Title: **Procedure - Emergencies**
Code: 3432P
Section: 3000 - Students

Overview

The District and its schools will develop comprehensive all-hazard emergency operations plans that address prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies. Plans will be revisited annually and revised if necessary.

In the event of an emergency:

- The report of an emergency will be directed to the superintendent's office;
- 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;
- The superintendent's office will contact those departments and/or schools who must assist in the emergency action, and
- When appropriate the superintendent's office will contact the local police department and the county department of emergency services.

Drills

Drills are essential and are held to familiarize the occupants of a building with the signals, process, and procedures so that in case of emergency there will be no hesitation or confusion. Each school in the District will hold at least one safety-related drill per month to teach students and staff the basic functional responses to potential threats and hazards: evacuation, lockdown, shelter-in-place, and drop-cover-hold on. All persons in the building must take part in the drills. District schools may hold unplanned drills.

Schools will identify those drills that they intend to practice more than one time. The basic functional responses are adaptable and can be applied to a variety of situations. In responding to real threats or hazards, more than one response may be required. (An earthquake, for example, may require both a drop-cover-hold-on response followed by an evacuation.)

The sounding of an alarm for the purpose of a drill is an authority possessed solely by the principal or authorized designee. The principal will designate an alternate to act in the principal's absence. In the event of a real emergency, the person witnessing the situation may sound the alarm; the school office must be immediately notified of the emergency.

Each school in the District will document the date, time, and type of drill, and maintain the documentation in the school office. Note: modify location for maintaining documentation as accurate for your district. In addition to required monthly drills, schools are encouraged to conduct one tabletop exercise, one functional exercise, and two full-scale exercises within a four-year period.

Each school in the District is distinct. It is incumbent upon the principal of each school to develop, adapt, and modify safety planning requirements, processes, and drills to the particular needs of the school. The school principal will ensure that all staff and students are trained and prepared for a wide range of potential emergency situations. Principals are encouraged to use a variety of options and opportunities to facilitate the training process. Each school will develop plans to teach students crisis

response strategies and ensure that adults, including First Responders, are trained to follow established protocols.

The District is committed to supporting the needs of all students in the event of an emergency, including those with special needs and disabilities, and those whose first language is other than English. School emergency planning will consider the needs of these students throughout the four phases of crisis management and work to identify students' needs for accommodations and modifications related to safety planning.

Basic Responses and Drills

Evacuation:

In an emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate students from a school. An evacuation is a functional response taken to move students and staff from one place to another quickly. The primary objective of an evacuation is to ensure that all staff, students, and visitors can quickly move away from the threat. Evacuation examples include responding to fire, bomb threat, after an earthquake, or internal gas leak.

Principals must prepare an evacuation plan for their school and carry out a practical evacuation exercise at least once a year. The needs for each school will be different; no common plan can be used to prepare all schools. Principals are encouraged to collaborate with local fire and law enforcement when making plans to evacuate their schools.

In preparing for possible evacuations, principals should identify three types of evacuation locations:

- On-site evacuation locations within the school (auditorium, gym, cafeteria, etc.);
- On-site evacuation locations outside of the building (playground, football field, parking lot, etc.);
- Off-site evacuation locations at a separate facility, as well as a possible alternate location.

When planning for an evacuation, principals should consider:

- The safe movement of students, staff, and visitors to designated assembly areas;
- The evacuation of students who are not with a teacher or staff member;
- Alternate evacuation routes and assembly locations in the event that the primary route or assembly area is unsafe;
- The evacuation of individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, such as language, transportation, or medical needs.

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.

Any District school that lies in mapped [lahar/tsunami] zones must plan with local First Responders and must implement one walking evacuation drill per year. The previous sentence can be removed if no mapped lahar/tsunami zones in the district.

Lockdown/Lockout:

A Lockdown is a functional response taken to secure interior portions of school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the school. The primary objective is to ensure all school students, staff, and visitors are quickly secured away from the immediate danger, such as armed intruders, violent behaviors, suspicious trespassers, on-campus shootings, bomb threat, sniper, or nearby police activity. Lockdown drills will not include live simulations of or reenactments of active shooter scenarios that are not trauma-informed and age and developmentally appropriate.

