

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1021 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY ROEBUCK, KINSEY, SCHLOSSBERG, MILLARD, NEILSON,
O'BRIEN, DONATUCCI, V. BROWN AND D. COSTA, MARCH 28, 2017

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 28, 2017

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," in terms and courses of study,
6 further providing for fire and emergency evacuation drills.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. Section 1517 of the act of March 10, 1949
10 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
11 amended to read:

12 Section 1517. Fire and Emergency Evacuation Drills.--(a) In
13 all [public schools] school buildings of school entities where
14 fire-escapes, appliances for the extinguishment of fires, or
15 proper and sufficient exits in case of fire or panic, either or
16 all, are required by law to be maintained, fire drills shall be
17 periodically conducted while the school entity is in session and
18 students are present, not less than one a month, by the [teacher
19 or teachers] principal or person in charge, under rules and
20 regulations to be promulgated by the [district superintendent]

1 chief school administrator under whose supervision such
2 [schools] school entities are. In such fire drills the pupils
3 and teachers shall be instructed in, and made thoroughly
4 familiar with, the use of the fire-escapes, appliances and
5 exits. The drill shall include the actual use thereof, and the
6 complete removal of the pupils and teachers, in an expeditious
7 and orderly manner, by means of fire-escapes and exits, from the
8 building to a place of safety on the ground outside.

9 (a.1) A record of all fire and emergency evacuation drills
10 shall be completed by the principal or person in charge at each
11 school building and shall be accurate and up-to-date and kept on
12 file in the respective school offices. The principal or person
13 in charge shall submit the record to the chief school
14 administrator and the Department of Education by June 1 each
15 year for review by the department for compliance with this
16 section. The Department of Education shall determine the manner
17 and form of the record to be used to document the fire and
18 emergency drills by the principal or person in charge at each
19 school building. The record must include, at a minimum, the
20 following:

21 (1) The date and time of the drill.

22 (2) The number of students participating in the drill.

23 (3) The duration of the drill.

24 (4) The drill type.

25 (5) A description of what occurred during the drill.

26 (6) The signature of the principal or person in charge.

27 (b) [District superintendents] Chief school administrators
28 are hereby required to see that the provisions of this section
29 are faithfully carried out in the [schools] school entities over
30 which they have charge.

1 (c) Any person who violates or fails to comply with the
2 provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and
3 on conviction shall be sentenced to pay a fine of not less than
4 twenty-five dollars (\$25) nor more than five hundred dollars
5 (\$500), or to undergo imprisonment in the county jail for not
6 less than (10) days or more than sixty (60) days, or both.

7 (d) (1) All [schools] school entities using or contracting
8 for school buses for the transportation of school children shall
9 conduct on school grounds two emergency evacuation drills on
10 buses during each school year, the first to be conducted during
11 the first week of the first school term and the second during
12 the month of March, and at such other times as the chief school
13 administrator may require. Each such drill shall include the
14 practice and instruction concerning the location, use and
15 operation of emergency exit doors and fire extinguishers and the
16 proper evacuation of buses in the event of fires or accidents.

17 (2) Bus operators shall be provided with proper training and
18 instructions to enable them to carry out the provisions of this
19 subsection and may be required to attend classes and drills in
20 connection therewith.

21 (e) On or before the tenth day of April of each year, each
22 [district superintendent] chief school administrator shall
23 certify to the Department of [Public Instruction] Education that
24 the fire and emergency evacuation drills herein required have
25 been [held.] conducted in accordance with this section and
26 documented in the record by the principal or person in charge of
27 each school building.

28 (f) The Department of Education, by August 1, 2017, and each
29 August 1 thereafter, shall compile a report of all fire and
30 evacuation drill records and forward the report to the Office of

1 the State Fire Commissioner. The Office of the State Fire
2 Commissioner shall make available on its publicly accessible
3 Internet website a searchable database containing information on
4 the fire and evacuation drills conducted in each school building
5 of each school entity for the past five (5) school years. The
6 searchable database shall be in a form and manner as determined
7 by the State Fire Commissioner. The Department of Education
8 shall provide annually a report on Statewide compliance with the
9 provisions of this section to the Education Committee of the
10 Senate and the Education Committee of the House of
11 Representatives.

12 (g) As used in this section, the following words and phrases
13 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection:

14 "Chief school administrator" shall mean the superintendent of
15 a school district, superintendent of an area vocational-
16 technical school, executive director of an intermediate unit or
17 chief executive officer of a charter school or regional charter
18 school.

19 "School entity" shall mean an area vocational-technical
20 school, a school district, an intermediate unit, a charter
21 school or a regional charter school.

22 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.