



# House of Representatives

**File No. 762**

General Assembly

January Session, 2023

**(Reprint of File No. 416)**

Substitute House Bill No. 6846  
As Amended by House Amendment  
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner  
May 11, 2023

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CRISIS  
RESPONSE DRILLS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-231 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

3 (a) Each local and regional board of education shall provide for [a fire  
4 drill] seven fire drills to be held in the schools of such board during the  
5 school year, provided at least one of the fire drills is held not later than  
6 thirty days after the first day of each school year, [and at least once each  
7 month thereafter, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section.]

8 (b) [Each such board shall substitute a crisis response drill for a fire  
9 drill once every three months and shall develop the format of such crisis  
10 response drill in consultation with the appropriate local law  
11 enforcement agency. A representative of such agency may supervise  
12 and participate in any such crisis response drill.] Each local and regional

13 board of education shall provide for two crisis response drills to be held  
14 in the schools of such board during the school year, provided at least  
15 one of the crisis response drills is a staff-only drill that is held not later  
16 than thirty days after the first day of each school year. Each such crisis  
17 response drill shall be conducted in accordance with the crisis response  
18 protocols developed for the school pursuant to section 10-222n, as  
19 amended by this act.

20 Sec. 2. Section 10-222n of the general statutes is repealed and the  
21 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

22 (a) Not later than January 1, 2014, the Department of Emergency  
23 Services and Public Protection, in consultation with the Department of  
24 Education, shall develop school security and safety plan standards. Not  
25 later than January 1, 2020, and every three years thereafter, the  
26 Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, in  
27 consultation with the Department of Education, shall reevaluate and  
28 update the school security and safety plan standards. The school  
29 security and safety plan standards shall be an all-hazards approach to  
30 emergencies at public schools and shall include, but not be limited to,  
31 (1) involvement of local officials, including the chief executive officer of  
32 the municipality, the superintendent of schools, law enforcement, fire,  
33 public health, emergency management and emergency medical  
34 services, in the development of school security and safety plans, (2) a  
35 command center organization structure based on the federal National  
36 Incident Management System and a description of the responsibilities  
37 of such command center organization, (3) a requirement that a school  
38 security and safety committee be established at each school, in  
39 accordance with the provisions of section 10-222m, (4) crisis  
40 management procedures, (5) a requirement that [local law enforcement  
41 and other local public safety officials evaluate, score and provide  
42 feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills, conducted pursuant to  
43 section 10-231] all crisis response drills conducted pursuant to section  
44 10-231, as amended by this act, be in accordance with the crisis response  
45 drill protocols described in subsection (c) of this section, (6) a  
46 requirement that local and regional boards of education annually

47 submit reports to the Department of Emergency Services and Public  
48 Protection regarding such fire drills and crisis response drills, (7)  
49 procedures for managing various types of emergencies, (8) a  
50 requirement that each local and regional board of education conduct a  
51 security and vulnerability assessment for each school under the  
52 jurisdiction of such board every two years and develop a school security  
53 and safety plan for each such school, in accordance with the provisions  
54 of section 10-222m, based on the results of such assessment, (9) a  
55 requirement that the safe school climate committee for each school,  
56 established pursuant to section 10-222k, collect and evaluate  
57 information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior  
58 that may not meet the definition of bullying, as defined in section 10-  
59 222d, and report such information, as necessary, to the district safe  
60 school climate coordinator, described in section 10-222k, and the school  
61 security and safety committee for the school, established pursuant to  
62 section 10-222m, and (10) a requirement that the school security and  
63 safety plan for each school provide an orientation on such school  
64 security and safety plan to each school employee, as defined in section  
65 10-222d, at such school and provide violence prevention training in a  
66 manner prescribed in such school security and safety plan. The  
67 Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall make  
68 such standards available to local officials, including local and regional  
69 boards of education, and the Department of Education shall distribute  
70 such standards to all public schools within the state.

71 (b) Not later than January 1, 2014, and annually thereafter, the  
72 Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall submit  
73 the school security and safety plan standards and any recommendations  
74 for legislation regarding such standards to the joint standing  
75 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
76 relating to public safety and education, in accordance with the  
77 provisions of section 11-4a.

