



**MOOSONEE DISTRICT  
SCHOOL AREA BOARD**

**BOARD GOVERNANCE POLICY**

Motion	2016-09-008
Adopted	September 27, 2016
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**EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS**

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**1. PURPOSE**

The Moosonee District School Area Board is committed to providing a safe environment for its students and staff. To assist staff in fulfilling this essential responsibility, from time to time the Board will publish guidelines outlining expectations, procedures, and acceptable practices which enhance the safety of individuals on Board property.

**2. DEFINITIONS**

**Emergency:** An emergency is a situation or occurrence of a serious nature, developing suddenly and unexpectedly, and demanding immediate action.

**Lockdown:** Lockdown is a response to a major incident or threat of violence within the school, or the immediate area of the school. A lockdown isolates students, the staff, and others from danger by requiring everyone to remain inside the building in secure locations. All staff members within the school are responsible for ensuring that no one leaves the secure locations until the lockdown is removed by the principal or police.

**WHMIS:** The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) is Canada's national hazard communication standard. The key elements of the system are hazard classification, cautionary labelling of containers, the provision of (material) safety data sheets ((M)SDSs) and worker education and training programs.

**Physical Education Safety Guidelines:** The Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines, managed by Ophea, represent the minimum standards for risk management practice for school boards. They focus the attention of teachers, intramural supervisors, and coaches on safe practices in every activity, in order to minimize the element of risk.

**Universal Precautions:** Universal precautions are precautions designed to prevent the transmission of blood-borne diseases such as human immunodeficiency virus, hepatitis B, and other blood borne pathogens when first aid or health care is provided. Under Universal Precautions, blood and certain body fluids of all individuals are considered potentially infectious. The precautions include specific recommendations for use of protective equipment such as gloves, masks, and gowns when contact with blood or body secretions containing blood is anticipated.

**PCBs:** PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, are industrial products or chemicals. They were made for things such as electrical insulators, capacitors, and appliances such as

television sets and refrigerators. They were also sprayed on dirt roads to keep the dust down. They are now banned substances because of their impacts on human and environmental health.

**Chlorine Gas:** Chlorine gas is a greenish-yellow gas that is two and one half times as heavy as air. It tends to collect in low-lying areas such as ditches, hollows, and basements. Chlorine has a penetrating odour comparable to Javex and is highly irritating to the respiratory tract.

## **POLICY**

### **3. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN**

- 3.1. The principal of the school and the supervisor of any other Board building shall ensure that a written emergency response plan has been developed which outlines the sequence of actions that should occur subsequent to an emergency situation on Board property.
- 3.2. The plan shall outline the names and locations of first contacts, the location of first aid kits, the sequence of actions, and the duties of key personnel (e.g., principal, secretary).
- 3.3. The emergency response plan shall be posted in the staffroom, gym, equipment room, the main office, and the resource room of the school, and a copy shall be included in the Staff Handbook and a copy sent to the Joint Health and Safety Committee.
- 3.4. The emergency response plan shall be reviewed by a member of the Joint Health and Safety Committee as part of each workplace inspection.
- 3.5. The emergency response plan shall be reviewed annually and updated as required.
- 3.6. The Board recognizes a number of guidelines as resource documents which shall be used as needed in the development of school safety plans. Ministry resources are listed at the end of this policy. Board resources are listed in the Staff Handbook.
- 3.7. Board safety guidelines shall be reviewed regularly by an appropriate committee and new manuals shall be developed as the need arises.
- 3.8. Staff members shall be familiarized on a regular basis with the emergency response plan and any revisions to it, as well as with any related Ministry and Board guidelines and manuals.

### **4. EMERGENCY PROCEDURE TRAINING**

The Moosonee District School Area Board shall provide for the training of the staff in emergency response procedures.

**5. FIRST AID KITS**

- 5.1. The school's administration is responsible for maintaining first aid kits in the school.
- 5.2. First aid kits will be kept in the staffroom and the gymnasium.
- 5.3. A portable first aid kit will be made available for trips and/or sporting events.
- 5.4. Universal Precautions will be followed at all times.

