

The background of the slide is a photograph of a modern school building. A wide, light-colored concrete staircase with metal railings leads up to a second floor. Several students are walking on the stairs. Some are going up, and some are going down. They are wearing backpacks and casual clothing. Large windows on the right side of the building let in bright natural light, creating a bright and airy atmosphere.

School Safety Standards and the School Facilities Grant

July 24, 2023

- **Adopted School Safety Standards**
(19 TAC §61.1031, School Safety Requirements)
- **Changes at Adoption**
- **Implementation Guidance**
- **Implementation Timeline**
- **School Facilities Grant Overview**

Adopted School Safety Standards Overview

Background: School Safety Standards (19 TAC §61.1031)

- On June 2, 2022, TEA was charged by Governor Abbott to create facility standards for all instructional facilities across the state
- Proposed rule was posted on the Registrar's website on November 4, 2022
- Public comment period ended on December 12, 2022.
- School Safety team reviewed comments for additional consideration.
- Effective May 31, 2023.

Rule Revisions at Adoption

Section	Description	Amendment
(c)(9)	Facilities requirements	All facilities must include one or more distinctive, exterior secure master key box(es) designed to permit emergency access to both law enforcement agencies and emergency responder agencies from the exterior <u>OR</u> provide all local law enforcement electronic or physical master key access to the building(s).
(c)(10)	Communications infrastructure	An alert must be capable of being triggered by campus staff, including temporary or substitute staff, from an integrated or enabled device. School systems shall comply with state and federal Kari's Laws and federal RAY BAUM's Act.
(h)	Records retention	School systems must adopt a 3-year records control schedule that complies with the minimum requirements established by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission schedule.
(i)(3)	Certification	TEA may modify rule requirements or grant provisional certification for individual site needs as determined by the agency.

Instructional Facilities

Instructional facility--this term has the meaning assigned in Texas Education Code (TEC), §46.001, and includes any real property, an improvement to real property, or a necessary fixture of an improvement to real property that is used predominantly for teaching curriculum under TEC, §28.002. For purposes of this section, an instructional facility does not include real property, improvements to real property, or necessary fixtures of an improvement to real property that are part of a federal, state, or private correctional facility or facility of an institution of higher education, medical provider, or other provider of professional or social services over which a school system has no control.

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.

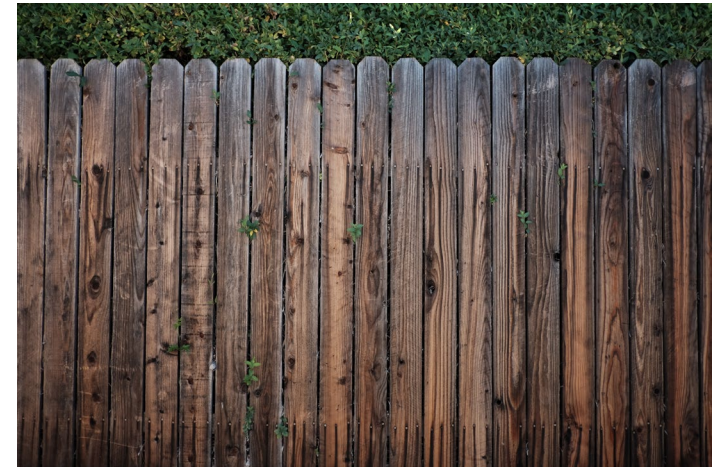
Definition of Secured Area

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.

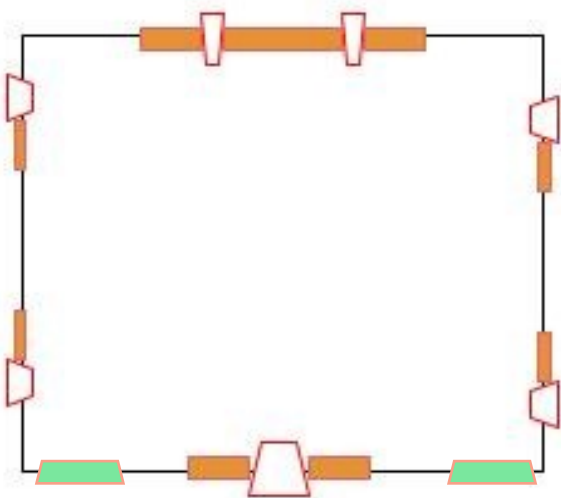
“Not Easily Scalable”



