



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 23, 2022 (*updated February 24 with webinar information and link*)
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Route To: School Safety Specialist Candidates
From: Jeffrey Gale, Director
Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning

New Legislation Impacting School Security Drills

On January 10, 2022, Governor Phil Murphy signed [Senate Bill 3726](#), concerning school security drills and supplementing Chapter 41 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes. N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1, otherwise known as the “Drill Law,” is the standard which directs New Jersey schools in the conduct of fire and security drills.

According to the statute, the following requirements are to be implemented when conducting monthly security drills:

1. An announcement is to be made that “...includes clear, developmentally and age-appropriate messaging to students and staff *at the conclusion of the drill* that this event is a drill and that no current danger exists.” (italics added)
2. It is required that a drill “...does not expose students to content or imaging that is not developmentally or age-appropriate;”
3. It is required that drilling “...is paired with trauma-informed approaches to address any student inquiries or concerns which may arise as a result of a school security drill;”
4. It is required that a drill “...does not include the use of fake blood, real or prop firearms, or the simulations of gun shots, explosions, or other sounds or visuals that may induce panic or a traumatic response from a student or school district employee; does not require a student to role play as a victim, but may include first aid training in which students participate.”
5. Security drills must be “...accessible to students with disabilities and mental health conditions and provides all necessary accommodations for these students.”
6. It is required that: “A school district shall provide written notification to the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the district *following the completion of a school security drill*, which notice shall be provided to the parent or guardian by no later than the end of the school day on which the school security drill is conducted.” (italics added)

Sample language: “Today, in accordance with state law, our school conducted a security drill in the manner that we conduct all emergency drills, with seriousness and with sensitivity to our students and staff. Everyone responded appropriately and instruction resumed immediately thereafter. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school.”

7. The law requires: “A school district shall review and update its school security drill procedures using a process that coincides with the review of the school safety and security plan developed pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:16-5.1 and collects input from emergency personnel, parents and guardians of students enrolled in the district, teachers and staff employed in the district, mental health professionals, and student government representatives from multiple grade levels.”
8. Lastly, the law requires: “A school district shall annually track data on such measures and information as are required by the Commissioner of Education, and shall report the data to the commissioner.”

While the Drill Law addresses both fire drills and school security drills, the above-referenced requirements are to be implemented when conducting *school security drills* performed when students are present.

Further guidance to assist in proper implementation of the listed requirements during security drilling is currently being prepared by the New Jersey Department of Education and will be delivered by the Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning via **webinar on Thursday, March 3, 2022, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.** [Register online](#) for this event.

Questions and requests for clarification should be directed to the Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning by emailing school.security@doe.nj.gov or by calling (609) 376-3574.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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