

Subject: Fire and Emergency Drills, Bomb Threats, and Bus Emergency Drills

Fire and Emergency Drills

The administration of each school building will instruct and train students on appropriate emergency responses, through fire and emergency drills, in the event of a sudden emergency.

Fire and emergency drills will be held at least 12 times in each school year; eight of these will be completed by December 31. Eight of the drills will be evacuation drills, four will be through use of the fire escapes on buildings where fire escapes are provided or identified secondary exits. The other four drills will be lock-down drills. Drills will be conducted at different times of the school day. Students will also be instructed in the procedures to be followed in the event that a fire occurs during the regular school lunch period or assembly, however, this additional instruction may be waived if a drill is held during the regular lunch period or assembly.

Summer School

At least two additional drills will be held during summer school in buildings where summer school is held, and one of these drills will be held during the first week of summer school.

After-School Programs, Events, or Performances

The building principal or designee will require those in charge of after-school programs, events, or performances attended by any individuals unfamiliar with that school building, to announce at the beginning of these programs the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Bomb Threats

School Bomb Threats

A bomb threat, even if later determined to be a hoax, is a criminal act. No bomb threat should be treated as a hoax when it is first received. Upon receiving any bomb threat, the school has an obligation and responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of the students and other occupants of the school. This obligation takes precedence over a search for a suspect object. Prudent action is dependent upon known information about the bomb threat-location, if any; time of detonation; etc. Specific procedures as to appropriate responses as a result of a bomb threat can be located in the building-level emergency response plan, as required by relevant law and regulation.

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Police Notification and Investigation

Appropriate law enforcement agencies must be notified by the building administrator or designee of any bomb threat as soon as possible after receiving the threat. Law enforcement officials will contact, as the situation requires, fire and/or county emergency coordinators according to the county emergency plan.

Implementation

The Superintendent or designee will develop written procedures to implement the terms of this policy. Additionally, these procedures will be incorporated in the District-wide school safety plan and the building-level emergency response plan, with provisions to provide written information to all staff and students regarding emergency procedures by October 1 of each school year, an annual drill to test the emergency response procedures under each of its building-level emergency response plans; and the annual review of the District-wide and building-level emergency response plans, along with updates as necessary, by September 1, as mandated by law or regulation.

Bus Emergency Drills

The administration will conduct a minimum of three emergency drills to be held on each school bus during the school year. The first drill will be conducted during the first seven days of school, the second drill between November 1 and December 31, and the third drill between March 1 and April 30. No drills will be conducted when buses are on routes.

Students who ordinarily walk to school will also be included in the drills. Students attending public and nonpublic schools who do not participate in regularly scheduled drills will also be provided drills on school buses, or as an alternative, will be provided classroom instruction covering the content of these drills.

Each drill will include practice and instruction in the location, use, and operation of the emergency exits, fire extinguishers, first-aid equipment, and windows as a means of escape in the event of fire or accident. Similarly, students will be instructed on all topics mandated by relevant sections of the Education Law and Commissioner's regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Safe boarding and exiting procedures with specific emphasis on when and how to approach, board, disembark, and move away from the bus after disembarking;
- b) Advancing at least 15 feet in front of the bus before crossing the highway after disembarking;

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- c) Specific hazards encountered during snow, ice, rain, and other inclement weather, including, but not necessarily limited to, poor driver visibility, reduced vehicular control, and reduced hearing; and
- d) Orderly conduct as bus passengers.

The administration of the drills will be in accordance with the New York State Education Department's Bus Safety Drill Guide and Compliance Form.

Instruction on Use of Seat Belts

When students are transported on school buses, the District will ensure that all students who are transported on any school bus owned, leased, or contracted for by the District will receive instruction on the use of seat safety belts. This instruction will be provided at least three times each year to both public and nonpublic school students who are so transported and will include, but not be limited to:

- a) Proper fastening and release of seat safety belts;
- b) Acceptable adjustment and placement of seat safety belts on students;
- c) Times at which the seat safety belts should be fastened and released; and
- d) Acceptable placement of the seat safety belts when not in use.

Education Law §§ 807, 2801-a, 3623, and 3635-a
Penal Law Article 240
8 NYCRR §§ 100.2(c), 155.17, and 156.3

Note: Refer also to Policy #5681 -- School Safety Plans

Adopted: 9/12/22