

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Critical School Security Legislation

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Critical Incident Mapping Data Assists Law Enforcement and First Responders in Cases of an Emergency, Strengthening Efforts to Protect Students and Teachers

TRENTON - Governor Phil Murphy today signed bill S2426 into law, requiring all public and nonpublic schools in New Jersey to submit critical incident mapping data to local law enforcement in electronic format. In August, Governor Murphy announced a \$6.5 million investment in American Rescue Plan funds toward a statewide school security initiative to collect and digitize school building blueprints and make them available to first responders. S2426, which builds on the Governor's statewide school security initiative, requires each board of education, board of trustees, or chief school administrators to provide their local law enforcement authorities or designated law enforcement entities with critical incident mapping data for all schools and school grounds.

"We have seen, time and time again, public mass shootings taking place across our country. Providing our law enforcement and first responders with the critical incident mapping data will aid them in their efforts in case of an emergency at a school," **said Governor Murphy**. "This Administration, in partnership with our legislative partners, will continue to put the health and safety of our students first, and this is another step forward in our efforts to protect our students and teachers."

Critical incident mapping data includes:

1. Aerial images of schools;
2. Floor plans, including room and suite numbers;
3. Building access points;
4. Locations of hazardous materials and utility shut-offs; and
5. Any other relevant location information.

Mapping data must be updated as necessary and revised copies shall be provided to applicable or designated law enforcement entities.

The bill will take effect immediately and first apply for the upcoming 2023-24 school year.

The Governor and State legislature have been very active this year in signing legislation to further protect students and teachers. Other legislation includes:

1. A-6258/S-4309, signed in January, which appropriates a total of \$5,150,531 from the "Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act" to provide grants for school security projects in New Jersey school districts. The funding was allocated to the installation of silent panic alarms to alert law enforcement during an emergency as required by Alyssa's Law, as well as other school security upgrades.
2. A-5727/S-3726, also signed in January, which requires school security drills to be age-appropriate and to prevent unnecessary traumatization of schoolchildren. Among other requirements, the legislation prohibits the use of fake blood, real or prop firearms, or the simulations of gun shots or explosions in school security drills
3. A4075/3229, signed in August, which requires the board of education in each school district and board of trustees in each charter school or renaissance school in the state to develop and adopt a policy for the establishment of a threat assessment team at their respective schools.

"Ensuring the safety of our children is and always will be a top priority. As gun violence continues to reach every corner of our nation, including our schools, the job of protecting our children is more important now than ever," **said Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin**. "Thanks to the Governor's leadership, we are offering concrete investments in the resources, tools, and information that law enforcement officers need to act swiftly and with precision to protect students and educators in the event of an emergency."

"Student safety is a top priority for every school official, this legislation takes us a giant leap forward in the evolution of school security," **said Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education**. "In New Jersey, we strive to be forward-thinking with our efforts to protect our students and school staff, and this measure will provide first responders with tools that can benefit public and nonpublic schools alike."

"Ensuring that our children and school personnel are safe will always be a top priority in our mission to protect and serve. This legislation will undoubtedly assist law enforcement during emergent times by providing first responders with an additional tool to work quickly and more efficiently," **said Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police**. "The Critical Incident Mapping Legislation represents another step towards making our schools safer and I applaud Governor Murphy for signing this bill into law."

"Protecting students and teachers when they step into a school remains a top priority for the State of New Jersey as Governor Murphy has demonstrated with this latest bill signing," **said New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness Director Laurie R. Doran**. "Our team continues to closely collaborate with our law enforcement and education-sector partners statewide as we work to roll out this innovative mapping technology which will serve as a critical tool for first responders by equipping them with a basic visual understanding of a building, school or location. In the event we need to coordinate an emergency response, this measure can and will save lives."

"Given the rise in school shootings and other school-related emergencies around the country, it is paramount that, in addition to strengthening gun safety laws and bolstering mental health services, we also do all we can to protect our students through providing law enforcement and first responders with every available tool that could help save lives," **said Senator Lagana**. "Access to critical incident mapping data, including digital floor plan mapping, will better prepare local law enforcement and first responders in the case of any emergency situation."

"Providing law enforcement with detailed blueprints empowers our officers to effectively respond and provide life-saving assistance during a crisis. Critical incident mapping data is vital for strengthening emergency preparedness in all of New Jersey's public and private schools," **said Assemblyman Gary Schaer**. "This legislation is crucial for developing proactive operational strategies to protect our children from threats to school security. Our State is



committed to establishing comprehensive resiliency measures to combat the national rise in school shootings, so every student feels safe in their classroom.”

“Providing law enforcement with critical incident mapping data will ensure our first responders have the most accurate and up-to-date information necessary to respond to any emergency situation,” **said Assemblywoman Angelica Jimenez**. “Taking proactive steps to keep our students safe is crucial. By giving law enforcement better, more effective mapping data, we are helping to make our schools safer.”

“This new law prioritizes preparedness, which is essential should the worst-case scenario happen. Having access to critical incident mapping data ahead of time will ensure law enforcement can respond to potential threats quickly and effectively,” **said Assemblywoman Annette Quijano**. “Expanding the information available to law enforcement beyond blueprints and maps gives first responders the resources necessary to keep our school communities safe.”

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