

TORNADO SAFETY GUIDELINES

The National Weather Service issues a *tornado watch* when the possibility of tornadoes exists and a *tornado warning* when a tornado has been spotted or indicated on radar. Tornadoes form suddenly so there may not be time for a tornado warning before a twister strikes. Teachers and students should know the difference between a *watch* and a *warning*.

Each school should be inspected and tornado shelter areas designated. Schools should use interior hallways on the ground floor that are not parallel to the tornado's path, which is usually from the southwest. Never use gymnasiums, auditoriums, or other rooms with wide, free-span roofs. Avoid all windows and other glassed areas. The most dangerous locations of a building are usually along the south and west sides, and at all corners.

Staff members and students should know their designated shelter areas.

During a tornado watch, specific teachers or other staff members should be designated to monitor commercial radio or TV for tornado warnings.

DANGER SIGNS

- ❖ **Severe thunderstorms**
Thunder, lightning, heavy rain and strong winds
- ❖ **Hail**
Pellets of ice from dark-clouded skies
- ❖ **Roaring noise**
Like a hundred railroad locomotives;
a crashing thunderous sound
- ❖ **Funnel**
Dark, spinning rope or column from the sky to ground
or a sudden increase in wind

Weather spotters should keep an eye on the sky for dark, rolling clouds, hail, driving rain, or a sudden increase in wind in addition to the telltale funnel or roaring noise. Tornadoes are often obscured by precipitation or darkness.

Specific teachers should be assigned to round up students on playgrounds or in other outdoor arenas.

When students are assembled in designated shelter areas, and when the danger is imminent, they should be instructed to respond to a specific command, such as "drop and tuck." They should assume a protective posture facing an interior wall. Most tornado deaths are caused by head injuries.

TORNADO/SEVERE STORM WATCH

STAFF

- ❖ Close all windows and blinds.
- ❖ Remind students of severe weather drill procedures.
 - ⇒ Define the shelter area where they may need to move to.
 - ⇒ Review the drop and tuck position facing wall.
 - ⇒ Inform students not to be alarmed if lights go out.
 - ⇒ Immediate action may be called for – drop and tuck under desks if instructed.

SCHOOL LEADER'S OFFICE

- ❖ Remind staff and students what to expect if a warning is issued.
- ❖ Remind teachers in exterior rooms to close windows and blinds.
- ❖ Activate pre-designated staff to monitor radio and TV for warnings.
- ❖ Bring students and staff indoors from playgrounds and other outdoor areas.

TORNADO/SEVERE STORM WARNING

STAFF

- ❖ Evacuate students to designated shelter area.
- ❖ Take classroom roster.
- ❖ Leave classroom door open.
- ❖ Have students sit on floor quietly.
- ❖ Take attendance and account for all students.
- ❖ Keep students calm and quiet.
- ❖ If you are given a drop and tuck command, ensure students face wall.
- ❖ If you sense that a tornado is imminent, give the drop and tuck command yourself.

BUS DRIVER

- ❖ When a tornado is sighted, head away from its path, at a right angle.
- ❖ Try to find shelter under a bridge or overpass.
 - ⇒ Once over overpass, have students open windows, drop to the floor and cover their heads.
- ❖ In an open area, escort children to a low area (ditch, culvert, ravine, etc.)
 - ⇒ Have students lie flat, face down and cover their heads.
- ❖ Account for all students.
- ❖ Report in as soon as possible.

SCHOOL LEADER'S OFFICE

- ❖ Sound the warning alarm immediately.
- ❖ Move all occupants to designated shelter areas.

IMPORTANT – If a tornado is spotted or reported as being very imminent, issue a command over P.A. to drop and tuck where they are, under desks.

- ❖ Issue Drop and Tuck command over Phone System when judgment warrants.
- ❖ Account for all students.
- ❖ Parents arriving at school to pick up students should be invited and recommended to shelter inside.
- ❖ Keep all exterior doors closed.

CUSTODIAN

- ❖ Ensure that all exterior doors are closed to prevent wind tunnel effect and flying debris.
- ❖ After children are in place in corridors, ensure that all fire doors are closed.
- ❖ If there is a possibility that a tornado has hit the building, shut off electrical power immediately.

POST TORNADO/ SEVERE STORM

STAFF

- ❖ Take attendance a.s.a.p.
- ❖ Report any injuries or missing students to the principal's office.
- ❖ Restore calm; reassure students that the situation is under control.
- ❖ Assist in any first aid needed in your area.
- ❖ Await any further instructions.

