## Emergencies

**Fire Evacuation: Three drills required annually**

**In the event of a fire:**

Give the fire alarm signal (one long continuous signal);

Call and report the fire; and

Authority to sound the fire alarm system in the event of a real emergency is possessed by any person who discovers the fire.

**Fire evacuation drills**

1. Instructions must be given to all students on the FIRST DAY of school in September, each year;

A fire/evacuation drill must be held three times each school year; and

It is particularly important that kindergarten children, representing the one large group of children new to the schools, be given instructions in fire drill procedures for the building.

**Authority to Call Drills**

The sounding of a fire alarm for the purpose of a drill is an authority possessed solely by the principal, or someone authorized by him/her.

**Purpose of Fire Drills**

Fire drills are held to familiarize the occupants of a building with the signals, evacuation routine, and exits so that in case of emergency there will be no hesitation or confusion in leaving the building.

These drills are for the safety of all persons involved, and each person must realize that the success of the drill is dependent upon his/her actions and cooperation. Therefore:

1. All persons in the building must take part in the fire drill; and

Every fire alarm should be considered as a warning of an actual fire.

**Frequency - Fire Drills in Schools**

1. Fire drills will be held as often as necessary and no less than three times per school year, to assure rapid and orderly evacuation of the school building. During severe weather, fire drills may be postponed. A record of all fire drills will be kept on the premises subject to inspection by the fire chief; and

In schools, fire drills include complete evacuation of all persons from the building.

**Warning Signals - Fire Drills**

The fire warning signal will be one long continuous signal, whether by bell, siren or horn.

An emergency warning signal, either by whistle or hand siren, should be planned for, and occasionally used, thereby anticipating possible power failure.

**Responsibilities of Staff**

1. Principals will:

Be in complete charge of all matters pertaining to organizing and conducting fire drills in the building, and will be responsible for the efficiency of the drill and all corrective actions or punishments taken for violation of the rules and regulations;

Be thoroughly familiar with the fire alarm system, all fire fighting equipment, all means of egress, and any special features of the building that might prove dangerous to human life, (storerooms, lunchrooms, attic spaces, ventilators, etc.) or where fire may spread quickly;

Be responsible for notifying custodians, engineers, and lunchroom staff that in case of an actual fire, the ventilating systems, the oil burners, gas meters, ovens, etc., are shut off;

Appoint all subordinate officers (see E immediately below) and instruct them in the general plan of the drills and details of their specific duties, such as instruction regarding:

i. How to send an alarm to the fire department (including how the fire alarm system operates — both electrical and emergency);
ii. How to use all in-school fire-fighting equipment; and
iii. The importance of quick action to send in a fire alarm signal, and to vacate the building — even if in-school fire-fighting equipment is in use.

Appoint subordinate officers:

iv. **Searchers** - These are teachers assigned to inspect sections of the buildings to make sure that everyone is out. Cloakrooms, lavatories, teachers' room, and all other places frequented by students or teachers must be checked. Searchers will rejoin their classes as soon as the inspection is completed.
v. **Traffic Guards** - These are students appointed by the principal to open doors, assist in traffic control, and maintain order.
vi. **Fire Drill Aides** - These are students appointed by either the principal or teachers to assist in any way deemed necessary, and to take the place of teacher searchers in their absence only. They may be used as messengers, or assigned to aid disabled students or those who are ill or faint.
vii. **Safety Coordinator** - In case of actual fire, during the absence of the principal, it must be clearly understood by the entire staff which person will be in charge.

Teachers will:

a. Be in charge of their respective classes;

Issue all commands relative to participation in the fire drills except as delegated by them to aides;

Unless assigned as searchers, lead their classes to the designated outside stations; and

Immediately report to the principal or fire drill aides, if any student is unaccounted for after a visual check of students.

**Drills on Request**

Occasionally, fire department representatives may come to schools and request an immediate fire drill. In general, this is their method of checking upon the quality of the drill program, and principals are expected to cooperate fully, even to the extent of calling a drill at an inconvenient time.

1. Procedures

In case of fire the principal will:

a. Sound the alarm;

Call and identify self to fire department officials, directing them to the location of the fire and give them any necessary special information;

Make a building search; and

Ensure that teachers and students perform all activities assigned to them during fire drills.

