

# School Safety Planning and Preparation

The West York Area School District is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all students in our schools. Based on the current recommendations from the York County Department of Emergency Services, FEMA, and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students, we have the following procedures in place at each of our buildings.

**Safety Management Teams:** Safety Management Teams are in place at the building level, district level and leadership team level. These teams are responsible for researching and developing consistent district wide safety policies and procedures for response in a variety of emergency situations. Each team meets on a regular basis to reflect on any degree of situation that may have occurred at the building or district level as well as to plan for appropriate faculty, staff, and student education.

**Emergency Operations Plans:** As required by the Pennsylvania Department of Emergency Services and the York County Department of Emergency Services, each building has a carefully developed Emergency Operations Plan that is updated and reviewed on a regular basis. These plans were developed through training and assistance received from the York County Emergency Management Services Department and Center for Safe Schools' Emergency Planning and Response Management Coordinator. District personnel continue to participate in Professional Development through PEMA and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students to review and refine district practices based on current recommendations.

**Regularly Scheduled Safety Drills:** Each building in our district is responsible for facilitating safety drills. The type of drill and the recommendations prescribed by the Department of Education determine the frequency of these drills. Drills at the building level include:

- Fire drills (planning for fire or smoke concerns)
- Health or Medical Emergency Drills (planning for medical emergencies requiring district nurses or local emergency response personnel.)
- Severe Weather Drills (planning for severe weather such as thunderstorms or high windstorms: tornado, hurricane, etc.)
- Evacuation Drills: (planning for situations that require evacuation of students and staff to an alternate site)
- Reverse Evacuation Drills (planning for situations that require all students to return to the building from outside activities: Physical Education Classes, Recess, Open Lunch, etc.)
- Intruder Drills: (planning for situations that require response to an intruder in the building or on school property)

Following each drill, building safety teams meet to discuss the successes or concerns raised during the drill and to determine follow up actions as needed.

**Run, Hide, and Fight:** As a part of our regularly scheduled intruder drills, faculty, students, and staff are trained in intruder response tactics. The current safety recommendations from the PDE Office of Safe and Healthy Students and FEMA are to teach the concepts of Flee, Fortify, or Fight.

- Run: Faculty, staff, and students are trained to leave the premises during a security breach at any time they deem it safe to do so. Information is shared regarding situations in which fleeing is a possible choice and the manner in which to exit the premises when leaving a building that is under a security breach.
- Hide: When it is unsafe to leave the premises, faculty, staff and students are trained in fortification tactics that can be used to keep the area where they remain as secure as possible. These tactics include the movement of furniture and securing door areas when possible.

- **Fight:** In the event that a fortified location is compromised **and** as a last resort faculty, staff, and students are trained to respond with “fight” tactics that might include screaming as loud as possible, throwing books or objects at the intruder or even physically attacking the intruder.

While talking to faculty, staff, and students about emergency situations can be daunting or uncomfortable, this planning, discussion, and training assist us in promoting a safe and healthy environment for all students in all levels of emergency situations and concern. ***Care and precaution is taken to ensure that discussions are developmentally appropriate to the age and understanding of the students or adult audience.*** Please understand that specific response procedures are kept confidential to protect the response plans from potential threats. It remains our goal to keep your child as safe as possible when they are with us. For additional information, please contact the office of the Assistant Superintendent at (717)-792-2796 ext. 1004.

**Resources:**

York County Department of Emergency Services Office of Emergency Management  
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Education: Office of Safe and Healthy Students