



DOAA

Georgia Department
of Audits & Accounts

Greg S. Griffin
State Auditor

January 9, 2026

Honorable Viola Davis
State Representative
404-D Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

SUBJECT: Fiscal Note
House Bill (LC 56 0237)

Dear Representative Davis:

The bill would amend the Quality Basic Education Act (QBE) to provide funding assistance to eligible public schools to reduce school violence and improve school safety and security. Funding would begin with the 2026-27 school year and continue each school year thereafter, subject to appropriations by the General Assembly. Eligible expenditures include mobile surveillance camera trailers, onsite command centers, weapon detection technology, and systems designed to detect illicit substances (e.g., nicotine, marijuana). To receive funding, schools must comply with all policies, procedures, regulations, and other requirements adopted by the State Board of Education.

Based on data provided by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS), the cost of the bill would vary greatly depending on the equipment purchased by school systems (see **Table 1**). Costs for security devices vary significantly, resulting in total estimated costs ranging from approximately \$170.7 million to \$1.4 billion. Estimated costs assume that every school system is eligible for funding.

Table 1: School Safety Costs (in millions)

Cost Categories	Low	Mid	High
Onsite command centers	\$93.2	\$233.0	\$372.8
Mobile surveillance camera	68.6	491.3	914.0
Weapon detection technology	3.4	13.1	22.9
Smoke/vapor detectors	5.4	54.7	104.1
GaDOE personnel	.14	.14	.14
Total projected costs	<u>\$170.7</u>	<u>\$792.2</u>	<u>\$1,413.9</u>
Note: Changes in QBE earnings are borne by the state and local school systems, with the ratio dependent on Local Five Mill Share calculations made each year. Currently, the state share is 80% but could increase in future years based on changes in local property tax digests.			

Additionally, the cap on the Promise Scholarship program is set at 1% of QBE earnings and would increase as a result of this bill.

Additional Information and Assumptions

- Currently, Georgia schools receive School Safety Grants to enhance the safety and security of their learning environments. The General Assembly appropriated \$158.9 million in Fiscal Year 2026 for school security grants for safety infrastructure and POST-certified personnel. These funds are not factored into estimated costs of the bill.
- The estimate assumes that all schools will purchase security devices. While some schools may already own security devices, GEMA/HS noted that schools are not required to detail their security equipment as part of their school safety plans.
- The analysis assumes virtual schools will not purchase security devices due to their lack of physical facilities, thus they are excluded from the analysis.
- Estimates were based on pricing information obtained by GEMA/HS from school security contacts across the state.
 - **Onsite Command Centers** – Reported costs vary widely depending on the model. Small vehicles cost \$400,000 to \$600,000, while premium models range from \$1.3 to \$1.6 million. The estimate assumes one command center per school system would be purchased. The cost would be less if the school system relies on a city or county to provide the command center.
 - **Mobile Surveillance Cameras** – Reported costs range from \$30,000 to \$400,000. The estimate assumes one camera per school. Similar to onsite command centers, use of mobile surveillance cameras already purchased by some cities and counties could reduce the estimated cost.
 - **Weapon Detection Technology** – Walk-through metal detectors vary in price from \$1,500 to \$10,000. According to GEMA/HS, the higher end models are faster and more sensitive. The estimate assumes one device per school, though costs could vary depending on the number of entry points at each school. The estimate does not include additional costs for installation, training, and subscription costs, which may be incurred.
 - **Smoke/Vapor Detectors** – Reported costs range from \$150 to \$3,000 per device, and an additional \$100-\$200 per year for installation and subscription costs. According to GEMA/HS, higher end models can detect various smoke/vapor types, provide real time alerts, and cover wider areas. Multiple devices would be necessary to cover “blind spots” in schools. The estimate assumes one device in every school restroom. The number of restrooms is estimated based on a ratio of 1:50 which is consistent with national standards for educational facilities.
- The estimate does not include any additional costs that may be associated with these devices, such as security personnel, maintenance, fuel, secure parking, and generators.

Respectfully,



Greg S. Griffin
State Auditor



Richard Dunn, Director
Office of Planning and Budget