

Instruction

Emergency and Disaster Preparedness

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General: All employees of the school system are responsible for promoting student and employee safety, including fire prevention measures and development of a sensitivity among students and employees about the importance of effective emergency procedures.

The Superintendent of schools shall develop system wide emergency procedures, and principals shall maintain specific building regulations and procedures for fire, bomb threats, civil defense, and other emergencies.

Fire alarm systems, and regular and emergency school exits shall be maintained in good working order.

First Aid: The Superintendent shall ensure that at least one person at each school site holds current first aid and/or CPR certification.

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Fire Emergencies

In such emergencies, the *primary* concern of the Vernon Board of Education is the safe, orderly evacuation of all individuals and secondarily, the building and contents. If a fire or indications of a fire such as smoke, unusual heat, smoldering wires, etc., are discovered in any school, *following the sounding of the alarm signal to evacuate the building*, the fire department shall be called immediately. The State of Connecticut requires a minimum of ten (10) regular fire drills per school year - one per month. All students and employees shall be required to leave the building during such drills.

The Superintendent shall, in August of each school year, request each principal to review and assess all fire safety procedures with staff. The fire chiefs will be invited to provide additional information if necessary. In addition, the Superintendent shall receive the written plan from each principal for the respective school. These plans will be reviewed and discussed as appropriate.

Each principal shall develop a plan to accomplish the objectives of a fire drill. Such plan shall accomplish the following:

- The fire alarm will be tested prior to the opening of school each year and periodically throughout the school year. The test will include the functioning of the system in the school and the registering of the alarm at the police station.
- Each principal will develop an evacuation plan containing the safest and most direct exit routes. Alternative routes will also be devised.
- Where there is not a serious time delay, appliances will be shut off, windows shall be closed and doors shall be closed in all cases as rooms are exited.
- Each principal shall orient his staff to the evacuation plan prior to the opening of school. In turn, *the staff will orient all students to the procedures.*
- The teacher in charge will be strategically located to best take care of the class as the situation warrants.
- To ensure the safety of all personnel, emphasis is to be placed on quiet, orderly fire drills.
- Attendance will be taken by the teacher responsible for each group of students. using a uniform school system attendance report form.
- A system of collection of forms will be devised by each principal.
- The final attendance check will be done by the principal and/or the principal's designee and appropriate staff.

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Fire Emergencies - continued

- In drills conducted by the fire department, the department will be responsible for setting off the school alarm, shutting off that alarm, and checking to see if the signal registered at the police department. In all other drills, the principal will be responsible. Different alarm boxes will be used as the system is periodically checked.
- Custodians will report to the designated area and will assist the principal and fire department officer in charge in all drills or incidents.
- Each school will establish an "all clear" signal for return to the building.

Results and Reports of a drill will be:

- Reviewed by the principal and fire department personnel.
- Critiqued with staff and students.
- When the fire department is involved:
 - the fire chief will send a written report to the Superintendent, and will forward a copy to the school involved and,
 - the principal will send a written report to the Superintendent on a standard form reporting the results of the drill and identifying any problems.
- For all other fire drills initiated by the school, the principal will send the standard report form to the Superintendent.

The essential element in any emergency is prevention of panic. Principals and teachers need to provide clear direction and supervision to maintain appropriate staff and student behavior in emergency circumstances.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-231 Fire drills,

52-557b "Good Samaritan law". Immunity from liability for emergency medication assistance, first aid or medication by injection. School personnel not required to administer or render.

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Bomb Threat

The Board strongly disapproves of any action by any person that seriously disrupts the educational process. Particularly reprehensible is making a threat that a bomb has been placed in a school. In the event of a bomb threat, the following guidelines will be followed:

1. The person receiving the threat or information about a threat will immediately notify the principal/designee, who will notify the Superintendents' office and the police and fire departments.
2. Students and staff will evacuate the building according to the plan instituted for fire drills.
3. The school will be searched by the police, the fire department and the designated Board of Education employee in charge of the facility.
4. After a search has been completed, the principal/designee and/or the Board of Education employee in charge will make the determination for re-entry of the facility.
5. Students who leave school without permission will be subject to discipline.
6. Investigation of the bomb threat will be made by school officials and local police and fire departments in cooperation with other appropriate agencies.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

52-557b "Good Samaritan law". Immunity from liability for emergency medication assistance, first aid or medication by injection. School personnel not required to administer or render.