

NLSchools refers to all public K-12 English schools and school related facilities under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, Education Operations Branch and all employees working therein, and all employees providing services and supports to such schools, including those who work in the areas of school facilities, student transportation, program implementation, student services, and procurement.

Policy Name

Lockdown-Secure Schools

Policy Statement

The safety of students and staff in our schools is paramount, and therefore students need to be prepared, and schools secured, in an appropriate manner to address a perceived or actual threat to the school community.

Background

There are many instances in which restricting movement of students and staff in school is the most appropriate course of action. These range from medical emergencies to critical incidents of potentially imminent and/or active violence. While hoping neither course of action is ever required, the most appropriate action that a school can take is to prepare students for these eventualities by creating a standard response and practicing the required actions.

Scope

This policy applies to all students, employees, and visitors while on school (and school related) properties within NLSchools It is intended to assist with responding to an event and the return to normalcy after the event.

Definitions

Local Emergency Response Authorities

Includes local policing (**Royal Newfoundland Constabulary** or Royal **Canadian Mounted Police**), fire department and health/emergency authorities and/or other designated community members.

Secure School

A course of action in which school safety is best achieved by restricting student and staff movement throughout the building; instruction continues.

Lockdown

An emergency course of action to secure students and staff in a safe location solely in the event of an armed intruder.

Policy Directives

1. Except in the case of special events (e.g. assemblies with parents/public attending), all exterior doors of a school are to be locked on a daily basis from the time homeroom period commences until just prior to the end of the instructional day (to facilitate parent pick-up where appropriate). Discretion may be applied to leave select doors unlocked when the general student body is outside doors (e.g. lunchtime or recess time).
2. Classroom door handles (locksets) should be left in a locked position at all times during the instructional day; doors may remain ajar.
3. Secure school and lockdown procedures shall be forwarded to each school's respective Director of Schools by October 15 of each school year.
4. The school administration must ensure that this policy is presented annually (e.g. at the initial staff meeting) so that teachers and support staff understand their individual responsibilities with respect to secure school and lockdown.

Administrative Procedures

1. Secure School

Given the diverse configurations and physical layout of our buildings, each school's plan may differ, but the following common elements shall be included in each plan.

- 1.1. Announce "**Secure School**" over the public address system. Schools should have a contingency plan in case of power outage, PA failure, etc.
- 1.2. Contact local emergency response authorities if applicable to the situation.
- 1.3. Teachers and staff check hallways for students and direct them to the nearest classroom.
- 1.4. Teachers are to take attendance, noting absent students and any additional students who have entered the room.

- 1.5. Teachers are to page the main office if an emergency situation arises in an area.
- 1.6. Teachers are to wait for administration to contact them regarding attendance and or other necessary information.
- 1.7. not allow students to leave the area.
- 1.8. Remain calm and continue teaching until the secure school call is lifted.
- 1.9. If schools are placed in secure school mode, schools are not to dismiss students nor admit external parties, with the exception of emergency responders.
- 1.10. Schools shall develop procedures that address situations in which the secure schools call is made during unstructured times e.g. recess.
- 1.11. Consult with the Director of Communications regarding potential post-event communication to parents.

2. Lockdown

Given the diverse configurations and physical layout of our buildings, each school's plan may differ, but the following common elements shall be included in each plan.

- 2.1. Lockdown signal shall be a warning bell (if PA system is capable of this) followed by this announcement over the public address system: **"Please initiate emergency lockdown procedures"**.
- 2.2. If a "secure school" signal is utilized, the lockdown signal shall be different from secure school signal.
- 2.3. If an event starts as a "secure school" but escalates to be an armed intruder situation, the lockdown call should be made if possible given the circumstance.
- 2.4. Contact police immediately and follow their instructions e.g. staying on the line.
- 2.5. Contact Superintendent of Schools and Director of School Communications as soon as it is practical to do so. Note this may be accomplished by asking the police to make contact if they ask you to stay on the line as per above, or by having a separate person concurrently contact the Superintendent.
- 2.6. Close all curtains/blinds, etc.
- 2.7. All students, staff, and visitors are to lie or sit silently along a safe wall (a location that reduces visibility of occupants by person looking through the door/window).
- 2.8. Teachers are to give direction to class that all cell phone ringers shall be turned off.

- 2.9. The use of email and text messaging shall be monitored by a teacher.
- 2.10. Disregard bells and alarms, including the fire alarm.
- 2.11. **The police are the only authority to lift a lockdown.** Stay in the secure area until notified by police that the lockdown has been lifted.
- 2.12. Remain calm and assure students that the situation is under control and that help is on the way.
- 2.13. Develop procedures that address situations in which the lockdown call is made during unstructured times.
- 2.14. Post-event communication to the school community shall be developed by the Superintendent of Schools and/or designates and implemented in consultation with the school administration.