

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) adopts new §103.1215, concerning school safety requirements. The new section is adopted without changes to the proposed text as published in the March 27, 2026 issue of the *Texas Register* (51 TexReg 1950) and will not be republished. The new section includes updates to implement House Bill (HB) 3 and Senate Bill (SB) 838, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, and HB 33 and HB 121, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, and clarify requirements for school safety to ensure a safe and secure environment in Texas public schools.

REASONED JUSTIFICATION: Adopted new §103.1215 moves existing language from 19 TAC §61.1031, which prescribes minimum school safety standards to address the safety of students and staff in Texas public schools. The new rule includes changes to existing §61.1031.

Legislation from the 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, added and amended school safety requirements in Texas Education Code (TEC), §§7.061, 37.1083, 37.117, 37.351, and 37.355. Legislation from the 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, added TEC, §37.1087, to existing school safety requirements. Adopted new §103.1215 implements legislation and clarifies school safety requirements, as follows.

Adopted new subsection (a) establishes definitions for the rule. The definition for "exterior secured area" includes new language specifying that a perimeter fence does not constitute an exterior secured area.

Adopted new subsection (b) makes the rule applicable to all school instructional facilities owned, operated, or leased by a school system, regardless of the date of construction or date of lease. No changes to the existing requirements were made.

Adopted new subsection (c) requires school systems to implement safety and security standards compliance requirements in all instructional facilities owned, operated, or leased by the school system. New language was added to specify that the standards apply to facilities that are newly constructed, acquired, or substantially renovated. Language was also added to state that security reviews required under TEC, §37.1087, should be conducted as soon as practicable after a facility is constructed, acquired, or renovated and must occur before students occupy the building. In addition, alert requirements were modified in subsection (c)(10)(B)(iv). Finally, a new requirement was added that beginning August 1, 2026, school systems must certify in Sentinel that security reviews have been conducted.

Adopted new subsection (d) outlines operating requirements for school systems and includes new language requiring electronic copies of exterior and interior door numbering site plans to be provided to emergency service districts.

Adopted new subsection (e) outlines that, to the extent this section conflicts with rules adopted in 19 TAC Chapter 61, School Districts, Subchapter CC, Commissioner's Rules Concerning School Facilities, including terms defined by this section or standards established by this section, the provisions of this section prevail. No changes to the existing requirements were made.

Adopted new subsection (f) requires school systems to comply with the standards adopted under Texas Government Code, §469.052. No changes to the existing requirements were made.

Adopted new subsection (g) requires school systems to adopt a 3-year records control schedule that complies with the minimum requirements established by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission schedule, record series item number 5.4.017. No changes to the existing requirements were made.

Adopted new subsection (h) outlines that any document or information collected, identified, developed, or produced relating to the monitoring of school district safety and security requirements is confidential under Texas Government Code, §418.177 and §418.181, and is not subject to disclosure under Texas Government Code, Chapter 552. No changes to the existing requirements were made.

Adopted new subsection (i) requires school systems to annually certify compliance with subsections (c) and (d) of this section as part of ongoing security audits under TEC, §37.108(b), to maintain the certification locally, and to provide documentation upon request by TEA. No changes to the existing requirements were made.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND AGENCY RESPONSES: The public comment period on the proposal began March 27, 2026, and ended April 27, 2026. Following is a summary of public comments received and agency responses.

Comment: The Texas Association of Architects (TxA) expressed concern regarding the lack of reference to a "good cause exception" in the rule, as outlined in TEC, §37.353. TxA indicated that, as currently drafted, the rule does not include any language or mechanism to effectuate the provisions of law contained in TEC, §37.353, that permit a school district or charter school to claim and document a good cause exception to become compliant with specified school facilities standards for safety and security. TxA requested the rule have additional language envisioning and providing for the use of a "good cause exception" for a school district or charter school to become compliant.

Response: The agency disagrees. Good cause exceptions related to facility safety are not equivalent to compliance with school safety requirements. A good cause exception is based on the limited circumstances outlined in TEC, §37.353, approved on a case-by-case basis, and they require school systems to develop alternative standards for safety with which they can comply.

