

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Background

Emergencies effecting school facilities, school buses and/or District transport that may prohibit the intended use for an unspecified period of time, may include;

- Earthquake,
- Fire,
- Hazardous material accident/spills,
- Threats to schools (*e.g. bomb threat*)
- Violent physical incident or threat,
- School bus accident,
- Weather.

The District recognizes the importance of being prepared for various types of emergencies, both natural and human caused, that could occur while school is in session, necessitating the need to develop appropriate plans and procedures to deal with such emergencies at school facilities or involving District transport. To this end it is important that students, employees and parents be knowledgeable about the various emergency plans and procedures and to be prepared if such an emergency occurs.

In developing and carrying out emergency plans, concern for human life and safety must prevail over concern for property. The emphasis must always lie on prevention and forethought; not merely on procedures for coping with emergencies that do occur.

Definition

An emergency is a sudden, unexpected occurrence requiring immediate action to stabilize a situation.

Procedures

1. The Superintendent directs that emergency plans and procedures be developed, implemented and maintained for all school facilities, District office complex and school buses, and that:
 - 1.1 All employees shall be informed about the emergency plans and procedures to be followed at their work site, to ensure their safety and the safety of others;
 - 1.2 Students and employees shall practice the emergency procedures implemented at their school or work site;
 - 1.3 Parents shall be advised of the emergency procedures developed at the school(s) where their child(ren) are attending;

- 1.4 If materials and supplies beyond those normally provided by the District are to be kept on hand to augment the school emergency procedures, then it shall be the responsibility of each Principal to obtain and maintain such supplies in good order;
- 1.5 This Administrative Procedure shall be reviewed annually.

2. Emergency

- 2.1 In the event of an emergency, employees are expected to remain at their worksite to ensure the safety and security of students under their care and/or the school's care until otherwise directed by the Principal (*or person in charge*); those employees who have a child(ren) in other schools are to have arrangements in place for the care of their child(ren) by others until they can be released from their duties.
- 2.2 All emergencies impacting on the normal operation of a school facility or a school bus transporting students are to be immediately reported to the Superintendent, indicating the nature and location of the emergency and people involved, including type and severity of possible injuries and if assistance of District staff is required.
 - 2.2.1 An unlisted telephone number is maintained by District Office that is to be used only for emergencies that require immediate action or advice from a senior manager. This telephone is attended from 08:30 to 16:30. The unlisted number will be made available only to principals and other persons in the District with a recognized "need to know".
- 2.3 The Superintendent will:
 - 2.3.1 Provide appropriate direction regarding the specific emergency, from a command centre located at the District Office complex, as required;
 - 2.3.2 Liaise with local government agencies according to the type of emergency, including the police, local fire departments, hospital officials, social services and if the severity of the emergency warrants, the City of Vancouver Emergency Program Coordinator;
 - 2.3.3 Appoint a media liaison (*radio, TV & print*), to ensure prompt and accurate information is released when appropriate, rather than District employees making isolated comments or opinions that might cause unnecessary anxiety concerning the particular incident.

3. Planning

- 3.1 The Principal shall be responsible for the administration and maintenance of the Emergency Preparedness Plan at his/her school.
- 3.2 The Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible for the administration and maintenance of a school bus emergency preparedness plan.
- 3.3 An emergency preparedness plan is to be developed and maintained for each facility and as part of the plan, the following must be considered for each type of occurrence:
 - 3.3.1 Method of evacuation, primary and secondary routes of egress;
 - 3.3.2 Number of physically challenged people requiring assistance to evacuate the facility/school bus including wheelchair bound students, employee(s) and visitors;
 - 3.3.3 First aid treatment, including qualified first aid attendants and supplies;

- 3.3.4 Personal care, including appropriate supervision, psychological counselling as required, arrangements to provide nourishment, alternate washroom facilities;
- 3.3.5 Time of day;
- 3.3.6 Potential for inclement weather conditions;
- 3.3.7 Potential facility site, interior and exterior hazards, including:
 - 3.3.7.1 Natural gas and propane service lines and shut off valves,
 - 3.3.7.2 Storage of chemicals and flammable materials,
 - 3.3.7.3 Power lines, to building facilities,
 - 3.3.7.4 Water mains, septic systems to building,
 - 3.3.7.5 Location and height of interior storage, including size and materials stored,
 - 3.3.7.6 Location of combustible artwork displays and teaching materials that are attached to classroom and school hall walls; (must not exceed 20% of the area of the wall)
- 3.3.8 Method of accounting for whereabouts of students, staff and visitors;
- 3.3.9 Inventory of neighborhood hazards, resources and temporary shelter sites; (available for District schools from the Manager of Health and Safety)
- 3.3.10 Release of employees from their work responsibilities after an emergency occurs to attend to personal affairs;
- 3.3.11 Emergency communication in the event of a power failure, including the use of a "power fail" telephone connection in the school office;
- 3.3.12 Procedures for getting school emergency supply kit(s) to evacuation area, if required.
- 3.4 Practice emergency drills are to be conducted on a regular basis for students and employees to implement their evacuation from the facility/bus without difficulty.
- 3.5 Principals/Supervisors are to ensure each employee under their direction, i.e. teachers, teacher assistants, clerical staff, custodians, maintenance employees, transportation employees, are aware of the emergency preparedness plans for each identified emergency that could affect their work and work site.
- 3.6 Emergency preparedness plans are to be filed with the Superintendent and reviewed annually to ensure the readiness of plans.
- 3.7 At the commencement of each school year, principals of each school shall communicate with parents, outlining the school's emergency preparedness plan and procedures for parents to take in the event of an emergency at their child(ren)'s school, including the need to identify other adults authorized to have temporary custody of their child(ren) in the event contact cannot be made with the child(ren)'s parents.
- 3.8 Parents of new students enrolling in a school during the school year shall be provided with the school's emergency preparedness plan as part of the enrollment material.
- 3.9 Parents are to be encouraged to respond to emergencies, assisting and providing resources to reduce the impact of the emergency.

- 3.10 An emergency evacuation drawing shall be posted at the entrance/exit of each District building and room, displaying the primary evacuation route to the outside assembly area.
- 3.11 The school emergency preparedness plan is to be easily identifiable and located in the school office for access by all school employees, as well as any other location(s) deemed necessary, identifying and outlining each school staff's particular responsibility(s) in an emergency.

Reference: Sections 17, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act
School Regulation 265/89
School Earthquake Safety Guidebook
Engineer-Custodian's Handbook

Adopted: October 18, 1982

Revised: August 1, 1990; September 1994; January 1999; September 24, 2018