**6. EMERGENCIES AFFECTING THE OPERATION OF THE SCHOOL**

- 6.1. The Board accepts the general principle that reaction to an emergency is best taken and directed by the person(s) responsible at the site of the emergency.
- 6.2. The safety of children foremost, and the safety of the staff, shall be the main consideration in dealing with an emergency.
- 6.3. Provided that the building is not affected by the emergency, the school shall normally be open to receive students.
- 6.4. It is assumed that weather and road conditions will not prevent at least some of the staff and some of the students from reaching the building.
- 6.5. It is accepted that bus operators are the best judges of the action to be taken when transportation emergencies arise.
- 6.6. When bus routes have to be cancelled, radio stations will be requested to announce cancellations. [See Board Policy GOV-24 Student Transportation.]
- 6.7. In emergencies requiring early dismissal, the principal and bus drivers are expected to use the best means available to ensure that students dismissed early will have access to shelter when they reach their homes.
- 6.8. In extreme emergencies such as unexpectedly severe weather conditions, it may be expedient to hold students at school until safe transit to their homes is assured.
- 6.9. The principal or designate shall immediately inform the Board office when a school has to be evacuated.

**7. FIRE EMERGENCY**

- 7.1. The school will incorporate in its emergency procedures a Fire Emergency Plan that ensures the quickest and safest evacuation of all students and staff from the building.
- 7.2. The principal is responsible for ensuring that all staff members are fully aware of procedures and responsibilities when a fire emergency occurs.

7.3. The school's Fire Evacuation Plan shall include the following:

- a) identification of primary and secondary escape routes for each room of the school;
- b) the posting of primary and secondary escape routes in easily observed locations in each room of the school;
- c) the posting of clearly outlined routines that all staff and students must follow during a fire alarm in classrooms, the teachers' staff room, and offices; and
- d) inclusion of scheduled fire emergency evacuation drills/practices (at least one per term).

7.4. The school's Fire Emergency Plan shall be reviewed every three years and a copy shall be forwarded to the Board office and the Fire Chief.

## **8. DANGEROUS INTRUDER**

8.1. The principal is responsible for the development of a high level of security consciousness in all staff members.

8.2. The school will make every effort to ensure the safety of students and staff by dealing with a dangerous intruder according to Administrative Procedure 160 Emergency Lockdown Procedures. [See Section 9 below.]

Note: Board Policy GOV-21 Access to School Premises addresses the process for dealing with an individual trespassing on school property, including when the person refuses to leave.

8.3. Any staff member observing a person entering the school grounds or school, and deems that person to be a possible dangerous intruder, shall immediately communicate the message to the principal or vice-principal.

8.4. The principal or office shall communicate to all staff a code which signals the possibility of a dangerous intruder, and follow the specific directives in Administrative Procedure 160 Emergency Lockdown Procedures.

## **9. EMERGENCY LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES**

9.1. The Ministry of Education mandates that all Ontario school boards must ensure the development and implementation of individual school plans for lockdown procedures.

[See Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol 2015. Appendix B: Provincial Policy for Developing and Maintaining Lockdown Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Schools in Ontario.]

9.2. Moosonee District School Area Board has developed Administrative Procedure 160 Emergency Lockdown Procedures, which includes details about requirements for the individual school plan and sets out clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and

expectations for staff, students, police, and parents. This procedure ensures that school staff and emergency personnel will work together to deal with lockdown situations quickly and effectively.

- 9.3. This administrative procedure includes directives about initial and ongoing training of all staff and students in lockdown procedures. It also addresses issues such as accessibility and communications for students with special education needs.
- 9.4. Administrative Procedure 160 Emergency Lockdown Procedures directs that a minimum of two lockdown drills must occur each school year.

## **10. BOMB THREAT**

- 10.1. The Ministry of Education, on the recommendation of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, specifies two mandatory requirements for dealing with bomb threats in schools, as follows:
- a) All publicly funded school boards in Ontario must establish a bomb threat response to ensure the development and implementation of individual school plans.
  - b) Each board must ensure that its staff, students, and other partners are aware of their obligations/responsibilities within the individual school plans.

[Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol 2015. Appendix C: Provincial Policy for Developing and Maintaining Bomb Threat Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Schools in Ontario.]

- 10.2. The principal is responsible for the development of a high level of security consciousness among all staff members.
- 10.3. Any person receiving a call regarding a bomb threat shall immediately communicate the message to the principal.
- 10.4. The school will follow the bomb threat procedure found in Appendix A attached to this Board policy. The detailed procedures in Appendix A minimize publicity about the threat and ensure the safety of the students and staff.
- 10.5. The principal shall submit a written report to the Board following the conclusion of the emergency.
- 10.6. The school's procedure for a bomb threat is to be consistent with the bomb threat plans of the other tenants of the J.B.E.C. complex.

## **11. SITUATIONS CAUSED BY HAZARDOUS GOODS OR FLOOD**

- 11.1. The Emergency Measures Organization of the Town of Moosonee has developed detailed plans of evacuation and action.

- 11.2. Directions will be issued by the officials of that organization in case of an emergency in any part of the community.