Comment: TxA commented the rule should be clarified to ensure school districts and charter schools are clearly directed to include floor plans in their emergency response maps and during their campus walk-throughs.

Response: The agency disagrees and considers current provisions sufficient as written.

Comment: A Texas administrator commented that local school systems are best positioned to assess their facilities, communities, and student needs in order to develop and maintain effective safety plans. The commenter stated that additional state-level restructuring and clarification does little to improve outcomes and instead diverts attention from the work that matters most. Further, the administrator noted that the inclusion of expanded language and clarification of requirements risks further embedding a compliance-driven approach to school safety.

Response: The agency disagrees. TEC, §7.061, requires that, not later than September 1 of each even-numbered year, the commissioner review all rules adopted under that section and amend the rules as necessary to ensure that facilities standards for school district and open-enrollment charter school facilities continue to provide a secure and safe environment.

Comment: A Texas administrator urged the agency to reconsider this proposal and focus on providing meaningful support to schools rather than expanding regulatory requirements.

Response: The agency disagrees. TEC, §7.061, requires that, not later than September 1 of each even-numbered year, the commissioner review all rules adopted under that section and amend the rules as necessary to ensure that facilities standards for school district and open-enrollment charter school facilities continue to provide a secure and safe environment. This rulemaking replaces §61.1031 in accordance with this requirement.

Comment: A Texas administrator expressed concern related to the availability of additional funding to support enhanced safety measures and requested clarification on the assertion that for the first five years the proposal is in effect, there are no additional costs to state or local government, including school districts.

Response: The agency provides the following clarification. The changes are necessary to implement requirements enacted by the 89th Texas Legislature and align agency rules with changes made in statute. The purpose of the rule is to clarify and operationalize legislative requirements rather than establish additional requirements beyond those prescribed by law.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY. The new section is adopted under Texas Education Code (TEC), §7.061, as amended by House Bill (HB) 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, which requires the commissioner of education to adopt and amend rules to ensure a safe and secure environment for public schools, which includes best practices for design and construction of new facilities and improving, renovating, and retrofitting existing facilities. The section requires the commissioner to review all rules by September 1 of each even-numbered year and take action as necessary to ensure school facilities for school districts and open-enrollment charter schools continue to provide a

safe and secure environment; TEC, §37.1083, as added by HB 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, and amended by HB 121, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, which establishes the Office of School Safety and Security within the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and charges TEA with monitoring the implementation and operation requirements of school district safety and security. Monitoring efforts must include technical assistance related to multihazard emergency operations plans, safety and security audits, and security reviews. Further, the statute establishes that any document or information collected, identified, developed, or produced related to the monitoring of district safety and security is confidential under Texas Government Code, §418.177 and §418.181, making them not subject to disclosure under Texas Government Code, Chapter 552. Subsection (k) allows the commissioner to adopt rules as necessary to implement the section; TEC, §37.1087, as added by HB 33, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, which requires a school district that constructs, acquires, renovates, or improves a district facility to conduct a security review to determine whether the facility meets school safety and security requirements; TEC, §37.115(b), which allows TEA, in coordination with the Texas School Safety Center, to adopt rules to establish a safe and supportive school program, including providing for physical and psychological safety; TEC, §37.117, as added by Senate Bill (SB) 838 and HB 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, which requires that each school district and open-enrollment charter school provide the Department of Public Safety, local law enforcement, emergency service districts, and emergency first responders an accurate map of each district campus and school campus, in accordance with standards outlined in TEC, §37.351. Additionally, school systems must provide these emergency services personnel an opportunity to conduct a walk-through of each campus and school building using the map provided; TEC, §37.118, as added by SB 838 and HB 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, which requires that each school district or open-enrollment charter school have silent alert panic technology allowing for immediate contact with district or school emergency services and emergency services agencies, law enforcement agencies, health departments, and fire departments; TEC, §37.351, as added by HB 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, which requires school districts to comply with each school facilities standard, including performance standards and operational requirements, related to safety and security adopted under TEC, §7.061, or provided by other law or TEA rule. Additionally, school districts must develop and maintain documentation of the district's implementation of and compliance with school safety and security facilities standards for each district facility; and TEC, §37.355, as added by HB 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, which outlines that any document or information collected, identified, developed, or produced relating to a safety or security requirement under TEC, Chapter 37, Subchapter J, is confidential under Texas Government Code, §418.177 and §418.181, and not subject to disclosure under Texas Government Code, Chapter 552.

