement officer or agency:
 - (i) attendance records for the minor;
 - (ii) a report of evidence-based alternative interventions used by the school before the referral, including outcomes;
 - (iii) the name and contact information of the school representative assigned to actively participate in the court process with the minor and the minor's family;
 - (iv) if the minor was referred to prevention or early intervention youth services under Subsection (3)(b), a report from the Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services that demonstrates the minor's failure to complete or participate in prevention and early intervention youth services under Subsection (3)(b); and
 - (v) any other information that the school district or school considers relevant.
 - (d) A minor referred to a court under Subsection (4) or (5) may not be ordered to or placed in secure detention, including for a contempt charge or violation of a valid court order under Section 78A-6-353:
 - (i) when the underlying offense is a status offense or infraction; or
 - (ii) for being a habitual truant.
 - (e) If a minor is referred to a court under Subsection (4) or (5), the court may use, when available, the resources of the Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services or the Office of Substance Use and Mental Health to address the minor.
- (9) If a minor is alleged to have committed an offense on school property that is a class B misdemeanor or a class A misdemeanor, the school administrator, the school administrator's designee, or a school resource officer may refer the minor directly to a court or to the evidence-based alternative interventions in Subsection (3)(a).
- (10) A school administrator, a school administrator's designee, and a school resource officer retain the discretion described under this section in relation to Title 63G, Chapter 31, Distinctions on the Basis of Sex.

Amended by Chapter 240, 2024 General Session

Amended by Chapter 301, 2024 General Session