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SENATE BILL No. 78

Proposed Changes to January 14, 2026 printing by AM007806

DIGEST OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Wireless communication device. Establishes an exception to the wireless communication device policy. Allows grants from the Indiana secured school fund to be used for certain storage pouches.

A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

1 SECTION 1. IC 10-21-1-2, AS AMENDED BY THE
2 TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS BILL OF THE 2026 GENERAL
3 ASSEMBLY, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
4 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 2. (a) The Indiana secured school fund is
5 established to provide:
6 (1) matching grants to school corporations, charter schools, and
7 accredited nonpublic schools, where the matching grants may be
8 used to:
9 (A) employ a school resource officer, employ a law
10 enforcement officer, or enter into a contract or a
11 memorandum of understanding with a:
12 (i) local law enforcement agency;
13 (ii) private entity; or
14 (iii) nonprofit corporation;
15 to employ a school resource officer or a law enforcement
16 officer;
17 (B) conduct:
18 (i) a site vulnerability assessment of the buildings
19 within a school corporation or the buildings that are
20 operated by a charter school or accredited nonpublic

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- 1 school; or
 2 (ii) critical incident digital mapping of the buildings
 3 within a school corporation or the buildings that are
 4 operated by a charter school or accredited nonpublic
 5 school;
 6 (C) purchase equipment, hardware, materials, and
 7 technology to:
 8 (i) restrict access to school property and classrooms;
 9 (ii) assist with visitor management on school property;
 10 (iii) expedite notification of first responders;
 11 (iv) expedite access to school property for first
 12 responders;
 13 (v) provide school staff with information about the
 14 open or closed status of interior and exterior doors;
 15 (vi) detect fire, chemical, visual, or audible threats;
 16 (vii) enhance emergency communications inside the
 17 building; or
 18 (viii) assist with emergency medical response on
 19 school property;
 20 (D) implement a student and parent support services plan as
 21 described in IC 20-34-9;
 22 (E) purchase or provide training for a canine trained to
 23 detect drugs and illegal substances, explosives, or firearms,
 24 or to otherwise provide protection for students and school
 25 employees and the canine shall:
 26 (i) be primarily assigned to a school corporation,
 27 charter school, or accredited nonpublic school;
 28 (ii) be primarily assigned to a school resource officer
 29 or law enforcement officer described in clause (A) who
 30 has received appropriate training for handling a canine
 31 trained to detect drugs and illegal substances,
 32 explosives, or firearms, or to otherwise provide
 33 protection for students and school employees,
 34 including training regarding handling a canine in a
 35 school setting; and
 36 (iii) receive continuous training as appropriate;
 37 (F) provide funding for school employees to receive
 38 training, including expenses for per diem, travel, and
 39 lodging, related to:
 40 (i) site vulnerability assessments;
 41 (ii) mental health or behavioral health threat
 42 assessments;

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- 1 (iii) multi-disciplinary threat assessment teams; or
 2 (iv) emergency preparedness or response activities;
 3 (G) provide funding for school resource officers or law
 4 enforcement officers described in clause (A) to receive
 5 training, including expenses for per diem, travel, and
 6 lodging, related to handling a canine trained to detect drugs
 7 and illegal substances, explosives, or firearms, or to
 8 otherwise provide protection for students and school
 9 employees;
 10 (H) purchase student safety management technology;
 11 (I) design and construct additions or renovations on school
 12 property if the primary purpose of the construction project
 13 is to enhance the physical security of the school building;
 14 (J) implement a bullying prevention program; or
 15 (K) develop, implement, and carry out a Stop the Bleed
 16 program required by IC 20-34-3-24, including for the
 17 purchase of bleeding control kits; and
 18 **(K) purchase a storage pouch for purposes described in**
 19 **IC 20-26-5-40.7(c)(3)(B); and**
 20 (2) one (1) time grants to enable school corporations, charter
 21 schools, and accredited nonpublic schools with the sheriff for the
 22 county in which the school corporation, charter school, or
 23 accredited nonpublic school is located, to provide the initial set
 24 up costs for an active event warning system.
 25 (b) A school corporation or charter school may use money
 26 received under a matching grant for a purpose listed in subsection (a)
 27 to provide a response to a threat in a manner that the school corporation
 28 or charter school sees fit, including firearms training or other
 29 self-defense training.
 30 (c) The fund shall be administered by the department of homeland
 31 security.
 32 (d) The fund consists of:
 33 (1) appropriations from the general assembly;
 34 (2) federal grants;
 35 (3) amounts deposited from any other public or private source;
 36 and
 37 (4) amounts deposited under IC 33-37-9-4.
 38 (e) The expenses of administering the fund shall be paid from
 39 money in the fund.
 40 (f) The treasurer of state shall invest the money in the fund not
 41 currently needed to meet the obligations of the fund in the same
 42 manner as other public money may be invested. Interest that accrues