CROSS REFERENCE TO STATUTE. The new section implements Texas Education Code, §7.061, as amended by House Bill (HB) 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023; §37.1083, as added by HB 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, and amended by HB 121, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025; §37.1087, as added by HB 33, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025; §37.115(b); §37.117, as added by Senate Bill (SB) 838 and HB 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023; §37.118, as added by SB 838 and HB 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023; and §37.351 and §37.355, as added by HB 3, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023.

<rule>

§103.1215. School Safety Requirements.

(a) Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this section, shall have the following meanings.

- (1) Actively monitored--supervised by an adult who can visibly review visitors prior to entrance, who can take immediate action to close and/or lock the door, and whose duties allow for sufficient attention to monitoring.
- (2) Exterior secured area--
 - (A) This term describes an area fully enclosed by a fence and/or wall that:
 - (i) is utilized when keeping doors closed, locked, and latched is not operationally possible;

- (ii) 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;
 - (iii) is well maintained; and
 - (iv) if gated, features locked gates with emergency egress hardware and has features to prevent opening from the exterior without a key or combination mechanism.
- (B) A perimeter fence does not constitute an exterior secured area.
- (3) 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.
- (4) Modular, portable building--
 - (A) an industrialized building as defined by Texas Occupations Code (TOC), §1202.002 and §1202.003;
 - (B) any relocatable educational facility as defined by TOC, §1202.004, regardless of the location of construction of the facility; or
 - (C) any other manufactured or site-built building that is capable of being relocated and is used as a school facility.
- (5) Primary entrance--
 - (A) the main entrance to an instructional facility that is closest to or directly connected to the reception area; or
 - (B) any exterior door the school system intends to allow visitors to use to enter the facility during school hours either through policy or practice.
- (6) School system--a public independent school district or public open-enrollment charter school.
- (7) Secure vestibule--a secured space with two or more sets of doors and an office sign-in area where all but the exterior doors shall:
 - (A) remain closed, latched, and locked;
 - (B) comply with subsection (c)(3)(B) of this section; and
 - (C) only unlock once the visitor has been visually verified.
- (b) The provisions of this section apply to all school instructional facilities owned, operated, or leased by a school system, regardless of the date of construction or date of lease. The provisions of this section ensure that all school system instructional facilities have access points that are:
 - (1) secured by design;
 - (2) maintained to operate as intended; and
 - (3) appropriately monitored.
- (c) A school system shall implement the following safety and security standards compliance requirements to all instructional facilities owned, operated, or leased by the school system, to include facilities newly constructed, acquired, or substantially renovated. In implementing the requirements of this section, school systems shall comply with the provisions of §61.1040(j) of this title (relating to School Facilities Standards for Construction on or after November 1, 2021) and the security review requirements outlined in TEC,

§37.1087. Security reviews should be conducted as soon as practicable after a facility is constructed, acquired, or renovated and must occur before students occupy the building. Beginning August 1, 2026, school systems must certify in Sentinel that security reviews have been conducted, in accordance with §103.1213 of this title (relating to Required Reporting through Sentinel).

