
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 823 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY SMITH-WADE-EL, HANBIDGE, HILL-EVANS, KAZEEM,
CERRATO, McNEILL, GIRAL, OTTEN, WAXMAN, KENYATTA, SANCHEZ,
MAYES, STEELE, KHAN, GREEN, RIVERA, RABB, D. WILLIAMS,
HOHENSTEIN, HOWARD, PARKER, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ AND WARREN,
MARCH 6, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 6, 2025

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(a.1) 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.--* * *

13 (a.1) Within ninety (90) days of the commencement of the
14 school year after the effective date of this subsection and
15 within ninety (90) days of the commencement of each school year
16 thereafter, each school entity shall conduct one school security
17 drill per school year in each school building in place of a fire
18 drill required under subsection (a). After ninety (90) days from

1 the commencement of each school year, each school entity may
2 conduct two school security drills per school year in each
3 school building in place of two fire drills required under
4 subsection (a). All of the following shall apply:

5 (1) The school security drill shall be conducted while the
6 school entity is in session and students are present under
7 policies adopted by the chief school administrator.

8 (2) The chief school administrator or a designee shall
9 oversee the instruction and training of students and school
10 employees in the procedures to be used in the school security
11 drill.

12 (3) The chief school administrator shall notify and request
13 assistance from the local law enforcement agency and emergency
14 management agency before conducting the school security drill.

15 (4) The chief school administrator shall provide notice of
16 the school security drill and debrief period required under
17 paragraph (8) at least seven (7) days in advance to parents and
18 legal guardians of the students attending the school building
19 for which the school security drill is scheduled.

20 (5) A school security drill shall be age-appropriate and
21 developmentally appropriate and include trauma-informed
22 approaches to address the concerns and well-being of students
23 and school personnel.

24 (6) The content of a school security drill shall include and
25 involve school personnel, including school-based mental health
26 professionals or a designee selected by the chief school
27 administrator.

28 (7) A school security drill shall not include any props,
29 actors, simulations or other tactics intended to mimic an
30 incident of violence or other emergency, including:

- 1 (i) Authentic or simulated weapons.
2 (ii) Gunfire.
3 (iii) Simulated fatalities, wounds or injuries.
4 (iv) Simulated blood.
5 (v) An individual posing as an active shooter or a victim of
6 an active shooter.

7 (8) Immediately following a school security drill, each
8 school entity shall implement a reasonable amount of time for
9 teachers to debrief with their students. During the debrief
10 period, students shall be allowed to access any mental health
11 services available on campus.

12 (9) A school security drill shall be accompanied by an
13 announcement prior to commencement that uses concise and age-
14 appropriate language and, at a minimum, informs students that
15 there is no immediate danger to life and safety.

16 * * *

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