



Tennessee

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Safe School Design Requires Expert Guidance

Supporting SB2207 (Johnson) / HB2275 (Moody) Through Advisory-Led, Evolving Standards

SB2207 | HB2275 strengthens how Tennessee approaches safe school design. By utilizing a Safe School Design Advisory Group and a rulemaking process, we can ensure safety standards are created by experts, adaptable over time, and effective for every community rather than locked into statute where they risk becoming outdated.

Safe School Design Requires Ongoing Expert Input

School safety is not static. It is constantly changing due to:

- Emerging security risks
- New building technologies
- Evolving best practices in design

A Safe School Design Advisory Group ensures input from:

- Architects
- School administrators
- Code officials, and other experts as needed

This creates a continuous feedback loop; not a one-time decision in statute.

Advisory Group + Rulemaking = Smarter, Safer Outcomes

The Advisory Group provides:

- Technical expertise
- Cross-disciplinary collaboration
- Real-world implementation insight

Rulemaking allows those recommendations to:

- Be vetted publicly and updated as conditions change
- Be implemented consistently statewide

This combination produces better outcomes than rigid statutory mandates.

Protects the Integrity of the Building Code Process

School safety is deeply tied to building codes and life safety standards, keeping these elements within rulemaking processes.

Expert advisory structures ensure alignment with statewide codes, consistency in enforcement, and clear guidance for designers and contractors. The Advisory Group strengthens the system—it doesn't bypass it.

Avoids Locking Complex Safety Requirements into Statute

School design involves highly technical considerations:

- Egress and life safety
- Access control and visibility
- Structural and environmental design

When these are placed in statute:

- It becomes difficult to revise and risks becoming outdated
- It may unintentionally conflict with building codes

Statutes are not designed to manage technical design standards.

Supports Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

LEAs vary widely in:

- Resources
- Building stock
- Community needs

A Safe School Design Advisory Group can:

- Provide guidance and “not one-size-fits-all” mandates
- Help LEAs prioritize improvements over time

This approach respects local realities while improving safety statewide.