SCHOOL LEADER'S OFFICE

IF TORNADO PASSES WITHOUT STRIKING

- ❖ Be cautious, as there may be other funnels in area.
- ❖ Continue to monitor radio and TV for current advisory information.
- ❖ Notify utility companies of any break or suspected break in lines.
- ❖ Retain students in area until it is considered safe to return to class, go home, or be released to parents.
- ❖ Sound the "all clear" signal to return to class, accompanied by a PA announcement.

SCHOOL LEADER'S OFFICE

IF A BUILDING IS STRUCK BY A TORNADO

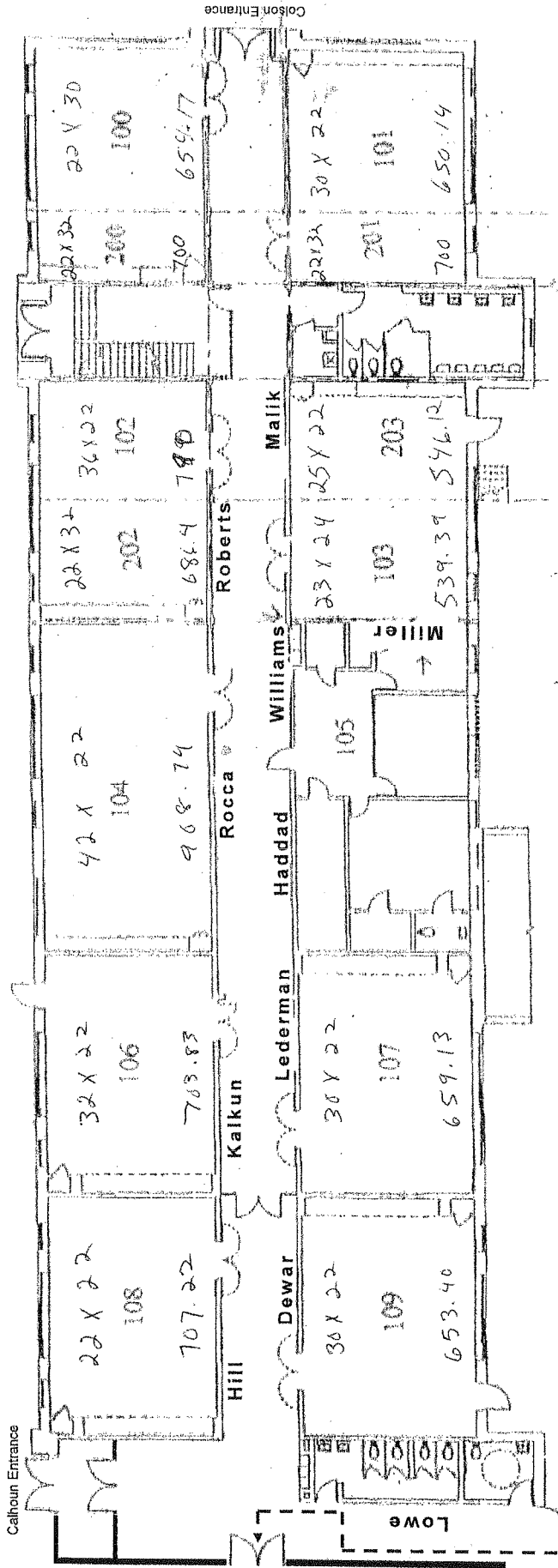
- ❖ Call custodian(s) to ensure that gas and electricity have been shut off at main switches.
- ❖ Activate medical response (see medical problem or accident).
- ❖ Call 9-911.
- ❖ Direct all staff to administer first aid as needed until medics arrive.
- ❖ Evacuate damaged areas cautiously.
- ❖ Call The Leona Group's Office.
- ❖ Collect attendance and search for any missing staff or students.
- ❖ Establish a parent information response team a.s.a.p.
- ❖ Retain students in area until it is considered safe.
- ❖ Keep record of students released to parents or other authorized persons.
- ❖ After crisis, School Leader or designee should go to hospital to be with injured.



