

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS RESPONSE DRILLS

The Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) School Board acknowledges the unfortunate reality that, despite high-quality safety and security procedures, emergencies that could result in harm to students may occur in ACPS schools. The Board believes that practicing responses to emergencies helps to ensure students are safe in the event of an actual emergency.

FIRE DRILLS

Each school in ACPS holds at least two fire drills during the first twenty school days of the school year, in order that students and staff members may be prepared in case of a fire emergency. During the remainder of the school year, fire drills are held at least monthly.

The principal/designee sends a copy of the Drill Form to Safety and Security Services within five (5) days of holding a fire drill.

An emergency operations and procedures plan is developed for each ACPS building. Each teacher must be acquainted with the emergency safety plan that has been developed as it applies to each room in which he/she teaches.

Placards describing the nearest exits, evacuation routes for students and important instructions are posted prominently in each room. A plan for evacuation of any student with physical disabilities is developed and reviewed annually. Parents/guardians of such students are notified of the evacuation plans for their child.

THREAT RESPONSE DRILLS

In every ACPS school there is at least one lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drill during the first twenty school days, in order that students and staff members may be prepared in the case of a lockdown situation.

In keeping with the model *School Crisis, Emergency Management, and Medical Emergency Response Plan* developed by the Virginia Board of Education and the Virginia Center for School Safety, ACPS uses the following terms:

- “**Lockdown**” is used in response to immediate threats of violence **inside** a school facility.
- “**Secure the building**” is used when preventing unauthorized entry or exit if there is an **external** threat in proximity to a school facility.

Each school holds at least one additional lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drill after the first 60 days of the school year. Each school provides the parents/guardians of enrolled students with at least 24 hours' notice before the school conducts any lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drill. The notice is not required to include the exact date and time of the drill.

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students are exempt from mandatory participation in lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drills during the first 60 days of the school year. The Superintendent

47 develops procedures to implement this exemption. Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students
48 participate in each lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drill after the first 60 days of the school
49 year.

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51 I. Active Threat/Violent Encounter Response Protocol

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53 ACPS provides an “options-based” training approach for staff and students to be applied
54 to the specific circumstances at the time of the incident. Staff members dealing with these
55 events may need to consider different response methods, including lockdown (to include
56 the decision to stay and barricade or evacuate if able to safely do so), immediate evacuation,
57 or related life-saving actions.

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59 **TORNADO DRILLS AND EARTHQUAKE DRILLS**

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61 There will be at least one tornado drill and one earthquake drill each school year in every ACPS
62 school.

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64 **SCHOOL BUS EMERGENCY DRILLS**

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66 Each school holds a drill in leaving school buses under emergency circumstances at least once
67 during the first ninety calendar days of each school year and more often if necessary.

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69 **ALL DRILLS**

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71 No emergency preparedness drills will be conducted during periods of mandatory testing
72 required by the Virginia Board of Education.

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74 **SAFETY TRAINING**

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76 In addition to the drills mentioned above, ACPS provides training to each student and employee
77 at least once each school year on safety procedures in the event of an emergency situation on
78 school division-controlled property.

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80 Adopted: June 11, 2015
81 Amended: September 15, 2016
82 Amended: September 28, 2017
83 Amended: September 10, 2020
84 Amended: October 21, 2021
85 Amended: June 15, 2023

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87 Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, §§ 22.1-137, 22.1-137.1, 22.1-137.2, 22.1-137.3, 22.1-184.

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89 Acts 2006, c. 164.

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91 8 VAC 20-131-260.

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93 *School Crisis, Emergency Management, and Medical Emergency Response Plan,*
94 Virginia Board of Education and the Virginia Center for School Safety, 2016.
95
96 Cross Ref.: EB School Crisis, Emergency Management and Medical Emergency Response
97 Plan