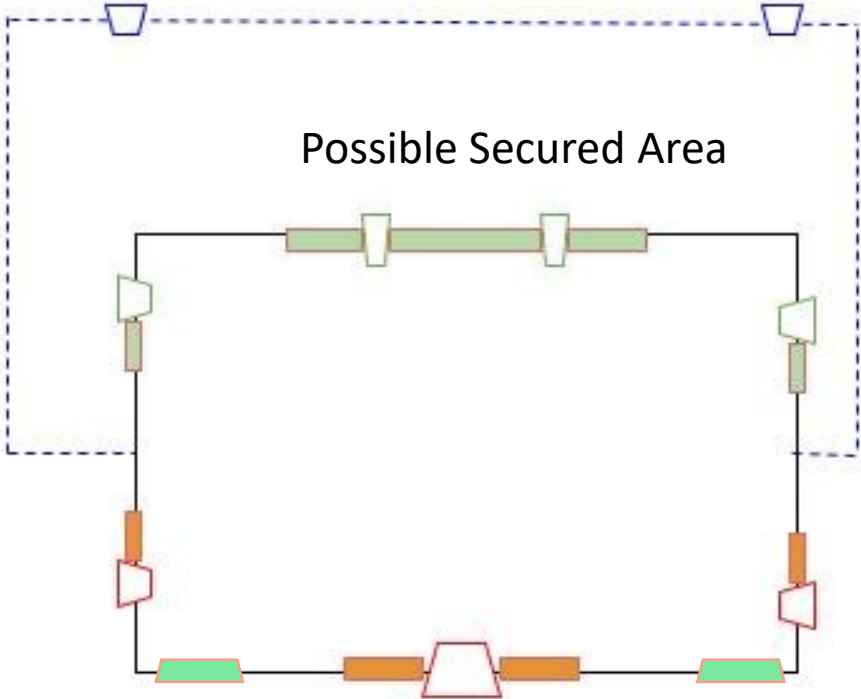
Secured Area Examples

- 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

Current Campus

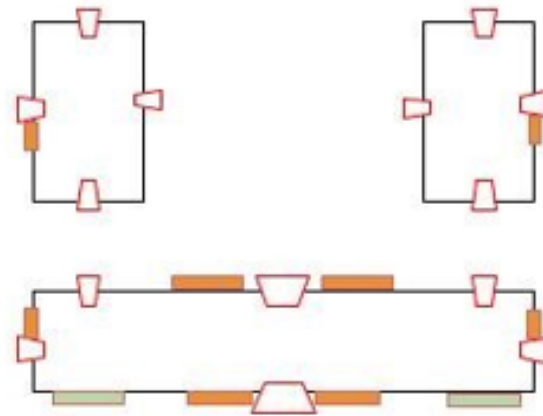


Possible Secured Area

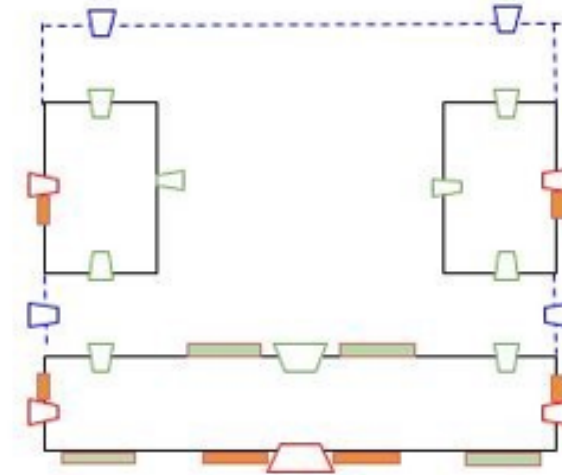


	Original Plan	With Possible Secured Area
Does this require fencing a new secured area?	No	Yes
Does this require fencing upgrades?	No	No
Total Number of Exterior Doors	7	7
Total Number of Exterior Doors that would need to be reinforced and would need to remain closed, latched and locked	7	3
Number of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

