

## **School Emergencies/Drills**

At the Letchworth Central School District, we strive to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all students and staff. To prepare for an emergency, we conduct a minimum of four (4) lockdown drills and eight (8) evacuation (fire) drills during the school year as well as one (1) Shelter-in-Place/Early Dismissal drill. Each lockdown drill will be announced to students and staff at the time of the drill. Parents will be notified one week in advance of a lockdown drill and after the drill has been completed, per New York State Education Department regulations. The District has a safety plan which includes orderly procedures that will help all students remain safe.

School officials need your support in their efforts to keep everyone safe, and we appreciate the cooperation of you and your child(ren) during these drills. Please continue to have discussions with your child(ren) about the importance of these exercises. Learn about the different types of school emergency practice drills below.

### **Types of School Emergency Practice Drills**

If you have questions regarding any of these safety drills or other safety concerns, please contact your school office. Each type of drill is explained below:

#### Evacuation (Fire) Drills

Evacuation (fire) drills, as required by Section 807 of the Education Law, are designed to ensure a quick and orderly evacuation of school buildings should we experience a real fire or other related emergency. Evacuation (fire) drills follow a set procedure using primary or secondary routes. We practice the evacuation process so all school employees know their respective duties and students know where to go.

#### Lockdown Drills

The purpose of the lockdown drill is to help students practice how to stay safe from any danger inside the building. During a lockdown drill, all perimeter doors to the school building as well as classroom and office doors will be locked and will remain locked until the danger or issue outside or inside the building is resolved. So that everyone may remain safe, no one will be allowed to enter or leave the building/classroom until the authorities authorize such release. The first lockdown drill will be conducted during the first week of school each year.

A lockout situation, which differs from a lockdown, is a response to a potentially dangerous situation outside the building or in the surrounding community. In a lockout, operations within the building continue as normal (such as moving between classes) while law enforcement works to address the external issue. Similar to a lockdown, no one may enter or leave the building until it is deemed safe and the authorities authorize such release.

#### Shelter-in-Place Drills

The shelter-in-place drill is designed to protect students and staff from threats requiring shelter, such as storms and high winds, or other situations where students and staff are most secure in

designated locations. During a shelter-in-place, all doors are closed and locked. Students and staff stay in designated secure spaces until the situation has been resolved.

### **Notification of School Emergencies & Drills**

During a school emergency or drill, the safety of our students and staff is our number one priority. As a result, we may be unable to provide immediate updates to parents/guardians. We understand your concerns and we will provide information to you and the community as soon as possible. Please listen for ParentSquare automated calls and monitor the district's website and Facebook page for updates.

Please remember that during an emergency or drill, telephone lines at school need to remain open and available for emergency response. Please understand that overloading the phone systems may interfere with response efforts and may delay our ability to provide accurate updates to parents/guardians and the public.

We also advise against posting on social media to ask what is happening at the school. This could cause a large number of people to start calling the school and overloading the phones, or attempting to come to the school and further impeding response efforts. The school district is the best source of information about what is happening in our buildings, and we will provide updates as soon as we can. Your understanding in this matter is appreciated.

### **What You Should Do During School Emergencies/Drills**

In a school emergency or drill, your cooperation and understanding will help to ensure the safety and security of your child.

Receiving a phone call or a text from your child during a school-related emergency or drill can be frightening and understandably so. We are trained to handle a variety of school emergency situations and how to best keep your child safe. If your child contacts you during a school-related emergency or drill, we recommend the following:

#### Remain calm and keep your child calm.

- Ask your child if an adult is with him/her and reinforce that he/she is safe.
- Encourage your child to silence his/her phone and await further instruction.
- Tell your child to stay off the phone until the emergency or drill is completed. This includes staying off social media. Sharing real-time information on social media during drills or actual emergencies has the potential to incite panic, spread inaccurate information and/or hinder response efforts.
- Remind your child to contact you once the incident is over.

#### Minimize phone use

- Calling your child on his/her cell phone could overload the cell system and prevent first responders and school officials from using cell phones, which could negatively impact emergency response efforts.

- Calling your child's school building would tie up district phone lines, which could impact the ability of emergency responders to efficiently and effectively ensure the safety and security of students and staff. Further, if the phone system is overloaded, it will hinder efforts to update parents and community members on the situation.
- For updates and information, listen for ParentSquare automated calls and monitor the district's website and Facebook page for updates. Contact your school's main office to make sure your contact information is current.

Please remain home or at work

- To keep access routes, streets and parking lots clear for emergency vehicles we ask that you not attempt to go to the school. Traffic congestion will make emergency response much more difficult for police, ambulances and fire departments to get to the school and could delay their response. If the school sends your child home on the bus, it is vitally important that you be there to receive your child.
- In an emergency situation, school officials will need your help to ensure the safety and security of our most precious charge: your children. Following these suggestions will allow for the quick resolution to security situations.

**What You Should Do If You See or Hear of a Threat**

All students, school staff and members of the community are encouraged to report anything they see, hear, or are made aware of, if it may impact a school or school program. Even if you don't feel like you have enough information or you're unsure of what it means, please call 911, contact the school or [Report an Anonymous Tip](#), which sends your message to school administrators. School officials and, if required, local law enforcement will determine the course of action and next steps in order to maintain a safe and secure school environment.

Mr. John Novak, Business Administrator, Safety Officer  
Mr. D. Todd Campbell, Superintendent, Chief Emergency Officer  
Deputy Ivan Carrasquillo, School Resource Officer