

SAMPLE POLICY

BOMB/BOMB THREATS

The threat of a bomb in a school building is indeed a frightening situation. Most often, these threats turn out to be hoaxes which present no real physical danger to students, staff or property. Occasionally, real bombs are placed in schools by a person or persons with serious intentions. Therefore, each bomb threat must be treated seriously and investigated to the greatest degree possible in the event it is real.

Crucial information can be gathered regarding the threat itself. Some threats come in the form of a written letter or note, but most often the threats are made by telephone. In order to assure the safety of all students and staff, certain procedures should be followed when a threat is made. These procedures must be reviewed with all secretarial, clerical, custodial and professional staff.

BOMB THREAT PROCEDURES:

Immediate Response

1. If the threat is made by phone, the person taking the call should ascertain as much information as possible by using a standard Bomb Threat Form.
 - a) **DO NOT HANG UP THE TELEPHONE!** Place the receiver on the desk next to your telephone; or if the caller does not hang up stay on the phone with the caller and notify another employee to call the operator.
 - b) Proceed to another telephone to call 911 and explain that you've received a threatening telephone call.
 - c) (Please insert specific instructions based on your phone system – these should be developed in conjunction with your local law enforcement and emergency agencies as well as your local phone system provider. Include specific steps and don't assume people will know what to do when faced with the pressure of a crisis)
2. If the threat is written, notify the Principal, the Police (911), School Police and building security.
3. Should a bomb threat exist, the principal is to be notified immediately. The superintendent and/or assistant superintendent must be notified.
4. The Principal should notify the custodian and other support staff, i.e., the nurse, cafeteria workers and aides. At this point, walkie-talkies should be turned off since certain types of radio signals could cause detonation of the bomb.
5. Based on initial information, the evacuation will be determined by the ranking school administrator and the proper law enforcement agency.
6. If the evacuation option is chosen, a predetermined signal should be sent throughout the building and an orderly evacuation to designated safe areas should be carried out.
7. The designated safe area outside the building should be at least 300 feet from the building.

8. While awaiting the emergency agencies, account for all students and staff.
 - a. Staff members must take grade books out of the building and take attendance.
 - b. The principal will check the attendance of every teacher
 - c. Emergency data forms, for both students and staff, must be taken out of the building by a principal or his/her designee for all evacuations
 - d. Everyone is to remain outside until the re-entry is approved by the appropriate emergency and/or school official
 - e. If re-entry is not possible, the administration building will make transportation arrangements.
9. The teacher's responsibility includes:
 - a. Make sure students are aware of exit routes and "safe areas"
 - b. Leave lights on
 - c. Leave all room doors closed but unlocked
 - d. Do not touch anything suspicious -- notify the office
 - e. Take attendance at the "safe area." Account for any missing students-- report unaccounted students to the director or fire marshal immediately
 - f. Report any possible relevant student rumors to the office
10. The student's responsibility includes:
 - a. Evacuate the building as directed as quickly as possible
 - b. Report to the safe area and remain there until released by your instructor
 - c. Identify any missing students
 - d. Contact your instructor if you have any information related to the bomb threat
11. If the evacuation option is not chosen, staff should be alerted by coded message that a bomb search of the building is to take place. The coded message can be unique to each school, but an example might be, THIS IS A MESSAGE FOR ALL STAFF, THE GREEN CODE IS ACTIVATED - FOLLOW PROCEDURES.
12. Teachers would search their classrooms. When a questionable object is discovered, they would ask the students, "to whom does this belong?"
13. Whether evacuation does or does not occur, a systematic search of the building by designated staff members under the direction of the Chief of School Safety should take place.
14. Designated staff members should include the custodian, School Police, and school security.
15. If a bomb or suspicious object is found, it should not be moved or touched in any way. At this point, law enforcement should be notified that a possible bomb has been found. They will then enter the building and remove the suspicious object.
16. Law enforcement will give the all-clear signal to re-enter the building.

17. The Communications Office should be notified regarding the release of information to the media.
18. The Student Assistance Staff should be notified regarding possible counseling of students and staff following the incident.
19. Parents should ALWAYS be notified of the incident and given pertinent information regarding the safety of their children.

Examples of some prevention strategies you may wish to address in your policy.

1. Require that all chemical storage areas be locked and that a careful inventory be maintained.
2. Keep the buildings as secure as possible and limit access to them.
3. Staff members who answer telephones are to be inserviced on how to handle threats.

This sample policy was developed by the Center for Safe Schools, and is a compilation of the Butler Area and Pittsburgh Public School Districts' bomb threat policies.