
School Safety: Emerging Conversations

May 7, 2024



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Session Learning Objectives

1. Attendees will be introduced to the TxA School Safety Subcommittee and the initiatives they are supporting related to school safety.
2. Attendees will have a clear picture of the role of the architect and design in school safety and the issues the built environment can and cannot solve.
3. Attendees will understand how both hardening and the educational environment play a critical role in school safety and will see examples of each.
4. Attendees will understand the updated TEA facility standards and legislative updates related to school safety.

School Safety Subcommittee

TxA Volunteers Education Design Firms School District Representative

Committee Members

Lauren Brown, AIA / Chair

Tommy Osborne, AIA / Co-chair

Antonio Puerto, AIA

Nichole Carroway, AIA

Julie Williams, AIA

Diego Barrera, AIA

Kevin Keating, AIA

Carter Moore, AIA

Jean Daly, AIA

TxA Staff + Support

Becky Walker / TxA

Kathy Grant / Lobbyist

Catherine Calloway, AIA / VP Advocacy

Laura Sachtleben, AIA / Chair GASCom

School Safety Subcommittee

Charge

To focus on the role of architects and the built environment in school safety, as well as to contribute to the school safety dialogue through advocating for and identifying resources and leading practices, and sharing knowledge.

TxA Strategic Plan Alignment

Public Understanding – Influencing governance over school safety legislation and guidelines.

Professional Development – Educating members and clients on the evolution of school safety guidelines.

Role of the Architect

Architects are key partners in the school safety conversation.

We continue to advocate for best practices in the design of safe, secure schools that maintain an inspirational educational environment and meet the needs of local communities.

Design for School Safety

Design CANNOT

- Prevent an attack or guarantee protection



Design for School Safety

Design CAN

- Support a positive and inspiring built environment that promotes engagement
 - Space for interaction and socialization
 - Maintain visibility and connection



Design for School Safety

Design CAN

- Encourage community participation
 - Address multiple risk factors and work in concert with school security procedures and operations
 - Provide a unique response for each community based on their needs and situations



Design for School Safety

Design CAN

- Provide layers of security:
 - Spaces for refuge and emergency escape paths and/or compartmentalization
 - Unobstructed observation sightlines to points of entry