A Full Lockdown is initiated when hallways need to be cleared. Movement throughout building is stopped until an all-clear signal is given.

A Modified Lockdown is typically used when events in the vicinity of the school may pose a threat. Movement within the building may continue as normal or may be adapted based on the situation.

A Lockout is initiated to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose a threat or hazard outside of the school building. Lockout uses the security of the physical facility to act as protection; it brings students inside the school when that is deemed safer than being outside.

Shelter-in-Place/Sheltering:

Shelter-in-place means to take immediate shelter where you are and isolate your inside environment from the outside environment. Generally, shelter-in-place lasts for just a few hours. Shelter-in-place is initiated because it is safer inside the building or a room than outside. It is used to protect students and staff from chemical, radiological, or biological contaminants that have been released into the environment.

Sheltering is similar to shelter-in-place, in that it is initiated because it is safer inside the building than outside. When sheltering, action is taken to move students, staff, and visitors indoors quickly. Sheltering may last for an *extended period* of time. For severe weather, depending on the type and/or threat level, staff may need to move the affected individuals to rooms without windows or to rooms that can be sealed as a weather shelter.

In planning for both shelter-in-place and for sheltering, the school planning team should consider:

- Supplies needed to seal a room against hazardous materials;
- Supplies needed to provide for the basic needs of students and staff (e.g., water; sanitary needs);
- The needs of individuals with disabilities and others who have access or functional needs, such as students needing regular administration of medication, durable medical equipment, or personal assistant services; and
- The possible need for and integration of "safe rooms" for protection against extreme weather hazards in order to provide immediate life-safety protection when evacuation is not an option.

Earthquake/Drop – Cover – Hold-on:

The threat of an earthquake in Washington is ever-present. The standard functional response to an earthquake is: Drop – Cover – Hold-on. When an earthquake occurs, the danger can persist for some time.

Each school principal in consultation with staff is required to prepare a plan and conduct an emergency drop-cover-hold-on earthquake drill annually. Building staff are encouraged to contact the District office and the county emergency service department for technical assistance.

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 walls 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.

Information to Families
Families should be advised that 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.

Families should also be advised not to remove a child from the school grounds unless they have first checked with school officials, as building staff might think the student is missing and needs help.

Families should further be advised to avoid calling the school, as school staff will need to use the phones, if the phones are functioning. Staff will notify parents of injured children first. Schools will train staff to help injured children, as possible, until other medical assistance arrives.

Following an earthquake drill or actual event, staff members will account for all students and staff before re-entry. The principal must determine, on the basis of thorough inspection of both structures and utility conduits, that the facility is safe. No students or staff will be dismissed until procedures have been approved by the superintendent's office if district-wide communications are in operation.

Instructions – During Drill or Earthquake
In classrooms: All persons, including the teacher, other staff, and students should get under a desk or table, face away from windows, face away from bookshelves, face away from 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.

In gymnasiums or assembly areas: all persons should exit such facilities as expeditiously as possible and move to designated areas.

On stairways: all persons should move to the interior wall and "duck and cover." If the stairway is exterior to the building, all persons should evacuate to designated areas.

If outdoors: all persons should move to designated areas, as far away as possible from buildings, poles, wires, and other elevated objects. All persons should lie down or crouch low to the ground, covering their heads. All persons should be aware of encroaching danger that may demand further movement.

After the Shaking Stops:
Expect aftershocks.

The principal and custodian should inspect facilities as soon as it appears safe to do so, and 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. One or more responsible staff members or students may be posted to prevent re-entry.

Following the evacuation, the principal should:

- 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).

Schools which lie in mapped lahar or tsunami zones must plan for and implement one walking evacuation drill per year. This sentence can be deleted if no such zones exist in your district.

The four basic functional responses are adaptable and can be applied to a variety of situations. Some threats or hazards may require the use of more than one basic functional response.

Preparation and Response to Specific Emergencies

Fire:

Fire drills are evacuation drills held to familiarize the occupants of a building with the signals, evacuation routine, and exits so that in case of a fire 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:

- All persons in the building must take part in the fire drill;
- Every fire alarm should be considered as a warning of an actual fire;

- An accidental or otherwise unplanned fire alarm will be considered a real event and not counted as a drill.