During Fire Drills - when the alarm begins:

a. Teachers will lead students to the designated exit;

Students will walk briskly (no running), with arm's length spacing, and without talking, laughing, or breaking from the ranks (no student may leave the line);

Students not in the classroom will join the line of the first group of students met (the student must not return to the classroom);

Teachers will check roll when assigned area is reached;

Teachers will not leave the students gathered at a designated area unless someone is placed in charge;

Teachers will notify the principal if any student is missing; and
The principal will initiate a search for any missing students.

After a Fire Drill:

a. The principal will give the all clear signal (a short steady signal);
Teachers will lead the students back into the classroom;
Teachers will check the roll;
Students will not loiter in the halls;
Teachers will notify the principal if any student is missing; and
The principal will initiate a search for any missing students.

After a FALSE ALARM the principal will:

a. Notify the fire department of the incident; and
Notify school officials of the incident.

**Lockdown – Three drills required annually**

Modified Lockdown is initiated to isolate students and staff inside the school from potential dangers outside the school. Modified Lockdown is typically used when events in the vicinity of the school may pose a threat.

Lockdown is initiated to isolate students and staff from immediate dangers which may include armed intruders, violent behaviors, suspicious trespassers, on-campus shootings, bomb threat, sniper, or nearby police activity.

**Shelter in Place – One drill required annually**

"Shelter-in-place" is initiated to protect students and staff from chemical, radiological, or biological contaminants released into the environment. To "shelter-in-place" means to take immediate shelter where you are and isolate your inside environment from the outside environment.

**Additional safety-related drill – One drill required annually**

Schools will consider earthquakes, tsunamis or other high-risk local events.

At least one safety-related drill annually will use the school mapping information system.

**Earthquake**

The threat of an earthquake in Western Washington is ever-present. As with other unforeseen events, the district must be prepared to care for students and staff until danger subsides.

Each school principal in consultation with staff is required to prepare a plan and conduct an emergency earthquake drill at least twice annually. The building staff is encouraged to contact the district office and the county emergency service department for technical assistance.

A. **Preparation**

The principal and building staff will be responsible for conducting an annual inspection of the building early in the school year for the purpose of identifying potential hazards in the event of an earthquake, e.g., securing all bookcases to wall to prevent collapse. Those hazards that cannot be corrected by building level personnel will be corrected by district maintenance personnel as soon as resources permit.

B. **Information to Parents**

Parents should be advised that:

1. If there is an earthquake while children are on their way to school, they should "duck

and cover away from power lines, buildings, and trees." Once the earthquake has stopped, they should proceed to school. If the quake occurs on their way home, after protecting themselves until the quake stops, they should proceed to their home.

A parent is advised not to remove a child from the school grounds unless they have first checked with school officials. If a parent were to remove a child without checking out, others could be needlessly hurt while searching for a missing child.

They should avoid calling the school. The phones, if ~~*they are*~~ functioning, may be needed by school staff. Parents of injured children will be notified first. All schools will have trained staff to help injured children until other medical assistance arrives.

Staff members should attempt to account for all students and staff before re-entry, the principal must feel absolutely certain, on the basis of thorough inspection of both structures and utility conduits, that the facility is safe; but no students or staff will be dismissed until procedures have been approved by the superintendent's office if district-wide communications are in operation.

C. **General Responsibilities**

The principal must become familiar with the alarm system, all means of egress, and any special features of the facility which might endanger human life. Staff should be appointed and instructed in the general earthquake plan. The building administrator should carry out all communications functions, coordinate post-quake building inspections, and signal re-entry when safety is assured.

Teachers will see that all members of their respective classes take protective action appropriate to their situations; evacuate classes in an orderly and expeditious manner; maintain order; supervise evacuated students; and, insure orderly re-entry when signaled.

Monitors may be appointed from the more mature students in each class to assist teachers. Monitors should be assigned to substitute for any teacher who may be injured.

The custodian will assist in the inspection of the facility, including utility conduits, and shut down mechanical/electrical systems as required. Other staff members will act as searchers; assist in evacuation and care of injured or disabled individuals; help remove hazardous materials or debris; and, carry out any additional assigned functions.

