

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1279

As of March 14, 2017

Title: An act relating to school safety drills.

Brief Description: Concerning school safety drills.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representative Pettigrew).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/28/17, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/13/17.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Revises the requirements for safety-related drills in schools.
- States that the drills must teach students the basic functional drill responses of shelter-in-place, lockdown, and evacuation.
- Requires the drills to incorporate an earthquake drill and a pedestrian evacuation drill for schools mapped in tsunami hazard zones.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Current state law requires schools to conduct no less than one safety-related drill each month that school is in session. Schools must complete no less than:

- one drill using the school mapping information system;
- three drills for lockdowns;
- one drill for shelter-in-place;
- three drills for fire evacuation, in accordance with the state fire code; and
- one other safety-related drill to be determined by the school.

Schools should consider drills for earthquakes, tsunamis, or other high-risk local events.

Schools must document the date and time of such drills.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

An online system called the Critical Incident Planning and Mapping System, or Rapid Responder, provides a unified means for school administrators, law enforcement, fire officials, and other emergency responders to share information during emergencies involving schools. The school mapping system is managed by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs. Information in the system includes maps, floor plans, school crisis plans, hazardous material inventories, interior photographs, and staff contact lists.

Summary of Bill: The requirements for safety-related drills are revised.

Due to geographic location, schools have unique safety challenges. It is the responsibility of school principals and administrators to assess the threats and hazards most likely to impact their school, and to practice basic functional drills, as these drills relate to those threats and hazards. Some threats or hazards may require the use of more than one basic functional drill.

Schools must conduct at least one safety-related drill per month, including summer months when school is in session. These drills must teach students three basic functional drill responses:

- shelter-in-place - used to limit the exposure of students and staff to hazardous materials, such as chemical, biological, or radiological contaminants, released into the environment by isolating the inside environment from the outside;
- lockdown - used to isolate students and staff from threats of violence, such as suspicious trespassers or armed intruders, that may occur in a school or in the vicinity of a school; and
- evacuation - used to move students and staff away from threats, such as fires, oil train spills, or tsunamis.

Some threats or hazards may require the use of more than one basic functional drill.

These drills must incorporate the following requirements:

- an earthquake drill using the state-approved earthquake safety technique "drop, cover, and hold";
- use of the school mapping information system in at least one of the safety-related drills; and
- a pedestrian evacuation drill for schools in mapped tsunami hazard zones.

Schools must document the date, time, and type—shelter-in-place, lockdown, or evacuate—of each drill required and maintain the documentation in the school office.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill allows school districts to have some flexibility, and it keeps the type of drills that have been required in the past. School districts do not face the same level of threat of earthquakes, but schools across the state do face some

threat. This bill includes definitions of shelter-in-place, lockdown, and evacuation, which has caused some confusion. This bill allows schools to tailor the drills to the specific threats that schools face.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Mike Donlin, OSPI School Safety Center.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.