Academy for Business & Technology Elementary School

Tornado Emergency Plan

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57 X 84
 In gymnasium: 4783
 Bathrooms: Obermeyer
 Kitchen: Russo

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Revised: October 2011

FIRE or EXPLOSION

REPORTABLE INCIDENT

STAFF

- ❖ **Evacuate students when you hear there alarm.**
- ❖ **Evacuate by pre-designed primary or alternate evacuation route to assembly area.**
- ❖ **Take class attendance roster with you.**
- ❖ **Leave building in an orderly manner.**
 - ⇒ Do not allow students to rush or crowd each other.
- ❖ **Students should be evacuated at least 300 feet, or recommended 1,000 feet, from building and out of the way of emergency vehicles.**
- ❖ **Take attendance when students are reassembled.**
 - ⇒ Report any missing students to the school leader

SCHOOL LEADER'S OFFICE

- ❖ **Sound fire alarm to signal an evacuation.**
 - ⇒ Use Phone system, announcement if an alternate evacuation route or assembly area is to be used.
- ❖ **Call 911 or Local Police.**
- ❖ **Evacuate all staff and students by pre-designed evacuation route to assembly area.**
- ❖ **Pre-appointed staff members should search building for remaining students (stragglers).**
- ❖ **Station yourself in a central location for staff information.**
- ❖ **Assist police and EMS with emergency information.**
- ❖ **Notify The Leona Group's Office to advise:**
 - ⇒ Location of assembly area and/or
 - ⇒ Possible transportation needs moving students to another building site.
- ❖ **Collect total attendance roster.**
 - ⇒ Pre-appointed staff should assist police with search of any missing staff and/or student(s).
- ❖ **Do not release any information to the media. Direct inquiries to The Leona Group's Office.**

FIRE - SMALL

STAFF ACTION

- ❖ Immediately evacuate class to hall area.
- ❖ Notify School Leader ASAP of possible need to evacuate entire building.
- ❖ Use a fire extinguisher.
- ❖ IF FIRE CANNOT BE EXTINGUISHED:
 - Notify school leader ASAP of need to evacuate entire building
 - Follow the fire evacuation procedure
- ❖ IF FIRE IS EXTINGUISHED:
 - Notify school leader that fire is extinguished
 - Retain students outside classroom until school leader declares it safe to return
 - Restore calm and resume education process
 - File an incident report

SCHOOL LEADER'S OFFICE

- ❖ If fire is extinguished, call Fire Department to report incident
 - Use judgment on when and whether to activate alarm for evacuation
- ❖ IF FIRE CANNOT BE EXTINGUISHED, CALL 9-911
 - Evacuate building according to established plans
- ❖ Notifications necessary:
 - THE LEONA GROUP
 - STAFF
 - PARENTS/GUARDIANS

PROCEDURES FOR LOCKDOWN

The events at Columbine High School will long be remembered. No amount of planning can prevent such tragedies, but well-defined and rehearsed plans may help avert losses of the magnitude of those in Littleton, Colorado. Many casualties result from confusion and panic. If a violent crisis occurs, students and staff will be the safest if they know where to go and what to do. To help address that variable, a well developed and prescribed "lockdown" procedure plan is needed in every building. AN ANNOUNCEMENT OVER THE P.A. SYSTEM WILL STATE:

"TEACHERS WE ARE IN A LOCKDOWN SITUATION"

Staff will:

1. KEEP STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM.

- When possible, teachers should take a quick view of the hallways and usher students into the classroom.
- If possible, check the closest bathroom and have any students come into the classroom. Do not do so if it means putting the teacher and the larger number of students at risk.

2. LOCK DOORS, if possible.

- Move students onto the floor away from window and away from hall/door/window sight lines.
- If there is INTERNAL DANGER (within the building), move students closest to the wall and furthest from the door.
- If there is EXTERNAL DANGER (outside building, playground, in the area), move students furthest away from the outside wall.

Remember: Comfort is not important. Safety is!

3. TURN LIGHTS OFF.

- Pull shades, close blinds (**darkening the room is extremely important!**)
- Take attendance.
- Make a list of all students NOT in the classroom.

If the event occurs during passing time in the hallways, or during lunch hour, gather as many students into classrooms, gymnasium, or any protected area that can be secured with a locked door.

****A simulated lockdown procedure should take place in each building at least two times a year. This would take place under the guidance of the Emergency Procedures Committee, which includes members from the school district and the community.**

The lockdown procedure should be explained beforehand to all staff at a staff meeting, with time allotted for questions, and subsequently discussed in weekly bulletins. Likewise, parents should be informed via newsletters, cable TV, PTA/PTSA meetings. Finally, students should be informed of the procedures much like they would be informed of a fire drill.

(These procedures were adapted from Gary T. Rau, Safety Coordinator, Janesville School District, Wisconsin, as they appeared in the Student Assistance Journal, Winter, 1999.)