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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - SCHOOLS

Introduced By: Senators DiPalma, Lombardi, and Sosnowski

Date Introduced: March 04, 2014

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

(State Police)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Sections 23-28.12-15 and 23-28.12-36 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-  
2 28.12 entitled "Schools" are hereby amended to read as follows:  
3           **23-28.12-15. Fire alarm systems.** -- (a) It shall be the duty of the principal or other  
4 person in charge of every public school or private school, college, university, or postsecondary  
5 institution or educational institution within the state, having more than twenty-five (25) pupils, to  
6 instruct and train the pupils by means of drills, so that they may, in a sudden emergency, be able  
7 to leave school buildings and dormitories in the shortest possible time and without confusion or  
8 panic. Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, in all schools or buildings used for  
9 educational purposes through the twelfth (12th) grade by six (6) or more persons for four (4) or  
10 more hours per day or more than twelve (12) hours per week, there shall be not less than one  
11 emergency egress drill conducted every month the facility is in session with all occupants of the  
12 building participating in said drill. One additional emergency egress drill shall be conducted in  
13 buildings that are not open on a year-round basis within the first (1st) thirty (30) days of  
14 operation. At least one out of every four (4) emergency egress drills or rapid dismissals shall be  
15 obstructed by means of which at least one or more exits and stairways in the school building are  
16 blocked off or not used. In addition, there shall be two (2) evacuation drills and two (2) lockdown  
17 drills. Evacuation drills shall be designed and conducted for use when conditions outside the  
18 school building are safer than conditions inside the building. Lockdown drills shall be designed  
19 and conducted for use to protect school building occupants from potential dangers in the building,

1 and one shall be held in September and one in January, and in conjunction with the local police  
2 whenever possible.

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

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

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

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

18 (e) Neglect by any principal or any person in charge of any public or private school or  
19 educational institution to comply with the provisions of this section shall be a ~~misdemeanor~~  
20 violation punishable by a fine not exceeding ~~fifty dollars (\$50.00)~~ two hundred dollars (\$200).

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

26 **23-28.12-36. Fire alarm systems -- Fire drills -- Penalties.** -- (a) It shall be the duty of  
27 the principal or other person in charge of every public school or private school, college,  
28 university, or postsecondary institutions or educational institution within the state, having more  
29 than twenty-five (25) pupils, to instruct and train the pupils by means of drills, so that they may in  
30 a sudden emergency be able to leave school buildings and dormitories in the shortest possible  
31 time and without confusion or panic. Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, in all  
32 schools or buildings used for educational purposes through the twelfth (12th) grade by six (6) or  
33 more persons for four (4) or more hours per day or more than twelve (12) hours per week, there  
34 shall be not less than one emergency egress drill conducted every month the facility is in session

1 with all occupants of the building participating in said drill. One additional emergency egress drill  
2 shall be conducted in buildings that are not open on a year-round basis within the first (1st) thirty  
3 (30) days of operation. At least one out of every four (4) emergency egress drills or rapid  
4 dismissals shall be obstructed by means of which at least one or more exits and stairways in the  
5 school building are blocked off or not used. In addition, there shall be two (2) evacuation drills  
6 and two (2) lockdown drills. Evacuation drills shall be designed and conducted for use when  
7 conditions outside the school building are safer than conditions inside the building. Lockdown  
8 drills shall be designed and conducted for use to protect school building occupants from potential  
9 dangers in the building, and one shall be held in September and one in January, and in  
10 conjunction with the local police whenever possible.

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

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

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

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

26 (e) Neglect by any principal or any person in charge of any public or private school or  
27 education institution to comply with the provisions of this section shall be a ~~misdemeanor~~  
28 violation punishable by a fine of not exceeding ~~fifty dollars (\$50.00)~~ two hundred dollars (\$200).

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

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

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

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1           This act would make it a violation for a public or private school principal or person in  
2 charge to neglect the fire system and fire drill requirements as set out in statute and would  
3 increase the fine to two hundred dollars (\$200) per violation.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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