REGISTER OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

Emergency Preparedness Policy

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1. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The objective of an Emergency Preparedness Plan is to provide for the safety and security of all who are in a Lester B. Pearson School Board facility at the time of an emergency.

All employees have a responsibility to promote safety and security, and to take measures to reduce potential injury, death and property damage. The best way to minimize the impact of emergencies in our facilities is to plan ahead.

This Emergency Preparedness Policy and the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide should become the core of each building's safety model. They outline the expectations and measures that are to be integrated into each local system. In turn, the plans developed by each school and centre and by the Board must incorporate the needs of the local communities.

The Lester B. Pearson School Board shares jurisdiction over Emergency Preparedness with the provincial government and local municipalities. Therefore, the Board and individual school or centre procedures will be made available to the province and appropriate municipality, in order to cooperate in the coordination of these larger programs.

The Lester B. Pearson School Board Emergency Preparedness Policy involves a continuing activity of planning, educating, rehearsing and reviewing.

2. EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

2.1 RESPONSE TEAM

- A local emergency response team is to be created in each Lester B. Pearson school, centre or office;
- the membership of this team could include, among others, the following personnel:
  - Responsible Authority (or delegate);
  - guidance counsellor;
  - support staff representative;
  - custodial staff representative (i.e. caretaker);
  - staff member(s) with current first-aid, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator training.

2.2 OPERATION CENTRE

- An emergency operation centre (e.g. administration office) must be established in each building of the Lester B. Pearson School Board; the emergency kit (see Appendix A), which is to be suitable for taking to any off- site emergency, should be located in this room.

2.3 COMMUNICATIONS

- The ability to gain control over the situation is directly related to the ability to communicate; for this reason, all avenues of communication must be identified and ready for use under emergency conditions, such as a phone line (or cell phone) that cannot be blocked by incoming calls;
- the Responsible Authority will alert 911 if applicable, and the Lester B. Pearson School Board's Regional Director of Schools or Director of Adult and Vocational Education;
- the Regional Director of Schools or Director of Adult and Vocational Education will relay the information to the Director General or delegate;
- the Director General will determine whether the emergency plan will be broadened to include other Lester B. Pearson facilities, and whether to activate a central control centre at the Board level;
- an Emergency Alert System will be activated by the Director General under specific conditions detailed in the Procedure Guide;
- in addition to hard copies and information residing on Board servers, designated individuals responsible for the emergency plan within their school, centre, or department will maintain a current list of names and telephone numbers of people to be contacted at their residence;
- specifically, when an emergency occurs, the communication process will be initiated, as outlined in the Procedure Guide;
- the Governing Board is to review the Emergency Preparedness Plan by October 31st;
- parents and Adult and Vocational Students are to be informed, in writing, that the school or centre has an Emergency Preparedness Plan.
- the response to the media will be the responsibility of the Directorate.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Emergency Preparedness Policy will assist the Responsible Authority to develop a response to emergencies. The duties and responsibilities that follow are not to be considered exhaustive. These guidelines are not to be construed as mandatory when circumstances exist that might jeopardize the lives of any individual or group.

The school's or centre's plan shall address the following:

- Evacuation of occupants to a safe assembly area;
- investigating the emergency to determine its source and severity;
- containing the emergency to minimize evacuation time and damage;
- briefing the municipal response agencies upon their arrival;
- compiling information for recording purposes.

3.1 PRINCIPAL or CENTRE DIRECTOR (Responsible Authority)

- Develops a school or centre Emergency Preparedness Plan in consultation with Staff Council and the Governing Board;
- during an emergency, supervises specific activities relating to the needs of the school or centre, staff, students and others involved in the incident, such as by delegating specific tasks to qualified individuals;
- ensures that all staff members (including temporary replacements and supervisors) are familiar with their respective duties with respect to the emergency plan;
- conducts a minimum of six (6) evacuation drills during the school year, at least three (3) in the fall and three (3) in the spring, or more if required by municipal by-law, and monthly if a *Centre de Petite Enfance* or outside daycare is in the school;
- conducts at least one (1) lockdown drill per school year by January 31st;
- ensures that the local fire response agency is invited to participate in a drill, if deemed appropriate, and, if so, that their suggestions be incorporated into the review process;
- discusses drill expectations and behaviour with the students during an assembly.

