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Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. A. Miller

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SUMMARY

- Specifies that the “administrator” of a public or nonpublic school must develop an emergency management plan for all buildings in which students regularly attend or receive instruction, rather than just those buildings under the administrator’s control.
- Specifies that the existing requirement to conduct annual emergency management tests applies only to preschool programs or school-age child care programs, and establishes a new requirement that districts and schools must conduct annual “emergency management rehearsals.”
- Provides that a school safety drill that is a “rehearsal of concept” drill conducted in accordance with the bill’s provisions fulfills the requirement to conduct an emergency management rehearsal.
- Makes other changes regarding the administration of school safety drills.
- Requires each countywide emergency management agency to include a representative from each school district and school in the county when developing an all-hazards emergency operations plan for the county.
- Declares an emergency.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Emergency management plans

The bill makes several changes regarding the development and administration of school emergency management plans. Under existing law, the “administrator” of a school district, community school, STEM school, college-preparatory boarding school, career-technical education program, chartered nonpublic school, educational service center, preschool program or school-age child care program licensed by the Department of Education, or any other facility

that primarily provides educational services to children subject to regulation by the Department must develop and adopt a comprehensive emergency plan.¹

Development of emergency management plans

The bill specifies that an administrator must develop an emergency management plan for any building in which students regularly attend or receive instruction, rather than just those buildings under the administrator's control as required under current law. It also specifies that an "administrator" may include individuals with supervisory authority over a building that hosts activities for children subject to regulation by the Department.²

Annual test and rehearsal

Currently, all administrators must prepare and conduct at least one annual "emergency management test," which is a regularly scheduled drill, exercise or activity that is designed to assess and evaluate an emergency management plan. The bill maintains this requirement for administrators of preschool programs and school-age child care programs.³

However, for a district or school, the bill requires administrators to prepare and conduct an "emergency management rehearsal" rather than an emergency management test.⁴ The bill specifies that this rehearsal is a regularly scheduled "rehearsal of concept" (ROC) drill that is designed to assess and evaluate a school's plan, including rehearsal of the most critical parts (such as the communications response plan or the integrated response plan), and a physical walkthrough of the plan.⁵ This ROC drill must be conducted in accordance with rules adopted by the State Board of Education. The bill also specifies that a "school safety drill" conducted under separate continuing law (see below) fulfills this requirement as long as it meets the State Board's ROC drill requirements.⁶

The bill requires the State Board to adopt rules specifying the requirements and procedures for emergency management rehearsals in addition to those for emergency management tests under continuing law.⁷

School safety drills

Public and private schools are required under continuing law to conduct school safety drills to instruct students in procedures to follow in situations where students must be secured in their building (rather than evacuated), such as a threat to the school involving terrorism, a

¹ R.C. 3313.536(B).

² R.C. 3313.536(A) and (B)(1).

³ R.C. 3313.536(E)(1).

⁴ R.C. 3313.536(E)(2).

⁵ R.C. 3313.536(A)(3).

⁶ R.C. 3313.536(E)(2).

⁷ R.C. 3313.536(F).

person in possession of a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance on school property, or other act of violence. Currently, each school must conduct at least three school safety drills during the school year, as well as one additional “theoretical” safety drill for faculty and staff.⁸ The bill makes several changes to the school safety drill requirements.

Rehearsal of concept drill

First, the bill requires that, in addition to the four school safety drills currently required, each public and private school must conduct a separate “rehearsal of concept” (ROC) drill pursuant to the school’s emergency management plan. It must be conducted in conjunction with the appropriate local law enforcement agency. Student participation is not required.⁹

Deadline for “theoretical” safety drills and rehearsal of concept drills

The bill requires that public and private schools conduct “theoretical” safety drills and rehearsal of concept drills no later than December 15 of each school year. Current law does not establish a date by which “theoretical” safety drills must occur and instead specifies that they must occur at least once each school year.¹⁰

Parental notification

Prior to conducting any school safety drill that includes student participation, the building principal or “person in charge” must notify the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in the school or institution of the drill. The notification must include information about procedures for parents or guardians to follow in situations where students must be secured in the school building or rapidly evacuated.¹¹

Development of county all-hazards emergency operations plans

The bill requires each countywide emergency management agency, when developing an all-hazards emergency operations plan for the county in accordance with continuing law and conducting the annual exercise of that plan, to include a representative from each school district and school that has school buildings in which students regularly attend or receive instruction within the county. The bill states their inclusion is required “in order to integrate school safety into the county’s plan and annual exercise.”¹²

Under current law, a countywide emergency management agency may be established by the board of county commissioners of a county and the chief executive of all or a majority of the other political subdivisions within the county for the purpose of establishing a program for

⁸ R.C. 3737.73(D)(1)(a) and (b)(i).

⁹ R.C. 3737.73(D)(1)(b)(ii).

¹⁰ R.C. 3737.73(D)(1)(b).

¹¹ R.C. 3737.73(D)(1)(c).

¹² R.C. 5502.26(A)(4).

emergency management in the county which must include, among other things, an emergency operations plan.¹³

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	06-25-20

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¹³ R.C. 5502.26.