

RSU #18

Crisis

Information

For

Parents/Guardians



There are 4 specific situations that RSU #18 plans and practices for each school year. Lockouts, Lockdowns, Evacuations and Shelter. Every building is required to review the crisis action plan each year. Every building will practice lockdown drills each year.

The following pages contain information for parents about each type of situation we look at plus information about the new reunification policy.

In addition each building practices fire drills at multiple times throughout the year. Almost any challenge that a school may face will be addressed by one of these four actions

Definitions:

Lockout: The Exterior doors and classroom doors are secured. No one is allowed in or out without being met by an administrator

Lockdown: Locks, Lights, out of Sight. This secures the building against a threat inside.

Evacuation: When the students and staff leave the building during the school day and go to an alternative sight to be picked up.

Reunification: A process used to ensure that students are released to the correct parent or guardian.

Shelter: A plan set up by the district to handle severe weather events.

EEA: Emergency Evacuation Area

SRO: School Resource Officer

SRM: Standard Reunification Method

SRP: Standard Response Protocol



Building Evacuation

- Building evacuations may be used for a number of different reasons. Emergencies, Fires, Bomb Threats, Power Outage, Structural issues, Weather Events, Flooding, and Heating Outages are just some of the reasons that a building may be evacuated.
- If a building is to be evacuated, a decision will be made by the building administrator. If there is time, the administrator may consult with the police and central office before evacuation. If not, Central Office should be contacted immediately after evacuation the building.
- A building may be evacuated in multiple different ways. If time is of essence, the fire alarm may be pulled. This is the fastest and easiest way to empty the building. From there the building administrator, leadership team and when available SRO will assist in coordinating the evacuation. The building administrator may Lockdown or Lockout the building to gain immediate control of the building, then announce an evacuation. Either the Main Office or Central Office will contact the district SRO's who will respond to assist with the evacuation and liason with first responders.
- Other than a fire alarm, students and staff should bring backpacks and purses with them when they leave the building.
- Some evacuation points may involve the students being transported by school bus. Students will be held in a safe area until those school buses arrive. The Transportation Department maintains a crisis action plan that guides them in responding to building emergencies.

RSU #18 Safety and Security Plan – White Copy

Each building has a primary and alternate evacuation site. They are as follows:

- China Primary School: 1. China Middle School 2. China Community Center
- China Middle School: 1 China Primary School 2 China Community Center
- Belgrade Central School: 1. Belgrade Center for All Seasons 2. Hammond Lumber
- James Bean School: 1. Sidney Town Office/Grange 2. Augusta Elks Lodge
- Atwood School: 1. Williams School 2. Messalonskee Middle School
- Williams School: 1. Messalonskee Middle School 2. Messalonskee High School
- Messalonskee Middle School: 1. Messalonskee High School 2. Williams School
- Messalonskee High School uses both Messalonskee Middle School and Williams School. Freshmen and sophomores will report to the Williams school. Juniors, Seniors, Medically fragile students and those in the lifeskills program will report to the middle school.

RSU #18 has made arrangements with Colby College to use the Alfond Athletic Center as a back up for building evacuations. The SRO will liaison with Colby and Waterville PD each school year to verify this evacuation spot.



Reunification Plan

Reuniting hundreds of students with the correct parent is a huge challenge for any school district. There are many factors we need to take into consideration before releasing a student that include but are not limited to Court orders, Custody issues, DHHS orders, parents work schedules, availability of family friends, grandparents, guardians ect RSU #18 is working hard to make the process of reunification as seamless as possible. It's important to know that reuniting students with their families can be a complicated issue and we strive to ensure that the correct student goes home with the correct adult.

To assist in the process we are putting into place the Standard Reunification Method (SRM). This is a well balanced plan that allows for a quicker transfer of student to parent or guardian, and also gives the schools the ability to track where each student goes.

What to expect if your school is evacuated:

Once the decision is made to evacuate a building the students will be taken to a safe location away from the building (EEA). From that area they may be transported via school bus to the release area. For some buildings the release area may be in walking distance. Buildings may be evacuated for a number of different reasons, not necessarily an emergency such as a lockdown or threat. Lack of heat, a fire, issues with the sprinkler systems or flooding inside the building are some examples that may generate a building evacuation.

Notification:

Parents will be notified by the districts all call system, email, and a notice posted on the school's web site. Parents will be given the location of their student and information on picking them up. If the evacuation is temporary due to issues such as fire alarms or heating, the decision may be made to continue with the school day. Parents may be given the option to allow the student to stay at school or go home. With every event, there is always information posted on social networks such as Facebook or Twitter that turn out to be false. **Please do not believe information that does not come from the district, town or public safety.** This will help avoid confusion and panic where none is justified.

Central Office may always be contacted to get information. It's also important to remember that the main office will not be able to answer calls, as those staff members have been evacuated as well.

Reunification Plan:

Parent/Guardian Expectations:

If a parent or guardian is notified that a controlled release and reunification is needed, there are some expectations that you should be aware of. First, bring identification. This will streamline things during the reunification, and the school official that is helping out during the crisis may not know you by name or face. Second, and most importantly, **Be Patient**. Reunification is a process that protects both the safety of the student and provides for an accountable change of custody from the school to a recognized custodial parent or guardian.

The Process:

At the reunification center Parents and Guardians will see the signage that will direct them to the pick up area. At that area school personnel will have parent sign a very quick form, verify the I.D. and send a runner to get your student. The student will then be brought to you.

