

## **Emergency Preparedness Response Plan: Lockdown**

**Date: 2010 09 01 / 2017 04 25 / 2023 06 20**

### **Administrative Procedures**

These procedures provide guidelines for responding to a Lockdown scenario.

#### **1. Lockdown**

A Lockdown will occur ONLY as a response to a major incident of violence or threat of violence (any incident which poses an imminent and serious threat to staff and students (e.g. armed intruder, weapons, etc.) at a school or Board location. Notification will be conveyed to the office and the Lockdown procedure will commence immediately. A Lockdown isolates students, the staff and others from danger by requiring everyone to remain inside the building in secure locations.

#### **2. Responsibilities**

Jointly the Superintendent of Education, with responsibility for safe schools, and the Treasurer of the Board, with responsibility for risk management, will be responsible for the development and implementation of this policy and procedures and ensuring compliance.

Jointly the Superintendent of Education, with responsibility for safe schools, and the Treasurer of the Board, with responsibility for risk management, will be responsible for communication of the policy and procedures to Board employees.

The Manager of Risk and Supply Chain will be responsible for maintaining the Emergency Preparedness Response Plan and related procedures on the staff room intranet accessible to school communities.

Principals will be responsible for communication of this policy and procedures to school communities.

#### **3. Expectations**

**Staff are to refer to Emergency Preparedness Response Plan for guidance and checklists located on the Board's staff room intranet.**

The Director of Education (or designate) will ensure that overall planning, training and final content of site-specific procedures for locations other than schools are developed and incorporated into the location's Lockdown plans. Site-specific plans should be reviewed annually with staff.

The Director of Education (or designate) will ensure that all staff, students and other partners are aware of their obligations and responsibilities within the individual school plans.

The principal will ensure that overall planning, training and final content of site-specific school procedures are developed and incorporated into the school's Lockdown plans. Site-specific Emergency Preparedness Response plans should be reviewed annually and submitted to Risk Management. Such plans will outline how police will gain access to the school in the event of a lockdown, especially for schools that lock their doors during the school day. Plans will also take into account the existence of childcare centres and/or community groups if applicable.

Principals will ensure that all staff, including occasional, part-time and itinerant teachers, have the ability to lock their classroom doors in the event of a lockdown.

Staff members will know and understand Lockdown procedures.

In the event of an emergency, students and parents/guardians will be able to respond to a Lockdown.

#### **4. Preparing for a Lockdown**

All Board locations will be "Lockdown aware" at the start of the school year and site locations will practice Lockdown procedures twice per year. Records of two Lockdown drills per year are to be retained at the school and included in the Monthly Workplace Inspection Report in the eBase Inspection Module. One of the two mandatory lockdown drills must be "non-routine", for example taking place during recess or at the beginning or end of the school day.

All Board locations shall prepare up-to-date floor plans outlining safe/secure areas that can be locked and open areas that are not considered secure during a Lockdown. It is important to familiarize students, staff and police with these locations.

Each classroom, office or space used by staff and students shall be equipped with floor plans identifying secure locations.

School emergency procedures poster shall be readily available in each room and will be used in all appropriate situations.

Site-specific plans will include mechanisms to communicate Lockdown messages to those who may not adequately hear verbal communications and those who may not be readily mobile without assistance. In schools, which have child care facilities or tenants, it is important that principals ensure that members from these groups are informed of and included in Lockdown planning.

#### **Non-School Locations**

The Director of Education (or designate) shall be responsible for the development of all non-school, site-specific Lockdown plans compliant with the procedures outlined in this document. In order to ensure an adequate state-of-emergency preparedness, it is essential that the Director (or designate) review all facets of the site-specific plan with all staff a minimum of twice per year (i.e. September and February). The Director (or designate) is also responsible for ensuring that new

staff, itinerant staff and casual support staff assigned to each site are informed of the Board's procedures.

## School Locations

Principals shall be responsible for the development of a site-specific Lockdown plan for their schools, compliant with the procedures outlined in this document. In order to ensure an adequate state-of-emergency preparedness, it is essential that principals review all facets of the school site specific plan with all staff a minimum of twice per year (i.e., September and February). Principals are also responsible for ensuring that supply teachers, itinerant staff and casual support staff assigned to the school, in addition to daycare facilities and tenants, are informed of the school's procedures.

