

Public Schools Branch

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

School Lockdown	
<i>Policy Section</i> School and Workplace Safety	<i>Policy Number</i> 610.1
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<i>Replaces:</i> ESD - EBCG School Lockdown Response Plan, May 12, 2009 WSB - #27 Lockdown, January 2008	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 In accordance with Public Schools Branch (PSB) Policy 610 – Lockdown, the purpose of this procedure is to ensure that the PSB and schools are prepared, through proactive planning and training, to respond to a high-risk incident at school.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 High-risk Incident - An incident involving an armed individual posing an immediate threat to life, an emergency in the community or an environmental danger such as a severe storm or chemical spill.
- 2.2 Shelter in Place - A response to an incident and/or threat outside the school, i.e. an environmental or weather-related situation, police activity, or animal threat, where it is necessary to keep all occupants within the school, to protect them from an external situation. Depending on the incident, a decision will be made for people to continue with regular activity but not leave their classroom/designated area or continue with regular activity within the school but not go outside the school building.
- 2.3 Lockdown - The restriction of movement of students and staff due to a high-risk incident where the threat is inside a school, or on or very near to school premises. No one, other than police are permitted access to the building until the lockdown has been cleared.
- 2.4 Drills - Supervised activities that provide the opportunity to practice, test, develop, or maintain skills to a response, as well as the possible interaction with emergency support services and personnel (e.g. police, fire, medical).
- 2.5 School Lockdown Response Plan - An in-house response plan developed by each school that includes specific information about the individual school, responsibilities, and what to do in the event of a lockdown drill or an actual lockdown. Appendix A
- 2.6 School Action for Emergency (SAFE) Plan – Information submitted annually to the RCMP and other police agencies, on an RCMP template, giving key information regarding individual schools, school floor plans, and mechanical information.

- 2.7 Command Centre - The location identified on the SAFE plan where central planning and communication will take place during an emergency. It is the focal point for command and control of the situation. From the Command Centre, the police will direct the overall response to the incident and the principal will work closely with them to provide required support.

3.0 SHELTER IN PLACE

- 3.1 A response to an incident may not require a lockdown but rather a Shelter in Place response.
- 3.2 Shelter in Place is initiated when there is a threat outside the school and personal safety is considered to be in danger if anyone leaves the school (i.e. an environmental or weather-related situation, police activity, or animal threat).
- 3.3 During Shelter in Place, staff and students who are outdoors must come back into the school. Depending on the incident, a decision will be made for everyone to:
- Remain in their classroom/area and continue with regular activity, or
 - Remain inside the school and continue with regular activity within the school.
- Students will not be released or dismissed until the situation has been resolved.
- 3.4 Close and lock all windows and exterior doors. Doors are monitored to allow someone from outside to enter.
- 3.5 Depending on the emergency, heating and air-conditioning or other intake/exhaust systems may need to be turned off to avoid drawing in air from the outside.
- 3.6 Additional directions may be provided as appropriate, including but not limited to:
- What to do in the event the fire alarm is activated.
 - Whether movement is restricted and if class change bells should be ignored.
 - Additional safety measures such as closing blinds or turning off lights.
- 3.7 To initiate Shelter in Place, use the following script over PA System:

“Attention all staff, students and visitors, the school is now in a state of Shelter in Place”

Provide additional information such as:

(Option 1) Due to _____, you must remain in your classroom or area with the door closed until further notice. Regular activity inside the classroom or area can continue. OR

(Option 2) Due to _____, you must remain inside the school building until further notice. Regular activity inside the school can continue.

(Repeat message)

4.0 PLANNING A LOCKDOWN - RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 **Director of the Public Schools Branch**
- Require schools to develop, or review and update their SAFE Plan and School Lockdown Response Plan by October 31 each year.
 - Require schools to submit their updated SAFE Plan to the Branch by October 31 each year.
 - Require schools to hold 2 lockdown drills per year.
- 4.2 **School Safety Consultant**
- Obtain an updated SAFE Plan from each school by October 31 each year.
 - Submit SAFE Plans to RCMP and other police agencies each year.
 - Provide advice to schools on their SAFE Plan and School Lockdown Response Plan as needed.

