



Key Takeaways—Education and School Board Law Webinar Vol. 9 (School Boards and School Safety)

The following are key takeaways from CALN's Education and School Board Law webinar on **September 25, 2025**. The session, which follows recent tragic events of violence in our nation, reviewed the authority of school boards as it relates to school safety measures, and also covered relevant proposed or passed legislation in North and South Carolina.

Please note: These summaries can provide you with helpful information, but they do not and are not intended to constitute legal advice or create an attorney-client relationship. Instead, they are for general informational purposes only. You are encouraged to contact your board attorney, or to hire a personal attorney, to obtain advice with respect to legal matters.

- Tragedy at Annunciation Catholic School on August 27
 - Gunman fired into church where students were holding Mass
 - 2 children were killed and 21 people were injured
- School board authority and duties regarding school safety
 - North Carolina:
 - GS §115C-36: School boards have general control and supervision over all matters pertaining to public schools
 - GS 115C-47: (1) School boards have the duty to provide an opportunity for a sound basic education for all and (61) a safe school environment
 - South Carolina
 - SC Code §59-63-910: (A) All public schools shall conduct various safety drills. (B) The State Board of Education and the SC Law Enforcement Division shall develop guidelines for active shooter situations, which must be included in annual teacher collegial development
 - SC Code §59-63-920: Leaders of each school must document compliance with §59-63-910
 - SC Code §59-66-20: Funds shall be provided to school districts in the general appropriations act for safety coordinators
 - SC Code §59-66-30: (A) Every public school (middle or higher) must be equipped with a handheld metal detector and (B) the State Department of Education must provide training for their use.
 - Key areas of school safety authority
 - **Funding:** broad discretion to allocate and administer federal and private funds

- Prioritize school safety in local budget
 - SROs, cameras, access controls, fencing, secure entry points, safety exercises and programs
 - **Policymaking**: adopt and enforce safety measures and crisis response plans
 - Set policies for threat assessment teams, safety drills, law enforcement coordination, student codes of conduct, discipline, etc.
 - **Oversight and Accountability**: superintendent oversight, direction, and evaluation
 - Hold the superintendent accountable for implementing safety measures, direct them to provide regular updates, evaluate their performance by using school safety as a key benchmark
- North Carolina behavioral threat assessment teams:
 - Center for Safer Schools in the SBI developed guidance that includes prevention and assessment best practices
 - School boards must adopt policies for threat assessment teams according to the Center's guidance.
 - Policies must include (1) a classification system to indicate various levels of threats, (2) a standard response for each threat level, and (3) a distinction between assessment and intervention at the elementary, middle, and high school levels
 - Superintendent must adopt a threat assessment team for each school.
 - Each team must: (1) provide trainings, (2) identify who threats should be reported to, (3) implement policies adopted by the school board, (4) utilize anonymous reporting applications, and (5) refer threats to mental health services when appropriate, notify the target, their parents, and law enforcement
 - The team can request training from the Center and is required to submit data
 - Superintendent must establish a committee that oversees the team
- North Carolina school safety exercises and programs
 - School districts must require school safety exercises and programs annually ○ They must require each school to practice a drill at least once annually, and have a tabletop exercise for multiple threat types
- South Carolina mobile panic alert systems:
 - [H.3258](#) (Not yet law)
 - Mobile panic alert systems required in every school
 - Ensure real-time coordination with local law enforcement and first responder agencies

- Annual training
- List of mobile panic alert vendors will be made available by Jan 1, 2026 •

South Carolina grant funding

- Proviso 1.77 of 2025-2026 Appropriations Act distributes up to \$20 million for eligible upgrades aligned with school safety priorities
 - Door locks, entry points, window covers, bulletproof glass or film, various technology, bulletproof doors
 - Application deadline was Sept. 1. Begin thinking about school safety needs for next grant cycle (pending a renewal)
- Helpful considerations
 - Know your district's safety measures, tour schools
 - Ask superintendent questions to ensure everything is prepared proactively
 - Consider whether board action is needed
 - Hold superintendent accountable
 - Suggest quarterly safety presentations to the board (in closed session)
 - Look at program evaluations

FOR HELP FINDING FEDERAL GRANT OPPORTUNITIES OR APPLYING FOR SCHOOL SAFETY GRANT FUNDING, PLEASE VISIT THE **GREENLIGHTS GRANT INITIATIVE'S AVAILABLE GRANTS PAGE** [HERE](#).

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