



LANCASTER CITY SCHOOLS

Steve Wigton, Superintendent of Schools
Lee Ann Haight, Administrative Assistant

May 12, 2020

Dear Legislators,

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 248. We believe the requirements of this bill are excessive in some parts of the state and believe that the moratorium should stay in place on the bill. The following list of items are proposed to be included in new buildings and additions to existing buildings:

Requirements for Storm Shelters based on ICC-500 Code:

1. Third party peer review is required.
2. Ohio wind load design for 250 mph winds.
3. Roof live load design for tornado structures at 100 PSF, thus requiring upgrade to roof structure.
4. Venting for atmospheric pressure changes.
5. Design for debris hazards to missile criteria (15lb lumber 2x4), thus requiring protected openings/minimal openings.
6. Utility openings larger than 3.5" square are considered openings and required protection.
7. Increased reinforcing in foundations, slabs and walls.
8. Typical floor elevation needs to be 2' above the flood elevation having a 1% annual chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.
9. Minimum required usable shelter floor area per occupant: 5 SF (10SF for wheelchair –one per every 200 occupants).
10. Exterior door hardware designed for storm loading requirements.
11. Fire separation requirements of 2 hours from other parts of building (if the storm shelter is not stand-alone).
12. Ventilation required (natural or mechanical). If mechanical, needs connected to emergency power system.
13. Sanitation facilities-over 50 occupants, 2 facilities required for the first 500 occupants, and one additional per 500 occupants or portion thereof.
14. Provide storage capacity for water and sanitary for facilities independent of the systems provided for the rest of the school for 2 hours.
15. Provide emergency lighting for min 2 hour duration.

We have been planning and constructing school buildings with the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission since 2012. We have completed five elementary schools, one junior high school and are currently completing our second junior high school. We are in the preliminary planning process for our final building, a new high school. Throughout the construction process, we have gained valuable experience with the cost of construction while working with our architect and construction

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management firm. Our architect and construction management firm believe that the budget allotments for the planning and construction of storm shelters is deficient by up to 50% of the actual cost. This puts the burden of covering the shortfall on the district's taxpayers and reduces funds for educational and other safety features in a building.

No one can argue that a building with a storm shelter is safer than one without a shelter. However, in safety matters, as in all expenditures, we have to determine if the expenditure is reasonable. There are several safety features that could be required in a building, such as bulletproof glass, but the expense of such expenditures simply are not reasonable. And given the current state of the economy, it's not a good time to add additional expenses for the State and the school districts to construct storm shelters.

The passage of Senate Bill 248 will provide the legislature time to further research the need and feasibility of constructing storm shelters in school buildings. As we have asserted above, the real cost of planning and constructing storm shelters needs to be determined in order to make an informed decision. Passage of the moratorium also provides time for our State economy to recover to the point where additional funds are available to cover the cost of storm shelters.

Again, thank you for taking the time to read our testimony. We have great respect for the work of the legislature and the challenges that you face in leading our State during this unprecedented time. We certainly wish you all the best as you make the difficult decisions that are before you.

Sincerely,



Steve Wigton
Superintendent of Schools



Jerry Rainey
Director of Business