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SENATE BILL NO. 905

Offered January 8, 2025

Prefiled January 5, 2025

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 3 of Title 22.1 a section numbered 22.1-24.2 and by adding a section numbered 22.1-212.1:3, relating to school boards; Internet safety education program; Internet Safety Advisory Council established.*

Patrons—Stanley and Craig

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 3 of Title 22.1 a section numbered 22.1-24.2 and by adding a section numbered 22.1-212.1:3 as follows:

§ 22.1-24.2. Internet Safety Advisory Council.

A. The Superintendent shall establish and appoint members to the Internet Safety Advisory Council (the Council) for the purpose of advancing the goal of safe use of media and technology by students and teachers in public elementary and secondary schools in the Commonwealth.

B. The membership of the Council shall include at least one (i) teacher; (ii) librarian; (iii) representative of a parent-teacher organization who is a parent of a school-age child; (iv) school administrator; (v) student; and (vi) individual with expertise in Internet safety and such other individuals as the Superintendent deems appropriate, provided that the membership of the Council shall not exceed 12.

C. The Council shall:

1. Develop and recommend to the Board for adoption, after study and consideration of a variety of sources and perspectives, a model policy for local school boards in the Commonwealth that would enable such school boards to better support the Internet safety of all students and teachers in the local school division;

2. Develop and recommend to the Board for adoption model instructional practices for the safe use of media and technology by students and teachers in public elementary and secondary schools in the Commonwealth; and

3. Design and post on the Department's website a page with links to successful instructional practices, curricula, and other teacher resources used in school divisions within and outside of the Commonwealth for the safe use of media and technology by students and teachers.

§ 22.1-212.1:3. Internet safety education program.

Each school board shall adopt policies (i) requiring all elementary and secondary schools in the local school division to provide to each student in grades three through 12 at least once each school year an Internet safety education program that shall be based on peer-to-peer observational learning and modeling concepts but (ii) permitting the parent of any such student to opt his child out of participating in such program.

2. That the provisions of § 22.1-24.2 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act, shall expire on July 1, 2026.

3. That the Internet Safety Advisory Council established by § 22.1-24.2 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act, shall submit a report of its findings to the Chairmen of the Senate Committee on Education and Health and the House Committee on Education no later than October 31, 2025.

4. That, prior to adopting the policies required pursuant to § 22.1-212.1:3 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act, each school board shall consider the model policy, instructional practices, curricula, and other teacher resources that are developed, recommended, or designed by the Internet Safety Advisory Council in accordance with § 22.1-24.2 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act.