

# School **Emergency** **Guide** for Parents





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## Dear Parents:

When an incident occurs at or near your child's school, you can rest assured that the matter is being handled by our staff of emergency responders.

All staff members in the District's Professional Standards & Special Investigative Unit and Safety Department are fully trained and poised to respond to all types of situations.

This guide was developed to provide parents with information on how the District's Professional Standards & Special Investigative Unit and the Safety Department work together with school-based staff to ensure your child's safety and security.

Regards,

James F. Notter  
Superintendent of Schools

## Alternative Formats

Individuals with disabilities requesting alternative formats of this publication may call Equal Educational Opportunities (EEO) at (754) 321-2150 or Teletype Machine TTY (754) 321-2158.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN**

Every school in the District has an individualized School Emergency Response Plan. The plans are updated annually and reviewed with all school staff members. The plans include detailed school information and staff responsibilities before, during and after an incident. The plans encompass numerous potential scenarios that may occur both on and off campus.

## **VISITOR SIGN-IN**

The District is dedicated to maintaining safe learning environments at every Broward County Public School. To help accomplish this goal, many District schools utilize a single point of entry and a new identification system called S.T.A.R. (Security, Tracking And Response system). Each school has a single access way for entering campus, with most entries leading to the school office. Upon arriving in the school office, you will be asked to provide identification (driver's license, government ID, District ID) and will receive a visitors' badge if going beyond the front office or checkpoint. Please wear your badge at all times when on the school campus. Having the badge lets school staff know who you are and that you are there for an approved purpose.

## **EMERGENCY PREPARATION**

Each District school is required to prepare and submit for approval a School Safety Plan. The plans focus on handling crises or emergencies. The School Safety Plans include the following information:

- \* Positions and responsibilities for each member of the school's emergency response team
- \* The location of the school's command center
- \* The school's evacuation assembly areas
- \* The school's primary and secondary evacuation locations.

Every school is required to perform fire and evacuation drills and weather and lockdown exercises throughout the year to test their emergency plans. Broward County Schools also schedules one annual District-wide drill to test the District's emergency communications, preparedness and training.

## **EMERGENCY SUPPLIES**

Every Broward County Public School maintains an emergency supply kit that includes a variety of safety items, including first aid materials, blankets, radios, water and non-perishable foods.

## **KEEPING THE STUDENTS SAFE**

One of the safest places for your child to be is in school. Even though major incidents at schools are rare, it is important that schools and District staff plan, prepare and be vigilant. Each school conducts regular safety training programs with students and staff to assure that everyone is ready and prepared, should an incident occur.

Should a major incident happen involving your child's school, you or a designated contact person will be notified regarding the nature of the event and instructions to be followed.

We ask that you refrain from calling the school or coming to campus, as the teachers and staff will be focusing on safeguarding the children and keeping the lines of communication open.

## **EMERGENCY EVENTS**

### **Lockdown**

A “lockdown” is instituted in response to an incident that could potentially result in an unsafe environment for students and staff. Examples of events that result in lockdowns include an intrusion attempt, a weapon on campus or a disturbance on campus or in the surrounding neighborhood.

The school’s principal, the District’s Special Investigative Unit or local police authorities may order the “lockdown” of a school.

When a “lockdown” announcement is made, all of the school’s outside activities are stopped, with staff and students immediately reporting to their classrooms or other protected areas. Once everyone is in a secure environment, room doors are locked and will remain locked until the situation has been safely resolved. Outside perimeter gates are also locked and staffed to allow access by outside emergency responders.

The District’s main office and 9-1-1 are notified immediately and are kept informed of the situation and any action being taken. Should the situation warrant, additional District departments, including Area Offices, Safety, Special Investigative Unit and Communications, will be notified and may be called to the school site to assist. The “lockdown” will remain in effect until the responding authorities on site inform the school’s principal that it is safe to resume normal activities.

### **Shelter In Place**

A “shelter in place” directive is initiated when there is a need to protect students and staff from health hazards related to environmental air quality. Such events may include a hazardous materials spill, chemical release or smoke from a fire.

The school and District officials will be notified by either Fire, Sheriff’ or Police departments that an event is occurring, which requires “shelter in place” action. Once the order has been issued, all students and staff will shelter in the nearest building, with all exit doors to the outside firmly secured and locked. At that time, only emergency responders are allowed to enter and exit the campus.

### **Evacuation of School Site**

In the event that an evacuation of a school to an alternate site is required, information for parents to pick up their children will be:

- \* Posted at the original school site
- \* Sent via an automated phone message to the student’s emergency notification numbers listed in their files
- \* Available by calling the District hotline at 754-321-0321
- \* Posted on the District Web site at ([www.browardschools.com](http://www.browardschools.com)).

## **STUDENT RELEASE**

In the unlikely event that a school incident requires release of students, every possible effort will be made to contact parents and/or guardians. The school's staff will assist in the orderly release of students to parents/guardians, unless an authorized public safety official has restricted access to the school. In order for parents or other designated persons to pick up children, they must:

- \* Be authorized to pick up the child on the Emergency Contact Card
- \* Present proper identification to school staff

To help us provide a safer school site for your children, we are asking that you please stop in at the main office and sign in prior to your visiting the rest of our campus. This gives us an opportunity to say hello and to provide you with a visitor badge. Having a visitor badge lets our staff and other parents, who might be on our campus, know who you are and that you are there for a legitimate purpose.

## **EMERGENCY PREPARATION**

Each year all of the Broward County Public Schools are required to prepare and submit a School Safety Plan. Part of the School Safety Plan is a section dealing with crisis and disaster preparedness. This plan designates the;

- positions and responsibilities for each of the emergency operations positions
- Location of the command center
- The evacuation assembly areas at the school
- Primary and secondary location the school will go to in the event that they must evacuate.

Each of the schools is also required to perform a number of fire and lockdown drills through out the year. Each year all the schools and the district office participate in a district wide drill to test our communications and overall preparedness and training.

## **EMERGENCY SUPPLIES**

Each of our schools maintains an emergency supply kit that is equipped to get the school through the initial hours of the crisis. Plans are in place to provide food supplies if the need becomes necessary.

