



Saskatoon Public Schools  
Inspiring Learning



## Working Together for Safe Schools

Saskatoon schools have well developed partnerships in our community. We work closely with the Saskatoon Police Service, the Saskatoon Fire Department and the City of Saskatoon Emergency Measures Organization to help ensure that our schools are safe places to be. With their help we have developed, and regularly review, our safety plans. These plans enable our staff to effectively and efficiently respond to any emergency events that may arise in our schools.

Parents/guardians/caregivers also play a role in working with all partners in keeping our students safe. This resource provides you with information on school safety planning.

## School Safety Plans

Safety plans help us prepare and respond to emergency events. That is why we prepare safety plans and why we practice emergency drills in our schools. All schools have developed safety plans for many different scenarios. In each instance the situation is assessed, a level of response is identified, and action is taken. These actions will depend on the specific incident. For example, one or more schools may evacuate, lockdown, or initiate a shelter in place response, according to the nature of the event.

Our school staff works directly with the Saskatoon Police Service and the Saskatoon Fire Department who provide us with advice on the best way to respond to a potential or actual event. They are the experts.

Key objectives in all event responses are to:

- Make sure everyone is safe
- Make sure schools have the supports they need
- Ensure timely and accurate communication during and after the incident
- Bring the incident to a prompt and safe solution
- Ensure timely continuation of classes
- Ensure appropriate debriefing and follow-up

Flexibility is a key component of each school's plan and of school division-wide preparations. If the Saskatoon Police Service officers and/or Saskatoon Fire Department are involved in the emergency, school staff members follow their instructions.

## Evacuation

Each school has determined an alternate safe location in the event of an evacuation. Parents, guardians and caregivers are made aware of this safe location through school newsletters and handbooks.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are contacted by the school staff in the event of an evacuation. They are informed if students will be evacuated to a safe location or if they are expected to come to the school to pick up their child(ren).

## Cancellation of Classes Due to Severe Weather

In cases of severe weather, there may be instances where schools cancel classes for the entire day or implement emergency dismissal procedures. Closing schools is a rare occurrence. If classes are cancelled a staff member will always be in the building in case a student shows up at the school.

Each school principal is responsible for developing a response plan for the emergency dismissal of students and ensuring that all parents/guardians/caregivers are aware of the plan. Many factors are taken into consideration when deciding to cancel classes, but the safety of students and staff is the number one consideration.



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## Shelter in Place

During a shelter in place, staff and students remain in the school. Staff members secure the school including windows and ventilation system. No one is allowed to enter or leave the building until the appropriate public safety agencies declare it safe to do so. A shelter in place may occur during severe weather or if there is a hazardous material spill in the neighbourhood.

## Hold and Secure and Lockdown

An emergency may prevent the safe evacuation of a school and require a specific response to protect students and staff in the building. In this instance, staff institute a school lockdown or a hold and secure, depending on the threat.

- A hold and secure is used when there is a potential threat near the school that requires an enhanced level of safety. School exterior doors are locked to ensure that no individuals leave or enter the building. Individuals are only allowed to exit and enter via the front door of the school with approval of school administration.
- A school lockdown alerts staff and students that an imminent threat exists inside or just outside the school. School personnel lock classroom doors and windows. Students and staff move away from doors and windows and remain in their classrooms until directed by emergency personnel that it is safe to leave. In a lockdown situation all cell phones are powered down and collected by school staff.

Our school divisions also have plans in place to address other disruptive events including power outages, water main breaks and severe weather.

Ways that parents/guardians/caregivers can help with an emergency

- Be familiar with your school's safety plan and discuss the plan with members of your family.
- Provide current emergency contact names and phone number at the beginning of each school year. Inform the school of any changes to emergency contact information.
- Do not call the school or your child(ren) on their cell phones in an emergency situation.
- Do not come to the school site during an emergency unless instructed to do so. It may not be safe and your presence may complicate the emergency response.

In emergency situations parents/guardians/caregivers are kept informed by school communication systems.

If you have any questions about what is in the resource or would like more information on your school's safety plan, please contact the principal at your school.

A copy of this resource is also available at:

- Conseil des écoles francsaskoises <https://ecolefrancophone.com/en/>
- Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools: [www.gscs.ca](http://www.gscs.ca)
- Saskatoon Public Schools: [www.saskatoonpublicschools.ca](http://www.saskatoonpublicschools.ca)
- Saskatoon Fire Department: [www.saskatoon.ca/services-residents/fire-emergency](http://www.saskatoon.ca/services-residents/fire-emergency)
- Saskatoon Police Service: [www.saskatoonpoliceservice.ca](http://www.saskatoonpoliceservice.ca)