

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2013 SESSION

CHAPTER 609

An Act to amend and reenact § 22.1-279.8 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 22.1-137.2, relating to yearly school lock-down drills, school safety audits, and school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans.

[H 2346]

Approved March 20, 2013

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 22.1-279.8 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 22.1-137.2 as follows:

§ 22.1-137.2. Lock-down drills.

In every public school there shall be at least two lock-down drills every school year, in order that students may be thoroughly practiced in such drills. One lock-down drill shall be completed in September of each school year and one lock-down drill shall be completed in January of each school year. Lock-down plans and drills shall be in compliance with the Statewide Fire Prevention Code (§ 27-94 et seq.).

§ 22.1-279.8. School safety audits and school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans required.

A. For the purposes of this section, unless the context requires otherwise:

"School crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plan" means the essential procedures, operations, and assignments required to prevent, manage, and respond to a critical event or emergency, including natural disasters involving fire, flood, tornadoes, or other severe weather; loss or disruption of power, water, communications or shelter; bus or other accidents; medical emergencies, including cardiac arrest and other life-threatening medical emergencies; student or staff member deaths; explosions; bomb threats; gun, knife or other weapons threats; spills or exposures to hazardous substances; the presence of unauthorized persons or trespassers; the loss, disappearance or kidnapping of a student; hostage situations; violence on school property or at school activities; incidents involving acts of terrorism; and other incidents posing a serious threat of harm to students, personnel, or facilities. The plan shall include a provision that the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Virginia Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund shall be contacted immediately to deploy assistance in the event of an emergency as defined in the emergency response plan when there are victims as defined in § 19.2-11.01. The Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Virginia Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund shall be the lead coordinating agencies for those individuals determined to be victims, and the plan shall also contain current contact information for both agencies.

"School safety audit" means a written assessment of the safety conditions in each public school to (i) identify and, if necessary, develop solutions for physical safety concerns, including building security issues and (ii) identify and evaluate any patterns of student safety concerns occurring on school property or at school-sponsored events. Solutions and responses shall include recommendations for structural adjustments, changes in school safety procedures, and revisions to the school board's standards for student conduct.

B. The Virginia Center for School Safety, *in consultation with the Department of Education*, shall develop a list of items to be reviewed and evaluated in the school safety audits required by this section. Such items shall include those incidents reported to school authorities pursuant to § 22.1-279.3:1 *and shall include a school inspection walk-through using a standardized checklist provided by the Virginia Center for School Safety, which shall incorporate crime prevention through environmental design principles.*

The Virginia Center for School Safety shall prescribe a standardized report format for school safety audits, additional reporting criteria, and procedures for report submission, which may include instructions for electronic submission.

Each local school board shall require all schools under its supervisory control to annually conduct school safety audits as defined in this section and consistent with such list.

The results of such school safety audits shall be made public within 90 days of completion. The local school board shall retain authority to withhold or limit the release of any security plans, *walk-through checklists*, and specific vulnerability assessment components as provided in subdivision 7 of § 2.2-3705.2. *The completed walk-through checklist shall be made available upon request to the chief law-enforcement officer of the locality or his designee.* Each school shall maintain a copy of the school safety audit, which may exclude such security plans, *walk-through checklists*, and vulnerability assessment components, within the office of the school principal and shall make a copy of such report available for review upon written request.

Each school shall submit a copy of its school safety audit to the relevant school division superintendent. The division superintendent shall collate and submit all such school safety audits, in the prescribed format and manner of submission, to the Virginia Center for School Safety *and shall make available upon request to the chief law-enforcement officer of the locality the results of such audits.*

C. ~~The school board may~~ *division superintendent shall* establish a school safety audit committee to ~~consist of~~ *include, if available,* representatives of parents, teachers, local law-enforcement ~~agencies,~~ *emergency services agencies, local community services boards, and* judicial and public safety personnel, ~~and the community at large.~~ The school safety audit committee shall ~~evaluate, in accordance with the directions of the local school board, the safety of each school~~ *review the completed school safety audits* and submit a ~~plan any plans, as needed,~~ for improving school safety ~~at a public meeting of to the division superintendent for submission to the local school board.~~

D. Each school board shall ensure that every school that it supervises shall develop a written school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plan, consistent with the definition provided in this section, *and shall provide copies of such plans to the chief law-enforcement officer, the fire chief, the chief emergency medical services official, and the emergency management official of the locality. Each school division shall designate an emergency manager.* The Department of Education and the Virginia Center for School Safety shall provide technical assistance to the school divisions of the Commonwealth in the development of the school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans that describe the components of a medical emergency response plan developed in coordination with local emergency medical services providers, the training of school personnel and students to respond to a life-threatening emergency, and the equipment required for this emergency response. The local school board shall annually review the written school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans. The local school board shall have the authority to withhold or limit the review of any security plans and specific vulnerability assessment components as provided in subdivision 7 of § 2.2-3705.2. The local school division superintendent shall certify this review in writing to the Virginia Center on School Safety no later than August 31 of each year.

Upon consultation with local school boards, division superintendents, the Virginia Center for School Safety, and the Coordinator of Emergency Management, the Board of Education shall develop, and may revise as it deems necessary, a model school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plan for the purpose of assisting the public schools in Virginia in developing viable, effective crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans. Such model shall set forth recommended effective procedures and means by which parents can contact the relevant school or school division regarding the location and safety of their school children and by which school officials may contact parents, with parental approval, during a critical event or emergency.