

## **Westbrook Elementary School Emergency Crisis Plan**

All Montgomery County public schools have a school emergency crisis plan. A crisis is an unpredictable, unplanned situation that requires an immediate response. Crises may include, but are not isolated to, bomb threats, criminal activity, accidents, fire, hazardous materials incidents, and weather-related incidents.

For well over a decade, Code Blue and Code Red procedures have been used to keep students safe during emergencies that occur on or near school grounds. New federal safety guidelines contained in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) have since been adopted by both Maryland and Montgomery County. The new procedures are called Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter (LES). These procedures have been developed as a response to an emergency situation at a school and are part of the school emergency preparedness plan.

It is vital that students, staff, and parents/guardians have an understanding of these procedures. Staff and students participate in drills for LES procedures at various times during the academic year. If parents/guardians are in the building during a drill or real emergency, they will be expected to know and follow these procedures. If the school must go under a shelter or lockdown, the reason is not shared with the students, but a phone message and/or email will be sent to parents/guardians via the Connect Ed system.

**Lockdown** is a term used to describe an emergency at an MCPS facility. Lockdown alerts staff that imminent danger exists inside or outside the building and requires moving to an immediate lockdown mode. It requires that all students are under adult supervision. Students and staff must move quickly to a securable location, remain quiet, and follow staff instructions. Each classroom is locked down, shades pulled, and teaching is stopped. Staff account for all students and then send the principal an email.

**Evacuate** is a term used to describe an emergency inside the school. It requires all students and staff to evacuate the building using either the fire evacuation alarm or a public announcement directed evacuation by the administration. In the event of an evacuation where the area around the school becomes unsafe, Westbrook's reunification site is Westland Middle School. See below for information on parent/child reunification.

**Shelter** is a term used to alert staff that an emergency exists at or near an MCPS facility and may be used in a weather-related emergency. It requires all students to be accounted for and under adult supervision inside the building. Instruction continues but student movement in the building is closely monitored. Exterior doors to the school are locked. Students in the portables are brought into the building in a weather related emergency, such as a tornado warning. Otherwise they are left in their classrooms.

**Parent/Child Reunification** Schools have plans in place to reunite students with their parents/guardians in the event of an emergency/crisis at a school. This process will ensure the safe and orderly reuniting of students and parents/guardians. Schools will ensure they use a three-step approach.

- Step 1. Identify parents using a source of identification.
- Step 2. Identify student location in school and sign out student.
- Step 3. Unite student and parent/guardian.

Parents will be informed about reunification plans via the Connect Ed system.

*Sources: Welcome to MCPS Booklet FY2012; A Student's Guide to Rights and Responsibilities 2011-2012*