

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

School District 60

GUIDE FOR PARENTS & GUARDIANS



Peace River North

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to familiarize parents/guardians with the emergency protocols established by School District 60.

In the event of an emergency, the safety of all students and staff remain our highest priority. Recognizing emergencies are unpredictable and can occur unexpectedly, the district has developed an Emergency Response Plan for all its schools. The plan operates in collaboration with local emergency authorities to ensure a timely and effective response in an emergency situation. Through proactive preparation and planning, our objective is to reduce the inherent risks associated with any emergency event.

School District 60 emergency protocols and procedures are in alignment with the Ministry of Education and Child Care's Emergency Management Planning Guide for Schools, Districts and Authorities which outlines key elements in the Emergency Management Cycle.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

- **All-Hazard:** Any incident or event, natural or human caused, that requires an organized response by public, private, and/or governmental entity in order to protect life, public health and safety, and minimize any disruption of government, social, and economic services.
- **Disaster:** An event, generally considered to have an even greater impact than an emergency, caused by an accident, fire, explosion or technical failure, or by the forces of nature, and has resulted in serious harm to the health, safety and/or welfare of people, or in widespread damage to property.
- **Emergency:** An event or circumstance that is caused by accident, fire, explosion, technical failure, human action or force of nature, that requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect the health, safety or welfare and/or a person or to limit damage to property.
- **Emergency Management Cycle:** An ongoing process to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from an incident.
- **Duty of Care:** The Supreme Court of Canada articulated that "The standard of care to be exercised by school authorities in providing for the supervision and protection of students for whom they are responsible [is] that of a careful or prudent parent."

Goals and Guiding Principles

- Keep students and staff safe in the event of an emergency
- Make sure staff have clear and consistent procedures to follow in the event of an emergency
- Clearly describe the roles and responsibilities in our school system during an emergency
- Ensure that communication and protocols aligned with community partners and authorities
- Minimize disruption and ensure continuity of education for all children

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The district adopts an all-hazards approach to managing emergency situations. This approach focuses on planning that involves a small number of responses that can be used in different types of emergencies.

Outlined below are the five basic all-hazard approaches that will be activated depending on the circumstances:

◆ Evacuation

Activated when the building or area becomes unsafe. In an evacuation, students and staff are to leave the building and go to a previously designated muster point outside the building or relocate to the secondary shelter. If it is safe to do so, students and staff are able to re-enter the building.

◆ Shelter-in-Place

Activated when a situation outside of the school is not safe. For personal safety, it is important for students and staff to remain inside the school. Exterior doors are locked and monitored to allow students and staff to enter. Once inside, no one leaves the building.

◆ Hold and Secure

Activated by the RCMP when it is necessary to secure the school because there is a security threat occurring in close proximity. Exterior doors are locked and monitored to allow students and staff to enter. Once inside, no one leaves the building.

◆ Lockdown

Activated in response to a significant act or threat of violence. If a lockdown is initiated by the principal, 911 is contacted for immediate response from the RCMP and other support agencies as necessary. Exterior doors and interior classroom doors are locked and no individual is permitted in or out of any area. Only the RCMP are permitted access to the school until the lockdown is over.

◆ Drop-Cover-Hold On

Activated in an event such as an earthquake, where the physical structure becomes unstable. Students and staff must go into a drop-cover-hold on position to reduce the risk of injury.

POST-EVENT RECOVERY

The following elements will be addressed post-event where needed:

- Emotional and psychological supports
- Restoring learning
- Debriefing to support moving forward
- Physical and structural needs of district facilities
- Continuity of operations (e.g. alternate site)

ANNUAL EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency drills provide students and staff the opportunity to practice the all-hazards approach to emergency management. These drills help students and staff acquire the knowledge required to respond quickly and confidently in the event of an emergency. Each year, the Principal schedules and conducts the following emergency drills:

- Six evacuation fire drills
- Two lockdown / hold and secure drills

SITE-SPECIFIC EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

Each school has developed a Site-Specific Emergency Response Plan aligned with the SD60 Emergency Response Plan. At the beginning of each school year, the plan is updated and reviewed with all building staff. It includes school site information, staff responsibilities in the event of an emergency, and the procedures to follow during an emergency. The plan also includes communication plans, student release plans and hazard-specific procedures.

Attached to the emergency plan are site maps, identifying muster points, traffic flow information and check in/out gates for parents. Secondary shelters have been prearranged with neighbouring buildings in the event of an evacuation during inclement weather. Emergency kits and designated first aid attendants are established at each site should an injury occur.

HOW CAN PARENTS AND GUARDIANS HELP?

BE PREPARED

- Ensure that your child's emergency contact information is accurate and up-to-date.
- Become familiar with the district's emergency protocols.
- Encourage your child/ren to take drills seriously.

DURING AN EMERGENCY EVENT

DO keep your phone close by for notifications from the district.

DO check the website at www.prn.bc.ca and official SD60 Facebook page for information.

DO rely only on official communication from school or public safety officials.

DO wait for official information regarding reunification with your child.

DO stay calm. Parents/guardians will be notified.

DO follow the parent reunification procedures.

DO NOT phone the school or the district office. Lines need to be open for emergency calls.

DO NOT visit the school until directed to do so.



- The Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with the Regional District and/or Municipal Authorities, has the authority to evacuate any school.
- If necessary, students and staff may be transported to a relocation site by school bus. School bus transportation will be arranged by the Transportation Supervisor in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools. Parents/guardians will be notified of relocation site.
- The student reunification plan will take place at site.
- If students and staff have to remain at the site for a length of time, contingency plans are in place.
- Any students and staff requiring assistance or have particular medical needs, medical alerts or medication will be supported.
- Designated first aid attendants will be on-site to respond in the event of an injury.

How can I be reunited with my child/ren?

Reunification Procedures

- Parents/guardians will be alerted by the school via email, district website and official SD60 Facebook Page to come pick up your child/ren.
- A “double-gated system” for parent reunification will be used (ie. check-in / check-out gates).
- School staff will be on-site to direct parents.
- Parents/guardians arrive at the check in “gate” but do not enter.
- Parents/guardians identify themselves and their child/ren’s name and move to student release “gate” to pick them up.
- Parents/guardians are asked to follow all on-site instructions.
- Students will only be released to an individual designated as the legal parent/guardian or emergency contact on the student contact information form.
- Once parents/guardians have been reunited with their child/ren, please exit the area immediately to minimize traffic congestion.

