Greenfield Public Schools
School Emergency Information Guide

Safety Terms & Procedures

Shelter in place

Shelter in place is a flexible protocol designed to ensure the safety of students and facilitate the school's response to a wide variety of emergency situations and sensitive situations. The primary objective is to limit access to the building and minimize non-essential traffic through the corridors and common areas.

Communications Expectations

2-3 emails and/or texts home

Communications 1:

We will share that a shelter-in-place/shelter-while-learning has been called and why. There may be limited details to share at this point in order to make sure the information we share is accurate. For example:

"We want to share that we have called a shelter-in-place due to a medical emergency involving a student. Emergency services were called to the building to assist, and police also responded. At no point were any other students or staff in danger and learning continued as normal."

Communications 2 & 3:

If there are further pertinent details, or more pertinent information comes to light, a second and possibly third communication will be sent home. This information may include timing, additional details about what students may have seen or heard, and follow-up information. These communications may be combined into a single message, depending on when information is available.

Communication 2 example:

"As you know, we called a shelter-in-place at around 11:30 am on Tuesday during lunch due to a medical emergency involving a student. An ambulance and a police cruiser arrived quickly, and your children may have seen the paramedics who came into the building to help. Learning continued as normal, with no interruptions for the rest of the day."

Communication 3 example:

"We want to thank all students and staff for their cooperation during today's shelter-in-place. As a reminder, we will call a shelter in place in the event of a medical emergency so that hallways can remain clear for emergency personnel to move quickly.

While everyone was safe throughout the shelter, we understand some students may have questions. Our school counselor is available to all of our students if they need help processing what they have seen or heard."



Why we shelter-in-place or shelter-while-learning

Examples of Shelter-in-Place events could include, but not be limited to:

- **Medical emergencies**
- **Missing students**
- **Found or Communicated threats (bombs or violence)**
- **Fights and behavioral issues**
- **A sick or dangerous animal on school property**
- **Police or Fire activity in the neighborhood**
- **Police or Fire personnel may initiate a shelter in place**
- **Canine sweeps or other searches**
- **Chemical spills**
- **Lockdowns at other schools in the district or within the city/town**

Teaching continues within the classroom. A shelter in place may be escalated to a lockdown.

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Lockdown

The lockdown protocol applies under only two circumstances: weapons related violence on campus or a hostile intruder on campus. Any staff member who identifies a situation like that is expected to call for a lockdown immediately.

During a "lockdown" situation, classrooms are immediately secured. Staff are trained to guide students to maintain in the room, to evacuate, or to take other actions to promote their safety. The main objective of a lockdown is student and staff safety by minimizing risk and allowing emergency responders the space and time to their jobs.

Communications Expectations

3-5 emails and/or texts home.

Communications 1:

We will share that a lockdown has been called and why. There may be limited details to share at this point in order to make sure the information we share is accurate. For example:

"We want to share that we have called a lockdown due to an intruder in the building. Greenfield police responded quickly and removed the intruder from the building. Students and staff remained safe where they were."

Communications 2 & 3:

We will share more details, include timing, what students may have seen or heard, and follow-up information. These communications may be combined into a single message, depending on when information is available.

Communication 2/3 example:

"As you know, a lockdown was initiatied at 1 pm this Wednesday. Greenfield police officers arrived quickly, defused the situation, and escorted the intruder from the building. By following our security plan and communicating clearly with emergency services, the situation was resolved without incident and the intruder was isolated in the main foyer. Once the police gave us the all clear, learning resumed."

Communication 4 example:

"We want to thank all students and staff for their cooperation during today's lockdown. We also want to thank Greenfield police for their quick and thorough response. We have reviewed our response with local and state police to make sure that we did everything expected of us in a situation like this.

While everyone remained safe throughout the lockdown, we understand some students and family members may have questions. Our school counseling team will be available to all of our students if they need help processing what they have seen or heard."



Why you might not get all of the information you hoped for

Emergency situations often involve students, staff, or family members, and their education and medical privacy are protected by state and federal law.

While we understand that you may feel certain information is relevant, we may not be able to share every detail. In these communications we will not share:

- Names or grade levels of students
- Teacher or staff names or titles
- Medical conditions
- Safety plan details

We will always defer to the police and legal counsel on what is appropriate the share. We will err on the side of caution to keep the integrity of our security in place.

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Evacuation

In the event of certain building emergencies, students are guided to the nearest exit and assemble at an established location.

During evacuation, release times, communication from the school and/or transportation may be temporarily disrupted, and families will receive information and instructions.

Off-Site Evacuation

In an extreme emergency when a school has been evacuated and it is not possible to return, an off-site meeting place may be needed. The school will inform and direct parents to a designated meeting spot.



To update your contact information, visit:

Visit:

https://www.parentsquare.com/signin

or scan below.

