

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH ORANGE AND MAPLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY

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Emergency and Crisis Situation
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8420 EMERGENCY AND CRISIS SITUATIONS

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide for the safety, security 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 written plans and procedures 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, ~~pupils~~, students and their families.

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The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall consult with law enforcement agencies, health and social services provider agencies, 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.

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 modifications to these statutory 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.

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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. Parent/Guardians 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:

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- 1) 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 (EMN) system.
- 2) 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) Tabletop drill exercises may be used in addition to actual drills in which students participate.
- 4) 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, ~~parent~~ 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) The plans and procedures 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. 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.

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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 holding a school security drill. 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.

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 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.

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.

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

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 et seq.

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

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