



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND CLOSURES

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Context:

Along with all levels of government, the Board recognizes that being prepared for various types of emergencies and responding appropriately is essential to maintaining a safe learning and working environment.

Policy:

The Board will develop and maintain a robust emergency preparedness plan and protocol that will include clear direction to all staff and students about preparing, training, rehearsing and reacting to emergencies. These plans and protocols will work together with the plans of local, regional, and provincial governments.

Guiding Principles:

The Board expects that:

1. The District Emergency Preparedness Plan will be maintained and regularly updated.
2. All schools and work sites will maintain and update a Site Emergency Preparedness Plan.
3. Training and rehearsal for emergencies will be on-going in each school and worksite.
4. Any potential emergency situation identified by the Health and Safety Committee will be included in the plans.
5. All employees will safeguard children under their care in the event of an emergency or school closure.
6. Parents/guardians will be fully informed of the plans in the case of an emergency, including school closures.

References:

- [Administrative Procedures to Board Policy 708: Emergency Preparedness and Closures](#)
- [Emergency Management in B.C.](#)
- [Emergency Management Oceanside](#)

Dates of Adoption/Amendments:

Adopted: 1994.04.26

Amended: 1996.11.26: 2011.05.24: 2018.02.27: **2022.05.24**



Purpose

These Administrative Procedures were written in support of Policy 708: Emergency Preparedness and Closures.

Emergency Planning

Site Administrators, in cooperation with the appropriate authorities, shall have Emergency Preparedness Plan procedures in place to ensure the safety of staff and students. That plan should provide for the evacuation, care, and reuniting of students with parents.

All employees shall be informed about the Site Emergency Preparedness Plan procedures to be followed at their worksite to ensure their safety and the safety of others.

At the beginning of each school year, parents shall be informed of the District Emergency Procedures and Site Emergency Preparedness Plan. This information will outline emergency procedures to be followed by staff and students in case of an emergency.

Emergency drills, including fire, earthquake, and lockdown, shall be undertaken in conformity with the District Emergency Procedures and Site Emergency Preparedness Plan.

The Board of Education will endeavor to ensure that each district school has sufficient staff trained in the following:

- a. Emergency planning
- b. The reduction of hazardous conditions
- c. Basic First Aid, C.P.R. Systematic Search and Basic Rapid Building Damage Assessment

If materials and supplies beyond those normally provided by the School District are to be kept on hand to augment the Site Emergency Preparedness Plan, then it shall be the responsibility of each worksite to obtain and maintain supplies in good order.

The Site Emergency Preparedness Plan must be easily identifiable and located in the main office of the worksite and any other locations that can be easily accessed by all site employees

The Director of Operations shall also develop an Emergency Preparedness Plan to address the safety of students and staff on school buses. Copies of this plan will be located at the Transportation Department Office, on each school bus and at each school.

In the event that a Site Administrator (or designate) must implement emergency procedures, the Superintendent of Schools (or designate) must be kept informed of the situation.

In the event of an advance warning of an impending natural disaster or any other occurrence which is a threat to the safety of children in school, the following action will be taken:

- a. The Superintendent of Schools (or designate) and/or Principal shall order a school or school(s) to be locked down or closed.
- b. Parents will be notified in accordance with established school procedures.
- c. Students will be dismissed and a student release/transportation plan enacted.



- d. The Director of Operations shall be responsible for providing the immediate transportation of students.
- e. The Superintendent of Schools (or designate) shall immediately notify the public of the threat to student safety and the nature of the emergency.

School Closure

The Board of Education has the responsibility, under the *School Act*, to keep District schools in session for all students and staff according to the annual School Calendar established by the Ministry of Education. However, the Board of Education also recognizes that the health and safety of staff and students is of paramount importance and recognizes that schools may have to be closed temporarily at times for any of several reasons, including the following:

- Inclement weather
- Power outage
- Failure of heating or water services
- Emergency health issues
- Other emergency situations

The Superintendent of Schools, or designate, has the authority to close schools by reason of weather emergencies or for other causes that might endanger the health or safety of students and staff.

There are occasions when the Director of Operations, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, may decide not to run the morning bus routes due to hazardous conditions. Every effort will be made to make that decision no later than 6:15 a.m.

Changes in bus operations or school closures shall be communicated to the following media outlets, which usually make such announcements between 6:30 and 8:00 a.m.:

- CIBH Radio ("The Beach" – 88.5 FM) Parksville
- CHPQ Radio ("The Lounge" – 99.9 FM) Parksville
- CHWF Radio ("The Wolf" – 106.9 FM) Nanaimo
- CKWV Radio ("The Wave" - 102.3 FM) Nanaimo
- CKNW (980 AM) Vancouver
- CBC Radio One (690 AM) Vancouver
- CHEK TV News Victoria
- Parksville/Qualicum Beach News (PQB News)

Prior to the end of October each year, parents will be reminded through school newsletters of the procedures that will be implemented in the event of emergent conditions.