Instructions should be given to all students during the first week of school in September. It is particularly important that kindergarten children, representing the one large group of children new to the schools, be given instructions in fire evacuation drill procedures for the building.

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 pandemic (or other catastrophes) the superintendent or designee will develop a pandemic/epidemic emergency plan that includes at a minimum:

- The chain of command for the emergency plan, and the individuals responsible for specific duties such as quarantine;
- The specific steps the district will take to stop the spread of the disease;
- The process for identifying sick students;
- The transportation plan for sick students;
- Disease containment measures for the district, including possible required use of personal protective equipment and of social distancing;
- A continuing education plan for students, such a plan for remote learning including but not limited to teaching via the internet, providing students with learning packets, assignments via mail, the school district's web resources, etc.;
- Procedures for dealing with student online safety and privacy;
- A continuity of operations plan (COOP) for central office functions including employee leave, pay, and benefits during a pandemic; and
- An ongoing communication plan for staff, students, and families.

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.

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.

The decision of whether or not to evacuate and the manner of evacuation 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.

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. Immediate evacuation of the facility should be initiated as delineated in the site-specific comprehensive safety plan. Evacuation procedures should be modified as needed to ensure the safest possible routes are identified and followed.

Students and staff to be evacuated from the area should be moved to a minimum safe distance as determined by law enforcement personnel. 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.

Those 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.

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. 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 Threats

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.

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.

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

- Do not touch or attempt to move the package in any manner.
- Avoid moving any article or articles that seem to be connected with the bomb in any way that could be 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.

Additional Emergency and Drill Planning Considerations Communications:

The delivery of timely and accurate information before, during, and after an incident is a critical component of crisis and emergency management. Ensuring that students, staff members, parents, local response agencies, the media, and the community have information is the joint responsibility of the school and the District Chief Information officer.

Planning for communication and coordination will consider both internal communication and external communication with stakeholders during emergencies and disasters. Planning will also consider the communication of emergency protocols before an emergency and communication after an emergency.

If possible, District and school communications system will work to integrate into the local disaster and response law enforcement communication networks (e.g., fire department and law enforcement staff). The goal of integrated communications is to:

- Ensure relevant staff members can operate communications equipment;
- Communicate with students, families, and the broader community before, during, and after an emergency;
- Account for technology barriers faced by students, staff, parents, and guardians;
- Effectively address language access barriers faced by students, staff, parents, and guardians;
- Allow the Chief Information Officer to respond in a timely manner to media inquiries;
- Communicate to the community; and
- Ensure effective communication with individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs (*e.g.*, coordinating with First Responders and local emergency managers to provide sign language interpreters for use during press conferences, publishing only accessible documents, ensuring information on websites is accessible).

Accounting for All Persons:

The planning team should consider the following when developing plans to account for all persons, including students, staff, and visitors:

- Who is in attendance at the school site;
- Who is in attendance at the assembly area;
- Actions to be taken when a student, staff member, or guest cannot be located;
- The process for reporting to the assembly supervisor; and
- How and when students will be dismissed or released.

Reunification and Student Release:

Planning how students will be reunited with their families or guardians is a critical component of emergency planning. Reunification is part of the Incident Command System. A comprehensive emergency plan needs to include procedures to accomplish the main priority of safety planning, which is to ensure the safety of the students to every extent possible.

There are a wide variety of emergency situations that might require student/parent reunification. Reunification may be needed if the school is evacuated or closed as a result of a hazardous materials transportation accident, fire, natural gas leak, flooding, earthquake, tsunami, school violence, bomb threat, terrorist attack or other local hazard.

As feasible, the planning team will consider the following when developing goals, objectives, and courses of action:

- The location of the reunification site;
- The methods used to inform families and guardians about the reunification process in advance;
- Verification that an adult is authorized to take custody of a student;
- The check-in process between the authorized adult and student at the reunion areas;
- Assurances that students do not leave on their own;
- Privacy protection of students and parents from the media;
- Methods to reduce confusion during the reunification process;
- Frequent updates for families;
- Recognition of technology barriers faced by students, staff, parents, and guardians; and
- Effective resources to address language access barriers faced by students, staff, parents, and guardians.

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Management Resources:

- 2022 - June Issue
- 2021 - February Issue
- 2017 - July Policy Issue
- 2013 - June Issue

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