- d) Maintain an updated copy of all school SAFE Plans.
- 4.3 **School Administration**
- a) Update and submit their SAFE Plan to the School Safety Consultant by October 31 each year.
 - b) Update their School Lockdown Response Plan annually to ensure that it meets the needs of students and staff including:
 - a) specific plans to address medical issues of staff/students
 - b) specific plans for students with special needs, if required
 - c) specific plans for students in areas outside classrooms
 - c) Ensure that the individual School Lockdown Response Plan identifies the same evacuation site(s) as the SAFE Plan.
 - d) Share School Lockdown Response Plan with staff.
 - e) Ensure that all designated safe areas have a working lock.
 - f) Familiarize replacement staff (e.g. substitute teachers, EA's, custodians) with the plan.
 - g) Address facility issues and review them on an annual basis (e.g. outside speakers, second command center, keying system for classrooms/offices).
 - h) Schedule and hold 2 lockdown drills per school year.
 - a) Ensure that everyone in the school is aware in advance that a lockdown drill will occur.
 - b) Notify PSB reception that a drill is going to be conducted.
 - c) Post a notice in on the main door stating that there is a lockdown drill in progress. **"THIS IS A DRILL – THE SCHOOL IS IN A LOCKDOWN DRILL. DO NOT ENTER"**.
 - d) Indicate to staff and students that the lockdown practice is a drill by saying; **"Attention all staff, students and visitors: This is a drill. Initiate lockdown, initiate lockdown, initiate lockdown, now. This is a drill."**
(Repeat message)
- 4.4 **School staff**
- 4.4.1 Understand the School Lockdown Response Plan participate in drills, and respond quickly, according to procedures in this plan during a high-risk situation.
 - 4.4.2 Instruct and train students in their classes/areas on lockdown procedures.
 - 4.4.3 Disclose prior information or knowledge of a developing high-risk situation to school administration immediately.
- 4.5 **Students**
- 4.5.1 Participate in lockdown drills and respond quickly to the direction of staff during a high-risk situation.
 - 4.5.2 Disclose prior information or knowledge about a developing high-risk situation to a staff member or school administrator immediately.
- 4.6 **Police**
- 4.6.1 Work closely with school administration in planning for and responding to a high-risk incident.
 - 4.6.2 Ensure that officers who may be called for service at a school are knowledgeable about the school's SAFE plan.
- 4.7 **Parent/Guardians**
- 4.7.1 Keep their child's contact information up to date so they can easily be reached by staff in the event of an emergency.

4.7.2 Become aware of lock down procedures and discuss lockdowns with their children, reinforce the instructions received from teachers, and provide any support their children may need. Appendix C

4.8 **Daycare/Child Care and other School-Based Tenants**

4.8.1 Follow the direction of the school during lockdown drills.

4.8.2 Ensure that specific plans are in place to address the needs of individuals in their care in the event of a drill or a high-risk incident.

5.0 CREATING A SAFE CLASSROOM/SCHOOL

5.1 Ability to lock classroom doors from the inside.

5.2 Ability to cover all windows looking into a classroom where students would be secured during a lockdown.

5.3 Libraries, cafeterias, gymnasiums and common areas may have limited options for offering shelter. The response is to lockdown in the closest secure area of the school.

5.4 Washroom do not have locks on their doors.

a) For elementary schools it is recommended that planning includes a staff member checking the washrooms, if safe to do so.

b) For secondary schools, it is recommended that it be explained to students that they are responsible to get out of the washroom immediately and go to the nearest safe area.

c) If trapped in a washroom, attempt to secure the bathroom door, enter a stall, lock the door, climb on top of the toilet, and remain quiet.

6.0 LOCKDOWN (ACTUAL EVENT) - RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 **Director of the Public Schools Branch**

4.1.1 Initiate PSB Emergency Response Plan – Red Binder

6.1 **School Administration**

a) Act as the primary contact with the PSB and police.

b) Follow the communication protocol in the event of a high-risk incident. See section 10.0.

6.2 **Staff**

a) Follow the direction from administration and police and encourage students to fully cooperate.

b) Endeavour to ensure that crime scene evidence is not disturbed (leave all objects exactly as found, discourage others from disturbing potential evidence, and isolate area if possible).

6.3 **Students**

a) Follow directions given by PSB staff and police.

6.4 **Police**

a) Respond to and investigate high- risks incidents.

b) Assume command and control of the response and investigation.

c) Assign an officer to the off-site evacuation location to communicate information to staff, students and families.

d) Direct families arriving on-site to pre-designated, off-site evacuation locations where they can receive information.

e) Set up media relations outside the incident area. (NOTE: Police representatives handle media relations regarding the incident and police response.

