

## Preparing for Walkouts and Protests

With protests and walkouts near school campuses in response to current events becoming increasingly common, schools should consider developing emergency response plans based on the following scenarios:

### Impact to Normal School Operations

| Impact   | Description  | Students Scenario  | or | Community Scenario  | Response   |
|----------|--|--|----|---|--|
| Minimal  | Normal school operations (class changes, recess, lunch, dismissal) can continue with minor modifications.        | A small number of students is involved. They are largely cooperative, remaining in a designated area on campus, and are isolated away from other students. |    | A small number of protesters are picketing near the school. They are peaceful, not interfering with entry and exit to campus, not attempting to contact students who are on campus, and not attempting unauthorized access.   | <p>Make modifications needed to maintain safe operations.</p> <p>If the circumstances are borderline, ask law enforcement to have patrol drive by several times during the school day.</p> <p>Notify district office.</p>  |
| Moderate | Instruction can take place in classrooms, but classroom changes, recess and/or meals cannot be handled normally. | The students who are involved are not cooperative. They refuse to remain in a designated area on campus, and are entering classrooms and other areas.      |    | A vocal group of protesters is picketing near the school. They are peaceful, but disruptive (for example, engaging passersby and children, making entry and exit difficult, attempting to contact students who are on campus, or challenging school staff on access to campus). | <p>Secure campus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom and office doors are locked, and all students and staff members remain inside through the duration of that event</li> <li>Outer gates and other entrance/exit points can be closed and monitored to deter any protestors from entering school grounds</li> <li>Make alternate meal arrangements</li> <li>Implement escort system for students who need to leave class</li> <li>Notify local law enforcement. Ask for officer on campus.</li> <li>Notify district office.</li> </ul> |

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| Severe | A potentially dangerous condition exists that makes even basic operations impossible. | Students involved in the protest have become largely uncontrollable. Examples could include banging on doors or windows, damaging property, becoming violent, or the report of a weapon on campus. | Any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unauthorized access to campus to contact students.</li> <li>• Report of a weapon.</li> <li>• Any act of violence.</li> </ul> | Lockdown: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 911. Ask for police assistance in restoring safety and order.</li> <li>• Nobody is allowed in or out of campus.</li> <li>• All exterior doors are locked, and students and staff members must remain in the classrooms or designated locations at all times.</li> <li>• Teachers and other school staff members are responsible for accounting for students and ensuring that no one leaves the safe area.</li> <li>• Notify district office.</li> </ul> |
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**Terms:**

- **Secure Campus** is typically implemented when the normal routines of the school day cannot be conducted safely.
- **Lockdown** is initiated to isolate students and school staff from a potential danger when there is a crisis on campus and movement within the school could put students and staff in jeopardy. It is used to prevent intruders from entering occupied areas of the building.

**Additional tips:**

1. Avoid arguing with participant(s). Use de-escalation strategies.
2. Communicate with student leaders to provide options to demonstration.
3. Move all students and employees away from the immediate area of disturbance.
4. Designate staff to:
  - a. Monitor protests outside of the school.
  - b. Supervise students involved in protesting inside of the school.
  - c. Accompany and observe students if they leave campus.
5. Use your Incident Command Structure roles.
6. Keep staff informed of developments via email updates.
7. Keep your district office informed of all developments.

The following resources may also be helpful in your planning:

- [Lessons Learned from School Crises and Emergencies - REMS](#) is a publication from the U.S. Department of Education - Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Centers with a highlight on responding to school walkout demonstrations.
- [Tips for Preparing for Walkouts](#) is a list of considerations for administrators prepared by the San Diego County Office of Education.
- [Can Schools Discipline Students for Protesting](#) is an informative article from the ACLU.
- [Student Walkout FAQ](#) is a resource available through the Association of California School Administrators where Fagen Friedman & Fulfrost.