

Sample Annual Parent/Guardian Notification of Safety Drills

To All Parents and Guardians:

The safety of our students and staff is very important to us. To keep everyone safe we have security (safety) procedures, such as [\[provide description that is specific to your school or district, things you may want to include are locked door and visitor policies, security cameras, School Resource Officer, etc.\]](#).

The emergency response terms used in New York are:

- **Lockdown:** To secure school buildings and grounds if an immediate threat of violence happens in the school or outside. Students and staff move from hallways into rooms. Doors and windows are closed and locked and students and staff move away from doors and windows and remain quiet and out of sight.
- **Secure Lockout:** To secure school buildings and grounds against a danger outside of the school. All students and staff outside move into the school building. Outside doors and windows are closed and locked. Some visitors to the building may not be allowed inside the building. The school day continues as normal.
- **Evacuation:** To move students and staff from the school building to a safe location.
- **Shelter-in-Place:** To keep students and staff safely inside the building when there is a safety concern outside the building. Students may stay in their classrooms for a continuation of instruction. Sometimes students and staff may need to shelter together in a predetermined safe area of the school, such as for weather emergencies.
- **Hold-in-Place:** To keep students and staff in their classrooms while dealing with short-term emergencies, such as a student needing medical help in the hallway. Students stay in their classrooms and instruction continues.

Our school works with local law enforcement (police), fire departments, and other emergency response partners to make sure we are prepared in an emergency. Part of this work includes:

- A District-Wide School Safety Plan on our website at [\[insert link to district-wide safety plan here\]](#).
- A confidential Building-Level Emergency Response Plan in place at each school building.
- Safety drills in each school to practice and learn what to do in case of an emergency. State law requires we have eight evacuation (fire) drills, four lockdown drills, and an early dismissal drill during the school year.
- Three school bus safety drills each year [\[include any additional drills your district or school conducts\]](#).

We will notify parents/guardians within a week before each safety drill. [\[include details about district policy regarding parental notification\]](#).

Safety Drills

Each school year before we have drills, we teach our students and staff about our emergency procedures to be sure that everyone knows what to do in an emergency. We teach in a trauma-informed way, which means we try not to scare anyone or make it seem like a real emergency. In a developmentally appropriate way, we talk about the kinds of safety drills we will practice during the school year, how a safety drill will be announced, and what students should do in each type of safety drill. When we practice evacuation (fire) drills, the drill is announced by the fire alarm

going off. For all other drills, we always tell students and staff that it is a drill and not a real emergency [\[include additional information about your specific procedures\]](#).

After drills, students and families are encouraged to ask questions. [\[include additional information about whom to contact with questions\]](#).

In an Emergency

If there is an emergency at your child's school, please:

- **Do not go to the school.** Coming to the school can prevent emergency personnel (e.g., police, fire department) from getting to the school quickly.
- **Do not call the school.** Our priority is to protect the wellbeing of our students and communicate with emergency personnel, and we cannot respond to callers.
- **We will contact parents/guardians** using our notification system [\[describe\]](#) as soon as possible. Please make sure your emergency contact information is always up to date at your child's school. [\[provide info about how to update information\]](#).
- **Check the district** [\[website/social media/parent portal, etc.\]](#). We will provide information to the public as soon as possible. We will provide regular updates as quickly as we are able. Information that is not from our school administration or our communications office may not be correct.

If you get a call or text from your child, help your child stay calm. Tell them that school staff know what to do in an emergency and will keep everyone safe.

If you have any questions regarding school safety, please contact [\[include contact info here\]](#). Thank you for helping us protect the wellbeing of our students.