



Student Safety and Emergency Preparedness

The Irvington Union Free School District considers emergency preparedness a top priority. To ensure we are equipped to respond in emergency situations, we maintain a comprehensive Districtwide safety plan that guides our staff and public safety partners to respond swiftly should an emergency occur. We provide ongoing crisis management training to school administrators and other key staff members throughout the District.

Building-level emergency response plans are also in place at each school. A building-based committee oversees the plan for each school, and committee members have assigned roles and responsibilities should an emergency occur. These committees meet regularly to review procedures and conduct annual training and drills so that students and staff are aware of the most effective and safe emergency responses.

Assessing an Emergency

An emergency typically involves unexpected events and potentially rapidly changing conditions. Across the District, we practice managing a wide array of challenges that could surface. However, each situation is unique and will dictate how we respond. In every instance, we will do what is necessary to protect our students first and then communicate with you as soon as possible – providing as much information as we can. If a situation is serious enough that it would require you to pick your child up from school, we will provide specific directions on how to best proceed.

Preparing for an Emergency

- Keep your child's emergency information up to date in eSchool Plus and in all school records, including alternate phone numbers for you and family/friends you have authorized as your backup. Notify the school promptly if this information changes.
- Talk with your children about the importance of following instructions in the event of an emergency.
- Tell your children not to use cell phones unless they are permitted to do so. Unauthorized cell phone use could put people at risk during an emergency and may distract students from listening to important safety instructions.
- Have a plan for an emergency and make sure your children are familiar with the plan.

Safety First

The Irvington Union Free School District is committed to providing safe learning environments for students and staff. We work closely with local first responders to ensure that we are well prepared and the children are protected. This collaboration with first responders includes regular communication, planning for emergency situations, observation of school emergency drills and facilitation of and participation in related training. Specifically, the Irvington schools are pleased to maintain a strong partnership with the Irvington Police Department. In our collaboration, they have a regular presence on our campuses either on patrol, visiting classrooms or leading programs. Should you see a police car on school grounds, it should not be a reason for concern as it is evidence of them engaging in our programs and supporting our safety initiatives.

Please know that should an emergency occur, the first objective of all school staff is to ensure the safety of our students. Then, we will provide essential communications to the school community with as many specific details as possible. This communication with parents is a priority. We ask that you please be patient and understand that we will provide as much information as we can as quickly as possible, as our first priority is ensuring the safety of students and staff.

Prevention is also paramount. To this end, the District provides multiple mental health supports and resources to assist our students. We encourage all school community members to speak up if they see or know something that is of concern – remember, **if you see something, say something to school or law enforcement officials.**

Terms That May Be Used During an Emergency

Shelter-in-Place

A shelter-in-place is a course of action when students and staff are required to remain indoors, perhaps for an extended period of time, because it is safer inside the building or a room than outside. Depending on the threat or hazard, students and staff may be required to move to rooms that can be sealed or are without windows. In case of a bomb threat, the school administration will consult with first responders and law enforcement when making decisions.

Hold-in-Place

If there is an internal incident or administrative matter such as a maintenance issue or medical emergency that requires students and staff movement to be limited, a “Hold-in-Place” may be initiated. This is intended to keep students and staff out of the affected area until the situation can be rectified.

Evacuation

Each school has procedures for partial or complete evacuation, including a designated safe location to which students may be transported. If students are to be released from the off-site location, parents will be directed where to pick up their children and will be required to sign out their child. A student will be released only to an adult with proper identification and who is documented as an emergency contact.

Lockout

A lockout is the response to an actual or potential threat from outside the school building. An example of such a threat might be criminal activity occurring nearby or a wild animal outside of the school. The primary objective of a lockout is to quickly ensure all school staff, students and visitors are secured in the school building away from the outside danger. Outside activities are canceled and the school day may proceed as normal.

Lockdown

A lockdown is initiated when a school administrator, faculty or staff member has become aware of an actual or imminent incident that poses an immediate threat in or around the school. The primary objective of a lockdown is to quickly ensure school staff, students and visitors are secured in rooms away from immediate danger. Individuals will be kept within locked rooms until the incident is brought to a close by emergency responders or law enforcement personnel.

What To Do During a School Emergency

- Do not go to the school or scene of an emergency unless officials ask you to do so – even though a child may ask you to come. Although this may be your first instinct as a parent, your presence may interfere with the emergency response.
- Check the district website at www.IrvingtonSchools.org for related messages.
- The District will also use the Send Word Now alert service to send pertinent communications. Please ensure that you maintain updated contact information within this alert service.
- Do not listen to rumors. If your child does contact you, remember that he or she may only know pieces of the larger picture.
- Remain as calm as you can if your child contacts you, as they are likely looking to you for reassurance.