



VESTAL, NEW YORK 13850

To: Vestal Faculty and Staff
From: Jeffrey Ahearn, Superintendent
Date: September 30, 2021
RE: Emergency Procedure Responses

New York State Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 describes the requirements for school emergency plans. By October 1st of each year, the Chief Emergency Officer is required to supply written instruction to all staff and students on school emergency responses. The Vestal Central School District has five emergency responses: Shelter in Place, Hold in Place, Evacuate, Lockout, and Lockdown (SHELL). These responses are posted in each room for reference, but you should review each appropriate response today.

As we begin a new school year, please remember the following emergency protocols and actions:

- Always wear your identification badge.
- If you see someone not identified with an employee badge or visitor badge, simply ask them, "Can I help you find something?"
- Don't prop doors open or leave doors unlocked.
- Don't let people into the building, rather direct them to the single point of entry (Welcome Center) during school hours.
- Visitor sign-in process is at the Welcome Center.
- If you see others letting people in, don't let them and report it to your administrator.
- Keep your classroom doors locked at all times.
- Know the emergency procedures and practice situational awareness throughout your day. Think about what you would do right now if we went into Lockout or Lockdown at the start or end of the school day with the arrival or dismissal of students, at lunchtime, at specials, or at faculty meetings.

Building principals need to review critical emergency response procedures with all their faculty and staff members. Be certain to review the following:

1. All information as it pertains to a fire drill or evacuation of the building. During drills, all personnel and students should be well-removed from the building structure. **Faculty should take their student attendance materials/registers with them to account for children and should not be re-entering the building.** Attendance procedures are critical when an evacuation occurs. Attendance should be taken at the beginning of the period in all classes (i.e., Physical Education, Art, Music, etc.).

2. Review designated in-building and out-of-building assembly areas.

In-building locations: For severe weather, lower-level interior walls/hallways adjacent to classrooms, away from glass.

Outside assembly areas for evacuation: Around the buildings as far away from incoming traffic, as there may be fire trucks and police cars, etc. entering quickly. Specific locations for each building should be reviewed in each class.

3. Review any special emergency building schedule to retain students in the classroom such as for Shelter-In-Place, Hold-In-Place, Lockout, and Lockdown.
4. Review the procedures that are in place for all emergencies.
5. Ask faculty to review appropriate information with their students.
6. Invite your faculty to ask you questions concerning any emergency situation.
7. When it is safe to do so, attendance should be taken in all emergency situations and reported to the main office via email.
8. Please feel free to contact Clifford Kasson at **607-757-2211** or the main office(s) where you work with any questions you may have.

- **Inform Central Office as soon as possible at 607-757-2320.**

Lockdown procedures announced

- 1) *** **Lockdown: Immediate dangerous situation in the building.** Moving within school is dangerous. Designated persons check bathrooms and bring students quickly into the nearest classroom. If safe to do so, teachers should check hallways and pull students into the nearest classroom. Classroom doors are locked and everyone takes cover away from sight of classroom door window. Barricade doors if necessary. Everyone is to remain quiet, silence cell phones, and turn off lights (if safe to do so), but leave window blinds as they are. Take attendance. A message will be sent out as fast as possible (yelling, public address). “LOCK YOUR DOORS AND TAKE COVER”. DO NOT communicate through the door or answer room phone. Do not respond to PA announcements or fire alarm. Teachers should take attendance and, if possible, communicate to the main office any student who is missing or if there are additional students in your room. Appropriate personnel—have your emergency bag ready in case of evacuation (School Nurses – medications). Remain hidden until physically released by law enforcement personnel. For a drill, administrators will perform release with a key and announce themselves.

No one should be admitted into your classroom once you have locked your doors.

In the event that a fire alarm goes off during a Lockdown, disregard the alarm and stay in your room until further notice, unless you see flames or smell smoke.

- 2) **Shelter in Place:** Non-specific threat within the school. Building Emergency Response Team may have to assemble. Instruction continues in classrooms. (No necessity to lock doors). Shelter-In-Place may be used for various situations within the buildings.

Designated areas to assemble for the Building Response Team will be determined by the Building Principal. Staff members assigned to the Building Response Team should have a designated staff member report to their assigned area to supervise students when appropriate.

Listen for instructions about the situation and your actions. Faculty and staff should check hallways and students should return to the closest classroom. Faculty are to take attendance and, if instructed, move to your predetermined or announced location to await further instructions.

If the Shelter-In-Place is announced for bad weather, sheltering at the lower-level interior wall and/or a corridor without glass is best. Instruct students to sit on their knees facing an interior wall with their head toward the wall and hands protecting the back of their head and neck, as noted below:



- 3) **Hold in Place:** May be used when there is a situation that requires students to be in class and accounted for, such as a medical emergency for a student/staff member, an animal in the building, etc.

Everyone should quickly move to the nearest classroom from the hallways and bathrooms. Close and lock the door. Take attendance. Teaching may continue, but no students are allowed to leave the classroom. Await further instructions for the “Hold-In-Place is complete” announcement.

- 4) **Lockout (Lock in):** Dangerous situation near, but outside the school. Leaving the school may place people in peril. Exterior doors are locked and closely monitored. Visitors should be closely screened and may be turned away. Classroom instruction continues as normal, leaving blinds and lights as they are, but making sure all exterior windows are locked. Take attendance and monitor for updates via PA announcements and/or emails. Normal activities will continue inside the building, but all outdoor activities are cancelled until the Lockout is lifted. Do not respond to the fire alarm unless actual signs of fire are observed or an announcement is made.
- 5) **Building Evacuation:** Fire Drills (planned or pulled) or any issue of odors, smoke, electric, plumbing/heating malfunctions, etc. An announcement is made via the PA system or room-by-room communication. Take class roster with you, take attendance, and evacuate quickly and orderly using fire drill evacuation procedures. **Move to assembly area outside the building. Staff and students may then move to evacuation site(s) as directed.** Once at the assembly site, take attendance again and await further instructions. Plans need to include responsibilities of Building Emergency Response Team members to assist anyone with a disability.
- 6) **Severe weather warning:** Approaching severe weather or natural hazard. Follow PA announcements or directions for sheltering. Remain in classrooms or hallways, away from windows, and await further instructions.

Staff and students caught outside the building during a Lockdown will report to their off-campus evacuation site. Elementary sites would report to an off-site setting were arrangements had been made previously for students and staff to safely report to. If the entire campus is under Lockdown, Transportation will provide for evacuation to an off-campus site. Staff and students caught outside may decide to move to an outside building or the woods, dependent upon the situation and the safest course of action.

Transportation will provide 2 buses at the Building when Lockdown is announced and requested.