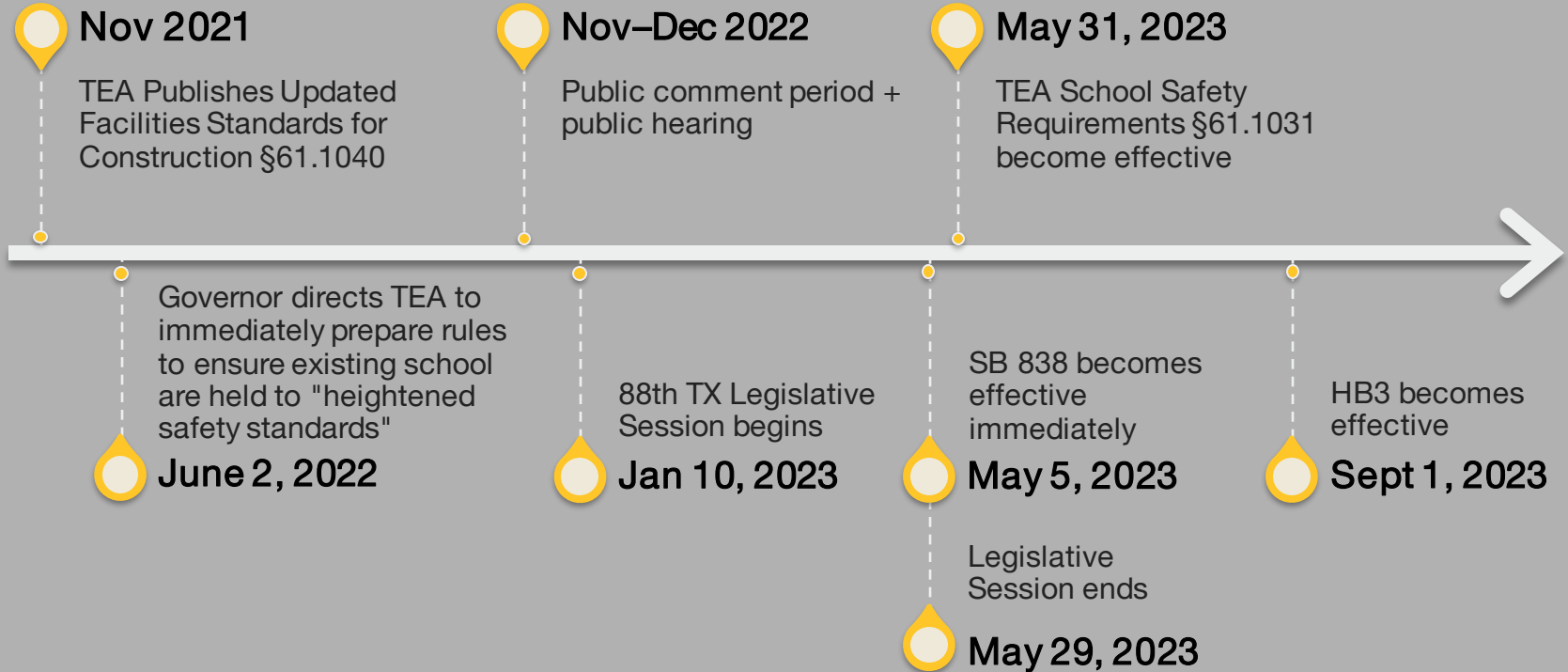




Relevant Legislation

School Safety Requirements Timeline

TEA Rules Update and Legislative Session



SB 838: Silent Panic Alarm Systems

- Each school district and open-enrollment charter school shall provide **each classroom** in the district or school with **silent panic alert technology** that allows for immediate contact with district or school emergency services and emergency services agencies, law enforcement agencies, health departments, and fire departments
- Silent panic alert technology provided for under SB 838 does not satisfy the requirements under **Chapter 37, Education Code, Section 108 (a)(2)** for the district or school to ensure employees have classroom **access to a telephone** or another electronic communication device
- Districts may use **Safety & Security Allotment funding** or other available funds to comply

HB 3: Key Provisions

In addition to law enforcement requirements at each campus, new reporting related to truancy, parental notification protocols, and mental health training, the bill also:

- Applies to new and existing school district and open-enrollment charter school facilities
- Codifies the Governor's appointment of a **Chief of Safety and Security** position at the Texas Education Agency (TEA)
- **Education Service Centers** will serve as a resource on school safety through materials developed by the Texas State School Safety Center to include multi-hazard emergency operations plans (EOP) and deficiencies in campus security
- Increased **oversight of school districts by TEA** for the monitoring of EOP and safety and security audit compliance

HB 3: Key Provisions

- Safety and security requirements for facilities predicated on best practices and the current **TEA Facilities Standards** for new construction and renovation projects
- Requires **review of best practices** for campus safety and security every five years
- Provides a **good cause exemption** for districts working to meeting these requirements
- **Safety and security allotment funding** at \$10/student based on average daily attendance plus \$15,000 for each campus*

The background of the slide is a grayscale image of rows of stadium seats, viewed from a low angle looking down the aisle. The seats are arranged in a repeating pattern that creates a strong sense of depth and perspective, receding into the distance. The lighting highlights the texture of the seats and the curves of the rows.

TEA Commissioner's Rules Concerning School Facilities

Application to Texas School Projects

New Construction

HB 3 and SB 838

TEA School Safety Requirements §61.1031

TEA Facility Standards §61.1040

(for bond projects passed after Nov. 1, 2021)

Existing Facilities

HB 3 and SB 838

TEA School Safety Requirements §61.1031

TEA School Facility Standards for Construction

19 TAC § 61.1040 effective November 1, 2021

- **New Construction**
- **Major Renovation**
 - Exceeds \$50,000 and requires the school district to hire an architect and an engineer
- **Minor Renovation**
 - Exceeds \$50,000 and for which a school district is required to hire an engineer but not an architect