Principals shall ensure that the unique needs of special populations (i.e. hearing impaired, ESL, ASD, developmentally challenged) have been anticipated in the development of the site plan. The lockdown procedures should address such issues as accessibility and communication for students with special education needs.

Principals shall provide orientation to new staff, occasional and itinerant staff with Lockdown procedures, using the most appropriate means .

In establishing site Lockdown procedures, consideration should be given to:

- the possibility that fire alarms could sound during a Lockdown. They are to be ignored unless a Lockdown has been terminated, or there is immediate danger because of fire and/or smoke.
- the possibility of a secondary emergency occurring during the Lockdown (e.g., student in a locked down classroom goes into anaphylactic shock, student in a locked down classroom becomes "uncontrollable" or engages in injurious behaviour).
- washroom or medication needs of students during a Lockdown.
- trauma that students or staff may experience in the event of a Lockdown.
- attendance reconciliation to account for students.
- procedures for students unable to access a safe room during a Lockdown.
- unique location or physical facility challenges.
- noise factors that may inhibit the effectiveness of the school's public address system.
- "time of day" considerations (i.e., location of students during nutrition and lunch breaks versus all students in class).
- communication with students and staff outside the building.
- the presence of guests inside the building, who would not be familiar with the Lockdown procedures (i.e., contractors, visitors)
- the possibility that uninvited "guests" are in need of protection (e.g., visiting students who did not check in at the office).
- clearly displayed numbers and letters that identify rooms and hallways.
- the need of parents for appropriate updates and a clear message throughout the duration of the incident.

In preparation of a Lockdown communications plan, principals shall ensure that:



- Lockdown procedures are shared with parents at the beginning of each year (principals may reference the School Emergencies Policy and Procedures, which appear on the Board website)
- In the event of a Lockdown, prior arrangements have been made to provide an off-site location for parents seeking information or attempting to make contact with their children

## 5. Lockdown Drills

Prior to the administration of a Lockdown drill, it is important to review the procedures with staff and students in order to avoid undue alarm in the school. For students in grade 8 and below, the drill may be modified in order to not unduly raise the level of anxiety. Any training provided to students with special education needs should be consistent with the expectations and accommodations outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Where possible, school Lockdown drills should be coordinated with Police, EMS and Fire Service members participating.

Drills shall be conducted twice per school year (i.e., September and February). One of the two mandatory lockdown drills must be “non-routine”, for example taking place during recess or at the beginning or end of the school day.

Principals shall ensure that parents are advised in advance of the scheduled drill. Parents are expected to review and reinforce the student’s responsibilities during a Lockdown.

The responsibility for maintaining control and exercising leadership during a Lockdown scenario is shared by all staff.

All staff are responsible for ensuring students are aware and know how to respond quickly and safely during a Lockdown.

Principals shall record the date of the Lockdown drill in the monthly Workplace Inspection Report in the eBase Inspection Module.

## 6. Initiating a Lockdown Emergency

A Lockdown will occur at the first indication of a major incident or threat of violence to staff and/or students. Notification will be conveyed to the office and the Lockdown procedure commenced immediately. Police must be notified by calling “911”. Some Lockdowns may be initiated by the Police in consultation with Principal or designate.

Upon notification, the response for all schools will be an announcement by a school official who identifies himself/herself and declares that the school is in a Lockdown.

***i.e. “ATTENTION. ATTENTION. This is NAME, ROLE, SCHOOL NAME is now in a Lockdown. I repeat SCHOOL NAME is in a Lockdown. SCHOOL NAME is now in a Lockdown.”***

(The script for this announcement should be readily available at the location of the public address system and, if circumstances allow, should be repeated every 15 minutes during the Lockdown).

