



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

TO: Legal Authorities of Approved Nonpublic Schools
Legal Authorities of Church Exempt School Programs

FROM: Alexandra Cambra, Director, Program Approval, Division of Educator Certification and Program Approval

DATE: June 28, 2019

RE: House Bill 1186 Nonpublic Schools – Fire Drill Requirements – State Fire Prevention Code

During the 2019 legislative session, the General Assembly passed House Bill 1186, codified in Education Article §7–408.1, requiring each nonpublic school in the State to hold fire drills in accordance with the State Fire Prevention Code, keep records of the fire drills, and send copies of the records to the State Board of Education.

The State Fire Prevention Code, established under §6-206 of the Public Safety Article, sets forth specific guidelines for fire emergency egress drills for educational facilities. Fire emergency egress drills shall be conducted according to Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 29.06.01. Specific language regarding educational programs can be found at COMAR 29.06.08VV(1)(b) and (2).

Statute allows for local jurisdictions to establish more stringent requirements should they chose to do so. As such, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) encourages all schools to work with their local fire safety office to determine if additional requirements have been established for their school program. Contact information for each local office is enclosed.

The MSDE will collect this information on behalf of the State Board of Education from all schools annually for drills conducted the previous school year. For approved nonpublic schools, this collection will be required as part of the school’s Annual Report. For church exempt schools, this collection will be required to be submitted to the Nonpublic School Approval Branch of the MSDE no later than February 1 of each year. All nonpublic schools will be required to use the attached MSDE form when reporting compliance with the State Fire Prevention Code.

Enclosure: Maryland Counties Local Agencies Contact Information
Nonpublic Schools Record of Fire Drills form
House Bill 1186

C: Education Directors of Nonpublic Schools Approved under COMAR 13A.09.10
Administrative Heads of Nonpublic Schools Approved under COMAR 13A.09.09
Sarah Spross, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Educator Certification and Program Approval
Holly Powell, Nonpublic School Approval Specialist, Nonpublic School Approval Branch
Denise Scott, Nonpublic School Approval Specialist, Nonpublic School Approval Branch