TEA School Facility Standards for Construction

- Implementation applies to the following pertinent public actions by a Board of Trustees:
 - Adoption of a fiscal year maintenance and operations budget where a capital improvement project title and budget are delineated
 - Calling a bond election where a capital improvement project title and budget are delineated

TEA School Facility Standards for Construction

§ 61.1040 Subsection (k) - Safety and Security Standards

- Communications infrastructure
- Access control
- Visitor Management
- Security cameras
- Exterior door numbering

TEA School Safety Requirements

19 TAC § 61.1031 effective May 31, 2023

The provisions of this section apply to **all school instructional facilities** owned, operated, or leased by a school system, regardless of the date of construction or date of lease. The provisions of this section ensure that all school system instructional facilities have access points that are:

- (1) secured by design;
- (2) maintained to operate as intended; and
- (3) appropriately monitored.

TEA School Safety Requirements



Door Numbering



Exterior Doors (except when inside a secured area)



Primary Entrance



Windows Near Exterior Doors (except when inside a secured area)



Secured Area

TEA School Safety Requirements



Master Key Access



Communications



Audits & Inspections



Record Keeping



Maintenance

School Safety Standards Rule Summary



Exterior doors, exterior classroom doors, and portable doors should operate as intended, are required to remain closed, locked, and latched and allow for emergency egress from the inside (while remaining locked).



Windowed doors on the ground level or windows that are adjacent to or near a door and are large enough to allow someone to enter if broken must be reinforced with entry-resistant film unless within a secured area.

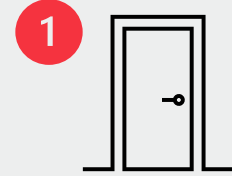


Exterior door sweeps must be conducted weekly to certify that all doors are properly closed, locked, and latched.

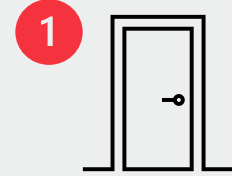


The school system must perform maintenance checks twice annually to ensure that the facility components within the rule function properly and as intended.

Door Numbering



- All facilities, including portable buildings, must have **graphic alpha-numerical characters** on both the interior and exterior of each exterior door location
- Characters must comply with IFC §505
- Sequencing must be **clockwise** around either the campus or each individual building
- All numbering must comply with all **accessibility requirements**



Exterior Doors



Except when inside a secured area, all exterior doors shall:

- Set to a closed, latched, and locked status
- Be **resistant to entry** by intruders. Glass doors cannot be **easily broken** or allow an intruder to open or otherwise enter through the door. (for example, using forced entry film)
- Fully close and engage locking hardware automatically after entry or egress
- Classrooms with exterior entry doors shall include a means to allow an individual located in the classroom to visually identify individuals seeking to enter

Exceptions:

- A door may be unlocked if **actively monitored** and **within a secured area**;
- and for the **purposes for ventilation**, specific doors may remain open for specific periods if explicitly authorized by the school safety committee

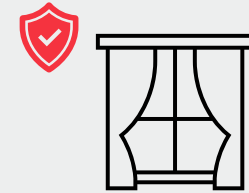
Primary Entrance



If there is no secure vestibule, a primary entrance shall:

- Meet all standards for exterior doors
- Include a means to allow an individual located within the building to visually identify an individual seeking to enter the primary entrance when the entrance is closed and locked, including, but not limited to:
 - windows
 - camera systems
 - and/or intercoms
- Feature a physical barrier that prevents unassisted access to the facility by a visitor
- Feature a location for a visitor check-in and check-out process

Windows



Except when inside a secure area:

- All windows **adjacent to an exterior door** and that would **easily permit** an individual to reach in and open the door from the inside shall be such that the glass cannot be **easily broken**.
- All ground-level windows **near exterior doors** that permit entry from the exterior shall be such that the glass cannot be **easily broken** and allow an intruder to enter through the window frame (for example, using forced entry-resistant film).
- If designed to be opened, all ground-level windows shall have functional locking mechanisms that allow for the windows to be locked from the inside and, if large enough for an individual to enter when opened or if adjacent to a door, be closed and locked when staff are not present.

