



FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Dear Parent Community,

The Fairfield Public Schools are committed to providing you with timely and effective communication with parents. Communication is essential, especially when unusual circumstances arise.

It is **extremely important** for parents/guardians to log into the Infinite Campus Parent Portal and check the appropriate boxes (e-mail, text, voice) under the “emergency” column. Checking the appropriate boxes is the only way to ensure receipt of all the notifications in the format indicated below.

Please take a moment to read the terms below to become familiar with the status categories that will appear in the subject line of the notification: Information, Weather Alert, Alert and Emergency.

**“Information”**

This term will be used to describe a general notification that does not require immediate action. These types of notifications will be posted on the parent portal and may also include an e-mail.

An “**Information**” notification may or may not include follow-up. An “**Information**” notification may:

- Provide general information about school related activities
- Provide information that will keep the school and parent communities informed about what is going on in their area/school
- Equip school and parent communities to recognize a subject or situation of interest to the Police Department
- Provide information that reinforces safety awareness

**“Weather Alert”**

This term will be used to describe a notification regarding a “**Weather Alert**” related closing, delay, or early dismissal. These types of notifications will be posted on the parent portal, and sent via e-mail and text message.

### **“Alert”**

This term will be used to describe a notification that a possible threat could unfold in time, or may provide information about a lingering potential threat. This will put the recipients on “stand-by.” These types of notifications will be posted on the parent portal, and sent via e-mail and text message.

Parents/guardians will receive follow-up notifications under **“Alert”** status to let them know if a situation has been prevented or resolved, or if a situation has escalated to “Emergency” status. Examples could be: A nearby hazardous materials spill, a gas leak in the area, a fleeing fugitive in the area, etc. **“Alert”** status may or may not require some type of immediate action.

### **“Emergency”**

This term will be used to describe a real time crisis event, **“Emergency,”** that requires immediate action. Parents will receive follow-up notifications under this status. Emergencies will normally be localized to a specific site. Examples could be: An active violence/shooter event, bomb threat, structure fire, fleeing fugitive known to be in the immediate area, etc. It is possible that the affected school location will receive an **“Emergency”** notification, and all other schools will receive the information as an “Alert.” This will help to distinguish the parent communities that may need to take immediate action from the parent communities that do not, while maintaining consistent distribution of information. These types of notifications will be posted on the parent portal, and sent via e-mail, text message, and voice message. Related information on Lockdown talking points is attached.

Thank you for staying informed and helping us keep our students, and your children, safe.

Sincerely,



Michael Cummings  
Superintendent of Schools  
[MCummings@FairfieldSchools.org](mailto:MCummings@FairfieldSchools.org)

*Attachment*

MC:mb

# **LOCKDOWN**

**Talking Points For Parents**



**Fairfield Police Department  
School Safety Division**

# **LOCKDOWN**

## **Talking Points For Parents**



**Part 1: Do's & Don'ts**

**Part 2: Lockdown Procedures Summary**

**Part 3: What To Expect From Police  
Responding To Active Violence Incidents**

**Part 4: Talking With Your Children**

# Part 1

## Do's & Don'ts

### **Don't Contact Your Child**

With the wide use of cell phones, getting in touch with your child at school is probably a snap. Whether by call or text, and despite your instinct, it is best NOT to try to get in touch with your child during school lockdowns. Exchanging information with them, especially information that is incomplete or wrong, could make matters worse or cause unnecessary worry. In addition, ringing or beeping cell phones could compromise the safety of your child and others in a lockdown situation. Don't use apps, such as Find My iPhone, because they can cause phones to emit sounds, even when phone is on silent. Your school district has policies in place that will keep you up to date on the situation and it is best to abide by those policies (see section regarding Infinite Campus and emergency messaging).

### **Don't Go To The School**

If a school is in lockdown, it may involve an unsafe environment surrounding the school. For your safety, the safety of your child, and the well-being of all involved, it's best to steer clear until you get the okay from the school. Further, if police have to worry about crowd management due to parents arriving on scene, their attention will be drawn away from addressing the threat.

### **Don't Call The School**

School staff will most likely be unable to answer phones and the lines must remain clear to contact emergency personnel.

### **Don't Panic**

This is probably the most important thing to remember. Of course when we hear about a school going into lockdown we assume the worst, but, there are many reasons that a school could go into lockdown. Remain calm for both yourself and your child. If you hear that a school is in lockdown, know that police and other emergency services are likely already on scene at that time.

## **Do Prepare Your Child**

It's not fun to imagine scary scenarios, and we certainly don't want to scare our kids more than the world already can, but it is still important to prepare them for a lockdown situation. Explain how they will be expected to behave, warn them they may not be able to talk to you right away, and stress that they should listen to their teachers and those in uniform (emergency personnel) who are there to help.

## **Do Have Your ID With You**

When picking your child up, once the all clear has been given, make sure you have the proper ID. Even if you are well known to the staff, there may be other officials involved in the situation and you should be prepared to prove your identity.