Contact Us

Greenfield Public Schools
Central Office

195 Federal Street, Suite 100
Greenfield, MA 01301
413.772.1300

School Safety Procedures Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Greenfield Public Schools wants families and community members to understand what happens in our schools, including in the case of an emergency. These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) answer some of the most pressing concerns we hear about before, during, and after an emergency at a school. When we hear other questions frequently, we will add to this FAQ.

How is GPS proactive in educating students about the dangers of hate speech, bullying, harassment, and other similar behaviors?

Greenfield Public Schools educates students using social-emotional practices that work to encourage them to actively practice kindness, inclusion, and respect towards themselves and others. Elementary students engage in daily classroom exercises to prioritize kind and safe behavior during morning meetings.

At the secondary level, to ensure that students and staff are staying active in GPS's commitment to fostering an environment where everyone feels supported and safe, we have built partnerships with organizations such as these to help educate students and staff on best practices for safety and inclusion.

- Baystate Franklin
- CSO
- Servicenet
- Survival Center
- Brickhouse
- YMCA
- Artspace
- Dial Self
- Literacy Project
- Community Action
- Mass Hire
- The Children's Advocacy Center
- The Community Core Coalition
- North Western District Attorney

What resources does GPS have to support students struggling with their mental health?

Our clinical team is available to provide support and assistance to students and families. School Nurses, School Counselors, administration, and others can be accessed throughout the school day.

How does GPS prepare students and staff for emergencies?

In addition to following all state regulations to maintain safe and secure schools, GPS is putting together emergency backpack kits in each classroom that contains supplies. We are also developing a flip book that provides instructions on how to act in a variety of different situations that will be included in the backpack. Students and staff also practice safety drills mentioned in the flip book multiple times during the school year.

GPS also has a district-wide Safety Team made up of 30+ individuals made up of administrators, administrative assistants, teachers, nurses, police and fire chiefs, road crews, and the bus company. The team reviews all safety procedures, and explores new ways to build on them.

If an emergency occurs when will parents/guardians be notified?

GPS will inform parents as soon as possible when an emergency takes place at one of the schools within the District.

How are parents/guardians informed if an emergency takes place?

GPS will make every effort to communicate critical news and updates to parents/guardians as soon as possible. Parents/guardians may be notified via automated telephone messaging and/or email notification via ParentSquare.

ParentSquare services as the main communication platform for GPS and can be used to reach famiiles through multiple channels, including the ParentSquare app, email, text, and voice.

It is critical that all emergency contact information - including home, work, cell phone and e-mail addresses - are kept up to date so that quick and accurate notification can occur.

What role does law enforcement play in an emergency?

If an emergency takes place where law enforcement is deemed necessary, local law enforcement will immediately be notified. Based on the situation at hand, local law enforcement will decide if state or federal authorities should be involved.

In some cases, local authorities will have initiated our emergency response in which case they will be involved from the very beginnning.

Once a parent/guardian is notified of an emergency, what happens next?

GPS will notify parents as soon as possible and if necessary, will give additional directions. We ask that parents/guardians read all notifications from the school, and follow any instructions they receive to help ensure the safety of all students and staff members.

How can parents/guardians help in an emergency?

Parents/guardians should always make sure their emergency contact information is up-to-date with the District using ParentSquare. The best action parents/guardians can take in an emergency is to stay close to their phone or email and review any information or instructions shared by the District.

What is the procedure when GPS assesses risk/threats?

Assessing a threat can happen very quickly. The goal is to ensure the safety of all students and staff while addressing underlying issues effectively.

School-based risk/threat assessment procedures involve a systematic approach to identifying, evaluating, and responding to potential risks or threats within the school environment. This process typically includes gathering information from various sources, such as staff, students, and parents, to identify warning signs or concerning behaviors.

A team, often including school administrators, the school-based mental health team, and security personnel, assesses the severity of the threat, considering factors like intent and capacity for harm. Based on this assessment, appropriate interventions are implemented, which may range from counseling and support services to security measures or collaboration with law enforcement and/or community behavioral health providers.

How does GPS and law enforcement work together to ensure schools are safe?

Massachusetts State law (Section 363 of chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000 and Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2012) requires schools and districts to develop and implement multi-hazard evacuation plans and medical behavioral emergency response plans in collaboration with local law enforcement and fire departments.

Multi-Hazard Evacuation Plans for Schools: requires that superintendents of schools work with local police and fire chiefs to develop a school-specific multi-hazard evacuation plan for each school in the district. The plan must address fire and hazardous storms or disasters, as well as shootings, bomb threats, or terrorist activities. The plan must include a crisis response team, a designated manager of an incident, a communication plan, and protocols for safe and effective evacuations.

Each school committee and commonwealth charter school board of trustees shall ensure that every school under its jurisdiction has a written emergency response plan that addresses both medical and behavioral health crises to reduce the incidence of life-threatening medical emergencies and behavioral health crises and to promote efficient and appropriate responses to such emergencies.