



**SENATE BILL 821**

By Hensley

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,  
relative to education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 10, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) Each LEA and public charter school shall annually implement an evidence-based substance abuse and violence prevention program in each school that serves students in any of the grades three through twelve (3-12) to reduce tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drug use by students.

(b) The program selected by the LEA or public charter school must:

(1) Include drug-prevention-related education that promotes anti-drug norms and teaches drug-refusal skills and life skills training that fosters the development of personal self-management skills and general social skills;

(2) Be provided to students throughout the school year; and

(3) Supplement, not supplant, any other drug abuse or life skills education provided by the LEA or public charter school, including, but not limited to, the drug abuse resistance education (DARE) required in chapter 1, part 4 of this title, the character education required in § 49-6-1007, any instruction required as part of a coordinated school health program, and the family life instruction required in part 13 of this chapter.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect July 1, 2025, the public welfare requiring it, and applies to the 2025-2026 school year and each school year thereafter.

Amendment No. 1 to SB0821

Watson  
Signature of Sponsor

**AMEND Senate Bill No. 821\***

**House Bill No. 902**

by deleting all language after the enacting clause and substituting:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 10, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) As used in this section, "substance abuse and violence prevention program" means a program or series of programs that:

- (1) Equips students with knowledge, skills, and resilience for healthy living and strong decision-making;
- (2) Fosters long-term resilience against substance use, mental health challenges, and preventable disorders by engaging families and communities as active partners in student development;
- (3) Includes a series of lessons that address the risk and protective factors associated with youth substance use and violence;
- (4) Is age and developmentally appropriate for the age and maturity level of the student receiving the instruction;
- (5) Aligns with the coordinated school health program guidelines developed by the commissioner of education, in consultation with the department of health, pursuant to § 49-1-1002;
- (6) Includes drug prevention-related education that promotes anti-drug norms and teaches drug-refusal skills and life skills training that foster the development of personal self-management skills and general social skills; and
- (7) Is provided to students throughout the school year.

(b) The department of education shall administer a three-year pilot program to provide grants to three (3) LEAs to advance the LEA's substance abuse and violence prevention program to avoid tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drug use by students. The pilot program begins in the 2026-2027 school year and terminates on July 1, 2029.

(c) To receive a grant through the program, an LEA must:

(1) Have an existing substance abuse and violence prevention program for students; and

(2) Submit a grant application to the department on a form created by the department by the application deadline established by the department.

(d) Each LEA that receives a grant pursuant to this section shall:

(1) Instruct students in grades three through twelve (3-12) on avoiding tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs by implementing a substance abuse and violence prevention program;

(2) Prepare a report on the effectiveness of the LEA's substance abuse and violence prevention program, including the instruction provided to students through the program, for the immediately preceding school year; and

(3) Submit the report prepared pursuant to subdivision (d)(2) by June 30, 2027, for the 2026-2027 school year and by June 30 of each subsequent school year that the pilot program is in effect, to the department of education, the department of mental health and substance abuse services, the department of human services, the chairs of the education and health and welfare committees of the senate, the chair of the committee of the house of representatives having jurisdiction over education, the chair of the committee of the house of representatives having jurisdiction over health, and the chair of the committee of the house of representatives having jurisdiction over insurance.

(e) The amount of a grant awarded to an LEA pursuant to this section must not exceed thirteen thousand three hundred dollars (\$13,300).

SECTION 2. This act is not an appropriation of funds, and funds must not be obligated or expended pursuant to this act unless the funds are specifically appropriated by the general appropriations act.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.