## 12. PCB SPILLS

- 12.1. In the event of a transformer rupturing, the principal will, if the transformer is located on, or in near proximity to the school grounds, keep students in the building until emergency procedures for dismissal are completed.
- 12.2. Students will be instructed to stay at least 100 meters from the site of the transformer.
- 12.3. The principal shall contact:
- Hydro One: 1-800-665-5130      Local: 336-7273
  - The Ministry of the Environment 1-800-380-6615

## 13. CHLORINE GAS SPILLS

- 13.1. If a chlorine gas spill occurs, the Emergency Measures Organization and/or the police department will notify all residents and schools in the area and direct evacuation.
- 13.2. When a warning of a chlorine spill is received, specific information will be included: the location, wind direction, and evacuation route. The evacuation direction should be at right angles to the wind direction and upwind.
- 13.3. If evacuation is not possible, the students and staff shall remain in the school, close all windows and doors, turn off heating and ventilation, and move to the upper floor.

## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

### **Legal:**

*Education Act, Section 265: Duties of Principal—Care of Pupils and Property*  
Ontario Regulation 298 Operation of Schools: Section 6 Emergency Procedures  
*Occupational Health and Safety Act*  
*Toxic Substances Control Act*  
Ontario Building Code  
Ontario Fire Code  
Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol 2015

### **Board:**

Board Policy GOV-03 Role of the Corporate Board  
Board Policy GOV-04 Role of the Supervisory Officer  
Board Policy GOV-18 Health and Safety: Working Environment  
Board Policy GOV-21 Access to School Premises  
Board Policy GOV-24 Student Transportation

Board Policy GOV-25 School Closure  
Administrative Procedure 160 Emergency Lockdown Procedures

**Resources:**

- Reference Manual for the WHMIS Requirements of the *Hazardous Products Act* and Controlled Products Regulations (2015)
- Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines: Curricular, Interschool and Intramural Activities
- Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol 2015. Appendix B: Provincial Policy for Developing and Maintaining Lockdown Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Schools in Ontario.
- Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol 2015. Appendix C: Provincial Policy for Developing and Maintaining Bomb Threat Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Schools in Ontario.
- [See attached suggested letter to parents about a school evacuation in Appendix B of this Board policy.]

**APPENDIX A****BOMB THREAT PROCEDURES****Purpose:**

To enhance safety and security, it is important for the school to have plans for responding to bomb threats. According to the RCMP, the overwhelming majority of reported bomb threats are unfounded, but some are not. The school must be in a constant state of readiness to deal with threats to explode a device in a school.

This readiness includes planning and preparation in the event that a bomb threat is received, an explosive device is discovered, or an explosives incident takes place.

The following procedures have been developed to help the principal and staff members to assess the validity of bomb threats and then to act so as to ensure student and staff safety.

**Procedures****1. Roles and Responsibilities****The Principal:**

- 1.1. During the initial stages of a bomb threat, the principal will be the authority responsible for the initial assessment and related decisions, including those regarding visual scans and evacuations. For serious incidents, the police are responsible for management of the threat and any subsequent criminal investigation. However, the principal will cooperate fully with police and strive to ensure that all staff and students do the same.
- 1.2. During an incident, if the principal has been relocated to a place of safety, he or she should continue to exercise his or her duties, to the extent possible, in support of the emergency responders' management of the situation.

**The Police**

- 1.3. Police are responsible for responding to and investigating bomb threats and explosives incidents. During any such incident, police will assume command and control of the response and investigation but will liaise and work closely with the principal and other emergency services throughout the process.
- 1.4. The police must be notified of all bomb threat incidents, regardless of other actions taken by the schools. The criminal investigation of bomb threats by the police may lead to the apprehension of persons responsible. The investigation itself may also serve as a deterrent for future "copycat" incidents.

[Section 1 is adapted from the Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol 2015. Appendix C: Provincial Policy for Developing and Maintaining Bomb Threat Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Schools in Ontario. pp 46-47]



## 2. Preparation and Training

- 2.1. In order to ensure an adequate state of emergency preparedness, it is essential that principals review all facets of the school emergency plan with all staff at the beginning of each school year.
- 2.2. The school must be prepared in the event that a call or written threat is received. The first line of preparedness is to have all office staff trained in how to gather information under the stress of such a call.
- 2.3. According to the RCMP, most bomb threats are made over the telephone by anonymous callers. Some are received in the mail or by other means, but these methods are rare. In each case, the communication should be taken seriously. School staff in positions that make them most likely to receive bomb threats should be identified in school plans and should receive training in proper procedures.

