



Book	Policy Manual
Section	800 Operations
Title	Emergency Preparedness and Response
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Purpose

The Board recognizes its responsibility for the safety of students, employees, visitors, and facilities. Therefore, the Board shall provide the facilities, equipment and training necessary to minimize the effects of all hazards and emergencies, including but not limited to natural disasters, hazardous chemicals, fires, weapons, bomb threats, intruders, terrorism, communicable diseases and pandemics. Advance planning, training, practice, and comprehensive implementation are key components in ensuring the protection of the school community.[1]

Authority

The District, in cooperation with the local Emergency Management Agency and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), shall develop and implement a comprehensive disaster response and emergency preparedness plan, consistent with the guidelines developed by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and other applicable state requirements.[2][3]

The Board shall also utilize the resources of and comply with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and local law enforcement agencies. [4]

The Board requires that emergency preparedness, emergency evacuation, and school security drills be conducted at intervals required by state law.[3][5][6]

Definitions

School security drill - a planned exercise, other than a fire drill or natural disaster drill, designed to practice procedures to respond to an emergency situation that may include, but is not limited to, an act of terrorism, armed intruder situation, or other violent threat.[5]

School Safety and Security Assessment - a strategic evaluation of a school entity's facilities and programs used to identify potential safety and security threats.[7]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including parents/guardians, students, staff, community agencies, local law enforcement agencies, and first responders, during the development and implementation of the emergency preparedness plan.

The Superintendent or designee shall implement a communication system to notify parents/guardians of the evacuation or sheltering of students and to alert the entire school community when necessary.

Annually, on or before April 10, the Superintendent shall certify that emergency evacuation drills and school security drills have been conducted in the manner prescribed by law.[\[5\]](#)

In accordance with state law and regulations, the Superintendent shall execute a memorandum of understanding with each local police department that has jurisdiction over school property.[\[4\]](#)[\[8\]](#)[\[9\]](#)

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee to periodically complete a School Safety and Security Assessment in accordance with the provisions of law and established criteria, based on the needs of the District and availability of funding and resources.[\[7\]](#)[\[10\]](#)

Guidelines

The emergency preparedness plan shall be accessible in each District building, reviewed at least annually, and modified as necessary. A copy of the plan shall be provided to the county Emergency Management Agency and each local police and fire department that have jurisdiction over school property. The District shall obtain assurances from each appropriate agency that the emergency preparedness plan will be safeguarded and maintained confidentially.[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[11\]](#)

Appropriate information regarding the emergency preparedness plan shall be communicated to students, parents/guardians, staff, relevant stakeholders, and the community.

Annually, by September 30, the District shall assemble information required to assist local police and fire departments in responding to an emergency. The required information shall be deployed immediately to the Incident Command Post in the event of an emergency incident or disaster.[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)

Schools and school buses or transportation vehicles owned or leased by the District shall be made available to local, county, and state officials for emergency planning and exercises.[\[3\]](#)

Continuity of Student Learning/Core Operations

In the event of an emergency, local, county or state officials may require that schools be made available to serve as mass-care facilities or to mitigate the spread of infection or illness. Local, county or state officials may also utilize District-owned buses and other transportation vehicles. The Superintendent or designee shall determine whether schools shall be closed, or the educational program suspended, to safeguard student and staff health and safety.[\[3\]](#)[\[12\]](#)[\[13\]](#)

The District shall make provisions in the emergency preparedness plan for the continuity of student learning during school closings or excessive absences, in accordance with law. This may include, as appropriate, activities qualifying as instructional days for fulfilling the minimum required days of instruction under the law. Instructional activities may include:[\[14\]](#)[\[15\]](#)[\[24 P.S. 520.1\]](#)[\[22 PA Code 11.2\]](#)[\[Pol. 803\]](#)

1. Web-based District instruction.
2. Telephone trees.
3. Mailed lessons and assignments.

4. Instruction via local television or radio stations.

The continuity of core operations such as payroll and ongoing communication with students, staff, and parents/guardians shall be an essential part of the emergency preparedness plan.

Education and Training

Students and staff members shall be instructed and shall practice how to respond appropriately to emergency situations.[5][6]

Effective infection control and prevention education and procedures, such as frequent hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette, shall be encouraged continually to help limit the spread of germs at District schools.[16][17]

The District shall provide mandatory training to school employees on school safety and security based on the District's needs and in accordance with law. Training shall address any combination of one (1) or more of the following areas:[18][19][20]

1. Situational awareness.
2. Trauma-informed approaches.[20][Pol. 146.1]
3. Behavioral health awareness.
4. Suicide and bullying awareness.[21][22]
5. Substance use awareness.[23][24]
6. Emergency training drills, including fire, natural disaster, active shooter, hostage situation, and bomb threats.[25]
7. Identification or recognition of student behavior that may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community, or others.[24 P.S. 1302-3][Pol. 236.1]

Employees are required to complete a minimum of three (3) hours of training every five (5) years.[19]

Required Drills

At least annually, all District schools shall conduct a disaster response or emergency preparedness plan drill, in accordance with the provisions of law.[3]

Each District school shall conduct fire drills at least once a month during the school year, in accordance with the provisions of law.[5][6]

Each District school shall conduct a school security drill within ninety (90) days of the beginning of each school year. The school security drill shall be conducted while school is in session, with students present.
[5]

The school security drill may take the place of a fire drill for the month in which it is conducted.

The Superintendent or designee may conduct additional school security drill in District schools after the first ninety (90) days of the school year. Up to two (2) additional school security drills per school year may be conducted in place of the required fire drills for the month in which they are conducted.[5]

The Superintendent or designee shall:[5]

1. Oversee instruction and training of students and school employees in procedures for conducting school security drills and responding to emergency situations.

Legal

1. Pol. 705
2. 22 PA Code 10.24
3. 35 Pa. C.S.A. 7701
4. Pol. 805.1
5. 24 P.S. 1517
6. 24 P.S. 1518
7. 24 P.S. 1301-B
8. 22 PA Code 10.11
9. 24 P.S. 1303-A
10. 24 P.S. 1303-B
11. 24 P.S. 1302.1-A
12. Pol. 804
13. 35 Pa. C.S.A. 7301 et seq
14. 24 P.S. 1501
15. 24 P.S. 1506
16. Pol. 203
17. Pol. 203.1
18. 24 P.S. 102
19. 24 P.S. 1310-B
20. Pol. 333
21. Pol. 249
22. Pol. 819
23. Pol. 227
24. Pol. 351
25. Pol. 805
26. 75 Pa. C.S.A. 4552
27. 24 P.S. 1303-D
- 24 P.S. 1205.7
- 20 U.S.C. 7112
- 20 U.S.C. 7118
- 20 U.S.C. 7801
- Pol. 146
- Pol. 236.1
- Pol. 709
- Pol. 810
- Pol. 909