

**NOTE: FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR, SAFETY DRILLS WILL COMMENCE AFTER THE RESUMPTION OF IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION IN ACPS FACILITIES.**

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS RESPONSE DRILLS**

### **FIRE DRILLS**

Each school in Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) holds at least two fire drills during the first twenty school days of the school year, in order that students and staff members may be prepared in case of a fire emergency. During the remainder of the school year, fire drills are held at least monthly.

The principal/designee sends a copy of the Virginia Department of Education and State Fire Marshall School Exit Drill Form to the Educational Facilities Department within five (5) days of holding a fire drill.

An emergency operations and procedures plan is developed for each ACPS building. Each teacher must be acquainted with the emergency safety plan that has been developed as it applies to each room in which he/she teaches.

Placards describing the nearest exits, evacuation routes for students and important instructions are posted prominently in each room. A plan for evacuation of any student with physical disabilities is developed and reviewed annually. Parents/guardians of such students are notified of the evacuation plans for their child.

### **THREAT RESPONSE DRILLS**

In every ACPS school there are at least two lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drills during the first twenty school days, in order that students and staff members may be prepared in the case of a lockdown situation.

In keeping with the model *School Crisis, Emergency Management, and Medical Emergency Response Plan* developed by the Virginia Board of Education and the Virginia Center for School Safety, ACPS uses the following terms:

- “**Lockdown**” is used in response to immediate threats of violence **inside** a school facility.
- “**Secure the building**” is used when preventing unauthorized entry or exit if there is an **external** threat in proximity to a school facility.

Each school holds at least one additional lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drill after the first 60 days of the school year. Each school provides the parents/guardians of enrolled students with at least 24 hours' notice before the school conducts any lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drill. The notice is not required to include the exact date and time of the drill.

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students are exempt from mandatory participation in

lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drills during the first 60 days of the school year. The Superintendent develops procedures to implement this exemption. Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students participate in each lockdown and/or “Secure the Building” drill after the first 60 days of the school year.

**I. Active Threat/Violent Encounter Response Protocol**

ACPS provides an “options-based” training approach for staff and students to be applied to the specific circumstances at the time of the incident. Staff members dealing with these events may need to consider different response methods, including lockdown, immediate evacuation, or related life-saving actions.

**TORNADO DRILLS AND EARTHQUAKE DRILLS**

There will be at least one tornado drill and one earthquake drill each school year in every ACPS school.

**SCHOOL BUS EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Each school holds a drill in leaving school buses under emergency circumstances at least once during the first ninety calendar days of each school year and more often if necessary.

**ALL DRILLS**

No emergency preparedness drills will be conducted during periods of mandatory testing required by the Virginia Board of Education.

**SAFETY TRAINING**

In addition to the drills mentioned above, ACPS provides training to each student and employee at least once each school year on safety procedures in the event of an emergency situation on school division-controlled property.

Adopted: June 11, 2015  
Amended: September 15, 2016  
Amended: September 28, 2017  
Amended: September 10, 2020

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, §§ 22.1-137, 22.1-137.1, 22.1-137.2, 22.1-137.3, 22.1-184.

Acts 2006, c. 164.

8 VAC 20-131-260.

*School Crisis, Emergency Management, and Medical Emergency Response Plan,*  
Virginia Board of Education and the Virginia Center for School Safety, 2016.

Cross Ref.: EB School Crisis, Emergency Management and Medical Emergency Response  
Plan