Emergency Early Dismissal

Each school shall have an established plan by which parents can be notified in the event of an early closure.

In those situations during the school day where an emergent situation arises or weather conditions deteriorate significantly enough that a Principal or designate has concerns for local road conditions in his/her school zone, the Principal or designate should contact the Superintendent of Schools. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools to notify the Principal or designate as soon as it becomes apparent that school emergency closure will be necessary.

When an emergent situation occurs after school has begun it may be prudent for students to be dismissed and, therefore, staff will activate their plan to contact parents. On such occasions the Superintendent of Schools shall activate communication which notify parents that schools will be closed early and some or all bus schedules have been advanced.

If a school bus driver is unable to complete the school bus driver's normal bus run, the driver will so advise the Director of Operations. After discussion with the Director of Operations, the driver will either return the students to their home school or deliver them to an alternate location identified by the Director of Operations. Parents will be advised of such route changes either by direct telephone contact or other means.

References:

- [Board Policy 708: Emergency Preparedness](#)
- District Emergency Procedures attached

Dates of Adoption/Amendments:

Adopted: 1994.04.26

Amended: 1996.11.26 | 2011.05.24 | 2018.02.27 | 2022.05.24 | **2025.06.24**

STAFF EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Lockdown

Used in response to an armed or dangerous assailant **WITHIN** the school.

- Gather people in your vicinity into a secure room - do this quickly
- Close and secure doors
- Turn off lights, be quiet, get down low/behind heavy furniture, get out of sight
- Silence all cell phones and ask they be placed face down on the floor
- Alert other occupants by any means available and/or call 911 - only if safe to do so OR Leave Safely if no secure area is available and a safe exit is, then quickly leave the area/school. Report to the designated assembly area and await instructions.

***Normal activities in the school cease. Await police response.**

Hold & Secure

Used if there is a security concern in the neighbourhood.

- Bring everyone into the school and remain inside
- Secure exterior doors
- Close exterior window blinds/drapes (if available)
- No one may enter or exit the school during Hold and Secure

***Typically normal activities continue WITHIN the school.**

Room Clear

Used to move people away from a hazard contained in one room/area.

- Direct students to leave the room/area and report to designated area (ex: Library)
- Summon assistance as needed and appropriate (ex: call First Aid Attendant, Principal/Vice Principal, Maintenance Staff, 911)

***Staff should remain to manage the situation arising or exit if the room is unsafe**

Shelter in Place

Used if an environmental hazard may impact the school.

- Bring everyone into the school and remain indoors
- Secure exterior door and windows
- Close exterior window blinds/drapes (if available)
- Turn off all ventilation systems (if locally available/situation dependent)
- Staff designates will monitor access to the school via the main entrance
- Access may be denied if a risk exists that jeopardizes the safety of occupants

***Typically normal activities continue WITHIN the school**

Evacuate

Used to move people out of the school when a hazard exists inside.

- Direct students and other staff to exit the school via the shortest safe route
- Report to and assemble outside at the designated assembly site

***Principal or designate will determine next steps**

Drop, Cover, and Hold On

Used in the event of an earthquake, explosion, or any event that shakes the school.

- Quickly move away from obvious hazards
- **Drop** - low to the ground
- **Cover** - take cover under a sturdy table, desk, furniture, or other large sturdy items
- **Hold on** - to the furniture you are under and stay there until the shaking stops
- After the shaking stops, wait 60 seconds and then Evacuate via the shortest safe route
- Report to and assemble outside at the designated assembly site

***Principal or designate will determine next steps**

EMERGENCY TERMINOLOGY QUICK REFERENCE

SCHOOL DRILLS

- **Fire:** 6 drills/year as follows:
 - 3 drills before end of January
 - 3 drills after beginning of February
- Note: actual alarms and false alarms count as drills

- **Earthquake:** 3 drills/year

- **Lockdown:** 3 drills/year
 - 1 staff only (optional)
 - 2 with staff and students

- **Hold & Secure + Shelter in Place**
 - 1 review of procedure/year
 - Process of securing school exterior is to be rehearsed by Principal/VP and staff only

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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EMERGENCY ASSEMBLY AREA

This Site's Assembly Areas:



Qualicum School District

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Always growing
Grandissons ensemble