Definition of Secured Area

Exterior secured area--an area fully enclosed by a fence and/or wall that:

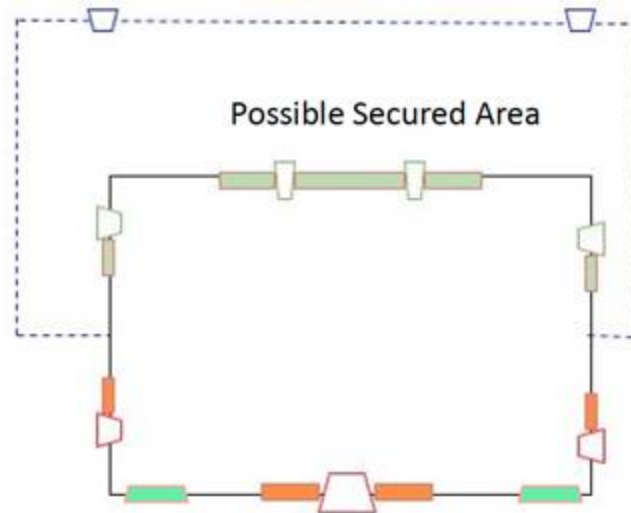
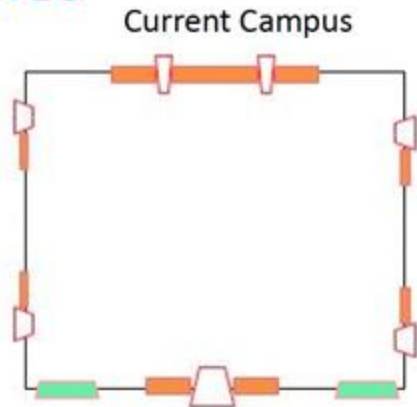
- (A) if enclosed by a fence or wall, utilizes a fence or wall at least 6 feet high with design features that prevent it from being easily scalable, such as stone, wrought iron, chain link with slats or wind screen, or chain link topped with an anti-scaling device, or utilizes a fence or wall at least 8 feet high;
- (B) is well maintained; and
- (C) if gated, features locked gates with emergency egress hardware and has features to prevent opening from the exterior without a key or combination mechanism.

A secured area and security fencing is not a required component of the rule but is provided as means to allow operational flexibility within the instructional facility.

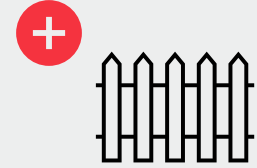


Secured Area Examples

-  Exterior Door - Required to be locked and reinforced if glass
-  Exterior Door - Not required to be locked or reinforced if glass
-  Emergency egress gate - Required to remain closed and locked
-  Ground window required to be reinforced
-  Ground window not required to be reinforced
-  Secured Fencing



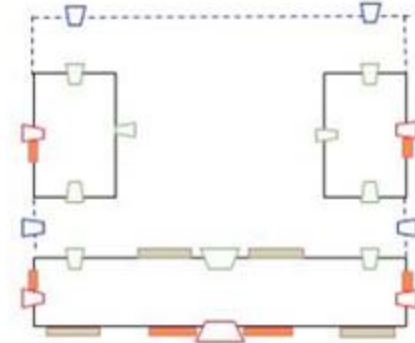
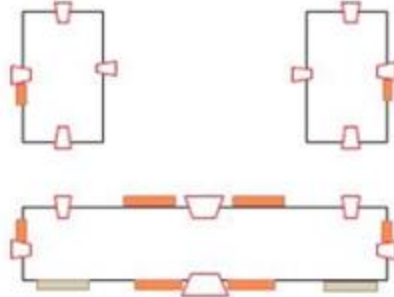
	Original Plan	With Possible Secured Area
Does this require fencing a new secured area?	No	Yes
Does this require fencing upgrades?	No	No
Total Number of Exterior Doors	7	7
Total Number of Exterior Doors that would need to be reinforced and would need to remain closed, latched and locked	7	3
Number of Windows Near or Adjacent to Doors	9	9
Number of Windows Near or Adjacent to Doors that would need reinforcement	9	4



