

2015 -- H 5410

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS - FIRE DRILLS

Introduced By: Representatives MacBeth, McLaughlin, and Messier

Date Introduced: February 12, 2015

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16-21-4 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-21 entitled "Health and
2 Safety of Pupils" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **16-21-4. Fire, evacuation and lockdown drills required – Failure to comply.** -- (a) It
4 shall be the duty of the principal or other person in charge of every public school or private
5 school, college, university, or postsecondary institutions or educational institution within the
6 state, having more than twenty-five (25) pupils, to instruct and train the pupils by means of drills,
7 so that they may in a sudden emergency be able to leave school buildings and dormitories in the
8 shortest possible time and without confusion or panic.

9 Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, in all schools or buildings used for
10 educational purposes through the twelfth grade by six (6) or more persons for four (4) or more
11 hours per day or more than twelve (12) hours per week, there shall be not less than one
12 emergency egress drill conducted every month the facility is in session with all occupants of the
13 building participating in said drill, provided that a building principal or the person in charge of
14 any public or private school or educational institution may delay or postpone such a drill during
15 the months of December, January, and February, if said principal or person determines that such
16 drills should be postponed due to severe inclement weather. In the event such drills are
17 postponed, the drills shall be scheduled and performed later in the school year so that the total
18 number of drills required by this section is met prior to the end of the school year. One additional
19 emergency egress drill shall be conducted in buildings that are not open on a year- round basis

1 within the first (1st) thirty (30) days of operation. At least one out of every four (4) emergency
2 egress drills or rapid dismissals shall be obstructed by means of which at least one or more exits
3 and stairways in the school building are blocked off or not used. In addition, there shall be two (2)
4 evacuation drills and two (2) lockdown drills. Evacuation drills shall be designed and conducted
5 for use when conditions outside the school building are safer than conditions inside the building.
6 Lockdown drills shall be designed and conducted for use to protect school building occupants
7 from potential dangers in the building, and one shall be held in September and one in January,
8 and in conjunction with the local police whenever possible. [A principal or other person in charge](#)
9 [of a public or private school or educational institution shall consider the safety of pupils and the](#)
10 [risk of exposing students to severe inclement weather in scheduling any drills required by this](#)
11 [subsection.](#)

12 (b)(1) In colleges, universities, postsecondary institutions, and residence facilities in
13 public schools or private schools there shall be at least four (4) drills or rapid dismissals during
14 the academic year for each school building or residence facility, at least two (2) of which shall be
15 held between the months of September through December. The remaining two (2) drills shall be
16 held between the months of January through June. Any college, university, or postsecondary
17 institution that holds a summer session shall hold a drill or rapid dismissal during the first full
18 week of the summer session.

19 (2) At least one drill or rapid dismissal shall be obstructed so that at least one or more
20 exits or stairways in the school building or dormitory are blocked off or not used.

21 (c) For purposes of this section "residence facility" means dormitory, fraternity, sorority,
22 or any other type of residence hall, whether on campus or off campus, owned or leased by a
23 college, university, postsecondary institutions, public schools, or private school with
24 accommodations for twenty (20) or more students.

25 (d) Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, fire drills shall be required in
26 colleges or universities only for buildings which are used for a residence facility.

27 (e) Neglect by any principal or any person in charge of any public or private school or
28 educational institution to comply with the provisions of this section shall be a misdemeanor
29 punishable by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500).

30 (f) Written reports, on forms supplied by the department of elementary and secondary
31 education, of each fire drill shall be completed immediately upon termination of every drill and
32 shall be available for review by the fire marshal, assistant deputy fire marshal, or local fire
33 authority. The fire marshal, assistant deputy fire marshal, or local fire authority may require that a
34 fire drill be conducted in his or her presence.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS - FIRE DRILLS

- 1 This act would permit school building principals to delay holding fire and emergency
- 2 egress evacuation drills in the months of December, January, and February.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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