- (1) All instructional facilities, including modular, portable buildings, must include the addition of graphically represented alpha-numerical characters on both the interior and exterior of each exterior door location. The characters may be installed on the door, or on at least one door at locations where more than one door leads from the exterior to the same room inside the facility, or on the wall immediately adjacent to or above the door location. Characters shall comply with the International Fire Code, §505, which requires numbers to be a minimum of four inches in height. The primary entrance of an instructional facility shall always be the first in the entire sequence and is the only door location that does not require numbering. The numbering sequence shall be clockwise and may be sequenced for the entire campus or for each facility individually. The door-numbering process must comply with all accessibility requirements related to signage.
- (2) Unless a secure vestibule is present, a primary entrance shall:

 - (A) meet all standards for exterior doors;
 - (B) include a means to allow an individual located within the building to visually identify an individual seeking to enter the primary entrance when the entrance is closed and locked, including, but not limited to, windows, camera systems, and/or intercoms;
 - (C) feature a physical barrier that prevents unassisted access to the facility by a visitor; and
 - (D) feature a location for a visitor check-in and check-out process.
- (3) All exterior doors shall:

 - (A) be set to a closed, latched, and locked status, except that:

 - (i) a door may be unlocked if it is actively monitored or within an exterior secured area; and
 - (ii) for the purposes of ventilation, a school system may designate in writing as part of its multi-hazard emergency operations plan under TEC, §37.108, specific exterior doors that are allowed to remain open for specified periods of time if explicitly authorized by the school safety and security committee established by TEC, §37.109, when a quorum of members are present, and only if it is actively monitored or within an exterior secured area;
 - (B) be constructed, both for the door and door frame and their components, of materials and in a manner that make them resistant to entry by intruders. Unless inside an exterior secured area, doors constructed of glass or containing glass shall be constructed or modified such that the glass cannot be easily broken and allow an intruder to open or otherwise enter through the door (for example, using forced entry-resistant film);
 - (C) include:

 - (i) a mechanism that fully closes and engages locking hardware automatically after entry or egress without manual intervention, regardless of air pressure within or outside of the facility; and
 - (ii) a mechanism that allows the door to be opened from the inside when locked to allow for emergency egress while remaining locked; and
 - (D) if keyed for re-entry, be capable of being unlocked with a single (or a small set of) master key(s), whether physical key, punch code, or key-fob or similar electronic device.
- (4) Except when inside an exterior secured area, classrooms with exterior entry doors shall include a means to allow an individual located in the classroom to visually identify an individual seeking to enter the classroom when the door is closed and locked, including, but not limited to, windows, camera systems, and/or intercoms.

- (5) 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.
 - (6) 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 (for example, using forced entry-resistant film).
 - (7) 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.
 - (8) Roof access doors shall remain closed, latched, and locked when not actively in use.
 - (9) All facilities must:
 - (A) 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 (for example, a Knox box) at a location designated by the local authorities with applicable jurisdiction; or
 - (B) provide all local law enforcement electronic or physical master key access to the building(s).
 - (10) A communications infrastructure shall be implemented that must:
 - (A) ensure equipment is in place such that law enforcement and emergency responder two-way radios can function within most portions of the building(s); and
 - (B) include a panic alert button, duress, or equivalent alarm system, via standalone hardware, software, or integrated into other telecommunications devices or online applications, that includes the following functionality.
 - (i) An alert must be capable of being triggered by campus staff, including temporary or substitute staff, from an integrated or enabled device.
 - (ii) An alert must be triggered automatically in the event a district employee makes a 9-1-1 call using the hardware or integrated telecommunications devices 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 allow for immediate contact with the 9-1-1 dispatch center, district or school emergency services, law enforcement agencies, health departments, and fire departments. Alerts must notify designated administrators and simultaneously notify affected staff of the emergency.
 - (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.
 - (11) School systems shall ensure compliance with state and federal Kari's Laws and federal RAY BAUM's Act and corresponding rules and regulations pertaining to 9-1-1 service for school telephone systems, including a multi-line telephone system.
- (d) Certain operating requirements. A school system shall implement the following.
- (1) Access control. The board of trustees or the governing board shall adopt a policy requiring the following continued auditing of building access:
 - (A) conduct at least weekly inspections during school hours of all exterior doors of all instructional facilities to certify that all doors are set to a closed, latched, and locked

status and cannot be opened from the outside without a key as required in subsection (c)(3)(A) of this section;

- (B) report the findings of weekly inspections required by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph to the school system's safety and security committee as required by TEC, §37.109, and ensure the results are kept for review as part of the safety and security audit as required by TEC, §37.108;
- (C) report the findings of weekly inspections required by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph to the principal or leader of the instructional facility to ensure awareness of any deficiencies identified and who must take action to reduce the likelihood of similar deficiencies in the future; and
- (D) include a provision in the school system's applicable policy stating that nothing in a school system's access control procedures will be interpreted as discouraging parents, once properly verified as authorized campus visitors, from visiting campuses they are authorized to visit.