3.2 CARETAKING STAFF

- Ensure that all maintenance areas are checked and closed;
- report to the emergency operation centre to provide support and assistance;
- assist the Responsible Authority in determining the cause of the emergency.

3.3 TEACHERS

- Explain evacuation, shelter-in-place and lockdown procedures to all students;
- remain with their students who are minor children at all times;
- lead students to safety, based on the emergency plan for that school or centre.

3.4 CAFETERIA STAFF

- Cafeteria staff will be informed of procedures and participate in evacuation and lockdown drills.

3.5 OTHER STAFF

- If no other role has been specified, other staff should report to the Responsible Authority for duty assignments.

3.6 OUTSIDE GROUPS, PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS

- During an emergency, outside groups, partners and volunteers will follow the leadership of the Responsible Authority.

4. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Although every circumstance cannot be anticipated, an attempt has been made to standardize emergency procedures and responses as much as possible.

4.1 ACCIDENT OR SERIOUS INJURY

- The Responsible Authority will be informed;
- all appropriate care and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

4.2 BOMB OR BOMB THREAT

- When a bomb threat is received by phone the recipient must follow the procedures as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide, and 911 will be called;
- the Responsible Authority will be informed;
- students and teachers exit the building through the designated doors;
- when outside the building, each class will assemble in the designated location FACING AWAY from the school or centre building.

4.3 EARTHQUAKE AND/OR EXPLOSION

- 911 will be called;
- the Responsible Authority will be informed;
- all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide;
- Following the initial tremor and/or explosion, teachers and students should evacuate the building following normal evacuation procedures;
- the Responsible Authority should monitor the situation and make decisions about moving groups of students away from areas that might be dangerous.

4.4 FIRE

- In the event a fire is detected, the nearest fire alarm should be activated;
- 911 will be called;
- the Responsible Authority will be informed;
- students and teachers will evacuate the building following normal evacuation routes;
- all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

4.5 GAS LEAK

- When the smell of gas is detected, the person discovering it must report the smell immediately to the school or centre's general office and the Responsible Authority will be informed;
- 911 will be called;
- all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

4.6 RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (EXTERNAL)

- In the event of an emergency, such as the accidental or intentional release of hazardous materials into the atmosphere (e.g., chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear contaminants), the Responsible Authority will be informed;
- 911 will be called;
- all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

4.7 HOSTAGE-TAKING OR KIDNAPPING

- 911 will be called;
- the Responsible Authority will be informed;
- all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

4.8 INTRUDER OR STUDENT, STAFF MEMBER OR PARENT BEHAVING IRRATIONALLY

- In the case of an intruder, an adult who sees a stranger will greet the subject and identify himself, inform the subject that all visitors must register at the office area; if the stranger does not respond or acts in a strange manner, the adult will continue to observe the stranger from a safe distance, without endangering themselves, while seeking assistance;
  a. 911 will be called;
  b. the Responsible Authority will be informed;
  c. all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.
- in the case of a student, staff member or parent behaving irrationally, an adult should continue to observe the student, staff member or parent from a safe distance, without endangering themselves, while seeking assistance;
  a. 911 will be called;
  b. the Responsible Authority will be informed;
  c. all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

4.9 TRANSPORTATION INCIDENT

4.9.1 School Bus

- When a report of a bus accident comes in, the Responsible Authority will consult a list of students who normally ride that bus;
- all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

4.9.2 Field Trip – Bus Trip

- All medical forms and a list of students should go with the responsible person on the field trip (adults over 18 years of age are not obligated to submit a form);
- a copy of the list of students going on the field trip and their medical forms should be left with the school/centre before a bus or buses leave with students;
- students are expected to return on the same bus;

- should a rider have alternate arrangements this must be indicated on the list and communicated with the school or centre;
- bus drivers are expected to be capable of communicating with their home office at any time;
- all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide;

4.9.3 Field Trip – Other

- All medical forms and a list of students should go with the responsible person on the field trip (adults over 18 years of age are not obligated to submit a form);
- a copy of the list of students going on the field trip and their medical forms should be left with the school/centre before the students leave;
- students are expected to return on the same mode of transportation as they departed on;
- should a student have alternate arrangements this must be indicated on the list and communicated with the school or centre;
- all appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide;

4.10 EXTREME WEATHER WARNING

- Upon receiving an extreme weather warning, the Responsible Authority is to review the suggested emergency procedures as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide;
- local television stations, radio stations and weather websites are to be monitored for further information.

