[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 4440

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 19, 2025

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SYNOPSIS

Requires key boxes at public school buildings with certain exceptions; permits reimbursement of costs related to key box installation.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee on December 15, 2025, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/22/2025)

AN ACT concerning the installation of key boxes at public school buildings[1]**[**,**]** and[1] supplementing chapter 41 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes[1]**[**, and making an appropriation**]**[1].

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. [1]**[**By**]** (1) Subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the annual appropriations act for the purposes of this section, by[1] June 30th of the 2026-2027 school year, each board of education of a school district and board of trustees of a charter school or renaissance school project shall provide for the installation at each school building of at least one exterior key box that meets or exceeds Underwriters Laboratories Standard 1037 [1], or another nationally recognized industry standard for antitheft alarms and devices, at the time of installation.

(2) A board of education or board of trustees shall, with the approval of the Commissioner of Education pursuant to subsection c. of this section, be exempt from the requirements of paragraph (1) of this subsection and subsection b. of this section if the board has implemented an alternative plan and procedures to provide emergency access to the school building for emergency responders and to ensure that law enforcement personnel have the ability to access the building onsite in the event of an emergency[1].

b. Each key box required pursuant to [1]paragraph (1) of[1] subsection a. of this section shall:

(1) be installed at an appropriate location for permitting emergency responders, including law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services personnel, emergency access to the building. The precise location of the key box shall be determined by the board of education or board of trustees in collaboration with emergency responders, including law enforcement [1]**[**,**]** and[1] fire [1]**[**, and emergency medical services**]**[1] personnel [1]. A board of education or board of trustees may provide emergency medical services personnel with access to the key box if the board of education or board of trustees deems it appropriate. Wherever possible, emergency responders shall utilize shared key boxes for a school building in collaboration with the school district, charter school, or renaissance school project[1]; [1]and[1]

(2) contain keys and other access control devices as are necessary to access each building and room located on the entire school grounds [1]**[**; and

(3) contain the most recently updated critical incident mapping data, as defined in section 1 of P.L.2019, c.106 (C.18A:41-7.1), in a printed format**]** .

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:
[1]Senate SBA committee amendments adopted December 15, 2025.

c. The board of education of a school district and board of trustees of a charter school or renaissance school project may apply to the commissioner for an exemption from the requirements of paragraph (1) of subsection a. of this section and subsection b. of this section. The commissioner may approve the application for exemption if the board of education or board of trustees is able to demonstrate that the alternative plan and procedures implemented are equivalent to or exceed the requirements of paragraph (1) of subsection a. of this section and subsection b. of this section.

d. The costs incurred by the board of education of a school district and the board of trustees of a charter school or renaissance school project for the installation of a new key box or the replacement of an existing key box necessary for compliance with the provisions of paragraph (1) of subsection a. of this section and subsection b. of this section shall be borne by the State. A school district, charter school, or renaissance school project that purchases and installs a key box necessary for compliance with the provisions of paragraph (1) of subsection a. of this section and subsection b. of this section after the effective date of this act may apply to the commissioner for reimbursement for the costs incurred[1].

[1][2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Education the sum of $2,500,000 to effectuate the provisions of this act.][1]

[1][3.] 2.[1] This act shall take effect immediately.