

SENATE BILL 227

By Hensley

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
Chapter 6, relative to firearm safety instruction.

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

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-1016, is amended by deleting the section and substituting instead the following:

(a) The department of education and the department of safety, in conjunction with the fish and wildlife commission, shall determine the earliest grade in which it is appropriate for students to begin receiving instruction on firearm safety. In determining the earliest appropriate grade for instruction on firearm safety, the departments shall study all relevant data and risk factors, including, but not limited to, the earliest age at which incidents of injury involving firearms are reported and the earliest age at which children are susceptible to harm from found firearms.

(b) Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, each LEA and public charter school shall annually provide students with age-appropriate and grade-appropriate instruction on firearm safety. The instruction must begin with the earliest appropriate grade, as determined by the departments under subsection (a), and must continue in each subsequent grade through grade twelve (12).

(c) The instruction required under subsection (b) must:

(1) Teach students:

(A) How to avoid injury if the student finds a firearm;

(B) To never touch a found firearm; and

(C) To immediately notify an adult of the location of a found firearm;

(2) Be viewpoint neutral on political topics, such as gun rights, gun violence, and the second amendment to the United States constitution;

(3) Be provided in one (1) fifteen-minute period; and

(4) Not include the use or presence of live ammunition, live fire, or live firearms.

(d)

(1) The department of education and the department of safety, in conjunction with the fish and wildlife commission, shall develop or approve a curriculum or program of instruction on firearm safety that meets the requirements of this section and that LEAs and public charter schools are required to implement for purposes of providing the instruction required under subsection (b). The departments shall not approve a curriculum or program of instruction if the curriculum, program of instruction, or any of the instructional materials used as part of the curriculum or program of instruction bear a brand or organizational affiliation.

(2) The instruction required under subsection (b) may be provided in a classroom setting, through the viewing of a video, or through the review of online resources or materials, as determined by the department of education.

(3) Each LEA and public charter school shall determine how best to incorporate the instruction required under subsection (b) into the school year.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-805, is amended by deleting subdivision (7) and substituting instead the following:

(7) Policies and procedures for annual school safety training for all students, teachers, and other school personnel. The fifteen-minute period of instruction on firearm safety required under § 49-6-1016 must be credited toward the annual school safety training required by the state-level safety team's template for district-wide school safety plans and building-level school safety plans for all students, teachers, and other school personnel who receive or provide the instruction; and

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