## **Do Be Aware Of School Lockdown Policies**

What are their lockdown policies? What safety measures do they have in place? Make sure you know what is expected of you and your child before a lockdown occurs and that you are comfortable with the precautions your child's school provides. Following the rules and policies of school lockdowns is vital to providing a safe environment for your child.

# Part 2

## Lockdown Procedures Summary

*Certain details of lockdown plans and procedures are sensitive information and therefore kept confidential in the interest of maximizing safety and security. Below is a summary that illustrates the general purpose and procedures for either locking down or securing a school.*

**Active Violence Incident** - This is an event where someone is actively causing harm. This type of event is commonly envisioned as an “active shooter,” where an armed intruder is discharging a firearm and taking lives. However, any act of violence which is causing injury (stabbing, bludgeoning, etc.) qualifies as an “active violence” incident.



**Lockdown** - If an active violence incident is believed to be occurring, or about to occur, a school will go into “Lockdown” (i.e., a potentially violent intruder is entering or is inside the building). All exterior access points to the building will be locked. Staff and students will be secured in rooms. ***Instruction and all other activities will cease until further notice.*** No one will be permitted to enter or leave the premises until the lockdown is over.

**Secure School** - When a situation occurring outside a school, but in close proximity, has the potential to pose a threat to the school, the school will go into “Secure School” (i.e., escaped fugitive, hazardous materials spill, etc.) All exterior access points to the building will be locked. ***In-class instruction/activities may continue unless otherwise directed.*** No one will be permitted to enter or leave the premises until secure school status is lifted.





**Emergency Communications** - All parents are encouraged to create an account in Infinite Campus, which will be used to deliver emergency communications via voice call, text message, and email. Parents are encouraged to rely on this information rather than what may be reported in the news or posted on social media. Parents are further encouraged to follow instructions that may be communicated regarding where to receive information or where to reunite with their children.

**Parent Information/Reunification Area** - In the event of a school emergency, parents may receive instructions via infinite campus directing them to a parent information/reunification area. This will be an area designated away from the school where parents will be able to receive the most current and accurate information from school and police personnel. This may also be the area where parents are reunited with their children if the decision is made to bus the students off site. Buses with students on field trips may also be directed away from the school and to the reunification area. It is imperative that parents/family stay away from the school where the emergency is occurring unless otherwise directed. This will allow first responders to focus on resolving the emergency rather than having to focus on managing parents/family placing themselves in the danger zone.



# Part 3

## What to Expect From Police Responding To Active Violence Incidents

Law enforcement's primary purpose is to stop the threat as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area where they believe the threat is occurring. The first officers to arrive on scene will not be able to stop to help injured persons. Expect rescue teams comprised of additional officers and emergency medical personnel to follow the initial officers. These rescue teams will treat and remove any injured persons. They may also call upon able bodied individuals to assist in removing the wounded from the premises.



How to react when law enforcement arrives:

- Remain calm and follow officers' instructions
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets, cell phones)
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers, such as holding on to them for safety
- Try to avoid pointing and screaming
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which the officers entered the premises

Once students/staff have reached a safe location, they will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is contained and all witnesses have been identified and questioned.

# Part 4

## Talking With Your Children

The subject matter surrounding the need for lockdowns and lockdown drills can be frightening for most children. The amount of detail included in your discussions with your children will vary depending on factors such as age, temperament, and/or special needs. Below are some suggestions for starting the discussion with your children, however, you know your child best, so use your best judgment.

### Preschool & Elementary

- “Your lockdown drills are an important part of being prepared for an emergency, just like your fire drills...”
- “There are a lot of different reasons why you might have to lockdown...”
- “There might be a skunk or raccoon loose in the building...”
- “A confused stranger might have wandered into the building...”
- “Lockdown drills are like playing a hiding game, and you have to listen to your teacher’s directions, go where she/he tells you to go, and stay very quiet...”
- “The police will be there to make sure you are safe...”



### Middle School

- “Your lockdown drills are an important part of being prepared for an emergency, just like your fire drills...”
- “There are a lot of different reasons why you might have to lockdown...”
- “There may be a stranger in the building...”
- “There may be someone acting violent in the building...”
- “It’s very important to follow your teacher’s directions...”
- “The police will be there to make sure you are safe...”



## High School

- Full transparency may be the best approach at this level. High School students have access to information about the reality of school violence and threats, so an up-front conversation may be far more productive in helping them understand the need for lockdowns/lockdown drills. At this level, it is also important to make your children



aware of the role they play in maintaining their safety and the safety of their environment.

Impress upon them the need to follow safety procedures and protocols, such as:

- Immediately report anyone or anything suspicious, dangerous, or otherwise concerning
- Do not open side doors for anyone, even if it is someone they know, as someone else may be lying in wait to get into the building
- Follow directions from staff during lockdowns and other emergency procedures