

Part 1 - SECTION 4 LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

The principal (incident commander) or any staff member that observes a critical incident can order a school lockdown. Depending on the situation, the crisis management team should be assembled prior to announcing the lockdown or immediately after making the lockdown announcement. Members of the team should report to the main office or command post identified in the announcement. The CMT will then plan for the next steps in handling the incident. This will involve monitoring and intervening in the emergency situation, making notifications, and ensuring lockdown procedures are in place and all students and faculty are secure.

Lockdown procedure serves many functions during an emergency situation:

- When a lockdown is initiated, the majority of students and teachers will be taken away from the threat.
- The dangerous situation can be isolated from much of the school.
- Accounting for students can accurately take place in each classroom.
- Depending on the situation, an organized evacuation can take place away from the dangerous area.

In addition to an onsite emergency, lockdown procedures can be modified for use during a local incident in which the school population is not in direct danger. A local incident might be a sheriff or fire event nearby or an injury on school grounds that require limiting student movement in the area.

When a lockdown is announced, several steps should take place. Someone must be assigned to the dangerous situation or area to ensure students and staff does not enter the area. Immediate notification should be made to 911, fully explaining what is known at that time. The bells must be held and instructions to ignore the fire alarm should be given.

When ordering a lockdown, the following announcements should be made and repeated several times:

A) Classes in progress (not during lunch)

“TEACHERS, PLEASE SECURE YOUR STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASSROOM IMMEDIATELY. ALL STUDENTS REPORT DIRECTLY TO YOUR CLASSROOM AND IGNORE ANY FIRE ALARMS.”

B) Class change in progress

“TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, IT IS NECESSARY TO BEGIN A LOCKDOWN OF CLASSROOMS. ALL STUDENTS REPORT DIRECTLY TO YOUR NEXT ASSIGNED CLASS AND IGNORE ANY FIRE ALARMS.”

C) Lunch is in session, add the following to either announcement

“STUDENTS IN THE LUNCH AREA, FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE FACULTY IN THE LUNCH AREA.”

These announcements have been designed for quick action to benefit students and teachers. Specific teacher information during a lockdown will be discussed later in this section and must be relayed to all teachers. The reason for plain language announcements instead of codes is so that every faculty member, student, and substitute teacher knows what is expected to take place immediately. Plain language also provides the opportunity to change portions of the message to meet specific needs during the emergency.

Unassigned teachers should ensure that students in hallways are placed in classrooms immediately. Staff members should check restrooms and other areas where students may be found. If students are found and are not close to their classroom, students should go into the closest occupied classroom. Then teachers should stay in a locked room and notify the office of their location.

During a lockdown, special attention should be given to the areas of the school where numerous students are gathered in an unsecured environment, such as the computer lab. Arrangements should be made so those students in these areas can be moved to nearby locations that can be secured. A CMT member should be assigned to these areas to facilitate this effort.

TEACHER RESPONSE TO A LOCKDOWN

When a teacher with a class hears one of the lockdown announcements he or she should follow these directions:

- 1. Lock the classroom door immediately.**
- 2. Keep all students sitting on the floor, away from the door and windows.**
- 3. Use caution and discretion in allowing students entry into the classroom.**
- 4. Advise the students that there is some type of emergency but you don't know what it is.**
- 5. Take attendance and prepare a list of missing students and extra students in the room. Prepare to take this list with you when you are directed to leave the classroom.**
- 6. Do not use the telephone to call out. Lines must be kept open, unless there is an emergency situation in the classroom.**
- 7. Ignore any fire alarm activation-the school will not be evacuated using this method.**
- 8. Project a calm attitude to maintain student behavior.**
- 9. When or if students are moved out of the classroom, assist them in moving as quietly and quickly as possible.**
- 10. Remain in the room until, a member of the crisis management team comes to the room with directions, or a sheriff arrives with directions.**

Teachers should be aware of the emotional response some students may have to a lockdown situation. For example, teachers could plan for frightened students vomiting by keeping plastic bags and cleaning supplies available in the classroom. Another idea is to keep a supply of gum, mints, or hard candy in each room to help relax students.

Depending on the grade level, students will ask many questions that teachers will not be able to answer. Being familiar with the lockdown procedures and the role of the CMT will provide a better understanding of what is taking place and what can be expected.

As a lockdown is taking place, the CMT should ensure that several functions are taking place. Depending on the situation, the school may need to be completely secured from the inside. This will require specific individuals being assigned to lock any open doors. Notifications will continue to be made to school administration and possibly the sheriff department if the sheriff has not arrived on the scene. Any known injuries should also be reported to the administration, who will relay that information to the sheriff.

Communication via school radio is permissible as long as the incident does not involve an explosive device or a suspect in possession of a radio or scanner. The sheriff liaison member of the CMT should be prepared to gather all known information and respond to the first arriving sheriff personnel location and brief them on the situation.

Once a lockdown has been started, wait for the sheriff department to arrive before arranging for evacuation of the school. This will allow for a more secure environment during the evacuation and assist the sheriff if a tactical operation is necessary.