



Dear Parents and Guardians,

In the Okanagan Similkameen school district, student safety is our highest priority. We want to ensure you are aware of the procedures our schools and district follow when responding to a range of emergency situations. These steps are in place to protect students and staff, and to ensure we can act quickly, calmly, and effectively.

Schools in our district work closely with the RCMP and Safer Schools Together whenever a potential safety concern arises, and to improve and enhance our current practices and procedures. Their support and guidance help us assess situations, determine the appropriate response, and maintain a safe environment for everyone.

Depending on the circumstances, several types of safety measures may be used, including:

Hold and Secure – The school remains operational, but exterior doors are secured as a precaution.

Lockdown – Used only in the most serious situations when there is a threat inside or very near the school. Students and staff remain in secured areas until the situation is resolved.

Shelter-in-Place – Activated when there is an environmental concern outside the building.

Evacuation – Used when it is safer for students and staff to move outside or to an off-site location.

These means of responding to critical events are practiced in every school throughout the district, on a regular basis, so all staff and students will know what to do in the event of an incident. It is important to allow school officials the time and space needed to navigate, investigate, and respond during these events. Staff work closely with district leadership and law enforcement to gather accurate information and determine the safest course of action. Once it is appropriate and safe to do so, we will communicate with families as quickly as possible. Speculation and creating rumors or storylines through social media can complicate and perhaps even make a situation in a school far more difficult for staff to manage.

Thank you for your understanding, trust, and partnership as we continue to prioritize the safety and well-being of all students.

Sincerely,

Marcus Toneatto
Superintendent of Schools
Okanagan Similkameen SD No. 53

