

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

At Berlin CSD, we strive to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all students and staff. As required by the New York State Education Department Commissioner Regulations, we conduct a minimum of four lockdown drills and eight fire drills during the school year, some announced and some unannounced. Each school has a safety plan which includes orderly procedures that will help all students and staff remain safe. During a school drill or emergency, your cooperation and understanding will help ensure the safety and security of your child and those involved.

Please note that during a school emergency or drill, the safety and security of our students is our highest priority. As a result, we may be unable to provide immediate updates to parents. We recognize that the sharing of information for any given incident is critical. However, there may be circumstances that will not allow for the immediate release of information. We will provide information to the community as soon as feasibly possible. Please listen for School Messenger automated calls and monitor the district's website and Facebook page for updates.

School officials and emergency responders need your support in their efforts to keep everyone safe during an incident. Telephone lines at your child's school building need to remain open and available for emergency communications and response. We ask that parents refrain from calling during an incident. Please understand that overloading the phone systems may hinder response efforts and may delay our ability to provide accurate information to parents and the public. Again, we will provide information to the community as soon as feasibly possible.

Each type of drill is explained below.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are required by Section 807 of the Education Law and are designed to ensure a quick and orderly evacuation of school buildings should we experience a real fire emergency. Fire drills follow a building based evacuation procedure. We practice the evacuation process so all school employees know their respective duties and students know how to safely exit the facility.

LOCKOUT DRILLS

The purpose of a lockout drill is to ensure students and staff can quickly respond to an exterior situation. This may involve an animal on grounds or be directed by law enforcement.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS

The purpose of the lockdown drill is to practice protocols established by local law enforcement to keep the students and staff safe from any threats from within the building. Drills may be announced and unannounced.

So that everyone may remain safe, no one will be allowed to enter or leave the building until the authorities authorize such release.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE DRILLS

The shelter-in-place drill is designed to protect students and staff from threats requiring shelter, such as storms and high winds, or other situations where students and staff are most secure in the classroom.

We appreciate the cooperation of your child during these drills. Please continue to have discussions with them about the importance of these exercises. If you have any questions regarding any of these safety drills or other safety concerns, please contact your school office.

PARENT PROTOCOL

Receiving a phone call or a text from your child during a school related emergency or drill can be frightening and understandably so. In the event that your child contacts you during a school related emergency or drill, we recommend the following:

Remain calm and keep your child calm

- Ask your child if an adult is with them and reinforce that they are safe.
- Encourage your child to silence his or her phone and await further instruction from staff.
- Tell your child to stay off the phone until the emergency or drill is completed.
- Remind your child to contact you once the incident is over.

Please remain home or at work

- To keep access routes, streets and parking lots clear for emergency responders, we ask that you not attempt to go to the school. Traffic congestion will make emergency response much more difficult for police, ambulances, and fire departments to get to the school and could delay their response time.
- If the school sends your child home on the bus, it is vitally important that you be there to receive your child.

Minimize cell phone use

- Calling your child on his/her cell phone could overload the cell system and prevent first responders and school officials from using cell phones which could hinder emergency response efforts.
- Calling your child's school building would tie up district phones lines which could impact the ability of emergency responders to efficiently and effectively ensure the safety and security of students and staff. Further, if the phone system is overloaded, it will hinder efforts to update parents and community members on the situation.
- For updates and information listen for School Messenger automated calls and monitor the district's website and Facebook page for updates.

In an emergency, school officials will need your help to ensure the safety and security of our most precious charge, your children. Following these suggestions will allow for the quick resolution to security situations.