

September 3, 2014

Authors



Julie C. Fay
(860) 251-5009
jfay@goodwin.com



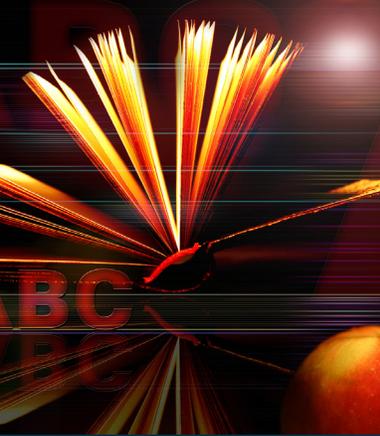
Peter J. Maher
(860) 251-5507
pmaher@goodwin.com

Important Update Regarding School Security and Safety Plans

The 2014-2015 school year marks the first year that public school districts must implement school security and safety plans for each school under Public Act 13-3, passed in the wake of the Newtown tragedy. The law, now codified at Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222m, requires districts to establish a school security and safety committee at each school. Those committees, in turn, are responsible for assisting in the development of the school security and safety plans and the administration of those plans. In January 2014, the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) within the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP), in consultation with the Connecticut Department of Education, released school security and safety standards as well as a template on which boards of education must base their school security and safety plans.

Earlier this summer, DESPP/DEMHS clarified that districts must develop and implement school security and safety plans by the first day of school for the 2014-2015 school year. In addition, through informal conversations, the state also clarified several other points, based on early feedback on submitted plans, that may be helpful to districts as they finalize and implement their plans:

- Districts should submit as part of their school security and safety plans all of the annexes and appendices contained in the state's template.
- The state will not be "approving" or "disapproving" the plans, but will review them and provide findings and recommendations.
- The required National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) trainings for all school personnel and leadership personnel should be completed by the end of this school year, but districts should include a training plan and schedule in their security and safety plans submitted to the state.



- Districts should ensure that the signatory page to the plan is completed, indicating that the proper district-level, school-level, and municipal officials have collaborated on and approved the plan. Districts should also provide copies of school security and safety plans to those community partners listed on the signatory page.
- Districts are reminded that, in addition to submitting their plans to DESPP/DEMHS, school security and safety plans must be made an annex to the municipality's local emergency operations plan, which is also filed annually with DESPP/DEMHS.
- Annual reports from districts to DEMHS Regional Coordinators regarding the types, frequency, and feedback related fire and crisis response drills are due July 1 of each year, beginning on July 1, 2015.

Questions or Assistance:

A school district with questions relating to the requirements for school security and safety plans should contact any member of Shipman & Goodwin LLP's **School Law Group**.

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One Constitution Plaza
Hartford, CT 06103-1919
860-251-5000

300 Atlantic Street
Stamford, CT 06901-3522
203-324-8100

1875 K St., NW - Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006-1251
202-469-7750

289 Greenwich Avenue
Greenwich, CT 06830-6595
203-869-5600

12 Porter Street
Lakeville, CT 06039-1809
860-435-2539

www.shipmangoodwin.com