1. Staff Instructions (During quake)
   Staff should maintain control in the following manner:
   a. In a classroom students should get under desk or table, face away from window, away from bookshelves and heavy objects that may fall, crouch on knees close to ground, place head close to knees, cover side of head with elbows and clasp hands firmly behind neck, close eyes tightly and remain in place until instructed otherwise or until the "all clear" signal is given;
   a. In gymnasiums or assembly areas, students should exit such facilities as expeditiously as possible. Individuals should move to designated areas;
   b. On a stairway students should move to the interior wall and "duck and cover." (Individuals should evacuate exterior stairs and move to designated areas); and
   c. If outdoors, students should move to designated areas, as far away as possible from buildings, poles, wires, and other elevated objects, and lie down or crouch low to the ground. Staff and students should be aware of encroaching danger that may demand further movement.

Staff Instructions (After quake)

The principal and custodian should inspect facilities before instructing staff and students to evacuate. Classes should be evacuated through exits to a safe area. Students should move away from buildings and remain there until given further instructions. Responsible student or staff should be posted to prevent re-entry.

Following this evacuation, the principal should:

a. Check for injuries among students and staff (do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury);

Check for fires or fire hazards;

Check utility lines and appliances for damage. If gas leaks exist, shut off the main gas valves and shut off electrical power if there is damage to the wiring (do not use matches, lighters, or open flame appliances until you are sure no gas leaks exist, and do not operate electrical switches or appliances if gas leaks are suspected);

Instruct students not to touch power lines or objects touched by the wires (all wires should be treated as live);

Clean up spilled medicines, drugs, chemicals, and other potentially harmful materials immediately;

Do not eat or drink anything from open containers near shattered glass (liquids may be strained through a clean handkerchief or cloth if danger of glass contamination exists);

Check the chimney over its entire length for cracks and damage, particularly in the attic and at the roof line (unnoticed damage could lead to a fire);

Check closets and storage shelf areas (open closet and cupboard doors carefully and watch for objects falling from shelves);

Keep the streets clear for emergency vehicles;

Be prepared for "after-shocks;"

Respond to requests for help from police, fire department and civil defense, but do not go into damaged areas unless your help has been requested; and

Plan for student/staff needs during the time that may elapse before assistance arrives (e.g. four to eight hours).

**Bomb Threats**

Most bomb threat messages are very brief. When possible, every effort should be made to obtain detailed information from the caller such as: exact location of the bomb, time set for detonation, description of the bomb and type of explosive used. Details such as: time of call, exact words used, sex, estimated age, identifiable accent, voice description of caller and identifiable background noise should also be noted.

A. **Evacuation Decision**

The principal should notify the district office immediately. The principal should be ready to provide specific information regarding the "threatening call" and indicate if the building(s) will be evacuated and/or searched.

**If the principal determines the threat is a hoax**, he/she will conduct a quiet search of the building. No classes will be dismissed. A written report should be submitted to the superintendent.

**If the principal determines that the message is a dangerous threat**, law enforcement officers and the district office should be contacted. A routine fire drill should be initiated at least 15 minutes prior to the time of possible detonation. Teaching staff should remain with their classes until such time as the danger of explosion is past. Search procedures should be conducted under the direction of law enforcement officers. A written report should be submitted to the superintendent.

B. **Search Procedures**

Each building should have a volunteer search team composed of staff members. The person most qualified to search buildings or space is the person using the area.

1. **How a Search is to be Made**

   The room to be searched may be divided into three (3) parts. The bottom third of the room, from eye level to the floor where most of the objects are located; the middle third from eye level upward toward the ceiling; and the top third of the room. The top third will have such items as light fixtures or a ceiling vent which can usually be observed from the floor. The search should be conducted systematically in a clockwise or counter-clockwise manner. Searchers should look into areas that are open and listen in those areas (cabinets, desks, lockers) where opening every closed area is impossible.

   Most homemade bombs are made with spring-wound clocks and give off a ticking sound. The more sophisticated bombs use other devices such as batteries, chemicals, or may even be plugged into a light switch.

**What to Look for**

**ALL UNIDENTIFIED PACKAGES FOUND DURING BOMB SEARCHES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED DANGEROUS AND LEFT UNTOUCHED, TO BE EXAMINED AND IDENTIFIED BY A QUALIFIED BOMB EXPERT.** Bombs come in many shapes and sizes. Some are disguised, while others may be as crude as sticks of dynamite held together with twine or tape. One must be suspicious of any package that cannot be identified. Example: a brown paper package found ticking in an unlocked locker should always be considered dangerous.