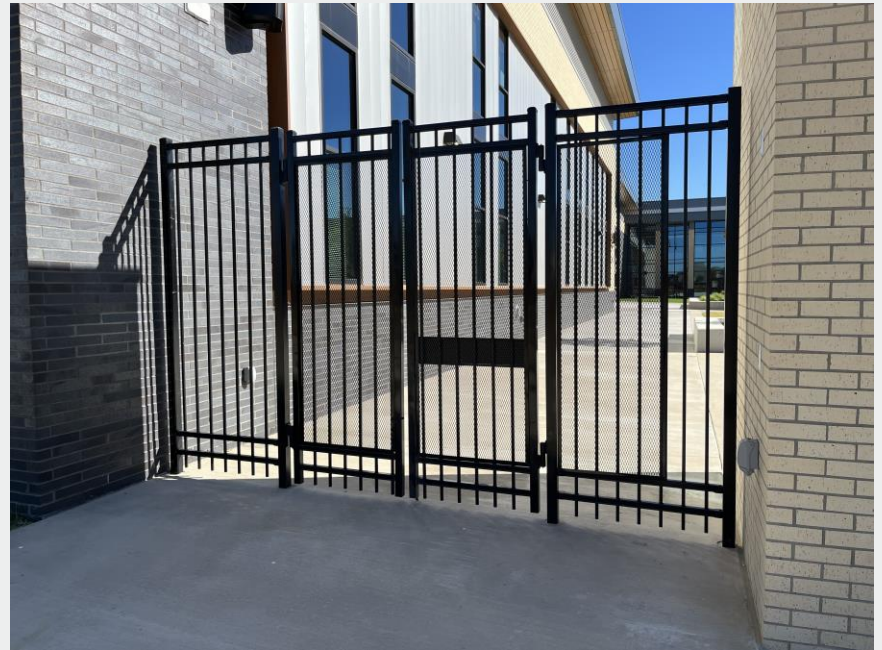
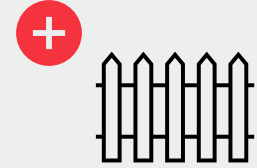
Current Campus









Possible Secured Area

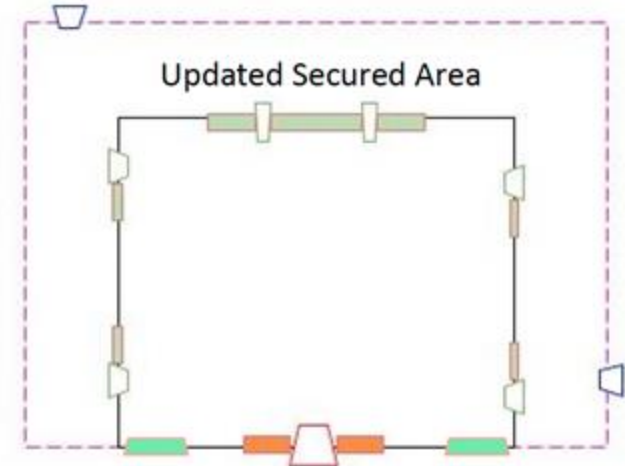
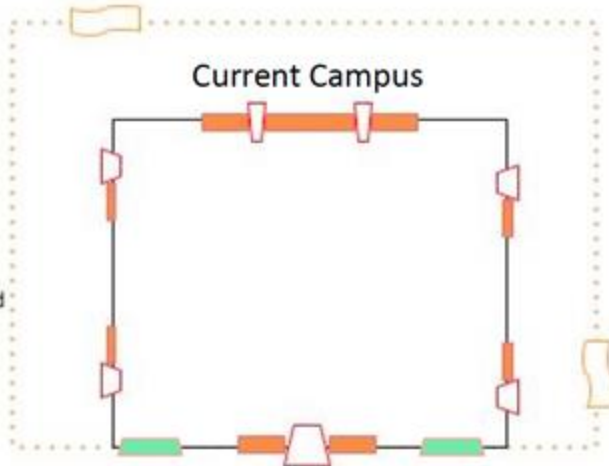
-  Exterior Door - Required to be locked and reinforced if glass
-  Exterior Door - Not required to be locked or reinforced if glass
-  Emergency egress gate - Required to remain closed and locked
-  Ground window required to be reinforced
-  Ground window not required to be reinforced
-  Secured Fencing