5. DISPERSAL PLANS

Evacuation of the facility, sheltering in safe areas of the school or centre or the deliberate dispersal of students to their homes are among the protective actions that are addressed in all plans. The circumstances under which one or more of the protective actions may have to be undertaken will vary with the type of threat.

If the situation permits, disperse students to their homes. Planning should include a mass-messaging or telephone chain system for contacting parents/guardians and alternate arrangements for the provision of continuing care for students whose parents/guardians are not at home.

The available warning time could restrict the range of options that could be exercised.

All appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

6. EDUCATION PROGRAM

Any or all of these topics could be addressed as part of an emergency education program in class at appropriate levels or addressed during a general assembly:

- natural emergencies such as floods, forest fires, tornadoes, snowstorms and epidemics;
- man-made emergencies such as structural fires, explosions, dangerous goods accidents, and road, rail and aircraft accidents;
- protective measures that mitigate the effects of emergencies and disasters;
- meteorology and weather warning systems;
- fire prevention and the chemistry of fire extinguishing;
- community organizations responsible for health and safety – fire, police, health, ambulance and public utilities;
- the community emergency response plan.

Presentations or information/training sessions for students might also be arranged with local Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance or other qualified emergency response groups.

7. TRAINING PROGRAM

Implementation of the emergency plan, either in an actual emergency or in a drill or exercise, is the single best way to prepare personnel in emergency response functions.

All appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

8. RECOVERY

Recovery is the process of assisting people to cope with the physical, psychological and emotional effects of a traumatic event. The goal of recovery is to return to learning in a safe and secure environment. Students and staff are all impacted by tragic events, but the level of distress experienced and the support required can differ greatly. Immediately following a traumatic event, a crisis response is needed and may be sustained for several days following the event.

Although most individuals are resilient and do not experience long term distress, there may be some students and staff who require continued intervention in the weeks and months following a traumatic event.

The orientation of the Lester B. Pearson School Board is to favour a school-based or community-based recovery from a tragic event.

The crisis team is composed of school/centre-based professionals (psychologist, guidance counselor, special needs consultant, spiritual animator, school social worker, etc.), school administration as well as senior management at the School Board.

The crisis team works together with school staff to determine a plan of action as to the most appropriate level of support.

The crisis team will assess needs and make recommendations regarding long-term intervention.

9. CONCLUSION

Careful planning, practice and an effective response save lives, prevent injuries and minimize damage. All appropriate actions and communications should be undertaken as outlined in the Emergency Preparedness Procedure Guide.

Developing and maintaining a safe school and centre environment is the responsibility of the entire community. Working with teachers, principals, centre directors and staff, parents/guardians can provide resources and assistance to support emergency preparedness.

When an emergency preparedness program is presented as a continuing community activity, its significance as part of everyday living will become evident and students will begin to understand why they must continue to be concerned with this issue.

Review and revise the crisis response after an event. Determine what aspects of the plan worked well and which could use improvement. Modifications to the school's or centre's plan should be made accordingly.

Addendum A

DEFINITION OF TERMS

CRISIS TEAM refers to a response group assembled in the aftermath of an emergency, composed of staff members from other schools, head office staff and community experts who will help the school deal with the trauma of the school students and staff.

DISASTER refers to an emergency of major proportions that surpasses the ability of the organization to respond fully. Resources may be committed for days and may require regional, provincial or federal coordination and assistance.

EMERGENCY means a situation caused by the forces of nature, an accident, an intentional act or otherwise that threatens the safety of people or property.

EMERGENCY KIT is an Emergency Preparedness Kit that includes items such as:

- Space blankets in every class for each student
- First aid kits
- An emergency preparedness binder
- An intrinsically safe megaphone

OPERATION CENTRE refers to a specific locale within a building from which all responses to an emergency are coordinated.

REGIONAL MANAGER refers to a board-level manager from the Equipment Services department who is associated with a particular region.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY is the principal/centre director or the person delegated by them until Emergency Measures personnel arrive at which point they will take leadership.

RESPONSE TEAM refers to the personnel within a building who have specific responsibilities at the time of an emergency.