
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SCHOOL SAFETY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that following the Maui
2 wildfires in August of 2023, the speaker of the state house of
3 representatives established six bipartisan interim working
4 groups tasked with evaluating specific topics in the aftermath
5 of the wildfires and making recommendations for appropriate
6 legislative action in the regular session of 2024. Members of
7 the working groups collaborated with federal, state, and county
8 agencies, along with community stakeholders and interested
9 parties, to identify immediate issues that require temporary or
10 transitional relief for the people and businesses of west Maui.

11 The legislature further finds that the schools working
12 group was specifically tasked with evaluating strategies
13 utilized to accommodate displaced students and staff to return
14 to school and preparing recommendations for appropriate
15 legislative action. All working groups released a joint final
16 report in December 2023 detailing their findings and
17 recommendations.



1 The purpose of this Act is to adopt the recommendation of
2 the schools working group by requiring:

3 (1) The department of education to grant public access to
4 emergency action plans that do not pose a security
5 risk to students, staff, or guests of school campuses;

6 (2) Each department school to have a comprehensive school
7 evacuation communication plan for use during
8 emergencies; and

9 (3) The department of education to collaborate with the
10 department of transportation to assess all department
11 school campuses to determine if there are sufficient
12 emergency evacuation routes for each campus.

13 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately
15 designated and to read as follows:

16 "§302A- Emergency action plans; public access. (a)

17 The department shall create emergency action plans for each
18 department school and allow for public access to the plans;
19 provided that access to the emergency action plans does not pose
20 a security risk to students, staff, or guests visiting a school
21 campus.



1 (b) The emergency action plans shall include standards
2 that would trigger the closure of a school, including weather
3 and other environmental situations.

4 §302A- Comprehensive evacuation communication plan;
5 evacuations; emergencies. (a) Each department school shall
6 establish and implement a comprehensive evacuation communication
7 plan for evacuations and other emergencies.

8 (b) Each school evacuation communication plan shall
9 include the following:

10 (1) Identification of 'key stakeholders and communication
11 channels, including students, parents, guardians,
12 staff, and emergency responders, to properly identify
13 how the school will communicate with each group
14 before, during, and after an evacuation or other
15 emergency situation;

16 (2) Development of:

17 (A) A communication protocol to establish clear and
18 concise messages and identify who is responsible
19 for communicating each message; and

20 (B) A process to update the communication protocol
21 developed pursuant to subparagraph (A) as needed;



1 (3) Regular testing and rehearsing of the communication
2 plan to ensure that the plan is effective and all
3 individuals involved know their roles and
4 responsibilities;

5 (4) Cultural awareness and responsiveness to translation
6 needs of the community and accessibility needs of
7 students and individuals with disabilities; provided
8 that the department shall work with language access
9 experts to supports schools in the development of the
10 communication plan; and

11 (5) Involvement of the community through input from
12 students, parents, guardians, staff, and emergency
13 responders.

14 (c) The school evacuation communication plan and any
15 updates to the plan shall be shared with all students, parents,
16 guardians, and staff at the beginning of the school year
17 through:

18 (1) Posting on the appropriate school's website and social
19 media pages; and

20 (2) Sending a copy of the plan to each student's parents
21 or guardians.



H.B. NO. 1837

Report Title:

Department of Education; Emergency Action Plans; Comprehensive School Evacuation Communication Plans; Department of Transportation; Evacuation Routes

Description:

Requires the Department of Education to grant public access to emergency action plans that do not pose a security risk to students, staff, or guests of school campuses. Requires each Department school to have a comprehensive school evacuation communication plan for use during emergencies. Requires the Department of Education to collaborate with the Department of Transportation to assess all Department school campuses to determine if there are sufficient emergency evacuation routes for each campus and report to the Legislature.

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