MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

FROM: J. Benjamin Roy, Jr.
State Fire Marshal

SUBJECT: State Fire Marshal Policy on School Operations with Regard to Life Safety

It is the opinion of the State Fire Marshal that life safety considerations in the school system will be an extension of the standard operating procedure established in past years.

Special considerations may be implemented to deal with the realities of desegregation, but still maintaining the highest standards for life safety.

A. Required means of egress and exits will be maintained as required under the State of Delaware Fire Prevention Rules and Regulations. No exits will be permitted to be eliminated or secured with locking or security devices that impede intended operation of the door.

B. ANY and ALL fire incidents occurring within the schools shall be immediately reported to the particular dispatch center located within that county:
   1. New Castle County Fire Board
   2. Kent Center
   3. Sussex County Call Board
   4. Municipalities Area of Jurisdiction

C. FIRE ALARM SIGNALING SYSTEMS
1. **Delaware Code** Title 16, Chapter 66 Fire Prevention Rules and Regulations
   State of Delaware.
   National Fire Protection Association
   Pamphlet No. 101
   Life Safety Code

   Section 17-312

   17-3121. All fire exit drill alarms shall be sounded on the fire alarm system and not on the signal system used to dismiss classes.

   17-3122. **Whenever** any of the school authorities determine that an actual fire exists, they shall immediately call the local fire department using the public fire alarm system or such other facilities as are available.

   Section 17-3131

   It shall be the duty of principals and teachers to inspect all exit facilities daily in order to make sure that all stairways, doors and other exits are in proper condition.

2. All fire alarm systems shall be maintained in an operable and active condition. An alarm system will not be shut down nor taken out of service for any reason other than the normal maintenance or repair of the system.

3. When the alarm bell sounds within the school, the following procedure will be followed:
   a. The school will be evacuated immediately.
   b. the person in charge shall institute a search of the building or shall receive reports from the various sections of the building as to the cause for the alarm bell to sound.
   c. The person in charge shall determine whether a false alarm has occurred, initiated either willfully or maliciously by an individual or accidentally by alarm or equipment malfunction; or that an actual fire has occurred or is in progress.
d. If a fire is determined to have occurred or is in progress, the person in charge shall immediately report that incident to the appropriate dispatch center, giving whatever information will be helpful to the first due fire department.

e. **ALL FIRES WILL BE REPORTED.**

f. When the person in charge has determined that a false alarm has occurred, this need not be reported to the dispatch center; however, the State Fire Marshal's Office will be notified.

g. In the event of an evacuation of the building in a fire situation, the **OFFICER IN CHARGE** of the fire department will give the authority for reentry of the students into the building.

**D.** Assistance is available from the State Fire Marshal to school administrators, especially in New Castle County, upon request by the school administrator, in the area of pre-planning for exit problems, designating areas of refuge within buildings, determining separate fire areas within a building.

**E.** The State Fire Marshal's Office will respond to occupied schools to assist in judgment and responsibility for securing exits or the need for adequate exits to be maintained, regardless of the situation.

**F.** Persons to contact for assistance:

- State Fire Marshal
  - 734-8402

- Chief Deputy Fire Marshal
  - 571-3013
  - 998-9886