



OFFICE OF INSURANCE AND SAFETY FIRE COMMISSIONER

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July 8, 2020

RE: School Fire Drill COVID-19 Safety Guidance

To our Education Partners,

In an effort to help school districts prioritize the health and safety of students and staff as they open school buildings during the COVID-19 pandemic, the following directive is hereby issued.

All schools that are operating at normal classroom occupancy will be required to complete the State Standard Fire Drills for the 2020-2021 School year. The Fire Drills are required in accordance with the adoption of IFC 408.3.1 and NFPA Life Safety Code 11-7-1, 14.7.2 per Georgia Rule 120-3-3.04. If your school has altered their occupancies through remote and/or distancing learning, staggered schedules, or additional classrooms, they may implement a staggered response. Please find outlined recommendations below:

1. **Rotation Schedule:** The rotation schedule will limit the number of students in hallways and exiting the buildings at the same time. The rotation schedule will include two groups (*Large Schools may use more than two groups if necessary.*)

Example:

Group A will include all odd numbered classrooms and **Group B** will include all even numbered classrooms. Group A and B will conduct the drill on separate days or times; each drill will be reported in the State Reporting System as normal. When reporting your drill, please advise in the notes sections Group A or B. All drills will need to maintain social distancing guidance; this includes maintaining separation while exiting the building, assembling outside the building, and re-entering the building.

2. **Blocked Schedule:** This format will allow each classroom to perform the evacuation separately. Each classroom would follow the normal exit as determined by the school's safe zone exit plan, explaining to the students where they would go in the case of a real emergency.
 - To speed up the process, the school may consider conducting several classroom evacuations simultaneously, provided they are located in different areas of the building and will not cross paths with any other classes.

- ***In the event of an emergency, schools should follow fire evacuation routes as prescribed; follow severe weather procedures; and follow shelter-in-place protocols. When and only when practicing drills, schools should consider social distancing and consider dividing the drills into sections of the school during the day or over more than one day.***
- ***No change will be issued in regards to the number of drills required to be conducted or how schools are required to report during the 2020-2021 school year. If changes have to be made to drills, please advise these changes when reporting the drill on the state website in the notes section.***
- ***The same guidelines and recommendations shall be used for Severe Weather Drills and Lock Down Drills.***

Please see following link for further recommendations and best practices to ensure a safe and successful school year from the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Department of Public Health: <https://www.georgiainsights.com/recovery.html>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Fire and Life Safety Educator Amanda Ghorley at aghorley@oci.ga.gov or (470)725-5722.

Sincerely,



Mark Revenew



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Insurance and Safety
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