

KSFM 2024-012 - KSFM Prevention Information Release

To: School Superintendents, Preschool Facilities Located in K-12 Buildings

Date: October 14, 2024

Subject: Drill Procedures for Preschool Facilities Located in K-12 Buildings

Regular safety drills are the key to ensuring school safety. Students knowing what to do in the event of an emergency saves lives. During an emergency, critical thinking skills may be impaired, so practicing drills helps ingrain the reflexive actions needed to prevent tragedy.

The 2006 International Fire Code requires that educational occupancies conduct monthly fire drills. Kansas State Statute has amended this to more accurately reflect the safety needs in today's educational facilities. In 2019 the following requirements were adopted:

31-133. Fire marshal; power and duties; rules and regulations. (a) The state fire marshal shall adopt reasonable rules and regulations, consistent with the provisions of this act, for the safeguarding of life and property from fire, explosion and hazardous materials. Such rules and regulations shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(5) requiring administrators of public and private schools and educational institutions, except community colleges, colleges and universities, to conduct at least four fire drills each school year at some time during school hours, aside from the regular dismissal at the close of the day's session, and prescribing the manner in which such fire drills are to be conducted;

(8) requiring administrators of public and private schools and educational institutions, except community colleges, colleges and universities, to establish tornado procedures. Such procedures shall: (A) Provide for at least two tornado drills to be conducted each school year, of which one shall be conducted in September and one shall be conducted in March, at some time during school hours, aside from the regular dismissal at the close of the day's session; (B) describe the manner in which such tornado drills are to be

(12) requiring administrators of public and private schools and educational institutions, except community colleges, colleges and universities, to conduct at least three crisis drills each school year at some time during school hours, aside from the regular dismissal at the close of the day's session. The manner in which such crisis drills are conducted may be subject to approval by the safe and secure schools unit of the Kansas department of education; and

(continue to page 2)

(d) The state fire marshal may grant an exemption pursuant to K.S.A. [31-136](#), and amendments thereto, that authorizes a variance for the number or manner of drills conducted pursuant to subsection (a)(5), (8) or (12) for students receiving special education or related services.

While this change does better prepare students for the emergencies that may be encountered, it only applies to kindergarten through 12th grade. Preschool classrooms are still required to follow the fire code requirement of monthly fire drills. If the preschool is located within a K-12 building, this differing drill schedule can lead to confusion, as all drills must be initiated by sounding an alarm.

If a preschool is located within a K-12 building, the school may choose to follow fire code and conduct a monthly fire drill or can choose to have the preschool children participate in the same drills the K-12 students practice. Also remember that if the preschool is a half-day program, each session must complete the required drills.

This only applies to preschools located within a K-12 building. If the preschool is located in a free-standing building, or any other building not housing a K-12 school, they must comply with the fire code requirement of monthly fire drills.

For questions and to assist you in complying with the requirements, the KSFM has a section on its website devoted to Preschools.

Please visit www.firemarshal.ks.gov/371/Preschool for more information.

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