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1 from these investments shall be deposited in the fund.

2 (g) Money in the fund at the end of a state fiscal year does not
3 revert to the state general fund.

4 SECTION 2. IC 10-21-1-4, AS AMENDED BY P.L.150-2023,
5 SECTION 4, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
6 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 4. (a) The board may award a matching grant to
7 enable a school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic
8 school (or a coalition of schools applying jointly) to:

9 (1) employ a school resource officer, employ a law enforcement
10 officer, or enter into a contract or memorandum of understanding
11 with a:

12 (A) local law enforcement agency;

13 (B) private entity; or

14 (C) nonprofit corporation;

15 to employ a school resource officer or a law enforcement officer;

16 (2) conduct a site vulnerability assessment of the buildings
17 within a school corporation or the buildings that are operated by
18 a charter school or accredited nonpublic school;

19 (3) conduct critical incident digital mapping of the buildings
20 within a school corporation or the buildings that are operated by
21 a charter school or accredited nonpublic school;

22 (4) purchase equipment, hardware, materials, and technology to:

23 (A) restrict access to school property and classrooms;

24 (B) assist with visitor management on school property;

25 (C) expedite notification of first responders;

26 (D) expedite access to school property for first responders;

27 (E) provide staff with information about open or closed
28 status of interior and exterior doors;

29 (F) detect fire, chemical, visual, or audible threats;

30 (G) enhance emergency communications inside the school
31 building; or

32 (H) assist with emergency medical response on school
33 property;

34 (5) implement a student and parent support services plan in the
35 manner set forth in IC 20-34-9;

36 (6) purchase or provide training for a canine trained to detect
37 drugs and illegal substances, explosives, or firearms, or to
38 otherwise provide protection for students and school employees
39 and the canine shall:

40 (A) be primarily assigned to a school corporation, charter
41 school, or accredited nonpublic school;

42 (B) be primarily assigned to a school resource officer or law

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enforcement officer described in subdivision (1)(A) who has received appropriate training for handling a canine trained to detect drugs and illegal substances, explosives, or firearms, or to otherwise provide protection for students and school employees, including training regarding handling a canine in a school setting; and

(C) receive continuous training as appropriate;

(7) provide funding for:

(A) school employees to receive training, including expenses for per diem, travel, and lodging, related to:

(i) site vulnerability assessments;

(ii) mental health or behavioral health threat assessments;

(iii) multi-disciplinary threat assessment teams; or

(iv) emergency preparedness or response activities; or

(B) school resource officers or law enforcement officers described in subdivision (1)(A) to receive training, including expenses for per diem, travel, and lodging, related to handling a canine trained to detect drugs and illegal substances, explosives, or firearms, or to otherwise provide protection for students and school employees;

(8) design and construct additions or renovations on school property if the primary purpose of the construction project is to enhance the physical security of the school building;

(9) provide one (1) time grants to enable school corporations, charter schools, and accredited nonpublic schools with the sheriff for the county in which the school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school is located to provide the initial set up costs for an active event warning system;

(10) implement a bullying prevention program; or

(11) purchase student safety management technology; or

(12) purchase a storage pouch for purposes described in IC 20-26-5-40.7(c)(3)(B);

in accordance with section 2(a) of this chapter.

(b) A matching grant awarded to a school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school (or a coalition of schools applying jointly) may not exceed the lesser of the following during a two (2) year period beginning on or after May 1, 2013:

(1) The total cost of the program established by the school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school (or the coalition of schools applying jointly).

