

# Carmel Central School District

# SCHOOL

# EMERGENCY

## GUIDE

The Carmel Central School District takes emergency preparedness very seriously. We have a comprehensive district-wide safety plan that assists our staff and public safety partners to respond swiftly should an emergency occur. We provide ongoing crisis management training to school administrators and other key staff members throughout the district.

Building level emergency response plans are in place at each school. A building-based safety committee oversees the plan for each school and committee members have assigned roles and responsibilities should an emergency occur. These committees meet regularly to review procedures and conduct annual training and drills so that students and staff are aware of the most effective and safe emergency responses.

### Safety is our priority

The Carmel Central School District is committed to making school safe for students and staff. We work closely with local and state agencies including police, fire, emergency medical services, and public health officials to ensure that we are well prepared and children are protected.

Please know that should an emergency occur, we will do what is necessary to protect children first and then inform you as accurately and fully as we can. Communication with parents during an emergency is an important priority for the school district. Please be patient and understand if we are unable to respond to you as completely or quickly as you would wish. Our first priority is the safety of your child and the other children and staff in the school.

### By definition...

An emergency involves unexpected events and rapidly changing conditions. We train to deal with different kinds of problems, whether caused by natural forces or humans. However, it is impossible to say in advance exactly how we will respond in any particular case. In general, you should know that we will do what is necessary to protect children first and then to inform you as accurately and fully as we can. If a situation is serious enough to require you to leave your home or workplace, we will either ask you to pick your child up or will direct you to a safe place where we can brief you on developments.



### Some terms that may be used during an emergency situation

#### Lockdown

Lockdown is initiated when a school administrator, faculty or staff member has become aware of an actual or imminent threat in which students should be kept in locked rooms within the school building. A lockdown may be implemented as a result of an intruder in the building, a hostage situation or biological threat. All students will be accounted for and kept within the locked rooms until the incident is brought to a close by emergency responders or law enforcement personnel.

#### Lockout

This is the response to an actual or potential threat from outside the school building. An example of such a threat might be an escaped fugitive, criminal activity occurring nearby, or a wild animal outside of the school. When a lockout occurs, all exterior doors and windows are locked and all outside activities are terminated. Entry to the school building may be gained only through a locked and monitored door. Otherwise, the school day continues as normal. Admittance to the school is by administrative approval during a lockout.

#### Hold in Place

This is used during medical emergencies, searches or other situations when school administrators wish to temporarily limit student movement. Instruction continues as normally as possible, with staff and students remaining in their current locations (classroom, gym, library, etc.) until the "all-clear" is called.

#### Shelter in Place

This may occur when there is a threat of or actual weather related incident and the school population needs to move to a predetermined location within the school building. The building level safety team will be activated and will move the school population to that site(s).

In the case of a bomb threat, the decision to evacuate students or shelter in place is dependent upon information received in the threat and how credible that information is. The school administration will consult with first responders and law enforcement when making that decision.

#### Evacuation

Each school has procedures for partial or complete evacuation, including a designated safe location

### How to prepare for a school emergency

- Keep your child's emergency information up to date, including alternate phone numbers for you and family/friends you have authorized as your backup. Notify the school promptly if this information changes.
- Talk with your children about the importance of following instructions in the event of an emergency.
- Tell your children NOT to use cell phones unless permitted. Unauthorized cell phone use could put people at risk during an emergency and may distract students from listening to important safety instructions.
- Have a plan for an emergency and make sure your children are familiar with the plan.

### What to do during a school emergency

- Do not go to the school or scene of an emergency unless officials ask you to, even though a child may ask you to come, and although that is your first instinct as a parent. Your presence may interfere with emergency response.
- Get accurate information and instructions.
- Check the district website at [www.carmel-schools.org](http://www.carmel-schools.org) or the CCSD mobile app. The district may also communicate via automated call or email.
- Tune into local radio (a list of area radio stations can be found on page 4 of the district's calendar).
- Do not listen to rumors. If your child does contact you, remember that he or she may only know pieces of the larger picture.
- Remain as calm as you can if your child contacts you. They are looking to you for reassurance.



to which students may be transported. If students are to be released from the off-site location, parents will be directed where to pick up their children.

#### Student/Parent Reunification\*

Circumstances may occur at the school that require parents to pick up their students in a formalized, controlled release. This process is called a Reunification and may be necessary due to weather, a power outage, hazmat or if a crisis occurs at the school. The

Standard Reunification Method is a protocol that makes this process more predictable and less chaotic for all involved. Because a reunification is not a typical end of school day event, a reunification may occur at a different location than the school a student attends. If this location is another school, then those students may be subject to a controlled release as well.

\*Adapted from the "I Love U Guys" Foundation

Please know that should an emergency occur, we will do what is necessary to protect children first...

