



Oral Testimony as Proponent before the

House Education Committee

on

SB 128 - Requiring at least nine safety drills to be conducted by schools each year including fire, tornado and crisis drills.

by

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to appear as a proponent for **SB 128**, which requires at least nine school safety drills each year, including fire, tornado and crisis drills.

SB 128 responds to a 2018 legislative proviso in the State Fire Marshal's budget for the current fiscal year. That proviso requires Kansas schools to conduct four fire drills, three tornado drills and nine "crisis" drills this school year.

Prior to the enactment of the 2018 budget, most Kansas schools were already conducting fire and tornado drills along with some sort of crisis drill (lockdown or lockout for example). Adding nine crisis drills to the existing drills has resulted in schools conducting an average of one drill every ten school days in the current school year, resulting in a loss of instructional time and increased levels of student anxiety, particularly in the early elementary grades.

SB 128 requires K-12 schools to conduct four fire drills, two tornado drills and three crisis drills in a school year. The tornado drills must be conducted in September and March. The crisis drills must be conducted during school hours, but their scheduling is at the discretion of the local school districts. Our members appreciate this nod to local control while ensuring the safety of our students. The bill also appropriately gives deference to the Kansas State Department of Education's Safe and Secure Schools division.

KASB notes the State Fire Marshall and the school administrators' associations also support SB 128.

Thank you, and I'm happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.