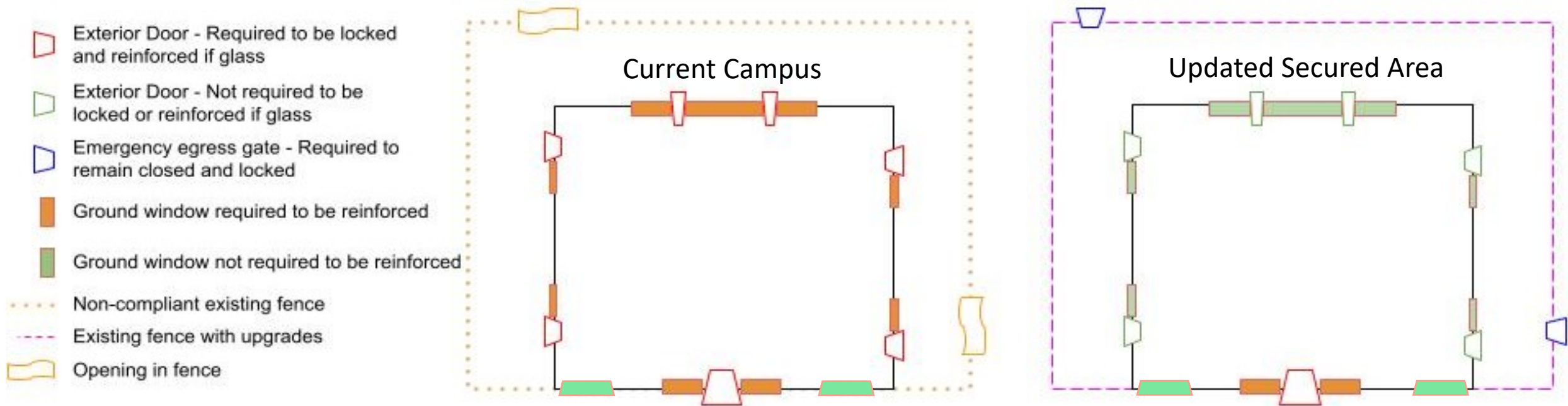
Current Campus



Possible Secured Area



	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



	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

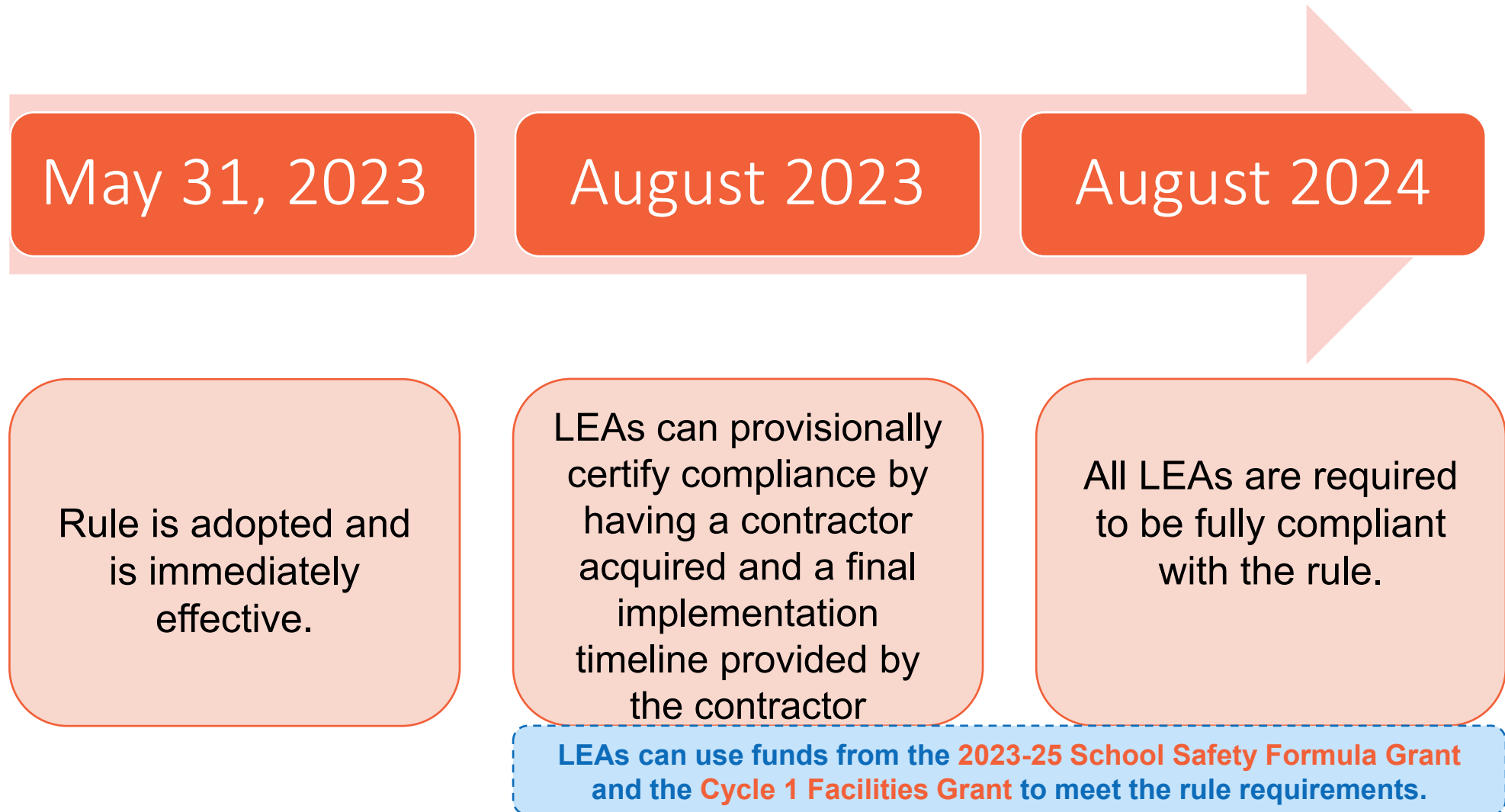


School Safety Standards Rule – Components

A communications infrastructure shall be implemented that must:

- (B) include a panic alert button, duress, or equivalent alarm system, via standalone hardware or integrated into other telecommunications devices, that includes the following functionality.
 - (i) An alert must be capable of being triggered manually by campus staff.
 - (ii) An alert must be triggered automatically in the event a district employee calls 911 using the hardware described in this subparagraph from any location within the school system.
 - (iii) With any alert generated, the location of where the alert originated shall be included.
 - (iv) The alert must notify a set of designated school administrators as needed to provide confirmation of response, and, if confirmed, notice must be issued to law enforcement and emergency responder agencies of an emergency situation requiring a law enforcement and/or emergency response. A notice can simultaneously be issued to all school staff of the need to follow appropriate emergency procedures.
 - (v) For any exterior doors that feature electronic locking mechanisms that allow for remote locking, the alert system will trigger those doors to automatically lock.

Standards Implementation Timeline



School Safety Standards FAQ

Q: Do I have to reinforce or otherwise make all ground floor windows intruder resistant?

A: No. The School Safety Standards require that:

1. **except when inside an exterior secured area**, all windows that are adjacent to an exterior door and that are of a size and position that, if broken, would easily permit an individual to reach in and open the door from the inside shall be constructed or modified such that the glass cannot be easily broken