(2) Except as provided in subsection (d), the following amounts:

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(A) Thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) per year, in the case of a school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school that:

(i) has an ADM of at least one (1) and less than one thousand one (1,001) students; and

(ii) is not applying jointly with any other school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school.

(B) Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) per year, in the case of a school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school that:

(i) has an ADM of more than one thousand (1,000) and less than five thousand one (5,001) students; and

(ii) is not applying jointly with any other school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school.

(C) Seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) per year, in the case of a school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school that:

(i) has an ADM of more than five thousand (5,000) and less than fifteen thousand one (15,001) students; and

(ii) is not applying jointly with any other school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school.

(D) One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) per year, in the case of a school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school that:

(i) has an ADM of more than fifteen thousand (15,000); and

(ii) is not applying jointly with any other school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school.

(E) One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) per year, in the case of a coalition of schools applying jointly.

(c) Except as provided in subsection (d), the match requirement for a grant under this chapter is based on the ADM for the school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school (or coalition of schools applying jointly) that is the subject of the grant as follows:

(1) For a school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school with an ADM of less than five hundred one (501) students, the grant match must be twenty-five percent (25%) of the grant amount described in subsection (b).

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1 (2) For a school corporation, charter school, or accredited
 2 nonpublic school with an ADM of more than five hundred (500)
 3 and less than one thousand one (1,001) students, the grant match
 4 must be fifty percent (50%) of the grant amount described in
 5 subsection (b).

6 (3) For a school corporation, charter school, or accredited
 7 nonpublic school with an ADM of more than one thousand
 8 (1,000) students or a coalition of schools applying jointly, the
 9 grant match must be one hundred percent (100%) of the grant
 10 amount described in subsection (b).

11 (d) A school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic
 12 school may be eligible to receive a grant of up to:

13 (1) one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) if:
 14 (A) the school corporation, charter school, or accredited
 15 nonpublic school receives a grant match of one hundred
 16 percent (100%) of the requested grant amount; and
 17 (B) the board approves the grant request; or

18 (2) for a school corporation, charter school, or accredited
 19 nonpublic school described in subsection (c)(1) or (c)(2), a grant
 20 of up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) if:

21 (A) the school corporation, charter school, or accredited
 22 nonpublic school receives a grant match of fifty percent
 23 (50%) of the requested grant amount; and
 24 (B) the board approves the grant request.

25 (e) A school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic
 26 school may receive only one (1) matching grant under this section each
 27 year.

28 (f) The board may not award a grant to a school corporation,
 29 charter school, or accredited nonpublic school under this section unless
 30 the school corporation, charter school, or accredited nonpublic school
 31 is in a county that has a county school safety commission, as described
 32 in section 12 of this chapter.

33 **SECTION 3.] IC 20-26-5-40.7, AS ADDED BY P.L.24-2024,**
 34 **SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE**
 35 **JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 40.7. (a) As used in this section, "instructional**
 36 **time" has the meaning set forth in IC 20-30-2-1. "school day" means**
 37 **the entirety of the time a student is present on school property for**
 38 **a student instructional day (as defined in IC 20-30-2-2).**

39 (b) As used in this section, "wireless communication device"
 40 means any portable wireless device that has the capability to provide
 41 voice, messaging, or other data communication between two (2) or
 42 more parties, including a:

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- 1 (1) cellular telephone;
- 2 (2) tablet computer;
- 3 (3) laptop computer; ~~or~~
- 4 (4) gaming device; ~~or~~
- 5 **(5) smartwatch that is connected to a cellular telephone, a**
- 6 **cell tower, or the Internet.**

7 **[The term does not include a device described in subsection (h).**

8 **]** (c) **Except as provided in subsection (d)**, each school corporation
 9 and charter school shall adopt and implement a wireless
 10 communication device policy that:

11 (1) ~~except as provided in subdivisions (2) and (3);~~ **subdivision**
 12 **(2), and subsection (d)**; prohibits a student from using a wireless
 13 communication device during ~~instructional time;~~ **the school**
 14 **day;**

15 ~~(2) authorizes a teacher to allow a student to use a wireless~~
 16 ~~communication device for educational purposes during~~
 17 ~~instructional time; and~~