Any staff member witnessing a major incident or threat of violence to students and/or staff shall immediately notify the office to declare a Lockdown. Call "911". Staff members will avoid any action that will physically endanger themselves or others (this applies to all employees throughout the duration of the Lockdown)

The staff member will immediately advise the office of any information, which would be helpful to police, such as:

- the location of the incident.
- the nature of the incident.
- description of the dangerous person or identity of person(s).
- any injuries/loss sustained.
- any information regarding threat to safety or life.
- state of mind of the dangerous person(s).
- direction of travel of dangerous person(s).

Any student witnessing such an incident shall immediately inform staff.

Office staff receiving the information shall:

- immediately commence a Lockdown with the public address announcement and advise the principal or designate.
- call 911 and report as much information as possible to police.

### **Procedures in Classrooms and Portables**

Staff shall:

- immediately usher nearby students into the closest secure classroom.
- Close, lock and barricade classroom doors, cover windows on the hallway doors, close perimeter curtains and turn off classroom lights.
- remain with students in the secure classroom and supervise the immediate care of persons who are injured, or who have witnessed an event of concern.
- locate all students in the safest area of the room, usually along the inside wall, farthest from the door, out of sight lines and away from glass.
- in portables, desks should be tipped onto their sides in a circle formation, with desktops facing outward. Students and staff should be seated inside the circle, below the top edge of the desks.
- inform students that there is a serious situation and that they must remain quiet and out of sight for the duration of the Lockdown. It is imperative that staff maintain order throughout the event. The classroom should look and sound empty.
- report by phone if medical assistance is required.
- ensure there is no use of cell phones or texting, unless communicating vital emergency information about the incident or calling 911. The use of cell phones during a Lockdown can compromise phone line connectivity and interfere with police communications. Student cell phones should be turned off.
- refuse access to the room during a Lockdown; and, if possible, advise office/police of any persons (students) in the hallways.
- check class lists to document any students who are unaccounted for.
- monitor, support and care for students, as required (quiet as possible)



- anticipate that Lockdown situations occasionally take considerable time. No one will be released from the classroom unless the Lockdown is terminated.
- ignore fire alarms unless there is imminent danger from fire and/or smoke. Notify the office if occupants are forced to leave the secure location due to fire danger.
- plan for the possibility that police officers could enter the room unannounced during the course of the Lockdown. Police will be identified by uniforms, police vests, badges, etc.
- remain in designated safe areas with students until the "LOCKDOWN TERMINATED" signal is given and follow subsequent instructions.

### **Procedures in Washrooms and Open Areas**

Staff shall:

- move students from washroom areas to secure classrooms, but not if it means moving into immediate danger.
- Elementary schools need to identify staff closest to washroom to do a washroom sweep prior to locking themselves down, if safe to do so.
- Secondary school staff and students should be trained to move to the nearest secure location as quickly as possible, if safe to do so, when a Lockdown is announced. As a last resort, trapped staff and students are advised to enter a stall, lock the door and stand on top of the toilet seat until the Lockdown is terminated.
- in the cafeteria, library, gymnasium or other open areas with staff and students present, consideration must be given to remaining in the school and moving to a secure location as quickly as possible, if safe to do so. Movement to a hiding spot or an area that can be barricaded is advised; avoid areas with windows, glass and high visibility. If safe to do so and staff or students leave the school building, they are expected to report to the pre-determined off-site location to account for their attendance

### **Procedures for Outside of the Building**

Staff shall:

- direct students to immediately take cover and, where possible and safe to do so, move to the pre-determined off-site location and take attendance.
- Not allow any persons to re-enter the school building during a Lockdown.

### **Procedures for Administration and Police**

Administration shall:

- ensure that a 911 call has been made.
- ensure that a call is made immediately to the Director of Education (or designate).
- ensure that all office staff are appropriately situated and advised of next steps.
- remain out of sight, maintain communication contact if possible, and be prepared to work with police as the situation dictates.
- In consultation with the Director of Education (or designate), anticipate and respond to time-sensitive decisions as they arise:
  - rescheduling of buses
  - end of day issues
  - turn off bells/buzzers during the duration of the Lockdown
  - return of any off-campus trips



- “game day” sports buses arriving and departing
- potential cancellation of sports/music/club events
- transportation arrangements (e.g., taxis) for special populations

