

Earthquake Policy and Procedure – Emergency Plan

1. Given that the school district geographically lies in an area which has the significant possibility of strong earthquake activity, appropriate procedures must be developed for implementation should an earthquake and/or earthquake aftershocks occur when school is in session.
2. School earthquake practice drills shall be held at least three (3) per year;
3. When conducting a school earthquake practice drill, use the school P.A. system to announce “earthquake, earthquake” or play a tape simulating earthquake noises for approximately 60 seconds. (fire bells are not to be used for earthquake drills)

The following classroom earthquake practice drill procedures should occur;

- a) the teacher should issue, “duck, cover and hold”;
 - b) all room occupants immediately take cover under desks or tables or beside counters;
 - c) face away from windows or glass display cases;
 - d) assume “crash” position on knees, head down, one hand clasped over neck or head with book or jacket and the other hand holding onto the furniture being used for protection. (it is important that this position/posture be practiced to ensure that the most vulnerable areas, neck and chest, are protected)
4. When an actual earthquake or after shock occurs, the following classroom procedures should occur immediately;
 - a) “duck, cover and hold”, taking cover under desks or tables or beside counters;
 - b) assume “crash” position on knees, head down, with one hand clasped over neck or head with a book or jacket and the other hand holding onto the furniture being used for protection; (it is important that this position/posture be practiced to ensure that the most vulnerable areas, neck and chest, are protected)
 - c) face away from windows or glass display cases;
 - d) the teacher shall count out loud with students until all the shaking has stopped, then recount again to 60, as this allows time for items to finish falling and possibly the first aftershock to occur; (teachers must take immediate steps to protect themselves from personal injury during an earthquake as they have an extremely important role to play in assisting students through the post earthquake recovery stage)
 - e) 60 seconds after all shaking has stopped, the teacher should instruct the students to carefully check for injuries and dangerous objects around them such as broken glass before moving or standing up; (it is

important to have footwear on or easily accessible, as broken glass will most likely be on the floor after an earthquake)

- f) the teacher shall then instruct the students to evacuate the school building in a similar manner to any other drill, do not wait for instructions from the school office to evacuate the building.
 - g) if the normal evacuation route is blocked due to building damage caused by an earthquake, then direct students out of the building via an alternate route, in a calm manner, walking slowly in single file, insuring no debris is underfoot while maintaining a look out above and on both sides for any possible dangers;
 - h) if an aftershock occurs while in evacuating the building, face away from windows and “squat and cover” beside an interior wall, placing your head as close to your knees and clasping hands behind the neck, covering the side of your head with arms, however if cover is available, use it or place your back to an interior wall; (“duck and cover” at this point is not advisable as the floor maybe littered with debris including sharp glass edges)
 - i) in other areas of the building,
 - move away from windows, shelves or areas where heavy objects are stored and may fall, take cover under a table or desk, in a corner or doorway,
 - in halls or areas where no cover is available move to an interior wall and “squat and cover” (head close to knees, hands clasped behind neck to cover sides of head with arms),
 - stay inside until the shaking has ceased as the most dangerous place in or around the building is just outside where debris may fall; exit after the shaking has stopped,
 - in science labs and I.E. shops extinguish all burners before taking cover or as soon as possible,
 - in science labs and I.E. shops stay away from hazardous chemicals that may spill.
6. Only those persons able to walk should leave the building after an earthquake, injured persons not able to walk or trapped under building debris should be reassured that help will come and they will be removed very shortly to safety.
7. If outside when an earthquake occurs;
- a) move quickly away from the building and from overhead electrical wires;
 - b) “squat and cover” (head close to knees, hands clasped behind neck to cover sides of head with arms) and wait for shocks to subside;
 - c) do not attempt to enter building; (site search and rescue will do so when authorized)

- d) stay away from all fallen wires;
 - e) teachers should take count of students under their care
8. Bus drivers transporting students at the time of an earthquake are to;
- a) stop, away from the road edge or shoulder, (stop as close to the road center as circumstances allow) power lines, bridges, overpasses and multi-story buildings;
 - b) occupants shall assume the “crash” position between the seat or in the aisles, counting loudly to 60 or until the shaking stops;
 - c) remain in the bus until instructed otherwise;
 - d) bus driver to tune to the local radio station or AM emergency radio frequency;
 - e) attempt to make contact via with the school office;
 - f) if the roads are passable, proceed with caution to the school;
 - g) if the bus is immobilized, in an unsafe position, evacuate to an open area in an orderly fashion due to the potential of further aftershocks;
 - h) administer first aid as necessary;
 - i) proceed when safe to do so, with students, on foot to nearest school or residence;
 - j) do not leave students unattended, stay with them until assistance arrives.
9. All media enquiries regarding the status of school students, staff and facilities affected by an earthquake, shall be handled through the School Communication Officer as delegated.