



Bethel Public Schools

School Emergency Guide for Parents

The Bethel Public Schools are Prepared for an Emergency

The Bethel Public Schools take emergency preparedness very seriously. We provide regular crisis management training to school administrators and other key staff throughout the District.

Each school and the district have a School Security & Safety Team composed of key staff members with assigned roles and responsibilities during an emergency. These committees meet regularly during the year to review procedures. In addition, every school conducts emergency drills throughout the school year so that students and staff are aware of the most effective and safe emergency responses. The Bethel Public Schools has a detailed emergency operations plan, which has been formulated to respond to all hazards.

Your cooperation is necessary in any emergency.

Safety Is A Priority

The Bethel Public Schools are committed to making schools safe for students and staff. We work closely with National, State, and local safety officials - including police, fire, and emergency medical services and public health - to ensure that we are well prepared and that children are protected. We have a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan that makes our staff and our public safety partners respond swiftly should an emergency occur, and we conduct regular training and practice sessions based on that plan.

How Parents Can Prepare For A School Emergency

1. Provide accurate contact information to your child's school, including alternate phone numbers for you and family/ friends you have arranged as your backup. Update your child(ren)'s demographic information in the Parent Portal promptly if this information changes.
2. Talk with your children about the importance of following instructions in the event of an emergency.
3. Tell your children NOT to use cell phones unless permitted. Unauthorized cell phone use could put people at risk.

What To Do During A School Emergency - Ways Parents and Guardians Can Help the Situation During a School Emergency or Crisis

- Check and update the emergency information in the Parent Portal anytime you or one of the contacts change information.
- If you or any of the emergency contacts are ever asked to pick up a child at the



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school or reunification site during a large-scale emergency or crisis, please remember to bring your identification card. We are unable to release children to any person who does not have proper ID. We are only allowed to release children to those individuals listed in PowerSchool as an Emergency Contact, no exceptions.

- Be patient if we have to engage in an emergency reunification process between parents and students. We have many students that we need to keep secure. When working with hundreds of students and parents/guardians, this takes time. We will reunify you with your child as soon as we can, but we also need to screen every adult to ensure they appear as an emergency contact.
- Ensure that you are registered to receive text messages on your cell phone through the Parent Square app or emergency notification system.
- In any emergency, please remember that we want to keep phone lines open so our first responders, such as fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical personnel, can use the phone lines to get life-saving resources to the scene(s).
- **Do not come to the school during an emergency unless you are asked to do so.** You and your car will be blocking emergency personnel from possibly getting life-saving resources to your child. If your child's school is on lockdown, you will not be able to pick up your child. We will not be answering the door or allowing people on campus.
- If an incident happens at your child's school, please know that our staff will first handle the emergency, ensure life safety, and then communicate with you. It is critical to take life-saving measures before texting about it.
- Be mindful of your social media presence. Please do not post specific information about your child's school on social media websites. While a majority of people using the internet/social media are good, law-abiding individuals, we know that some may want to use the information you post for harm. It also has the potential to spread inaccurate information.
- If your child is at school when on lockdown, please do not attempt to call or text them. The noise could put your child in increased danger.
- If an incident happens at your child's school, follow the instructions of law enforcement and school administrators. We train and exercise for emergencies, so we are better prepared to guide everyone to the most appropriate actions and facilitate a response that does not cause more stress for our children.
- Be prepared at home! FEMA asks us to "Get a Kit; Have a Plan; Be Informed." Your children are more likely to experience an emergency at home than at school or in the community. They need to know what to do, and they want to be assured that you, as a family, are prepared. Involve them in getting prepared and putting together



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an emergency kit. Make it a fun activity for the whole family. Talk to them about how to evacuate their room if there is a fire and where to drop, cover, and hold-on if there is an earthquake. If you need suggestions on how to talk to children or activities to help them understand what to do during an emergency, here are resources we recommend:

- o [Ready Kids](#)
- o Ready Kids [En Español](#)

- * If students are to be kept at school, you will be notified by our Parent Square, via calls, text message, email, and appropriate announcements will be made over the following radio and television stations, social media, and our district website listed below.

WEBE	FM	Bridgeport	108 on the dial
WEZN	FM	Bridgeport	100 on the dial

TV Channel 3, 8, & 6, and 30

[Bethel Public Schools Website](#)

Instagram & Threads [@christinelcarver](#)

[Bethel Public Schools Facebook Page](#)

About Lockdowns and Evacuations

These are terms that we use in the Bethel Public Schools associated with student safety.

- **Lockout:** A lockout is when we have been informed of some type of outside threat on the campus. We conduct business as usual in the building, but we will not let anyone in the building (including parents). Any students outside (i.e., physical education or recess) will be brought in. We would notify parents by email if we have any type of lockout drill. In the event of an actual lockout, we would likely notify parents by phone, text, and/or email.
- **Hold:** A hold is when we ask students to stay in classrooms for a very short period of time. It is typically not associated with any threat. Students and staff are not locked in, and visitors can come into the building. An example of a hold is when a staff member or student needs to be transported by ambulance for a medical reason. We would not typically notify parents of a hold unless there was an unusual experience.
- **Lock Down:** Lockdown is when an intruder or criminal act is occurring in the building. Students and staff go into a locked space, out of view. Other than law enforcement, no one would be allowed in or



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out of the buildings. We would notify parents by email, phone, or text if we have any type of lockdown (actual) and by email only (drill).

- **Shelter in Place:** Shelter in Place is typically related to a weather emergency. We would ask students and staff to stay in place, but they would not be locked inside. We typically do not drill for shelter in place. We would notify parents by phone, text, and/or email if we had a shelter in place experience.
- **Evacuation:** Evacuation drills are when we practice evacuating the building, the most typical is a fire drill. If there is an actual evacuation, parents would be notified by phone, text, and/or email. If it is a drill, we will notify you by email.

What should I do if there is a lockdown or lockout?

Do not go to the school. Do not attempt to enter the building. This may jeopardize student and staff safety. We will notify you when it is safe to enter. Try to remain patient and calm until the lockdown order is lifted.

If the school is evacuated, how will I locate my child(ren)?

Each school has procedures for partial or complete evacuation, including a designated safe location to which students may be transported. Students may either then be transported home from the safe location, or you will be directed to go to a specific location where you will be required to sign your child out.

Students will be released only to parents/guardians and persons identified in PowerSchool as emergency contacts. During an extreme emergency, students will be released at designated reunion locations on the school campus or elsewhere if necessary. Please refer to our [reunification plan](#) for more information.

By definition, an emergency involves unexpected events and rapidly changing conditions. We train to deal with different kinds of problems. Whether caused by natural forces or humans. However, it is impossible to say in advance exactly how we will respond in any particular case. In general, you should know that we will do what is necessary to protect children first and then inform you as accurately and fully as we can. If a situation is serious enough to require you to leave your home or workplace, we will either ask you to pick your child up or we will direct you to a safe place where we can brief you on developments. Please be patient and understand if we are unable to respond to you as completely or quickly as you would wish. Our first priority is your child and the other children in the school.