

HB 501

School Evacuation Plans – Updates for Students with Mobility Impairments



Bill Patron: Delegate Laura Jane Cohen

■ WHAT THE BILL DOES:

Requires any divisionwide or public elementary or secondary school building evacuation plan, policy, or protocol to seek to maximize the opportunity for students with mobility impairments to evacuate the school building alongside their non-mobility-impaired peers.

■ HOW DOES THIS IMPACT SCHOOL DIVISIONS?

Each school's building evacuation plan, policy, or protocol must include provisions that seek to maximize the opportunity for students with mobility impairments to evacuate the school building alongside their non-mobility-impaired peers.

■ WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

- Virginia Department of Education's [*Best Practices for Inclusive Planning for Evacuation*](#)

■ WHAT ADDITIONAL ITEMS WILL BE RELEASED?

- No additional items are currently slated for release.

■ SCHOOL DIVISION NEXT STEPS:

1. Review current evacuation plans and determine if specific plans with student with mobilities are articulated in the evacuation plan.
2. Identify students with current mobility impairments who may need assistance exiting the school building. Note that students may also have temporary mobility impairments.
3. Determine what changes or improvements may be needed for the plan to ensure that the evacuation procedures allow students with mobility impairments to evacuate the building alongside their non-mobility-impaired peers.
4. Collaborate with first responders, including local fire/rescue officials, to identify additional solutions as needed.
5. Create a plan in collaboration with school staff, first responders, and the student's family to ensure a safe exit alongside the student's non-mobility-impaired peers.
6. Formalize the school evacuation plan and communicate the plan in writing to relevant stakeholders. This plan should be included in the school's crisis plan and should be included in teacher substitute plans in every classroom that serves the impacted students with mobility impairments.
7. Purchase any needed equipment to ensure a safe exit for students with mobility impairments.
8. Provide training to staff impacted by revisions to the school and school division's evacuation plans.
9. Practice evacuation plans during designated school fire drills and other evacuation exercises.



WHO IS THE VDOE CONTACT:

Jeremy Raley, Chief of Staff

jeremy.raley@doe.virginia.gov

804-546-1496

Kent Dickey, Deputy Superintendent

kent.dickey@doe.virginia.gov

804-225-2025