18 ~~(3) permits a student to use a wireless communication device in~~
 19 ~~the event of an emergency or to manage the student's health care.~~

20 **(2) requires teacher directed use of a wireless communication**
 21 **device for educational purposes during the school day to**
 22 **occur only on school supplied wireless communication**
 23 **devices; and**

24 **(3) mandates one (1) of the following policies:**

25 **(A) A no device policy under which students are not**
 26 **permitted to bring wireless communication devices to**
 27 **school.**

28 **(B) A secure storage policy under which wireless**
 29 **communication devices may be brought to school, but**
 30 **must be stored away and inaccessible to a student**
 31 **throughout the school day.**

32 (d) The policy adopted and implemented under subsection (c) may
 33 not prohibit a student from using a wireless communication device
 34 during ~~instructional time~~ **the school day** if the use of the wireless
 35 communication device is: ~~included in the student's:~~

36 (1) **included in the student's** individualized education
 37 program; ~~or~~

38 (2) **included in the student's** plan developed under Section 504
 39 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794;

40 (3) **necessary for the management of a documented medical**
 41 **condition pursuant to an order provided by a licensed health**
 42 **care provider;**

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1 (4) authorized by the superintendent, or the superintendent's
2 designee, during an emergency; or

3 (5) necessary for language translation to ensure access for
4 multi-lingual learners, prioritizing school-managed wireless
5 communication devices or applications where available.

6 (e) Each school corporation and charter school shall publish on its
7 website the wireless communication device policy established under
8 subsection (c).

9 (f) The department shall publish model policy language and
10 implementation guidance consistent with this section.

11 (g) A school corporation, a school maintained by a school
12 corporation, a charter school, and personnel of a school
13 corporation, a school maintained by a school corporation, or a
14 charter school, are immune from civil liability for any actions
15 taken in good faith to comply with this section. The civil immunity
16 under this subsection does not apply to an act or omission that
17 constitutes gross negligence or willful, wanton, or intentional
18 misconduct.

19 (h) Notwithstanding subsections (a) through (f), a student may
20 possess and use an unobtrusive audio recording device solely for
21 the student's individual educational notetaking or personal
22 learning assistance if the device:

23 (1) is designed principally to capture spoken word audio for
24 the purpose described in this subsection, including through
25 recording, transcription, summarization, or other personal
26 assistant functionality;

27 (2) does not capture, store, or transmit images or video;

28 (3) is visible to the classroom teacher or other appropriate
29 school personnel at all times while in use;

30 (4) is provided to the school for inspection upon request; and

31 (5) is used in a manner consistent with applicable state and
32 federal law governing consent to audio recording.

33 (i) Except as provided in subsection (d), nothing in the
34 exemption under subsection (h) shall be interpreted to limit a
35 school's authority to adopt and enforce policies to control or
36 restrict the possession or use of audio recording devices described
37 in subsection (h), including policies that:

38 (1) restrict where and when such devices may be used while
39 at school;

40 (2) prohibit the use of the devices during an assessment or
41 other activity designated by the school;

42 (3) prohibit the real time transmission, broadcasting, or live



1 streaming of audio recorded by the devices;
 2 (4) require advance notification to either a classroom teacher
 3 or building administrator as may be applicable in the
 4 school's policy before use;
 5 (5) require that recorded material be stored, retained, or
 6 deleted in a manner consistent with school policy; and
 7 (6) require consent requirements consistent with applicable
 8 law for the recording of another student or school employee.
 9 (j) A school corporation or charter school that adopts a policy
 10 under this section that permits the possession or use of an audio
 11 recording device under subsection (h) shall include in the policy a
 12 provision that a recording made under subsection (h) may not be
 13 used for a disciplinary, evaluative, or supervisory purpose against
 14 a:
 15 (1) student; or
 16 (2) school employee.
 17] SECTION ~~4~~[4]. IC 34-30-2.1-271.5 IS ADDED TO THE
 18 INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS
 19 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: **Sec. 271.5. IC 20-26-5-40.7**
 20 **(Concerning school corporations, schools maintained by school**
 21 **corporations, charter schools, school personnel, and compliance**
 22 **with a school's wireless communication device policy).]**
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