A BILL

TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

Relating to public K-12 school safety and security; to create the School Security Program to require periodic inspections of school security of public K-12 schools and facilities; to require the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) and the State Fire Marshal, to adopt rules to administer and implement the program and rate local boards of education based on compliance with school security criteria; to create the School Security and Fire Safety Fund; to provide for grants for qualifying local boards of education; to establish the School Mapping Data Program and require ALEA to adopt rules to administer and implement that program; to provide criteria for school maps; to provide for the distribution of school mapping data to certain law enforcement and public safety agencies; to require each local board of education to designate an employee as a district safety coordinator; and to provide for the duties of the district safety coordinator.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:
Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the School Security Act.

Section 2. For the purposes of this act, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) ALEA. The Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency.

(2) BOARD. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) and the State Fire Marshal.

(3) DEPARTMENT. The State Department of Education.

(4) SCHOOL. Any public K-12 school.

(5) SCHOOL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN. The plan adopted by each local board of education pursuant to Section 16-1-44, Code of Alabama 1975.

(6) SCHOOL FACILITY. Any building operated in connection with a school, including, but not limited to, those housing classrooms, administration, or athletic facilities.

Section 3. (a)(1) There is established the School Security Program. The board shall adopt rules to implement and administer the program pursuant to this act.

(2) The board shall require that at least once every five years, the school facilities under the jurisdiction of each local board of education shall be inspected by at least one school security inspector to determine the compliance of the school facility and the local board of education with the school security criteria established pursuant to subsection (b).

(b)(1) The board shall establish criteria for school security inspections. The criteria shall be established in
consultation with the department's regional school safety coordinators and any other entities or individuals as determined by the board. The criteria shall include a rubric that school security inspectors must use to evaluate each school facility during an inspection. The rubric shall include, but not be limited to, standards for each of the following:

a. Security cameras.
b. Alarm systems.
c. Locks on exterior and interior doors.
d. Emergency escapes.
e. Fire extinguishers.
f. Intercoms and communications equipment.
g. Panic buttons.
h. Any other physical measures used to strengthen the security of school facilities, school buses, and school grounds, including, but not limited to, criteria related to intrusion detection, fencing, and windows.

(2) The board shall periodically review and update the criteria and rubric to ensure that both accurately reflect current best practices relating to school security.

(c) Inspections under this chapter shall be completed by one or more school security inspectors. The board shall adopt rules relating to the selection of school security inspectors. School security inspectors shall be neutral and nonbiased individuals with some background experience relating to school security or school facilities, as determined by the board. Each school security inspector shall be certified
board. Each school security inspector shall be certified through a state, federal, or other industry professional course relating to physical security. Upon request, the school security inspector must provide proof of his or her certification to the department, ALEA, and the State Fire Marshal. A regional school safety coordinator may not be a school security inspector but may attend school security inspections for the purposes of reviewing the accuracy and currentness of school security criteria and rubric.

(d)(1) Following an inspection, the school security inspector who conducted the inspection shall provide each school facility with a school security rubric rating. The school security inspector shall also provide each local board of education that he or she inspects with the school security rubric rating for each school facility and recommendations to improve school security.

(2) A school security rubric rating may be assigned the color green, yellow, or red. A "green" rating shall indicate the highest level of compliance with the school security criteria, a "red" rating shall indicate serious needs, and a "yellow" rating shall indicate minor needs.

(e)(1) The School Security and Fire Safety Fund is created within the State Treasury.

(2)a. The board may award grants to local boards of education to assist those local boards in complying with the school security criteria established pursuant to subdivision (b).

b. The board may award grants to local boards of education to assist those local boards in complying with fire
safety recommendations made by the state Fire Marshal or his or her assistants, as defined by Section 36-19-3, Code of Alabama 1975.

(3) A local board of education that receives a grant from the fund shall ensure that the expenditure of any grant funds will be used to improve school facilities in compliance with the state building code and rules adopted by the board, including rules related to school facilities.

(4) The board shall develop an application form and adopt procedures for the administration of the fund, including for the development of application criteria. The board shall prioritize schools with the most need as demonstrated through the school security inspection rubric rating and local boards of education that have completed a facilities assessment through the department's regional school safety training program.

(5) Any monies appropriated shall be budgeted and allotted pursuant to the Budget Management Act in accordance with Article 4, commencing with Section 41-4-80 of Chapter 4 of Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975, and only in the amounts provided by the Legislature in the general appropriations act or other appropriations act.

Section 4. (a) A School Mapping Data Program is established within ALEA to provide accurate maps of each school in the state for use in the case of an emergency. ALEA shall adopt rules to implement and administer the program pursuant to this act.