(2) Exterior and interior door numbering site plan.

- (A) A school system must develop and maintain an accurate site layout and exterior and interior door designation document for each instructional facility school system-wide that identifies all exterior and interior doors in the instructional facility and depicts all exterior doors on a floor plan with an alpha-numeric designation, in accordance with the door numbering specifications established in subsection (c)(1) of this section.
- (B) Copies of exterior and interior door numbering site plans shall be readily available in each campus main office.
- (C) Electronic copies of exterior and interior door numbering site plans shall be provided to the local 9-1-1 administrative entity, the Department of Public Safety, emergency service districts, local law enforcement agencies, and emergency first responders in accordance with TEC, §37.117. These entities shall be afforded an opportunity to conduct a walk-through of facilities utilizing the site plans provided.
- (D) The site layout and exterior and interior door designation document shall be oriented in a manner that depicts true north.

(3) Maintenance.

- (A) A school system shall perform at least twice-yearly maintenance checks to ensure the facility components required in subsection (c) of this section function as required. At a minimum, maintenance checks shall ensure the following:
 - (i) instructional facility exterior doors function properly, including meeting the requirements in subsection (c)(3)(A) and (C) of this section;
 - (ii) the locking mechanism for any ground-level windows that can be opened function properly;
 - (iii) any perimeter barriers and related gates function properly;
 - (iv) all panic alert or similar emergency notification systems in classrooms and campus central offices function properly, which includes a notification successfully broadcast to all campus staff and to law enforcement and emergency responders;
 - (v) all school telephone systems and communications infrastructure provide accurate location information when a 9-1-1 call is made in accordance with state and federal laws and rules and when an alert is triggered in accordance with this section;
 - (vi) all exterior master key boxes function properly and the keys they contain function properly;

- (vii) law enforcement and emergency responder two-way radios operate effectively within each instructional facility; and
 - (viii) two-way radios used by school system peace officers, school resource officers, or school marshals properly communicate with local law enforcement and emergency response services.
 - (B) A school system shall ensure procedures are in place to require that staff who become aware of a facility component functionality deficiency that would be identified during the twice-yearly maintenance review described by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph immediately report the deficiency to the school system's administration, regardless of the status of the twice-yearly maintenance review.
 - (C) A school system shall promptly remedy any deficiencies discovered during maintenance checks required by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph or reports made under subparagraph (B) of this paragraph.
- (e) To the extent that any provisions of this section conflict with rules adopted in Chapter 61, Subchapter CC, of this title (relating to Commissioner's Rules Concerning School Facilities), including terms defined by this section or standards established by this section, the provisions of this section prevail.
- (f) In implementing the requirements of this section, school systems shall comply with the standards adopted under Texas Government Code, §469.052.
- (g) In implementing the requirements of this section, 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, record series item number 5.4.017, as referenced in Texas Government Code, §441.169, and Texas Local Government Code, §203.041.
- (h) Any document or information collected, identified, developed, or produced relating to the monitoring of school district safety and security requirements is confidential under Texas Government Code, §418.177 and §418.181, and is not subject to disclosure under Texas Government Code, Chapter 552.
- (i) Certification.
 - (1) A school system must annually certify compliance with subsections (c) and (d) of this section as part of ongoing security audits under TEC, §37.108(b); maintain the certification locally; and provide documentation upon request by TEA. Non-compliance with subsections (c) and (d) of this section and all information received upon completion of a district vulnerability assessment under TEC, §37.1083, shall be reported to the school system's safety and security committee, the school system's board, and TEA, as applicable.
 - (2) TEA may modify rule requirements or grant provisional certification for individual site needs as determined by TEA.