78 (c) For the school year commencing July 1, 2023, and each school year  
79 thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall develop, and  
80 annually update, in consultation with the appropriate local law

81 enforcement agency, crisis response drill protocols to be implemented  
82 as part of a crisis response drill conducted pursuant to section 10-231, as  
83 amended by this act, for each of the schools under the jurisdiction of  
84 such board. Such protocols shall be trauma-informed, created with  
85 input from the administrators of each such school, and, include, but not  
86 be limited to, a requirement that (1) the staff-only crisis response drill  
87 shall (A) be designed and conducted in a manner that prepares  
88 administrators, educators and other staff on their roles and  
89 responsibilities during an actual emergency, including a walk-through  
90 of such drill, (B) include a discussion of the implementation of the items  
91 described in subdivision (2) of this subsection and how to conduct a  
92 whole-school crisis response drill that includes students in accordance  
93 with such protocols, and (C) a representative of the local law  
94 enforcement agency may supervise and participate in the staff-only  
95 crisis response drill, and (2) (A) notice may be provided to the parents  
96 and guardians of students, educators, local law enforcement and other  
97 first responders of when the whole-school crisis response drill will be  
98 held, at any point during the three days prior to such drill, (B) parents  
99 and guardians be given the option to opt their student out of  
100 participating in the whole-school crisis response drill, (C)  
101 accommodations are provided to students who have past-trauma, post-  
102 traumatic stress disorder, anxiety or other relevant disabilities, (D) an  
103 age-appropriate explanation be delivered to the students of the school  
104 and that such explanation includes a description of what the whole-  
105 school crisis response drill is and how the school security and safety  
106 plan will be implemented during an actual emergency, (E) information  
107 be provided to students relating to the availability of mental health  
108 counseling for students, (F) a prohibition against the simulation of an  
109 active shooter in the school and crouching and huddling by students  
110 during the whole-school crisis response drill, and (G) a representative  
111 of the local law enforcement agency may supervise and participate in  
112 the whole-school crisis response drill.

113       Sec. 3. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The Department of Emergency Services  
114 and Public Protection, in consultation with the Department of

115 Education, shall conduct an evaluation of the efficacy and effectiveness  
 116 of the revisions pursuant to sections 10-222n and 10-231 of the general  
 117 statutes, as amended by this act, to the number and implementation of  
 118 fire drills and crisis response drills conducted pursuant to section 10-231  
 119 of the general statutes, as amended by this act. In conducting such  
 120 evaluation, the department shall (1) review the annual reports  
 121 submitted by each local and regional board of education pursuant to the  
 122 school security and safety plans standards, as described in section 10-  
 123 222n of the general statutes, as amended by this act, (2) analyze how the  
 124 results of the security and vulnerability assessments and school security  
 125 and safety plans for each board, developed pursuant to section 10-222m  
 126 of the general statutes, have been addressed and revised following such  
 127 revisions to the number and implementation of fire drills and crisis  
 128 response drills, and (3) assess the effectiveness of how local and regional  
 129 boards of education are conducting such crisis response drills in  
 130 accordance with the crisis response drill protocols developed pursuant  
 131 to section 10-222n of the general statutes, as amended by this act. Not  
 132 later than January 1, 2025, the department shall submit a report, in  
 133 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
 134 on its findings, including any recommendations for legislation, to the  
 135 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
 136 matters relating to education.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2023	10-231
Sec. 2	July 1, 2023	10-222n
Sec. 3	July 1, 2023	New section

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:**

Municipalities	Effect	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$
Local and Regional School Districts	Savings	Minimal	Minimal

**Explanation**

The bill results in a potential savings beginning in FY 24 to local and regional school districts by reducing the number of crisis response drills they must perform from once every three months to twice per year. Any savings is expected to be minimal and would only occur if districts reimburse local and state police departments for any overtime incurred by participating in such drills.

The bill also reduces the number of fire drills that districts must perform annually, which has no fiscal impact.

House "A" strikes the underlying bill and results in the above identified fiscal impact.

**The Out Years**

The ongoing above identified fiscal impact will continue into the future subject to inflation.

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**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 6846 (as amended by House "A")\******AN ACT CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CRISIS RESPONSE DRILLS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill reduces the number of crisis response drills that local and regional boards of education must require their schools to hold each school year. It changes requirements for the crisis response drill format, including those in the law governing the standards that the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) must create for schools' security and safety plans. It also gives school boards more discretion in scheduling these drills and required fire drills throughout the school year.

