

8420 EMERGENCY AND CRISIS SITUATIONS (M)

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[See POLICY ALERT Nos. 189, 191, 221, 224 and 227]

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide for the safety, security in each school building in the district. ~~and social-emotional well-being of every student and staff member in the district, while in school buildings, on school grounds or in transit on school buses.~~ The district will develop and implement comprehensive written plans, ~~and procedures,~~ and mechanisms to provide for the protection of health, safety, security, and welfare of the school population; the prevention of, intervention in, response to and recovery from emergency and crisis situations; the establishment and maintenance of a climate of civility; and supportive services for staff, students, and their families.

“School security drill” means an exercise, other than a fire drill, to practice procedures that respond to an emergency situation including, but not limited to, a bomb threat, non-fire evacuation, lockdown, or active shooter situation and that is similar in duration to a fire drill.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall consult with law enforcement agencies, health and social services provider agencies, emergency management planners, and school and community resources, as appropriate, ~~in-district mental health professionals, emergency management planners, students, and school and community resources, as appropriate,~~ in the development of the school district’s plans, procedures, and mechanisms for school safety and security. The plans, procedures, and mechanisms shall be consistent with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.1 and the format and content established by the Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force, pursuant to N.J.S.A. App. A:9-64 et seq., and the Commissioner of Education and shall be reviewed annually, and updated as appropriate.

A copy of the school district’s school safety and security plan shall be disseminated to all school district employees, local law enforcement authorities, and local fire department. New employees shall receive a copy of the school district’s safety and security plan, as appropriate, within sixty days of the effective date of their employment. All employees shall be notified in writing, as appropriate, regarding updates and changes to the school safety and security plan.

~~In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1, at least one fire drill and one school security drill will be conducted each month within school hours, including any summer months which the school is open for instructional programs. The only permissible suspensions or~~



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~~modifications to these statutory drill requirements are those directed by the New Jersey Department of Education Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning and Executive Order directives from the Governor of New Jersey. Any procedures or regulations will be created with consideration for the age of students enrolled in the school and sensitive to the social and emotional well-being of students. A school security drill means an exercise, other than a fire drill, to practice procedures that respond to an emergency situation including, but not limited to, a non-fire evacuation, lockdown, bomb threat, or active shooter situation that is similar in duration to a fire drill. Schools are required to hold a minimum of two each of active shooter, non-fire evacuation, bomb threat, and lockdown security drills annually. Fire alarm systems shall be initiated only during a fire drill evacuation. An actual fire or school security emergency that occurs at a school during the month and that includes activities which are the equivalent of a drill shall be considered a drill for the purposes of meeting the requirements of this section. Parents will be made aware by the end of the school day when a drill does occur.~~

~~The Board of Education is cognizant of the stress and anxiety that many students and staff experience as the result of preparing for the range of emergency situations encompassed by this policy. The Board directs that the training of staff, together with the planning and execution of drills, proactively address the need to reduce anxiety and help children feel safe. In accordance with the statewide NJ Drill Laws and NJ Drill Observation Checklist, the Board directs that:~~

The school district shall develop and provide an in-service training program for all school district employees to enable them to recognize and appropriately respond to safety and security concerns, including emergencies and crises, consistent with the school district's plans, procedures, and mechanisms for school safety and security and the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.1. New employees shall receive this in-service training, as appropriate, within sixty days of the effective date of their employment. This in-service training program shall be reviewed annually and updated, as appropriate.

The Board shall ensure individuals employed in the district in a substitute capacity are provided with information and training on the district's practices and procedures on school safety and security including instruction on school security drills, evacuation procedures, and emergency response protocols in the district and the school building where the individuals are employed in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:41-7.

Every Principal of a school of two or more rooms, or of a school of one room, when located above the first story of a building, shall have at least one fire drill and one school security drill each month within the school hours, including any summer months during



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which the school is open for instructional programs, and shall require all teachers of all schools, whether occupying buildings of one or more stories, to keep all doors and exits of their respective rooms and buildings unlocked during the school hours, except during an emergency lockdown or an emergency lockdown drill. Where school buildings have been provided with fire escapes, they shall be used by a part or all of the students performing every fire drill. An actual fire or school security emergency that occurs at a school during the month and that includes activities which are the equivalent of a drill shall be considered a drill for the purposes of meeting the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1.

