

2016 -- S 2571

=====
LC005142
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

—————
A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Introduced By: Senators DiPalma, Satchell, Lombardi, Coyne, and Archambault

Date Introduced: February 25, 2016

Referred To: Senate Education

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; provided, that when conducting drills,
9 emphasis shall be placed on orderly evacuation rather than on speed.

10 Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, in all schools or buildings used for
11 educational purposes through the twelfth grade by six (6) or more persons for four (4) or more
12 hours per day or more than twelve (12) hours per week, there shall be not less than one
13 emergency egress drill conducted every month the facility is in session with all occupants of the
14 building participating in said drill. One additional emergency egress drill shall be conducted in
15 buildings that are not open on a year- round basis within the first (1st) thirty (30) days of
16 operation. At least one out of every four (4) emergency egress drills or rapid dismissals shall be
17 obstructed by means of which at least one or more exits and stairways in the school building are
18 blocked off or not used. In addition, there shall be two (2) evacuation drills and two (2) lockdown
19 drills. Evacuation drills shall be designed and conducted for use when conditions outside the

1 school building are safer than conditions inside the building. Lockdown drills shall be designed
2 and conducted for use to protect school building occupants from potential dangers in the building,
3 and one shall be held in September and one ~~in~~ at any time between January 1 and May 31, and in
4 conjunction with the local police whenever possible. Any unplanned emergency egress,
5 evacuation and lockdown drill may be credited towards the requisite number of drills required by
6 this section. Further, the principal may defer one emergency egress drill per school year due to
7 severe inclement weather or other exigent circumstances; provided, that the report shall include a
8 detailed explanation in the written report required by subsection (f) of this section explaining the
9 reason why the drill could not be held throughout the entire month.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

=====
LC005142
=====

EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

- 1 This act would make changes in the scheduling of required school fire drills, and require
- 2 that they be conducted with the emphasis on order rather than speed.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

=====
LC005142
=====