

WHEN AND WHY ARE STUDENTS AND STAFF ASKED TO:

- 🔹 LOCK DOWN
- 🔹 SHELTER-IN-PLACE
- 🔹 EVACUATE

School Response Emergency Protocols

A school crisis can take a number of forms, including an environmental event, such as a chemical spill or gas leak; a weather emergency, such as a tornado warning; or an intruder near the school. The nature of a school crisis dictates whether school officials will put in place a lock down, modified lock down, shelter-in-place, evacuation, or any combination of two of these protocols, as a means to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff.

There are times when schools work in collaboration with local law enforcement in determining when a specific school response is required.



SAFETY TERMS AND PROCEDURES

Lock Down

A lockdown takes place if an internal or external threat is identified at or near a school building. All entry and exit doors are locked and students are confined to classrooms. No entry or exit from the school will be permitted until an “all-clear” announcement is made. For the safety of all building occupants, students will NOT be released during a lockdown.

Modified Lock Down

During a modified lock down, outside doors are locked and students are accounted for and remain in the building under supervision. Visitors may be permitted to the building at the discretion of the school administrators.

Shelter-in-Place

During a shelter-in-place, students take refuge in designated areas to protect them from hazardous materials or severe weather. No exit from the school will be allowed until an “all-clear” announcement is made. School administrators will determine if people are allowed to enter the building. For the safety of all building occupants, students will NOT be released during a shelter-in-place.

Evacuation

During an evacuation, students and staff are led to the closest and safest way out of the building and attendance is taken to determine that every individual has exited the building safely.

Reunification Process

In the event of certain building emergencies, students will be relocated to a reunification assembly area. Students will be released ONLY to parents/guardians with photo ID and permission from a school district official. This procedure is necessary to account for the whereabouts of all students.



STAY SAFE PROGRAM

PARENTS/GUARDIANS' ROLES IN A SCHOOL EMERGENCY



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ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS IN AN EMERGENCY

In a school emergency, the first instinct as a parent/guardian is to pick-up the telephone and call your child(ren)'s school, or rush to your child(ren)'s school to pick-up your child(ren). The truth is, this only complicates matters from a safety and security standpoint.

Parents/Guardians too close to an incident often hinder the rescue attempts of police and emergency services on the scene.

The best action parents/guardians can take in an emergency is to stay close to their phone and email, and to monitor local radio and TV reports for regular, official updates and instructions.

Ensure that your child(ren)'s emergency contact information is accurate and up-to-date. The district uses the Blackboard Connect5 mass notification system to notify parents/guardians of inclement weather and emergencies. Become familiar with your schools' emergency communication procedures. Each school is committed to providing accurate and timely information in the event of an emergency.

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- 🔊 **DO** tune into local TV/radio stations for official school news alerts.
 - 🔊 **DO** rely only on official communication from school or public safety officials.
 - 🔊 **DO** listen for official information regarding reunification with your child(ren).
 - 🔊 **DO NOT** call or rush to your child(ren)'s school. Your presence could interfere with emergency responders.
 - 🔊 **DO NOT** call your child(ren) or school. Staff and students are discouraged from using cell phone communication for safety reasons.

SUGGESTED POINTS TO MAKE WHEN SPEAKING TO YOUR CHILD(REN) ABOUT SAFETY

Consider the child(ren)'s emotional state and use age-appropriate language.

- 🔊 Schools are safe places.
- 🔊 The school building is safe because...
(cite specific safety measures.)
- 🔊 We all play a role in school safety. If you see or hear anything that makes you feel uncomfortable, nervous, or afraid, it is important to tell an adult.
- 🔊 There is a difference between reporting, tattling, or gossiping.
- 🔊 Stay away from guns and other weapons. Tell an adult if you know someone has a gun or weapon.

HOW CAN I BE REUNITED WITH MY CHILD?

Parents/Guardians will be directed by school or public safety officials via the mass notification systems: phone, email, and text messages to their child's emergency contact information on file at their school.

Students will be released **ONLY** to parents/guardians who are documented as emergency contacts and who present a photo ID, such as a driver's license, military ID, or passport.

The reunification process can be time-consuming, so parents/guardians are urged to be patient.

MORE INFORMATION ON THE TOPIC OF SAFETY

- 🔊 HCPS Office of Safety and Security
www.hcps.org/departments/safetyandsecurity or (410) 638-4242
- 🔊 National Association of School Psychologists
www.nasponline.org
- 🔊 American School Counselor Association
www.schoolcounselor.org

