



**MESSAGE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS REGARDING  
FIRE, EVACUATION AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

**“KEEPING OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF SAFE”**

October 2010

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board has a primary responsibility to ensure the safety of our students and staff inside Board buildings and on Board property. Accordingly, following the direction of the Ministry of Education and working with fire, police and emergency services, the Board has developed an Emergency Preparedness policy and procedures that will provide for a consistent response in all schools in the event of an emergency. Each school has developed a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness plan and will be implementing it this fall. This letter is intended to inform you about some of our new procedures.

The “shelter-in-place” is used in a situation where an incident occurs on school property or close to the school and poses no immediate danger to students. The school is secured until the incident near the school is resolved (e.g. broken gas line, bear in the school yard). When this procedure is used, all exterior school doors are locked and traffic in and out of the building is monitored by a staff member via the front entrance. Staff and students continue their usual school day with all outside activities cancelled.

The “hold-and-secure” is used in a situation where an incident occurs on school property or close to the school and poses no immediate danger to students. The police will inform the school when a “hold-and-secure” situation is necessary and the school is secured until the incident near the school is resolved (e.g. bank robbery nearby). When this procedure is used, all exterior school doors are locked and traffic in and out of the building is monitored by a staff member via the front entrance. Staff and students continue their usual school day with all outside activities cancelled. While there is no immediate danger to students or staff, this situation could possibly escalate to a lockdown.

The “lockdown” procedure is initiated should a high risk incident involving weapons, student/stranger intrusion, etc. occur in the school or on school property, or there are circumstances in the vicinity of the school that could endanger the lives and/or safety of students and/or staff. A lockdown requires that all students and staff remain in classrooms or other designated secure locations that are away from danger and that minimize access and visibility.

In order for students and staff to become familiar with the expectations during a crisis situation, our school will be practicing lockdown procedures just as we have normally done with fire drills. During these drills there will be signs posted on the entrance doors indicating the school is in lockdown. The doors will be locked and no one will be allowed into the school. Similar procedures will be followed in a real situation. As required, we will have six (6) fire drills and two (2) lockdown drills throughout the school year.

Should you have any questions you are welcome to call me at the school anytime.

Sincerely,

Darren Berthier, Principal