## 3. Floor Plans

- 3.1. Accurate, up-to-date floor plans are a key component of bomb threat and explosives incident response plans.
- 3.2. Floor plans should be posted throughout the school, at least in every classroom. Floor plans should clearly identify entrances and exits as well as routes that staff and students are to take during an evacuation.
- 3.3. Floor plans should be available to all emergency service responders who may be involved in a search of the premises when they arrive on the scene.

## 4. Bomb Threat Procedures

- 4.1. The person receiving the call shall attempt to keep the caller on the phone as long as possible, and to note any particulars and extract any details from the caller before the caller hangs up.
- 4.2. Staff should be trained to record precise information during a bomb threat call, including the following:
  - the exact wording of the threat;
  - the time and date of the call;
  - the phone number or line on which the call was received;
  - the caller's number, if shown on call display;
  - whether the caller is male or female and the caller's approximate age;
  - the exact location of the explosive device and the time of detonation, if that information is revealed by the caller;
  - the type of explosive device and what it looks like (e.g., pipe bomb, truck bomb), if that information is revealed by the caller;
  - any unique speech characteristics of the caller;
  - any background noises (e.g., traffic, music, laughter);

- the condition or emotional state of the caller (e.g., whether the caller seems to be intoxicated, excited, angry);
- the caller's name, if that information is revealed by the caller;
- whether the call taker recognizes the voice of the caller; and
- the time when the caller hangs up.

4.3. If possible, the call taker should attempt to notify the school principal during the telephone call. If not, the principal should be notified immediately after the call. All pertinent details of the call should immediately be relayed to the principal and documented.

4.4. The principal will inform the Board office about the bomb threat.

4.5. The principal has the responsibility of contacting the police. It is recommended that, unless there are exigent circumstances, this should be done after the school principal has been provided with available information and after both the initial assessment (see the next section) and the decision whether or not to evacuate have been made.

## 5. Initial Assessment

5.1. One of the most challenging aspects of a bomb threat incident is the initial assessment of the threat and the accompanying decisions about whether to authorize a visual scan and/or an evacuation. Many bomb threats are hoaxes intended to disrupt school exams or daily classes. Hasty decisions to evacuate or to initiate a high-profile emergency response may encourage further incidents. However, the safety of students and staff is paramount during a bomb threat and therefore every threat must be assessed individually, based on known information.

5.2. The initial principal's assessment should be based on the following:

- the information recorded by the person taking the call;
- activities taking place in the school at the time of the threat (e.g., examinations);
- whether a specific location for a bomb was stated or the entire school was threatened;
- whether the threat was specific to the current time or a future time/ date;
- any recent negative incidents involving a student, staff member, or anyone else connected with the school;
- whether there have been any other recent bomb threats or hoaxes;
- the likelihood of anyone having the opportunity to place a bomb in the stated location; and
- whether a suspicious device/package has been located.

## 6. Visual Scan

6.1. A visual inspection involves the following steps:

- Without raising undue alarm, the principal or designate shall alert the staff as follows: “Facilities Check announcement: Attention all staff: Please undertake a Facilities Check and report the results to the office.”
- Staff members shall not inform the students of the bomb threat.
- Students are to remain in class.
- The principal or designate will request any teacher on a preparation period and the custodial staff to report to the office for instructions.
- Custodians will search the boiler room, custodial storage areas, lunch room, the perimeter of the building, etc.
- Staff members will search unoccupied classrooms and common areas (hallways, washrooms, library, etc.)
- Teachers will check their classrooms for suspicious objects/ packages. They are the only persons qualified to decide what is suspicious and unusual.
- Administrators and custodians will search their offices and common areas.
- Secretaries will search the school office.

6.2. The search should be continued to completion even if a suspicious parcel or device has been located. [A decoy package may be used to draw attention from the primary device.]

6.3. Staff members shall not touch, move, poke, nor approach a suspicious object.

6.4. Evacuation routes (the stairwell, hallways, and exterior paths) shall be searched in anticipation of a possible evacuation.

6.5. The pre-determined meeting area must be searched in anticipation of a possible evacuation.

## **7. Procedures Following the Location of a Suspicious Device/ Package**

7.1. If a suspicious package/device is located, appropriate procedures include the following:

- isolation/containment of the device/package, ensuring that it is not touched;
- immediate communication of the discovery to the principal and to police and the fire department; and
- immediate re-evaluation of any evacuation decisions in light of the discovery.

7.2. Police should be notified or updated when confirmation is received regarding the precise location of the package/device. Once the police have been notified, fire department and EMS personnel should be contacted so that they will be nearby or on the scene in stand-by mode.

7.3. The school principal will work with emergency services personnel, which may include first responders, investigators, and bomb technicians, to evaluate the need to relocate evacuees and/or command posts.