Older Students/Student Drivers:

Depending on the situation, high school aged students may be dismissed if they drive to school. If they live close enough, they may be dismissed to walk home. There may be situations such as a bomb threat where access to the vehicle parking lot may be restricted by Law Enforcement. At those times the students will be released to a parent in the prescribed manner.

Attachments:

Posted on the districts Website will be two forms. One is the SRM parent information sheet. The other is a copy of the SRM pickup form. If anyone has any questions about this information please feel free to contact a school administrator or SRO.



Lockdown Procedures

Lockdown is a method used by the district in order to secure students in case of some type of threat inside of the building. The ultimate goal is to lock doors and make it as hard as possible for anyone other than administration or law enforcement to get into the building and classrooms.

During a lockdown teachers and students will use the “Locks, Lights, Out of Sight” principle to secure students and staff. Our district mandates that schools practice Lockdown drills throughout the year. We have been conducting these drills for the last four school years so students are now familiar with the routine. Teachers are also encouraged to talk with their students throughout the year about lockdown drills.

In the event of a real lockdown the school will contact 911 and request law enforcement to respond. At times, law enforcement may request a school lockdown due to an emergency near the building.

Example: In March of 2015 adults working on the roof of Messalonskee High School reported what they believe to be gunshots coming from the vicinity of the student parking lot. MHS was placed in lockdown and the Middle School and Williams School were placed in Lockout. Police units responded and checked the area with no contact. The lockdown was lifted 7 minutes later and the high school was placed into Lockout for an additional 20 minutes until the situation was cleared by law enforcement. Classes resumed as normal afterwards. The suspicion is that unknown subjects were poaching deer in the vicinity of the schools.

We expect that the legislature will make lockout drills mandatory in 2016 and are already prepared for that requirement.



Lockout (Shelter in Place) Procedures

Lockout is a method used by the district in order to secure the building in the case of an emergency or event near the school. (Bank Robbery, Suspicious Activity ect.) In a Lockout the building is secured and no one is allowed in or out unless met at the front door by an administrator. Classes go on as normal until the Lockout is lifted. When an event like this occurs, parents will be notified by the All Call phone system to advise them that a Lockout was put into effect and when it was lifted. Lockout is not used for an emergency in the school. It is used to protect the building in case of an external emergency.

There may be times when a lockdown turns into an evacuation, if this occurs the district will use the reunification plan and notify parents.

Shelter

Shelter is primarily used in the event of a severe weather event. In our area we would be looking at strong thunderstorms, extreme winter weather and flooding. In the case of a Shelter event the district would keep students in the building and away from windows. If bus transportation is impossible, students would maintain shelter in the building until they could be released directly to the parent or legal guardian. The reunification plan would be in use.

Typically severe weather events only affect a limited area. The District is prepared keep students in place and safe until the event is over.

Fire Alarms and Fire Drills

All District buildings follow the guidelines set down the Life Safety Code. Each building is equipped with a fire alarm system that includes pull boxes, flashing lights and klaxons. Once activated the fire department is dispatched to the building.

Every building in the district is required to have a certain number of fire drills each year. In the first two weeks of school, we try to complete at least two fire drills and a lockdown drill.

Fire Drill Procedures: If a staff member observes a fire or smoke, they are to secure the students around them and immediately pull one of the fire alarms. Then they contact the main office to advise them of the issue. If they cannot reach the main office, the staff member that pulled the alarm should send a runner to find an administrator and advise them of the issue.

Each classroom has a designated area to evacuate to (EEA). Once at the EEA staff members take attendance to ensure that they have all of their students and then wait for instructions.

The building will be searched by an administrator and custodial staff. If a problem is observed, they are to evacuate.

Firefighting methods such as fire extinguishers are secondary. The speedy and safe evacuation of the building takes priority.

A fire alarm may be cleared by the administrator or fire department. Once the all clear is given, students and staff may be allowed back in the building and regular classes may continue. If it is determined that the building needs to be evacuated, the reunification method will be put into place.

Students and staff are to leave the building by the closest, safest exit. Students and staff will not try to gather backpacks and personal items before leaving.

Parents and visitors will exit the building with the group they are visiting.

All EEA's must be located in such a manner that responding fire and police equipment do not get near any of the students and staff. At no time should students and staff be around fire apparatus.

Bomb Threats

Unfortunately Bomb Threats are not an uncommon threat for schools nationwide to face. Due to their nature, each bomb threat must be treated as the real thing until law enforcement determines the threat to be false or a hoax.

Staff members are required to immediately report any type of bomb threat to the main office. Staff members will receive training from the SRO on responding to bomb threats.

Upon receiving or observing a threat the building administrator and law enforcement will make a determination on evacuation procedures.

Steps will be taken by law enforcement to search the building that has been subject to the threat. Students will be evacuated and brought to a predetermined safe area. If there is time, students may return to school after the building has been searched and resume classes. When leaving the building students and staff should bring their backpacks and personal belongings with them. Staff members should look around as they are leaving and note anything unusual that is around classes and the building. If something unusual is noted, administration and law enforcement should be notified immediately.

If it is determined that the building search will take some time, the standard reunification plan will be implemented. Students that drive to school will not be able to access their cars until authorized to do so by law enforcement.

If the threat is received before the school day, the superintendent may make the determination to close that school for the day.

Every bomb threat will be investigated and vigorously investigated. In most cases, the District will request that criminal charges are pursued. If younger students are involved the district will work with law enforcement and DHHS to ensure the safety of the schools and the accused student.