- 6.5 **Parents/Guardians**
 - a) Do not call child's cell phone during a high-risk incident.
 - b) Assist school administration and police by following direction at the off-site evacuation site.
- 6.6 **Visitors**
 - a) Proceed to the nearest safe room and lock the door.
- 6.7 **Daycare/Child Care and other School-Based Tenants**
 - a) Follow procedures as practiced.

7.0 INITIATE LOCKDOWN

- 7.1 Anyone observing a high-risk incident must contact the school office immediately to initiate the lockdown using the following words over PA System:
 - “Attention all staff, students and visitors:
Initiate lockdown, initiate lockdown, initiate lockdown, now.”**
 - (Repeat message)**
 - a) Initiating lockdown is the first priority. If administration is not in the office to initiate lockdown, anyone can do it.
 - b) All staff members (instructional and non-instructional) should know how to initiate a lockdown.
- 7.2 If possible, the call to 911 should be made at the same time as the lockdown announcement, but if alone ALWAYS initiate the lockdown first, then call 911.
 - a) Identify yourself, the school name, and full address.
 - b) Stay on the line and continue to provide information as requested. DO NOT HANG UP until directed to do so.
 - c) If possible, document times and events related to the incident.
- 7.3 Contact the Director of the PSB from another phone or have someone else do it.

8.0 LOCKDOWN EVENT

- 8.1 Upon hearing the lockdown announcement, all staff, students, volunteers, visitors, and tenants should immediately proceed to the nearest safe area. If safety permits, staff should immediately gather everyone caught in the hallway into the nearest safe room.
- 8.2 In an elementary school staff teaching in the classroom(s) closest to the washrooms can be assigned the task of getting children from the washroom to the classroom.
- 8.3 All exterior doors remain “as is” at the time of lockdown. No one is to be designated to lock/unlock exterior doors after lockdown is initiated.
- 8.4 Close, lock, and barricade (if possible) the classroom door(s).
- 8.5 Shut off all lights and try to make the room appear uninhabited.
- 8.6 Close and lock all windows and draw curtains/blinds if available to prevent any view into the room from corridors.
- 8.7 Sit in designated safe area, typically on the floor against a wall away from the line of sight from doors and below the level of windows.
- 8.8 Remain silent to give the impression that the room is empty.
- 8.9 Ignore dismissal bells.
- 8.10 If a fire alarm rings, remain locked down, if it is safe to do so. Be prepared to react if smoke is detected.
- 8.11 Put cell phones on silent and only use one to communicate pertinent information to emergency services. Do not electronically share or post images of the event.

- 8.12 Staff and students outside when a lockdown is initiated should proceed to their evacuation site, if possible and safe to do so. If it is not possible or safe to do so, find a safe location/shelter and wait for help.
- 8.13 Remain in lockdown until your room is unlocked and cleared by authorities.

9.0 POST LOCKDOWN

Actions taken following a lockdown can have a major impact on the well-being of staff, students, and the broader community. Follow-up actions will include the following, as appropriate:

- 9.1 The Director of the PSB and the Director of Student Services, in consultation with the school administration, will ensure that:
 - a) A student services team is made available to provide support for staff and students.
 - b) Appropriate information is provided to parents/guardians, staff, students and the broader school community regarding the incident.
 - c) Police and the PSB will coordinate a news release.
 - d) The School Lockdown Response Plan and the SAFE Plan are evaluated and modified as necessary.
 - e) Co-operation with police is maintained to facilitate completion of investigations.
 - f) All necessary legal, insurance, and administrative forms and documents are completed as required.
- 9.2 School Administration will:
 - a) Maintain close contact with any injured victims and families.
 - b) Arrange to debrief the incident with staff.

10.0 MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS DURING SCHOOL LOCKDOWNS

- 10.1 Any media requests must be directed to the Director of the PSB so consultation with emergency services representatives (police, fire, etc.) can occur before an interview or statement is given.
- 10.2 The initial media response should be done as soon as the emergency is known, even though all the details may not be known. The Director or designate will provide the following information:
 - a) The Public Schools Branch is aware of the situation and emergency response plans have been activated. More information will be released as it becomes available.

11.0 APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A - School Lockdown Response Plan Template
- 11.2 Appendix B - How to talk to your kids about school lockdown drills

12.0 CROSS REFERENCE

- 12.1 Operational Policy 610, Lockdown
- 12.2 *Education Act*