**Search without Evacuation**

If the preliminary decision is to search the building without evacuating the students, the principal should enlist the voluntary aid of the staff to conduct a cursory search of the building. Particular attention should be paid to those areas that are accessible to the public, such as hallways, stairways and stairwells, restrooms, unlocked lockers, unlocked unused classrooms, closets, and the like. A search should also be made on the outside of the building on low window ledges, window wells, and the base of all outside walls.

**Search with Evacuation**

If the decision is to evacuate staff and students, the principal should have the team conduct a more thorough search of the entire building. The signal to be used for evacuation is through the use of the fire drill routine. When a threat appears to be "dangerous", the principal should enlist the aid of the local police and fire department in conducting the search. All searchers should vacate the building for a short period of time when the alleged bomb is to detonate. After the search has been made and the danger period is over, the students may then return to their classrooms for resumption of normal activities.

**Search with Evacuation during Valid Bomb Threat**s

When the bomb threat is judged to be valid the building should be cleared immediately of all personnel so that the police can assume the responsibility of conducting the search. A staff member should be stationed at each entrance to prevent unauthorized persons from returning to the building until the area is declared safe.

**Disposition of Suspected Bombs**

In the event of the discovery of a suspected bomb, the following steps will be taken:

a. **DO NOT TOUCH OR ATTEMPT TO MOVE THE PACKAGE IN ANY MANNER;**

Avoid moving any article or articles which in any way may be connected with the bomb to act as a triggering mechanism. Bombs have been set off by turning on a light switch or lifting a telephone receiver;

Clear the danger area of all occupants; and

Assign staff at entrances to prevent others from entering.

The decision of whether or not to evacuate depends on the circumstances of each call. Every call should be handled individually and evaluated separately. If there is doubt as to what action to take, the safety of students and staff must be paramount and evacuation procedures should be followed.

Persons to be evacuated from the area should be moved to a minimum of 300 feet from the point of possible explosion. Power, gas, and fuel lines leading to a danger area should be shut off as soon as practical. All flammable liquids and materials should be removed from the surrounding area as well as any portable materials of value.

If an actual bomb explosion does occur, the police department should maintain a guard around the area to prevent re-entry by any unauthorized person. However, inspection is necessary to insure the safety of all persons having business in the bombed area. Fire marshals, building inspectors, etc., should be requested to inspect the building regarding supporting walls, damaged overhead structure, broken gas lines, live power lines, etc. Their inspection should precede any police or security investigation and should be designed to prevent any further injury.

**Emergency School Evacuation**

When an emergency within a school or department necessitates total or partial closure of the schools within the district, threatens the safety and wellbeing of students, and/or interferes in the normal operation of the school, the following emergency procedure must be followed:

A. The report of an emergency will be directed to the superintendent's office;
B. If the nature of the emergency calls for immediate action on the part of a principal, he/she will take necessary action and report such action to the superintendent's office;
C. The superintendent's office will contact those departments and/or schools who must assist in the emergency action; and
D. When appropriate the superintendent's office will contact the city police department and the county department of emergency services.

The principal will instruct staff including teachers, secretaries, cooks, custodians, aides, and bus drivers as to their respective responsibilities in an evacuation exercise.

The principal will be responsible for organizing and conducting such emergency evacuation drills as are necessary and will objectively evaluate the activity following each such drill. In the absence of the principal, staff should be able to conduct all aspects of the evacuation procedure.

**Pandemic/Epidemic**

If anyone within the school is discovered or suspected to have a communicable disease that may result in an epidemic/pandemic that person will be immediately quarantined pending further medical examination. Local health officials will be notified immediately.

Any student or staff member found to be infected with a communicable disease that bears risk of pandemic/epidemic will not be allowed to attend school until medical clearance is provided by the individual's primary care physician or other medical personnel indicating that the risk of that individual transmitting the disease no longer exists.

In the event of prolonged school closings and/or extended absences by staff or students as the result of a flu pandemic or other catastrophe the superintendent will develop a pandemic/epidemic emergency plan that includes at a minimum:

A. The chain of command for the emergency plan, and the individuals responsible for specific duties such as quarantine;
B. The specific steps the district will take to stop the spread of the disease;
C. The process for identifying sick students;

D. The transportation plan for sick students;

E. Disease containment measures for the district;

F. A continuing education plan for students, such a plan may include providing students with assignments via mail, local access cable television, or the school district's Web site;

G. Procedures for dealing with student privacy rights;

H. A continuity of operations plan for central office functions including employee leave, pay and benefits during a pandemic; and

I. An ongoing communication plan for staff, students and parents.