



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

Hannah K. Wann

H.B. 178

130th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Phillips, Hayes, Mallory, Strahorn, Reece, Fedor, Heard, Antonio

BILL SUMMARY

- Requires the principal or director of each public or private school to hold five fire drills and four safety drills in alternating months each year, instead of nine fire drills and one safety drill each year as under current law.
- Adds rapid evacuation procedures to school safety drills.
- Changes to November 5, instead of December 5 as under current law, the deadline for school officials to certify compliance with the safety drill law.
- Requires a school official's certification to include the date and time for each safety drill that was conducted during the previous school year and for each drill to be conducted during the current school year.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Background on school fire and safety drills

Current law requires the principal or director of each public or private school that has an average daily attendance of 20 or more students to conduct fire drills. Fire drills must be held at least nine times during the school year. Schools must also provide for tornado drills.¹ Although the statute does not specify how many tornado drills must be conducted in a school year, a rule of the State Fire Marshall requires a tornado drill once each month whenever school is in session between April 1 and July 31.²

¹ R.C. 3737.73(A) and (B).

² Ohio Administrative Code 1301:7-7-04(I)(2)(d).

In addition, the principal or director of each public or private school must conduct a school safety drill. A school safety drill must 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 person in possession of a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance on school property, or other act of violence. At least one safety drill must be conducted each year on or before December 1.³

The bill

The bill makes several changes to the law regarding school fire and safety drills. First, it reduces the number of required fire drills from nine to five and increases the number of required school safety drills from one to four. Under the bill, schools must alternate between the two types of drills each month.⁴

The bill also broadens the scope of safety drills to include instruction in procedures to follow where students must rapidly evacuate a building, as well as those where students must be secured in their building as under current law.⁵

Finally, the bill changes the deadline for and content of a school official's annual certification of compliance with the safety drill law. Under current law, the principal or director of a school must provide written certification of the date and time the one required school safety drill was conducted to the police chief or other similar chief law enforcement officer by December 5 of each year. The bill changes the deadline for this certification to November 5. It also requires the principal or director of the school to certify the date and time for both the safety drills that were conducted during the previous year and for each drill that will be conducted during the current school year.⁶

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	05-28-13

H0178-I-130.docx/ar

³ R.C. 3737.73(D).

⁴ R.C. 3737.73(A), (D)(1), and (E).

⁵ R.C. 3737.73(D)(1).

⁶ R.C. 3737.73(D)(2)(b).

