###### **Department of Public Safety**

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*State Fire Marshal*

To: All Utah School District Superintendents

From: Coy D. Porter, Utah State Fire Marshal

RE: Update regarding school classroom door locks

Date: July 30, 2019

The purpose of this communication is to update school districts on the requirements of the International Fire Code (IFC) for door locking devices in educational occupancies.

Pursuant to Utah Code Ann. (U.C.A.) § 15A-5-103(1), the 2018 International Building and Fire Code, with amendments, has been incorporated by reference into the Utah State Fire Code and went into effect on July 1, 2019. The International Fire Code (IFC) Part III, *Building and Equipment Design Features*, Chapter 10 *Means of Egress,* section 1010.1.4.4 *Locking arrangements in educational occupancies* states,

In Group E and Group B educational occupancies[[1]](#footnote-1), egress doors from classrooms, offices and other occupied rooms *shall be permitted* [emphasis added] to be provided with locking arrangements designed to keep intruders from entering the room where all of the following conditions are met:

1. The door shall be capable of being unlocked from outside the room with a key or other approved means.
2. The door shall be openable from within the room in accordance with Section 1010.1.9.
3. Modifications shall not be made to listed panic hardware, fire door hardware or door closers.

IFC Section 1010.1.9 Door operations states, ‘[e]xcept as specifically permitted by this section, egress doors shall be readily openable from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort.”

The Utah Legislature made amendments to portions of the IFC during the 2018 session, some of which are reflected in U.C.A. § 15A-5-205 *Amendments and additions to IFC related to means of egress and special processes and uses*. Subsection (7) of that section states,

In IFC, Chapter 10, Section 1010.1.9.5, Unlatching, Exception 5 is added after the existing Exception 4 as follows: “5. Group E occupancies *may* [emphasis added] have a second lock on classrooms for purposes of a lockdown or lockdown drill, if:

5.1 The application of the lock is approved by the code official.

5.2 The unlatching of any door or leaf does not require more than two operations.

5.3 The lock can be released from the opposite side of the door on which it is installed.

5.4 The lock is only applied during lockdown or during a lockdown drill.

5.5 The lock complies with all other state and federal regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.”

To summarize, the Utah Code permits, but does not mandate a school to install a second lock on classroom doors for purposes of a lockdown or lockdown drill, if the five statutory criteria are met.

The Utah State Fire Marshal’s Office (SFMO) has evaluated all after-market door locking devices and barricade devices to determine whether the application of those locks could be approved under the statutory criteria. Until recently, all such devices were found to have one or more deficiencies, and none were approved for use in the State.

In December 2018 and in February of 2019, two different locking devices presented to the SFMO for evaluation have now been determined to be in compliance with the adopted Utah Code.

Listed alphabetically, the following are the after-market devices that the SFMO has determined meet the Utah State Building and Fire Codes: “SAFEBOLT” by Securitech and “TeacherLock” by Defcon Products

Please note that the SFMO has only determined whether the products comply with the criteria listed in statute, and neither the SFMO, nor the Utah Department of Public Safety, nor the State of Utah endorse these or any other products.



1. See ICC 2018 Intl Fire Code § 202 General Definitions [↑](#footnote-ref-1)