MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents
Charter School Leaders

FROM: Jacob Oliva, Senior Chancellor, Division of Public Schools
Dakeyan Graham, Executive Director, Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice
Tim Hay, Executive Director, Office of Safe Schools

DATE: October 15, 2021

SUBJECT: Memo Regarding Emergency Drills

As we begin the 2021-2022 school year, we are mindful of the importance of student, teacher and school staff health and safety. We have heard from school districts and schools on the need for additional guidance on conducting required safety drills while adhering to public health guidance. Safety and security protocols are required in statute because they are necessary to save lives; therefore, we are committed to supporting schools in ensuring they take place, as required, in a manner that maintains the safety of our schools.

Section 1006.07(4), Florida Statutes, provides the statutory requirements for district school boards with regard to emergency drills and emergency procedures. These requirements and expectations have not changed. For that reason, it is critical that all schools continue to conduct the emergency drills required by law, while following Florida Department of Health (DOH) guidelines and working with local DOH officials.

Our Office of Safe Schools has pursued guidance from the Division of State Fire Marshal to help you safely plan these drills. Last year’s CFO Directive 2020-13, provided Florida’s K-12 schools with flexibility on the manner in which fire safety drills were conducted during COVID. Per the Division of State Fire Marshal, the guidance provided last year by the CFO is included in the Florida Fire Prevention Code. Therefore, districts can continue to conduct the required fire drills with appropriate modifications in consideration of health and safety; modifications would also apply to drills for active shooter and hostage situations.

JO/DG/TH/jc