

31-144. School buildings; definition; inspection; correction of violations; closing in lieu of repair; judicial review. (a) As used in this act, "school building" means any building or structure operated or used for any purpose by, or located upon the land of, any school district, community college district, area vocational school, area vocational-technical school, institution under the state board of regents or any private or nonpublic school, college or university, whether or not operated for profit. The term school building does not include within its meaning any single-family dwelling or duplex constructed as part of a vocational education program or construction trades class if such single-family dwelling or duplex is to be sold, after its construction, for private use.

(b) All school buildings shall be inspected at least once each year. In all cities of the first and second class in which there is a full-time fire chief or full-time fire inspector, the inspection of the school buildings shall be conducted by such chief or inspector. The chief or inspector shall report the findings from the inspection to the state fire marshal within 30 days after such inspection. In all other cases, school buildings shall be inspected by the state fire marshal or the fire marshal's authorized assistants.

(c) The state fire marshal shall order the governing body having control of any school building or facility thereof to correct any condition in such building or facility which is in violation of this act, or any condition which the fire marshal deems dangerous, or which in any way prevents a speedy exit from such building. After any such order is rendered, such governing body shall make the changes required to comply therewith. A board of education of any school district is hereby authorized to make expenditures from its general fund or capital outlay fund to comply with such order, or the board may issue no-fund warrants in such amounts as are necessary to pay expenses incurred in complying with such order. Such no-fund warrants shall be issued, registered, paid and redeemed and bear interest as provided by K.S.A. 79-2940, and amendments thereto, except that the approval of the state board of tax appeals shall not be required. Such warrants shall recite that they are issued by the board of education of the school district under authority of this act. Any board of education issuing warrants hereunder shall make a tax levy at the same time as other tax levies are made, after such warrants are issued, sufficient to pay such warrants and the interest thereon.

(d) Whenever a board of education receives an order from the state fire marshal pursuant to subsection (c), the board, in lieu of repairing or remodeling the school building or facility as ordered by the state fire marshal, may close such building or facility as an attendance center. Whenever any board of education finds that any such order of the state fire marshal involves a cost in excess of that which the board of education finds the school district can afford, or that the changes ordered are unwarranted or unnecessary, the board may petition for review of such order in the district court of the home county of such school district. Upon receiving such petition, the district court shall appoint three disinterested commissioners, one of whom shall be a licensed architect. The commissioners shall inspect the building or facility affected by the order and report to the court its findings of fact as to the necessity for the improvements or changes ordered by the state fire marshal, together with the estimated cost of each such improvement or change and such other recommendations as the commissioners deem advisable. Upon receiving such findings of fact and recommendations, or any other evidence relating to the petition for review, the court shall enter its order affirming, reversing or modifying the order of the state fire marshal. Such order of the court may be reviewed by the appellate courts in the same manner as other orders and judgments of the district court may be reviewed.

(e) Except as provided in subsection (d), any action of the state fire marshal pursuant to this section is subject to review in accordance with the Kansas judicial review act.

History: L. 1972, ch. 157, § 13; L. 1986, ch. 318, § 26; L. 1988, ch. 128, § 1; L. 1991, ch. 230, § 2; L. 1992, ch. 280, § 52; L. 2008, ch. 109, § 57; L. 2010, ch. 17, § 46; L. 2014, ch. 141, § 51; July 1.