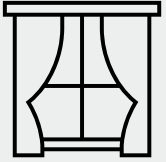
	Original Plan	With Possible Secured Area
Does this require fencing a new secured area?	No	Yes
Does this require fencing upgrades?	No	No
Total Number of Exterior Doors	14	14
Total Number of Exterior Doors that would need to be reinforced and would need to remain closed, latched and locked	14	5
Number of Windows Near or Adjacent to Doors	8	8
Number of Windows Near or Adjacent to Doors that would need reinforcement	8	6



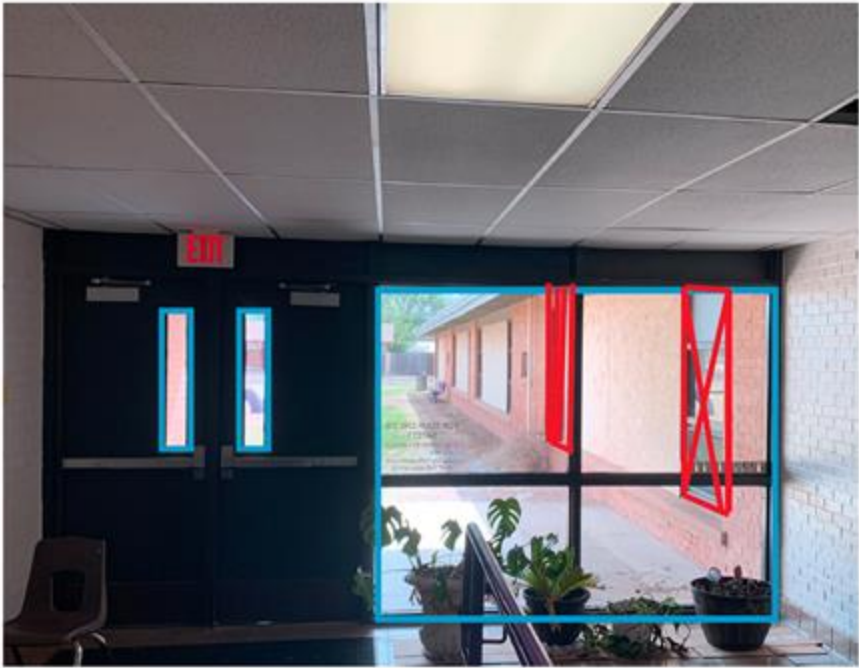
-  Exterior Door - Required to be locked and reinforced if glass
-  Exterior Door - Not required to be locked or reinforced if glass
-  Emergency egress gate - Required to remain closed and locked
-  Ground window required to be reinforced
-  Ground window not required to be reinforced
-  Non-compliant existing fence
-  Existing fence with upgrades
-  Opening in fence

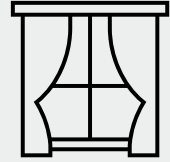


	Original Plan	With Possible Secured Area
Does this require fencing a new secured area?	No	No
Does this require fencing upgrades?	No	Yes
Total Number of Exterior Doors	7	7
Total Number of Exterior Doors that would need to be reinforced and would need to remain closed, latched and locked	7	1
Number of Windows Near or Adjacent to Doors	9	9
Number of Windows Near or Adjacent to Doors that would need reinforcement	9	2



Windows





Master Key Access



All facilities must:

- Include one or more distinctive, exterior secure master key box(es) to permit emergency access to both law enforcement agencies and emergency responder agencies from the exterior (for example, a Knox box)
- Or provide law enforcement electronic or physical master key access to the building



Communications



A communications infrastructure shall be implemented that must provide:

