

# Universal Emergency Response Procedures

## What Parents Need to Know

*Once an administrator calls for one of the universal emergency responses below, students, employees, service providers, and visitors are to immediately follow the procedures provided. Notification is to be given in an age appropriate manner.*

**ALERT STATUS**-for use in securing access to buildings, usually a community event.

When a school or office building is under alert status, no one can enter or leave the building without the principal's or office head's permission. This permission is granted on a case-by-case basis and usually granted in conjunction with approval by the Baltimore County Police Department (BCoPD). Parents should not come to a school while the occupants are on alert status. Parents might place themselves at risk by doing so as the event in the community is being investigated or handled by the BCoPD.

**DROP, COVER, AND HOLD**-for use in earthquakes or other imminent danger to a building or its immediate surroundings.

When the drop, cover, hold response is called, occupants of a building will take cover away from windows or any areas that are likely to be affected. Parents should not come to a school while the occupants are under this universal response. Parent might place themselves at risk by doing so due to the adverse environmental conditions that led to the response.

**EVACUATION**-for use when conditions outside are safer than conditions inside.

When a school's or office's occupants are told to follow their evacuation procedures, there is a condition within the building that makes it safer for them to be out of the building. Each school or office building has designated meeting locations for an evacuation with alternate locations if necessary. Parents should not come to a school that has evacuated and remove students as this can disrupt the accounting procedures that are in place.

**LOCKDOWN**-for use in protecting building occupants from potential dangers in the building or outside.

When a school or office building is on lockdown, no one can enter or leave the building. Movement within the building is restricted and individuals within the building remain behind locked doors until cleared to move by first responders or the event is deemed over. Parents should not come to a school while the occupants are on lockdown. Parents might place themselves at risk by doing so.

**SEVERE WEATHER SAFE AREA**-for use in severe weather emergencies.

When a severe weather response is called, occupants of a building will take cover away from windows or any areas that are likely to be affected. Parents should not come to a school while the occupants are under this universal response. Parents might place themselves at risk by doing so due to the adverse environmental conditions that led to the response.

**SHELTER IN PLACE**-for use in external gas or chemical releases.

When occupants of a building are told to shelter in place, they make every effort to seal the building from outside toxins by shutting down their air handling systems and blocking fumes from entering the building. Parents should not come to a school while the occupants are under this universal response as opening doors will expose the occupants to chemicals of concern.

# See it, Say it!

Safe Schools Tip Hotline	1-877-636-6332
Text/E-mail	Hotline@bcps.org
Maryland Crisis Hotline	1-800-422-0009
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273 TALK