



## EMERGENCY PLANNING – A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

The Freeport Public Schools have always been serious about being prepared for emergencies. Each year, the District's entire Emergency Plan is reviewed and updated to meet New York State regulations. The plan addresses an enormous range of issues, from dealing with the onset of a crisis situation, to addressing the psychological and emotional needs of students and adults in its aftermath.

When an emergency occurs, the first and foremost concern of every Freeport staff member is the safety of the children in our care. This guide provides a brief description of how the school district will manage an emergency and how Freeport parents can support those vital efforts.

### GENERAL INFORMATION:

The Freeport Union Free School District has established a **District-Wide School Safety Plan (which is posted on our website)** and a **Building-Level Emergency Response Plan** for each School Building in the District. **The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan is a confidential document which cannot be shared with the public.** Each of these plans is coordinated with police, fire and other officials in Freeport Village, county and state-wide agencies as necessary.

### WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL SECURITY PROCEDURES?

All doors that lead to the outside are locked when school is in session. In order to enter the building, the parent/visitor may only enter through the main entrance and must obtain a visitor's pass. Parents/visitors are required to provide valid photo ID to obtain a visitor's pass in order to access the building. ID provided will be returned upon your time of exit. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the school Principal or designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. School personnel are required to wear photo ID badges for identification purposes. Visitors are required to wear a temporary badge which indicates an individual is an authorized visitor. Children are instructed to look for these badges.

It is strongly encouraged parents/visitors call in advance to make appointments with school personnel in the buildings prior to the visit. Visitors are expected to

keep within the confines of the appointment time and location. Any change must be cleared with building administration. Non-appointment visits should be limited to emergency situations.

## **HOW WILL THE SCHOOL RESPOND TO AN EMERGENCY?**

The Superintendent of Schools or Designee may implement one of the following emergency response procedures:

**1. GO-HOME-EARLY:** Returns students to their homes and family as quickly as possible. Schools maintain the names and contact numbers of family/guardians, and identify students with special needs. **No student will be released to an empty home.**

**2. Shelter:** Keeps students and staff in their buildings in a secure location when it is safer to stay inside than go out. Generally, sheltering is for a short time until it is safe to either evacuate to another building, or to send students home. However, the District is prepared to shelter students as long as necessary. This option may even be utilized during a bomb threat if specific procedures are followed.

**3. Evacuation:** Requires all building occupants to leave the building and go to a pre-determined, safe location outside of the school building. Evacuation could mean going outside to the evacuation site until the danger has passed. It could also mean going to the evacuation with the intention to be **transferred** to another location. Circumstances in which this could happen include severe weather outside, or a very dangerous hazard that requires students to be out of the area of the school. Evacuation locations are not given out to the general public for safety reasons. However, if students are transferred to another location, parents/guardians will be notified as soon as students are settled and safe.

**4. Lockout:** A lockout is a procedure which allows the school to continue with a normal day inside the building, but locks out any unauthorized persons into the building. A situation which could warrant this would be a dangerous person or threat in the community or area. **Students will not be released to parent/guardians when a lockout is in progress. Parents/visitors will not be able to enter the building during the lockout. It is strongly advised to move away from the building vicinity until the lockout is lifted.**

**5. Lockdown:** A lockdown of the building requires all students and staff to remain in the room that they are in, lock all doors and stay out of sight. Students and staff that are in the hallway are to go to the nearest classroom. The presence of an intruder is one reason to invoke this type of response. The only way a lockdown can end is by emergency responders physically releasing all locations that are locked

down. **Students will not be released to parents/guardians when a lockdown is in progress.**

### **WHAT KIND OF EMERGENCIES DOES THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S EMERGENCY PLAN ADDRESS?**

- Criminal offenses such as bomb threats, kidnapping or violent behavior
- Natural hazards such as severe weather
- Environmental hazards, for example, exposure to hazardous materials, fire, explosions or plane crash
- Medical emergencies including serious contagious disease, accident or illness of a student or staff member

### **ARE THERE EMERGENCY PLANNING DRILLS?**

Yes, New York State regulations require school districts to test their emergency plans in each school building through exercises and drills. The buildings conduct these drills on a regular basis throughout the school year, meeting and, at times, exceeding the state requirements of 12 drills per year. There must be eight evacuation drills and four lockdown drills. Evacuation drills include fire drills. Eight of these drills must be scheduled before December 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

### **SHOULD I PICK UP MY CHILD AT SCHOOL DURING AN EMERGENCY?**

Not unless directed to do so. While every parent's natural instinct in an emergency is to go to the school to protect his/her own child, it is important to realize that doing so may significantly affect the District's ability to respond to the situation. For example, cars driving up to the building will restrict access by emergency vehicles that are responding to the emergency or school buses that are loading children to evacuate them or take them home. The building's staff will be actively working to ensure the safety of all students. It may seem logical that every student taken home by a parent reduces the responsibility of the staff, but in a fast moving situation that requires a great deal of careful coordination and communication, it actually makes the critical task of keeping track of students more difficult.

### **HOW WILL PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS BE REUNITED?**

An area will be designated for parents to pick up students. Photo identification must be shown in order for a student to be brought to the reunification area.

### **WHAT PROVISIONS ARE MADE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES?**

Every school building has a plan of action to evacuate any student with special needs.

## **WHERE CAN I GET INFORMATION DURING AN EMERGENCY?**

Chances are that you will have difficulty reaching the school by phone when you try. The school will be making every effort to contact you through automated calling systems, automated emails, push notifications from the mobile app and our website as quickly as possible based on the emergency situation. The schools have every child's emergency contact information that they have readily available for emergencies. TV News 12, FIOS and local radio stations may also be utilized.

## **WHAT CAN I DO TO PLAN AHEAD?**

The two most important things you can do are:

1. Make sure your child's school has the most up-to-date emergency contact information.
2. Review with your child any alternative arrangements you have made in case an emergency prevents you from being home.

## **If you have any questions, please contact your building principal:**

Columbus Avenue School	516-867-5240
Archer Street School	516-867-5250
Bayview Avenue School	516-867-5255
Leo F. Giblyn School	516-867-5260
New Visions School	516-867-5390
Caroline G. Atkinson School	516-867-5265
John W. Dodd Middle School	516-867-5280
Freeport High School	516-867-5300

Freeport School District  
235 No. Ocean Avenue  
Freeport, NY 11520

Superintendent of Schools, Kishore Kuncham, Ed.D. 516-867-5200