2. **except when inside an exterior secured area**, all ground-level windows near exterior doors that are of a size and position that permits entry from the exterior if broken shall be constructed or modified such that the glass cannot be easily broken and allow an intruder to enter through the window frame
3. 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

Q: What if I am unable to get everything within the timeframe outlined in the School Safety Standards?

A: TEA may look at these situations on a case-by-case basis. However, ensuring the safety of students across Texas remains the priority.

Q: Can TEA recommend a vendor for components of the rule?

A: The agency cannot recommend or otherwise endorse a specific vendor.

Q: Why do I have to put fencing around my entire campus?

A: Fencing is not a requirement under the School Safety Standards. It is an optional component with specific requirements that is allowed to provide some operational flexibility to the campus.

Q: What if I have a natural barrier around part of my campus (e.g. a tall, natural rock wall)? Can that help create an exterior secure area?

A: Please contact us at safeschools@tea.texas.gov. We will be happy to review your specific situation.

Q: Are interior doors required to be locked during instructional time?

A: Although a best practice, there is no requirement for interior doors to be locked. Locking interior doors is a local determination. If classroom doors are unlocked, it is best practice that they be able to be locked in the event of an emergency utilizing one's gross motor skills (e.g. push button door handles / knobs).

Q: How can I be sure local first responder radios will work in our facility(s)?

A: Contact your local law enforcement / fire department and request they test their communications capability.

Q: What if my doors are numbered differently than the manner outlined in the School Safety Standards?

A: The School Safety Standards are written in compliance with International Fire Code and the campus doors should align with the required numbering sequence.

Q: Can we perform door inspections monthly versus weekly?