7.4. The possibility of an explosives incident can be limited by ensuring that staff and students are acutely aware that suspicious devices or packages must not be moved. Containing and reporting a suspicious package or device, and immediately re-evaluating evacuation, notification, and search decisions, depending on the information received, reduces the risk of harm to staff and students.

## **8. Decision to Evacuate**

8.1. The supervisory officer or designate may be consulted by school administration to help determine if an evacuation should be carried out. The data from the bomb threat call report or written threat is a valuable aid in determining the need to evacuate. Knowledge of recent school events and the school culture should also be used to help assess the seriousness of the threat to people and property.

8.2. Due diligence with respect to the safety of all users must always be exercised. School administrators must be aware that:

- Most threats are hoaxes and evacuation reinforces hoaxes.
- School activities are often disrupted by evacuations, sometimes for the remainder of the day.
- People are disturbed and concerned by evacuations and the decision to return must be made with little more data than was available upon evacuation.
- An evacuation may bring students and staff to an area that is a greater threat to their well-being. For example, because the most likely location for a bomb is in a common area, evacuation through common areas can increase risk.

8.3. Once the decision to evacuate has been made, the principal shall follow school evacuation procedures as set out below.

## **9. School Evacuation**

9.1. The pre-determined meeting area must be searched in anticipation of a possible evacuation. This area should be a significant distance away from the school.

9.2. Evacuation routes (the stairwell, hallways, exterior paths) shall be searched in anticipation of a possible evacuation.

9.3. The evacuation shall not be a fire alarm alert. The school shall be notified via a general P.A. announcement.

9.4. Students shall take bags, knapsacks, etc. from the classroom in order to reduce the number of potential suspicious objects.

9.5. Teachers shall take attendance records. The classroom will not be locked. Attendance shall be taken following evacuation to ensure the safe arrival of all students to the meeting area.

9.6. The evacuation plan must ensure that all student areas such as the library and washrooms are checked.

## 10. Re-entry

The decision to re-enter the building will be made by the principal in consultation with the police and the supervisory officer or designate.

## 11. Recovery Following an Incident

11.1. When a bomb threat or a suspicious package/device is found to be a hoax, controlled communication, including communication relating to any debriefing conducted to evaluate actions, is important so that further incidents are not encouraged.

11.2. In serious situations following the location of a suspicious package/device or an explosives incident, the board's trauma response plan will normally be initiated. In all cases, communication with students and parents is vital.

11.3. The school plan shall be thoroughly reviewed following the incident.

## References

### **Legal:**

*Education Act: Section 265 (1) (j) Duties of Principal: Care of Pupils*

*Guideline—Ontario Schools Code of Conduct*

*Occupational Health and Safety Act*

Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol 2015. Appendix C: Provincial Policy for Developing and Maintaining Bomb Threat Procedures for Elementary and Secondary Schools in Ontario

### **Board:**

Board Policy GOV-08 Safe Schools

Board Policy GOV-09 Safe Schools: School Code of Conduct

Board Policy GOV-18 Health and Safety: Working Environment

Board Policy GOV-21 Access to School Premises

Administrative Procedure 540 Safety and Security of Buildings and Property

Administrative Procedure 541 Safety and Security: Video Surveillance

**APPENDIX B**

[Suggested letter for each school year]

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

RE: EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF SCHOOL

Occasionally it may be necessary to evacuate the school prior to the normal school dismissal times because of an emergency situation such as snow storms, bomb threats, heating plant failure, school fire, chemical spills, etc.

The safety and welfare of our students is of prime concern during a state of emergency. Our school has developed an action plan to meet emergency situations. The success of the school's plan requires your cooperation.

Parents or guardians may be absent from home on many occasions during school hours because of employment, shopping, appointments, etc. In view of this fact and because of the unpredictability of emergencies, we respectfully request that you make alternative plans for sheltering your children in anticipation of such early and unexpected dismissal of school. We would urge that arrangements be made with neighbours, friends, or relatives to care for your children should such an emergency force the early closure of the school during your absence from home. We also ask that you make your children aware of your expectations in this regard.

In the event that a disaster affecting all or part of an area necessitates the evacuation of the school, plans have been developed to ensure that your child will be evacuated to a place of safety. Our primary evacuation site is the Community Centre.

If an evacuation is called by authorities, you are requested not to proceed to the school to pick up your children as this could create traffic problems, hinder the evacuation process, and perhaps endanger your own safety

Children will be evacuated to a safe area. The location of this area will be broadcast by electronic media (local radio station) and by phone messages. You can then proceed to pick up children in safety.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

[Signature]  
Principal