The bill also requires DESPP, in consultation with the State Department of Education (SDE), to evaluate the effectiveness of the bill's provisions on the number and implementation of both fire drills and crisis response drills. DESPP must report its findings and any recommendations for legislation to the Education Committee by January 1, 2025.

\*House Amendment "A" (1) increases the number of required crisis response drills in the underlying bill from one to two by requiring a separate drill only for school staff at the beginning of the school year; (2) eliminates provisions that would have reduced the number of required fire drills to two per school year, instead requiring seven per year; and (3) requires boards of education to adopt policies with additional protocols for staff-only and whole-school crisis response drills.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

## **§ 1 — DRILL FREQUENCY AND FORMAT**

### ***Fire Drills***

Current law requires schools to hold one fire drill within 30 days after the first day of the school year, followed by a fire drill at least monthly; however, every third month a crisis response drill must be substituted for a fire drill. This results in approximately seven fire drills per school year.

The bill specifies that schools must hold at least seven fire drills per school year, beginning at least 30 days after the first day of the school year as under current law. However, it removes the requirements that they (1) occur at a monthly rate and (2) be swapped for a crisis response drill every third month.

### ***Crisis Response Drills***

Under the bill, schools must hold two crisis response drills per school year, rather than one every three months instead of a fire drill. (Neither the bill nor current law or regulations define “crisis response drill.”) At least one of the crisis response drills must be a staff-only drill, held within 30 days after the school year begins.

The bill eliminates the requirement that boards of education develop the crisis response drill format in consultation with the appropriate law enforcement agency. It replaces this with the requirement that boards follow DESPP’s standards for crisis response drill protocols (see below).

## **§§ 2 & 3 — DESPP STANDARDS AND DRILL EVALUATION**

### ***School Safety and Security Plan Standards (§ 2)***

By law, each local and regional board of education must develop and implement a school security and safety plan for each school under its jurisdiction, based on standards developed by DESPP in consultation with SDE (CGS § 10-222m).

Existing law requires DESPP’s standards to outline “an all-hazards approach to emergencies at public schools.” Current law requires these standards to (1) involve local officials and school leaders in developing school security and safety plans and (2) require each school to establish



its own security and safety committee, among other things. The bill makes the following changes in this law:

1. removes from the standards the requirement that local law enforcement and other local public safety officials evaluate, score, and provide feedback on both fire and crisis response drills and
2. adds to the standards the requirement that all crisis response drills be conducted using protocols developed by the school's board of education in consultation with local law enforcement.

The bill requires boards to develop these crisis response drill protocols in time for the 2023-24 school year and annually update them for subsequent school years. The protocols must be trauma-informed, created with input from the school's administrators, and contain minimum requirements for a staff-only drill and a separate whole-school drill.

**Staff-Only Drill.** For the staff-only crisis response drill, the board-created protocols must at least:

1. be designed and conducted to prepare administrators, educators, and other staff on their roles and responsibilities during an actual emergency, including a drill walk-through;
2. include a discussion of how to (a) implement the board's protocols for whole-school crisis response drills and (b) conduct a whole-school drill with students using these protocols; and
3. allow a local law enforcement agency representative to supervise and participate in the staff-only drill.

**Whole-School Drill.** For the whole-school crisis response drill, the board-created protocols must at least:

1. allow advance notice to be given to students' parents and guardians, educators, local law enforcement, and other first responders at any point during the three days before the drill;

2. allow parents and guardians to opt their student out of participating in the drill;
3. accommodate students who have past trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, or other relevant disabilities;
4. give an age-appropriate explanation to students that includes a description of what the drill is and how the school security and safety plan will be implemented during an actual emergency;
5. give information to students about the availability of student mental health counseling;
6. prohibit active shooter simulation in the school and crouching and huddling by students during the drill; and
7. allow a local law enforcement agency representative to supervise and participate in the drill.

***Evaluation of Bill Effectiveness (§ 3)***

Under the bill, DESPP, in consultation with SDE, must do the following when evaluating the efficacy of the bill's fire and crisis response drills provisions:

1. review the annual reports that each school board submits to DESPP as required under the department's school security and safety plan standards;
2. analyze how the results of each board's security and vulnerability assessments and school security and safety plans have been addressed and revised after the bill's revisions to the drills' frequency and implementation; and
3. assess how effectively school boards are conducting crisis response drills consistent with the protocols developed by each board and its law enforcement agency.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 30 Nay 10 (03/17/2023)