Every school in the district shall conduct a school security drill within the first fifteen days of the beginning of the school year. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the school district shall ensure that a school security drill that occurs when students are present:

1. ~~Includes clear, developmentally and age-appropriate messaging to students and staff at the conclusion of the drill that the event is a drill and that no current danger exists; Staff and students will be informed that the active shooter, bomb threat or lockdown is a drill and not a real event while the drill is occurring, including via intercom/loudspeaker and Emergency Mass Notification (EM-N) system.~~
2. ~~Does not expose students to content or imaging that is not developmentally or age-appropriate; Care for students during drills must be prioritized and included in every proposed drill plan, including (but not limited to) students caught in the hallway once a lockdown begins (to ensure that no child is left alone and without any supervision during a drill), the range of events and times of day which might find large groups of students outside of class, the manner in which students will be cared for if forced to exit school during inclement weather, and the accommodation of students with demonstrated anxiety or disabilities (including, but not limited to, students with IEPs and 504 plans).~~
3. ~~Is paired with trauma-informed approaches to address any student inquiries or concerns which may arise as a result of a school security drill; Tabletop drill exercises may be used in addition to actual drills in which students participate.~~



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4. ~~Does not include the use of fake blood, real or prop firearms, or the simulations of gun shots, explosions, or other sounds or visuals that may induce panic or traumatic response from a student or school district employee; Written plans and procedures drafted in compliance with this policy must contemplate and make provision for reasonably foreseeable eventualities, including, but not limited to, the absence of key personnel designated for specific roles, the presence of untrained substitute teachers, volunteers, and contractor/vendor personnel, the precise manner in which fire and security personnel know how to navigate the building and obtain access to all locked closets and rooms.~~
5. ~~Does not require a student to role play as a victim, but may include first aid training in which students participate; and The plans and procedures shall be reviewed annually, and updated as appropriate.~~
6. ~~Is accessible to students with disabilities and mental health conditions, and provides all necessary accommodations for these students.~~

~~A copy of the school district's school safety and security plan shall be disseminated to all school district employees. New employees shall receive a copy of the school district's safety and security plan, as appropriate, within sixty days of the effective date of their employment. All employees shall be briefed in writing, as appropriate, regarding updates and changes to the school safety and security plan.~~

~~The school district shall develop and provide an in-service training program for all school district and vendor/contract employees to enable them to recognize and appropriately respond to safety and security concerns, including emergencies and crises, consistent with the school district's plans, procedures, and mechanisms for school safety and security and the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.1. New employees shall receive this in-service training, as appropriate, within sixty days of the effective date of their employment. This in-service training program shall be reviewed annually and updated, as appropriate. The administration shall take steps to verify that the training has been comprehensive and effective.~~

~~Law enforcement personnel will be present for at least one school security drill in each school during each school year, in order to make any recommendations or changes to the school security drill that the officer may deem advisable.~~

The Principal or designee will provide local law enforcement or other emergency responders, as appropriate, with a friendly notification at least forty-eight hours prior to



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holding a school security drill. A law enforcement officer shall be present at a minimum of one school security drill in each school year in order to make recommendations on any improvements or changes to school security drill procedures that the officer may deem advisable in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1. The school district may permit emergency personnel access to the buildings and grounds of its schools for school security drills that are scheduled outside of school hours and during such times as students are not present.

~~Although these outside agencies are not required to observe all school security drills, the Principal may invite representatives from local law enforcement and emergency responder agencies to attend and observe additional security drills, as needed.~~

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~~Such drills and in-service training programs shall be conducted in accordance with a building security drill guide and training materials that educate school employees on proper evacuation and lockdown procedures in a variety of emergency situations on school grounds as provided by the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness and the Commissioner of Education.~~

The school district shall review and update its school security drill procedures using a process that coincides with the review of the school safety and security plan developed pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.1 and collects input from emergency personnel; parents of students enrolled in the school district; teachers and staff employed in the district; mental health professionals; and student government representatives from multiple grade levels.

The school district shall annually track data on such measures and information as required by the Commissioner of Education, and shall report the data to the Commissioner.

Such drills and in-service training programs shall be conducted in accordance with a building security drill guide and training materials that educate school employees on proper evacuation and lockdown procedures in a variety of emergency situations on school grounds in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.1.

The school district will be required to annually submit a security drill statement of assurance to the New Jersey Department of Education by June 30 of each school year. Each school in the district will be required to complete a security drill record form as required by the New Jersey Department of Education.



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~~Each school in the District will also be responsible to submit a written report to the Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Safety by June 30 of each school year detailing the climate in the school before and after drills as well as any positive and negative impact of drills upon students and staff.~~

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~~The implementation of this Policy and its related regulations and procedures will be reviewed annually.~~

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~~Should any portion of this policy be determined to be contrary to existing law, the requirements of the law will prevail.~~

N.J.S.A. 2C:33-3

~~N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1; 18A:41-2; 18A:41-6; 18A:41-7;
18A:41-7a.~~

~~N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.1~~

~~N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1 et seq.~~

~~N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.1; 6A:27-11.2~~

Adopted: 2 April 2001

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