- Law enforcement and emergency responder two-way radios can function within **most portions** of the building(s)
- Include **a panic alert button**, duress, or equivalent alarm system:
 - An alert must be capable of being triggered by campus staff
 - An alert must be triggered automatically in the event a district employee makes a 9-1-1 call
 - The location of where the alert originated shall be included
 - The alert must notify a set of designated school administrators and, if confirmed, notice must be issued to the 9-1-1 center of an emergency situation requiring a law enforcement and/or emergency response and must include the location of where the alert originated
 - **For any exterior doors that feature electronic locking mechanisms that allow for remote locking, the alert system will trigger those doors to automatically lock**

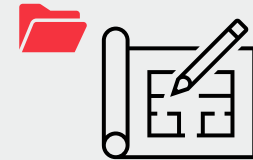
Audits and Inspections



The Board of Trustees or governing board shall adopt a policy requiring the following **continued auditing** of building access:

- Conduct at least **weekly inspections** during school hours of all exterior doors of all instructional facilities to certify that all doors are, by default, set to a closed, latched, and locked status and cannot be opened from the outside without a key
- **Report the findings** of weekly inspections to the school system's safety and security committee
- Report the findings of weekly inspections to the principal to ensure awareness of any deficiencies. Action must be taken to reduce the likelihood of similar deficiencies in the future
- Include a provision in the school system's policy that access control procedures will not discourage parents from visiting campuses they are authorized to visit

Record Keeping



A school system must develop and maintain:

- **Accurate site layout** and exterior and interior **door designation** document for each instructional facility school system-wide that identifies all exterior and interior doors with an alpha-numeric designation
- The site and exterior and interior door designation document should be oriented in a manner that depicts true north
- Copies of exterior and interior door numbering site plans in each campus main office
- Electronic copies of exterior and interior door numbering site plans supplied to the local 9-1-1 administrative entity



Maintenance

A school system shall perform at least **twice-yearly** maintenance checks to ensure the following functionality:

- Exterior doors, windows, locks, and perimeter gates and barriers
- Panic alert or similar emergency notification systems in classrooms and campus central offices
- Telephone and communications infrastructure provide accurate location information
- Master key boxes and the keys they contain
- Law enforcement and emergency responder's two-way radios and two-way radios used by peace officers, resource officers or school marshals properly communicate with local law enforcement and emergence response services
- Procedures in place to require staff to immediately report deficiencies
- Promptly remedy any deficiencies

Certification

- All requirements are required to be implemented during the **2022-2023** school year and thereafter
- Annual compliance certification as part of security audit
- A school system may provisionally certify compliance if:
 - School system has taken steps to initiate an upgrade and
 - For the 2023-24 school year, the contractor or supplier has been procured and a time frame is provided for when the upgrade will be completed
- TEA may grant provisional certification for individual site needs as determined by the agency

Funding



School Safety Funding Continued

June 2022

Governor Abbott and the Legislature provided \$17.1M for school districts to purchase silent panic alert technology

October 2022

Governor Abbott and the Legislature provided \$400M to assist school districts in replacing or upgrading doors, windows, fencing, communications, and other safety measures

May 2023

SB 30 includes \$1.1B for School Safety



2022 – 2025 School Safety Standards Formula Grant

The timeline for the [2022-2025 School Safety Standards Formula Grant](#) is as follows:

- Application Availability Date – 01/03/2023
- **Application Due Date – 08/01/2023**
- Last Amendment Due Date – 01/30/2025
- Revised Final Expenditure Report – 07/31/2025
- Final Expenditure Report - 07/31/2025

*Districts that do not apply for the current grant opportunity will not be eligible for Cycle 1 of the School Safety Facilities Grant.



Ongoing Process

Ongoing Process



TEA School Safety Resources



**2022-2025 School Safety
Formula Grant and Safety and
Facilities Enhancement (SAFE)
Needs Assessment deadlines
have passed.
Expenditure reporting through
2025.**

**TEA Rule Making:
Implementation of school
safety legislation**

Questions

Thank you!