



BULLETIN: 2013-1

SUBJECT: School Security, Locking of Classroom Doors

REFERENCE: N.J.A.C. 5:70-3, Chapter 10, Means of Egress

ISSUE DATE: February 22, 2013

As a result of recent incidents involving school security, the Division of Fire Safety has received a number of questions regarding the securing of classroom doors.

Classroom doors can be locked to prevent entry from the outside of the classroom if in compliance with Section 1008.1.8 which requires the door to be openable from the side of egress without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort.

A device that slides under the door to prevent entry can be acceptable if staff is trained in its use and is constantly positioned inside to remove it if necessary. The installation or use of a hasp lock mechanism, a slide bolt or a door wedge is absolutely prohibited.

Another device that is being used on classroom door frames is magnetic strips that cover the latch opening. This strip prevents the door latch from latching or locking and is removed in an emergency allowing the door to latch and lock. This is permitted as long as egress can be made from the occupied side and the door is not part of an opening protective in a fire rated assembly.

In any case where the actual door hardware is being altered or changed, a construction permit is required.

Fire Officials are encouraged to work with schools to ensure that the need to provide security is met while maintaining the intent of the fire code.

This bulletin will remain in effect until withdrawn or replaced. Questions regarding this bulletin are to be directed to the Bureau of Fire Code Enforcement at 609-633-6132 or through our website – www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/dfs.