

LEARNS Work Groups Kick Off: School Safety

Meeting Norms

Prior to Meeting

- Jerry will send out agenda and materials at least 3 business days in advance of each meeting.
- Members review all materials and come prepared to share feedback.

During Meeting

- Mute yourself when not speaking.
- Keep feedback centered on topic at hand.
- Stay engaged (e.g., actively participate and use the chat function).
- Be mindful of how much “air time” each member receives.
- All ideas are valued.

Materials (notes, slides) will be posted after the meeting for members who can not attend.



FOIA Made Simple

Legislative Intent:

- To ensure that public business is performed in an open and public manner so that the electors shall be advised of the performance of public officials and of the decisions that are reached in public activity and in making public policy

FOIA Made Simple

Who is subject to FOIA?

- All government entities
- Private entities that receive public funds and are intertwined with government activities

FOIA Made Simple: Public Records

Definitions:

- **Writings, sounds, electronic info, or videos** that (a) are kept and (b) constitute a **record of performance or lack of performance** of official functions

LEARNS Act

LEARNS stands for Literacy, Empowerment, Accountability, Readiness, Networking, and Safety. On Jan. 11, 2023, Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders signed the LEARNS Executive Order, which calls for the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) to conduct an analysis of key aspects of the state's education system and produce corresponding reports.

On March 8, 2023, the LEARNS Act was signed into law, signaling the start of the largest overhaul of education in the state's history.

After completing these analyses called for in the LEARNS Executive Order, **ADE is eager to engage stakeholders as implementation of the LEARNS commitments begins.**



Work Group Purpose

The Arkansas Department of Education is convening work groups around key areas of LEARNS for external stakeholders to **provide ideas, expertise, and feedback to ADE as they develop rules and policies.**

- School Safety
- Early Learning
- Parental Empowerment
- Teaching and Learning
- Educator Workforce
- Career Readiness



Ensure Arkansas schools provide safe learning environments free from violence.

In the LEARNS Executive Order Report for School Safety ADE committed to:

- Conduct a comprehensive review:** Ensure all schools and districts have: Annual active shooter drills and safety assessments in collaboration with local law enforcement; A school safety plan and training for all district employees and students; Floor plans and pertinent emergency contact information provided to appropriate first responders; Safeguards to ensure floor plans and school safety plans remain concealed from the public record and unavailable for public inspection
- Identify a School Safety Coordinator:** Ensure each school district has identified an individual in each district responsible for overseeing school safety.

Ensure Arkansas schools provide safe learning environments free from violence.

In the LEARNS Executive Order Report for School Safety ADE committed to:



Increase the presence of law enforcement and CSSO's on campuses: Implement strategies to increase the presence of trained law enforcement officers and Commissioned School Security Officers on campuses.



Review the recommendations of the 2022 Arkansas School Safety Commission: Launch a process to review the recommendations put forward by the 2022 Arkansas School Safety Commission final report.



LEARNS Act Requirements

Drills and Assessments

- A comprehensive school safety assessment every three years. The initial assessment completed by August 1, 2024
- A lock down drill for a possible threat on campus annually

Law Enforcement and Security

- Provide current floor plans and emergency contact information to the appropriate first responders
- Each public and open-enrollment charter school shall work with local law enforcement to improve school safety and security
- Each public and open-enrollment charter school shall form District Safety and Security Teams to review emergency operations plans and security policies and procedures; And conduct a comprehensive school safety assessment every three years

Training and Education

- Continued appropriation and funding for the Arkansas Center for School Safety to assist the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education in building the capacity of educators, leaders, and law enforcement to meet the safety needs of children in public schools
- The Arkansas Center for School Safety shall be the state school safety clearinghouse
- The Department of Education will make crisis response training available
- Each public and open-enrollment charter school shall support training for youth mental health; Require all school staff to complete mental health awareness training; Establish a behavioral threat assessment team
- Public and open-enrollment charter schools shall provide training to school nurses and staff in efforts that enhance the emergency medical response in schools

LEARNS Act Requirements

Collaboration

- The Department of Education shall work with other organizations to promote school safety
- Determine how the Arkansas State Fusion Center may be more effectively utilized

Communications

- Public and open-enrollment schools establish and maintain a comprehensive, common communications plan
- Public and open-enrollment schools establish systems that enable direct communication with local law enforcement

Physical Security

- A "school safety expert" will review and advise on architectural plans for a public school

School Safety Work Group Charge

This work group is focused on school and district safety and security components. LEARNS calls for new rules or policy on:

- How the completion of the comprehensive school safety assessment and confirmation of the collaboration with local law enforcement and emergency management will be verified
- Describe how the completion of the lock down drills and confirmation of collaboration with local law enforcement, medical professionals, fire department and emergency management will be verified
- Describe how compliance in providing floor plans to first responders and updating the information will be verified
- Establish the requirements for a "school safety expert"
- Collaborate with the Arkansas Center for School Safety, DESE's Safe Schools Committee and other organizations (Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools and Technical Assistance Center)
- Conduct an analysis to determine how the Arkansas State Fusion Center may be more effectively utilized



School Safety Work Group Charge

Engagement from this group and other stakeholders is essential so that the rules and policies related to school and district safety is present and monitored ensuring the safety and security of ALL is at the forefront of each organization's culture.

Workgroup Scope & Sequence

	Date	Key Topics
1	Mid July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Objectives and structures for the Work Group● Background/Current state
2	End of July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● How the completion of the comprehensive school safety assessment and confirmation the collaboration with local law enforcement and emergency management will be verified● Describe how the completion of the lock down drills and confirmation of collaboration with local law enforcement, medical professionals, fire department and emergency management will be verified
3	Mid August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Describe how compliance in providing floor plans to first responders and updating the information will be verified● Establish the requirements for a "school safety expert"
4	End of August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Collaborate with the Arkansas Center for school Safety, DESE's Safe Schools Committee and other organizations (Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools and Technical Assistance Center● Conduct an analysis to determine how the Arkansas State Fusion Center may be more effectively utilized

Next Steps

- Jerry will send any draft materials in advance of next meeting
- Work group members review background materials
 - [2022 Arkansas School Safety Commission Final Report 10-6 2022\[92\] COMM.pdf](#) PAGES 33-90
 - [Executive Order To Prioritize L.E.A.R.N.S. \(Literacy, Empowerment, Accountability, Readiness, Networking, and School Safety\) \(arkansas.gov\)](#)
 - [LEARNS Act](#) PAGES 7-13

