



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 621

PRINTERS NO. 1009

PRIME SPONSOR: Regan

AS AMENDED BY: A02543

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20
General Fund	\$0	See Fiscal Impact

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 621 amends the Public School Code concerning school security. It would take effect in 60 days.

ANALYSIS:

Senate Bill 621 makes numerous changes to Article XIII-C of the Public School Code, including changing the title of the article from "School Police Officers and School Resource Officers" to "School Security." Most changes involve school security personnel, such as school police officers, school resource officers and school security guards.

Changes concerning school police officers include:

- Amending the definition of school police officer to include an independent contractor or individual provided through a third-party vendor.
- Requiring a judge to grant the school police officer authority to carry firearms if the school police officer satisfies training requirements.
- Clarifying that a school police officer must successfully complete the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training or have graduated from the State Police Academy and have been employed as a State Trooper and separated in good standing; adds a requirement for school police officers to successfully complete the Basic School Resource Officer Course of Instruction or an equivalent program approved by the Pa. Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD).
- Adding a school bus going to or from school activities to the list of areas a school police officer can enforce good order.
- Clarifying that school entities and nonpublic schools are included in authority to enter into cooperative police service agreements.
- Specifying that a school entity or nonpublic school may contract with an independent contractor or third-party vendor to provide a school police officer.
- Removes the ability of school police officers to exercise the same authority as municipal police officers.

Changes concerning school resource officers (SROs) include:

- Adding nonpublic schools as schools that may have SROs.

- Adding active certified sheriffs and deputy sheriffs as individuals qualified to serve as SROs.
- Adding a requirement to successfully complete the Basic School Resource Officer Course of Instruction offered by the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) or an equivalent approved by PCCD prior to starting duties of an SRO. Those currently employed as SROs will have six months from the effective date of this requirement to complete the training.

Changes concerning school security guards include:

- Adding nonpublic schools as schools able to have school security guards.
- Adding independent contractors as individuals able to serve as school security guards.
- Clarifying that a school security guard is an individual assigned for routine safety and security duties and is not a school police officer with authority to issue citations or detain individuals.
- Allowing a school entity or nonpublic school to contract with an independent contractor or third-party vendor to provide school security guard services.
- Requiring that individuals serving as school security guards complete the Basic School Resource Officer Course of Instruction offered by NASRO or an equivalent approved by PCCD. Those currently serving as security guards have six months to complete the training from the effective date of this requirement.
- Clarifies that a school entity or nonpublic school may employ or contract with an independent contractor or a third-party vendor for an armed security guard if the individual meets a variety of law enforcement and weapons training requirements.

Senate Bill 621 places several additional requirements on PCCD. The Commission, in conjunction with the Department of Education and the State Police, must periodically reassess the training requirements for all school security personnel, including the Basic School Resource Officer Course of Instruction offered by NASRO. In addition, PCCD must establish criteria for certifying third party vendors to provide school security services, including posting a listing of all approved third-party vendors, and submit an annual report to the General Assembly on school security.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Enactment of this legislation will have no adverse impact on Commonwealth funds. The PCCD estimates that the additional duties imposed on it as a result of this legislation can be handled within its current and projected budgets. School entities and nonpublic schools with school security personnel may face additional costs for training in the NASRO Basic School Resource Officer Course of Instruction. According to the NASRO website, the course costs \$495 per person for non-members. Total costs for a school will vary depending on the individual circumstances of each school.

PREPARED BY: Jeff Miller
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 26, 2019

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.