



Pocono Mountain School District

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September 28, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In the event of an emergency at one of our schools, it's important for parents to understand the procedures our schools will follow to keep students, staff and schools safe.

Throughout the school year, students and staff practice a number of safety drills such as fire evacuation drills, lockdown drills and Run, Hide, Fight. These types of training drills are done to prepare students and staff on how to respond in many types of emergencies. All of the training drills and preventive measures we have in place throughout the school year are part of the District's comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan for All Hazards. The plan is confidential, so parents won't find a copy of it on the District's website. The plan includes procedures for District administrators, staff and students to follow in all types of emergencies from severe weather to a threat against a school.

An important part of the District's emergency preparedness procedures is the ability to lockdown a school or schools in an emergency. When a school is placed in a lockdown, whether for a drill or potential threat, the school remains locked down until the drill ends, or in the case of a perceived threat, until the threat or hazard has been cleared. If the situation warrants it, the District may also lockdown an entire campus or all campuses during an emergency.

When a building is locked down, it's important for parents and community members to understand that no one except for law enforcement will be allowed into the school. Keeping students and employees safe, and dealing with a potentially dangerous situation takes priority over all else. ***District officials ask parents to please wait for further instructions or information from the District when a school is placed in a lockdown.***

Parents may not realize this, but during an emergency, District officials need to keep the roadways and school campuses as free from other traffic as possible, so emergency responders (police, fire fighters, emergency medical personnel, ambulances, etc.) can get to the school campus as quickly as possible. It will be very hard for emergency responders to get to our school campuses and assist with an emergency if parents descend on the school(s).

District officials also ask parents to please refrain from immediately trying to call their children's schools in an emergency, because school staff will be busy responding to the emergency and addressing the needs of students in the school(s). Keeping the telephone lines open for emergency use is critical to the District's ability to keep everyone safe when responding quickly and effectively to the emergency.

Additional measures parents can take in an emergency, include:

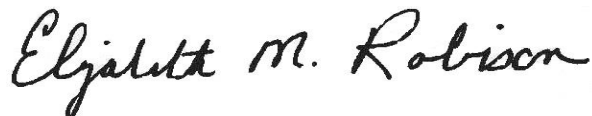
- **Check the PMSD website at www.pmsd.org frequently for information.** Information and updates will be posted to the Alert Message section of PMSD website during an emergency.
- **Stay by the phone where you normally receive your ParentLink phone calls.** District officials will use ParentLink phone calls and ParentLink alert emails and text messages to provide information to parents. If you haven't signed up to receive ParentLink alert emails or text messages, please do so on the PMSD website under the Helpful Links section using the PMSD Alert Text & Email Messages link.
- **Monitor local media outlets for updates.** The District will ask for the media's help to get information out to parents and the community. The District will send advisories to local television, print and radio news outlets to keep parents informed.

Hopefully, with all of our preventative safety measures already in place at our schools, the District will never face an emergency where we would need to evacuate our students to another location. However, we do plan for this and are prepared to evacuate and relocate students if needed to keep them safe. If we evacuate students to another location, we will notify parents of the reunification location and provide instructions on the process for picking up students. Students will only be released to a parent or individual designated on the student's emergency form, so please make sure your child's school has the correct emergency contact information and permissions regarding who is allowed to pick up your child from school.

Please know that in an emergency, District officials will communicate with parents as quickly as possible, but our first priority is always going to be taking the necessary steps to immediately ensure the safety of our students and employees.

If you have any questions about your school's emergency response procedures, please contact your principal.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Robison
Superintendent of Schools