

Crisis Management

A crisis is any period of instability and/or any event that may have an impact on a single school or the entire school division which may endanger the health, safety and/or security of students, teachers and staff. Crisis management is the reactive adjunct to the proactive safe school initiatives for Suffolk Public Schools. Suffolk Public Schools utilizes a system-wide crisis management plan which has been used as an example for school division crisis management plans across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The crisis management plan for your child's school includes the emergency elements of medical assistance, law enforcement, fire and utility services in the event that a crisis should occur. The plan describes the appropriate response procedures, agencies involved and the methods of communication during a crisis. Each school performs drills each month to ensure that students and staff know how to react to a given crisis.

In a crisis, leadership is provided by the principal and the school's crisis management team which consists of members of the school staff. Depending on the situation, School Administrative Staff (School Administrative Offices personnel) may also provide assistance both on and off site.

Early Dismissals will *NOT* be granted during emergency evacuations. In the event that an emergency evacuation of the building becomes necessary for any reason, students will not be granted early dismissal until such time as the situation causing the evacuation has been resolved and students have returned to the building. Upon returning to the building, students who obtain parental authorization will be permitted to leave, but

will be marked for an unexcused absence unless their dismissal had been previously approved or can be shown, via proper documentation, to be for a medical or court appointment.

Students typically permitted an early dismissal will be required to remain on school grounds if their time of departure coincides with an emergency evacuation. Students needing a note for employers will be provided with a note explaining the situation.

Safety Drills

Multiple practice drills are conducted throughout the year for everyone's safety. Outside visitors must wait outside until the drill is completed. Students will not be dismissed during a drill. If you are visiting the school during a drill, please follow procedures provided by the office staff or other school personnel.

Emergency Codes

The following emergency codes are used to prompt action by staff and students and convey vital information in the event of an emergency.

	Shelter Initiated when specific proactive actions are needed based on a threat or hazard; May include severe weather conditions or need to evacuate to a shelter area.
	Secure Get inside, lock outside doors. The "secure" action is called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the school building. If possible, classroom activities may continue uninterrupted.
	Lockdown Initiated when an incident or emergency is occurring inside the school or near school property. Occupants are kept in rooms or areas that are secured. There is no movement within the building. Lockdown procedures are followed.
	Evacuate Initiated when there is a need to move people from one location to another for safety reasons.
	Hold Hold in your room or area. Students and staff are required to stay in their classrooms or stay out of access areas until the all-clear is announced.