(b)(1) ALEA shall collaborate with local boards of
education to produce accurate mapping data for each school in this state, subject to the appropriation of funds for this purpose. School mapping data shall include accurate floor plans of each school overlaid on current, verified aerial imagery of the campus and shall meet all of the following requirements:

a. Be oriented true north.

b. Be verified by the entity producing the data for accuracy by a walk-through of school buildings and grounds.

c. Contain site-specific labeling that matches the structure of school buildings, including room labels, hallway names, and external door or stairwell numbers and locations of hazards, critical utility locations, key boxes, automated external defibrillators, and trauma kits.

d. Contain site-specific labeling that matches the school grounds, including parking areas, athletic fields, surrounding roads, and neighboring properties.

e. Be overlaid with gridded x and y coordinates.

(2) Updates to school mapping data shall be completed as deemed necessary by ALEA, in consultation with the State Board of Education and the applicable local board of education. Any updates to school mapping data shall be accessible within software platforms used by the local, county, state, and federal public safety agencies that provide emergency services to the specific school.

(3) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the distribution of school mapping data to anyone other than local, county, state, and federal public safety or
education agencies.

(c) School mapping data shall be provided to each local board of education, local law enforcement agency, and public safety agency for use in response to emergencies. For the purposes of this section, emergencies include, but are not limited to, any event in which one or more law enforcement officers, firefighters, rescue squads, emergency medical services providers, public safety telecommunications, or other emergency management provider may respond.

(d)(1) School mapping data shall be compatible with software platforms used by local, county, state, and federal public safety agencies that provide emergency services to the school for which the data is provided. School mapping data shall be compatible with security software platforms in use by the public K-12 school for which the data is provided.

(2) School mapping data shall be available in a printable format and, if requested by a public safety agency, local law enforcement agency, or local board of education, be in a digital format that may be integrated into interactive mobile platforms in use.

(e) No entity, including, but not limited to, a law enforcement agency, local board of education, or public safety agency, may be required to purchase additional software or pay a fee to view or access school mapping data through the School Mapping Data Program.

Section 5. (a) Each local board of education shall designate an employee in the district's central office as the district safety coordinator. Each district safety coordinator
must have direct access to the local superintendent of education and must have prior experience in crisis response.

(b) Within one year of designating an employee as the district safety coordinator, each local superintendent of education shall ensure that the district safety coordinator completes training related to:

(1) Emergency operation plan implementation;
(2) Lockdown best practices;
(3) Relocation, evacuation, and reunification;
(4) Weather and sheltering;
(5) Behavioral threat assessment; and
(6) Facility security.

(c) Each district safety coordinator shall:

(1) Annually attend at least four safety training sessions, with no more than one credit granted for attending a vendor-based training session. Acceptable training includes programming by the department, the Alabama Homeland Security Office, the Alabama Emergency Management Agency, the National Incident Management System, the Partnership Alliance for Safe Schools, the Alabama School Resource Officer Association, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National School Resource Officer Association, or other governmental agency or nonprofit organization focusing on relevant school safety best practices.
(2) Organize, administer, and attend at least one school-based lockdown drill and one other safety drill per semester and review the implementation of those drills with the building-level administrator.
(3) Annually organize and oversee a meeting with school administrators and local public safety officials at each school in the local school district in order to familiarize the local officials with each school, its respective school emergency operating plan, and its school mapping data. The district safety coordinator shall ensure that each of the following local public safety officials attend the meeting:

a. At least one local law enforcement officer.

b. At least one local firefighter.

c. At least one representative of the local emergency management agency office.

d. The school mental health coordinator.

e. Any other local public safety officials, as determined by the district safety coordinator.

(4) Collaborate with the local board of education to adopt policies relating to the sharing of camera data and remote access control with appropriate local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.

(d)(1) Each district safety coordinator shall annually review the school emergency operation plan of each school local in his or her local school district.

(2) No later than September 1 of each year, each district safety coordinator shall notify his or her superintendent of education of any building-level administrator or school that fails to have a current, up-to-date school emergency operation plan.

(3) Upon receiving a notice under subdivision (2), a local superintendent of education shall ensure that the school
emergency operation plan is updated within 30 days of his or her receipt of notice.

(e) The board shall adopt rules to implement and administer this section, including rules relating to the qualification of district safety coordinators and training requirements for district safety coordinators.

Section 6. (a) School security rubric ratings and school mapping data, including any information or records used to determine a rating or develop mapping data, are confidential and shall not be considered public records under Article 3 of Chapter 12 of Title 36, Code of Alabama 1975.

(b) This act may not be considered as creating a private right of action against a local board of education or its officials or employees.

Section 7. This act shall become effective on October 1, 2024.