During the Lockdown, the police may require administrators to provide the following:

- Copies of the Lockdown plans – one located in the school office and one located at a pre-determined off-site location (i.e., a pre-determined “twin” school). The package should include laminated site maps (including the identification of any hazardous areas, such as propane tanks, gas lines and the location of high risk student populations) and labeled floor plans, indicating classroom areas and non-classroom areas (i.e., Storage Rooms, Student Activity Rooms, etc.) These site packages shall be reviewed and updated prior to each school year. They are to be held in a secure area.
- assistance to establish a “staging area” or “command centre.” Anticipate secondary sites should the preferred locations be deemed unsuitable.
- the safest means of entry into the building. This will vary depending on the situation. Be prepared to give best advice.
- as much information as possible regarding the number and identity of intruders, description of events, weapons, the state of mind of the intruder(s), possible motives or targets.
- where possible, access to school monitoring equipment (video monitors). Assign a knowledgeable staff member to assist the officer with the use of the equipment, and/or to identify locations and persons viewed.
- clarity about who will be the primary communication link for police.

All communication with the media will be directed by the Police Media-Relations Personnel and the Director of Education (or designate).

The Director of Education (or designate) in consultation with Police Services, will be responsible for:

- notifying neighbouring schools that they may need to Lockdown or delay dismissal.
- responding to messages and queries from parents and concerned community members.
- communicating to media the designated off-site location for parents to wait for their children.
- communicating with the system, including senior administration, trustees, system leaders and appropriate staff.
- communicating with the coterminous board, as required.

## 7. Ending a Lockdown

In consultation with the police, administration will make the decision to end the Lockdown by the administration and police jointly announcing:

***"ATTENTION. ATTENTION. This is NAME, ROLE and NAME, POLICE ROLE, The Lockdown is now terminated. Lockdown is now terminated. I repeat the Lockdown is now terminated."***

This announcement may be followed by room to room visits by the police/administration with some sort of identification process, so that occupants of locked rooms know the Lockdown has concluded.

Administration may prepare an appropriate message to accompany the “LOCKDOWN TERMINATED” announcement, so that the school community is assured of safety and is aware of “next steps”. Anticipate announcing the manner in which all students will be dismissed (i.e. controlled dismissal - one room/corridor/section at a time or all at once) and provide explicit, clear direction.

Cooperate with police in identifying areas within the school that shall be designated a “crime scene” and safeguard against access to those locations.

## 8. After a Lockdown

A “next steps” plan will be developed by administration in consultation with the Director of Education (or designate). This plan may include:

- decisions regarding a debriefing session.
- decisions regarding resumption of program.
- immediate counseling care and attention for profoundly traumatized individuals, those who self-identify a need and those referred by staff.
- establish security of personal belongings that may be left behind in the school – facilitate safe and secure retrieval of items.
- assessment of the after-care needs of students, staff, occasional teachers, volunteers, community and administration in consultation with the Catholic Compassionate Care Team, followed by deployment of available resources to meet those identified needs.

Development of a Communication Plan

The Director of Education (or designate), in consultation with the principal, shall:

- plan communications for media and staff debriefing.
- develop memoranda/letters to be sent home with students and/or posted on the school website, Edsby or broadcast through School Messenger
- plan “next day” announcements to be delivered.
- prepare a de-brief script that teachers can utilize as classes resume.
- invite the Police Liaison Officer to assist in any student and/or teacher debriefings to help explain the police response and procedures.

## 9. Additional Information

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is committed to the principles of equity and inclusive education, consistent with our Catholic teachings, which value and promote human rights and social justice in all Board policies, programs, guidelines, operations and practices.

## Definitions

**Catholic Compassionate Care Team** – is a support system within the St. Clair Catholic District School Board for addressing tragic events within our school communities. The Compassionate Care Team is assembled at the request of the school principal through the Superintendent of Schools.

**Major Incident of Violence or Threat of School Violence to Staff and / or Students** – is any incident which poses an imminent and serious threat to staff and students (e.g. armed intruder, weapons, etc.) requires that a Lockdown be reported to the main office.