

Obion County Schools

Emergencies happen; therefore, we must be prepared to make certain our school climate promotes safety as well as learning and student success. Parents/guardians, faculty/staff, and students must work together to ensure a safe and secure environment. The following information will help you take an active role in keeping our schools safe.

- **Practicing Drills**: When responding to an emergency at school, all students, faculty, and staff follow specific protocols or procedures based on the type of emergency situation, such as fire, tornado, or intruder. Various drills are practiced throughout the year so those in the building are prepared to respond quickly and appropriately to any emergency.
- **Using Plain Language**: When notifying faculty, staff, students, and visitors in our schools of an emergency situation, our administrators use plain language rather than codes to alert everyone of the situation and instruct them how to respond. This eliminates any confusion and prompts an orderly response.

When a school enters an emergency response mode, no one but emergency personnel may enter or leave the building until the “All Clear” signal is given by the school’s principal after consultation and approval from emergency response personnel.

The Obion County School System understands that in an emergency parents will be concerned for their children. Please keep in mind that the school must ensure the safety of ALL students and staff, collaborate with emergency responders, and account for students before reunification or dismissal can begin.

Emergency responders have repeatedly expressed concern about parents rushing to the school to find their children and blocking the access of emergency personnel. This creates a dangerous situation for everyone—including parents—and we request your assistance to follow the established procedures, allow the responders to do their jobs, and help support the safety of everyone concerned.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How will schools respond if an incident occurs?

Depending on the nature of the incident, we will implement one of the following emergency drills:

- **Evacuation** - if it is unsafe for students and staff to remain inside the building, we will conduct an evacuation. If necessary, we will relocate students and staff to another safe location. We then will follow the directions given by public safety officials.
- **Lockdown** - if there is an intruder or threat of violence on or near the campus, we will conduct a lockdown. All students and staff will remain behind locked doors. We then will follow the directions given by public safety officials.
- **Shelter-in-Place** - if there is a threat of severe weather or of hazardous materials (biological or chemical) outside the school, we will conduct a shelter-in-place drill. All students and staff will move to safe locations inside the building (interior classrooms and away from windows and doors). We then will follow the directions given by public safety officials.

All schools practice these drills throughout the school year.

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2. Do schools have the basic supplies and equipment needed to handle emergency situations?

Yes. Schools have emergency first-aid kits. Also, schools are equipped with emergency lighting systems, fire extinguishers, flashlights, emergency alert radios, and two-way radios.

3. Will parents be notified if an incident occurs at school?

If an incident occurs, our first priority will be to ensure that all students are safe and under adult supervision.

Listen for a call from the school system's automated telephone system. A message will be sent alerting parents/guardians of the emergency and how best to respond. (Be sure your contact information is current at your school.) The superintendent's office will also immediately notify the news media and place current information on the school system website.

Parents should listen to local radio and television stations or access the school system website at www.obioncountyschools.com.

4. What should parents do if an incident occurs at school?

If an incident occurs, it is only natural for parents to want to rush to the school. However, parents must be careful to avoid hampering the work of school and public safety officials.

Parents can help manage a crisis situation in the following ways:

- **Remain calm.** Do your best to cooperate with school and public safety officials
- **Keep roads clear.** Be aware that traffic or parking congestion could hamper access of public safety vehicles.
- **Keep phone lines open.** Be aware that excessive phone calls could jam the phone system and hamper emergency communications. This includes not contacting your child by text or phone call.
- **Be patient.** Students will be released to their parents, guardians, or emergency contact persons as soon as possible.
- **Have appropriate identification** - driver's license, passport, etc. when picking up your child at school or an alternate site. Check with the school officials before removing your child from campus.
- Be sure your contact information is current at your school.

Remember, a crisis situation must be handled in an orderly manner so that we can protect and account for ALL students.