A: No. The [Proposed amendment to 19 Texas Administrative Code \(TAC\) Chapter 61, School Districts, Subchapter CC, Commissioner's Rules Concerning School Facilities, §61.1031, School Safety Requirements](#) require weekly sweeps. Weekly inspections serve two primary purposes: 1. to better ensure the safety of students, staff, and visitors, and 2. to timely detect any defects or damage to doors or door hardware thereby allowing for rapid repair.

Q: Who do I contact if I am unsure about something in the School Safety Standards?

A: Please contact - safeschools@tea.texas.gov

Q: If a district has fire knox boxes, can we add separate police boxes or must it be combined?

A: You will need distinguishable access points - one for fire and one for law enforcement. This can be either 2 separate boxes and/or a single combined box.

Q: Does the School Safety Standards require a panic button in every classroom?

A: The standards require that most staff can trigger an alert in the event of an emergency situation.

Q: What are the important deadlines and milestones of the 2022-2025 School Safety Standards Formula Grant program?

A: The timeline for the 2022-2024 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*

Q: Please advise as to what the assurance “Applicant provides assurance that it will first expend all its SB500 School Safety and Security Grant (school hardening funds) before expending grant funds” means.

A: To be considered as expending all of your 2019-2021 School Safety and Security (SB500/School Hardening) grant funds, your LEA must have 15% or less of your grant award remaining.

The background of the slide is a photograph of a school hallway with a wide set of stairs. Several students are walking on the stairs, some going up and some coming down. They are wearing backpacks and casual clothing. The hallway has large windows on the right side, letting in natural light. The overall atmosphere is bright and active.

School Safety 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.

Allowable Costs

- Fencing – **NOT REQUIRED BUT OPTIONAL**
 - Purchase of fencing;
 - Emergency egress gates;
 - Anti-scaling devices;
 - Fencing; and
 - Fence posts.
 - Upgrade pre-existing fencing to become compliant with safety standards rule:
 - Increasing the height of pre-existing fence to meet the height requirement of the safety standards rule; and
 - Modification of other pre-existing fencing components to bring fence(s) up to standard.
- Exterior Doors
 - Purchasing of door reinforcement components:
 - Door;
 - **Mechanical** door auto-closer;
 - **Mechanical** door lock;
 - Emergency egress push bar;
 - Door frame;
 - Center mullion; and
 - Master key rekeying on mechanical doors

- Glass Exterior Doors Not Within A Secured Area
 - Purchase of forced-entry resistant film; and
 - Installation materials.
- Ground Level Exterior Windows
 - For windows adjacent to or near an exterior door to become complaint not within a secured area:
 - Purchase of forced-entry resistant film; and
 - Installation materials;
 - In the case that the window frame itself is not removable and the frame and window must be upgraded to comply with the minimum safety standards:
 - Purchase of forced-entry window;
 - Window frame; and
 - Installation materials.

This grant is intended to meet the MINIMUM component standards and only allows for the purchase and installation of those required components before an LEA can expand the uses of the grant funds.

2023 – 2025 School Facilities Grant



School Safety Facilities Grant

\$1.1B

one-time funding through the supplemental appropriations bill to address new minimum school safety standards and other facilities-related safety improvements.

Cycle 1 (~September 2023)

Discretionary non-competitive grant process that will require LEAs to demonstrate a need for the funds to include, rationale, site plans, and vendor contracts.

Intended to ensure that full funding is provided so that all campuses in Texas fully comply with the minimum school safety facility standards, even if they do not currently comply.

Only LEAs that have applied to the current grant AND have not certified compliance will be eligible for the first cycle of this grant. Allowable costs will only consist of items aligned to the School Safety Standards.

Cycle 2 (~January 2024)

Formula grant to all LEAs to support additional safety needs identified by the district, beyond the minimum safety facility standards. Eligibility is open to all public school districts and open enrollment charter schools.

Allowable Costs

- Cycle 1 – Similar to the current 2022-25 School Safety Standards Formula Grant, the list of allowables will only cover the required items in the School Safety Standards and the instillation of those components.
- Cycle 2 – The list of allowables for the second cycle of the grant will a much more comprehensive list of allowables to include, but not limited to:
 - Safety equipment
 - Mental health supports and counseling
 - Armed security
 - School safety technology
 - Other school safety supports

Questions?

SafeSchools@tea.texas.gov

