SOUTHERN WESTCHESTER BOCES
BOARD OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

SOUTHERN WESTCHESTER BOCES

DISTRICT EMERGENCY INFORMATION GUIDE

2026-27

Southern Westchester Boces is committed to providing a safe environment for students, staff and visitors. In the event of an emergency, it is important for parents and guardians to be familiar with the way the District prevents and manages emergencies. This guide outlines key information and terms that are helpful to know in the event of an emergency situation.

How does the District respond to a wide range of emergencies?

Schools are required to engage in comprehensive emergency planning and training to prevent and manage emergencies in their buildings. Emergencies may include facility failures such as a gas leak, accidents, medical emergencies, severe weather or a intruder in the school. The following protocols may be used individually or in conjunction with one another to respond to a wide range of critical incidents.

SECURE LOCKOUT

In response to a security concern outside of the school, a Secure Lockout means students and staff remain inside locked and secured inside school buildings during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside the school. Normal operations will continue inside the building. Students will not be released during a secure lockout and building access is restricted during this time.

LOCKDOWN

In response to an imminent threat in or around a school, a Lockdown means to immediately clear the hallways, lock and/or barricade doors, hide from view, and remain silent while readying a plan of evacuation as a last resort. Only emergency responders can release each room from lockdown. Barricade the door or exit if the danger is within your locked area.

REUNIFICATION

In the unlikely event it is necessary for students to be reunited directly with their parent or guardian, the District will provide information via phone, email, and/or text regarding their child's specific location. Students will only be released to a parent/guardian or other adults listed as emergency contacts. Photo identification will be required. The individual picking up the student will be asked to complete a Student Release Form (available onsite).
This procedure is designed for your student's protection. Please be aware that reunification can be time-consuming, and we appreciate your patience.

EVACUATION (EVACUATE)

Evacuation (evacuate) takes place if it is determined that it is safer outside than inside the building (fire, explosion, intruder, hazardous material spill) and staff, students and visitors can safely reach the evacuation location without danger.

HOLD-IN-PLACE/HOLD

A Hold-in-Place/ Hold may be issued during a non-threatening event such as a medical emergency or maintenance issue. Hallways are cleared, students are kept in classrooms and instruction continues.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE/ SHELTER

A Shelter-in-Place/Shelter may be issued when it is necessary to remain inside the building due to exterior hazards such as severe weather or other type of hazard. Students are kept in a safe space inside the building until the situation has been resolved.

When and why would the district issue an emergency protocol?

In the event of an emergency situation, please be assured that the District has an emergency management plan in place and that District, school, and first responders will act accordingly.

The District will provide ongoing information regarding the event, including specific instructions for parent/student reunification if necessary. Parents and guardians are encouraged to monitor phones and email regularly. Updates may also be posted on the following:

District website
https://www.swboces.org/

District Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/swboces

What are the daily security measures parents should be aware of?

Please note standard operating safety procedures require all exterior doors to be locked at all times. Visitors must provide a government-issued photo ID, which will be scanned into the Visitor Management Database prior to building entry. Staff are required to wear photo identification while on campus.

What to do after an emergency

- ❑ It is important to remain calm as children are greatly influenced by their family's sense of well-being.
- ❑ Provide reassurance that your child is safe.
- ❑ Families need to be compassionate listeners when their children speak of the crisis. Listen to and acknowledge your child’s concerns.
- ❑ Please seek help from the school, District, or other mental health professionals if you/your child have any concerns.

How You Can Help

People who are at risk of hurting themselves or others often show warning signs before an act of violence takes place. If you see something that doesn't seem quite right, parents and students are encouraged to report their concerns to their building principals. Additional information on identifying warning signs may be found on the APA and DHS websites or from the Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health.

Make sure your child's emergency contact information is up-to-date and accurate. If your child requires medication, please be sure it is supplied to the school nurse.

Parents SHOULD NOT respond to the school building during an emergency. Doing so can greatly interfere with the efforts of emergency responders to manage the incident.

Please do not call the schools. In a crisis situation, school phones are needed to manage the situation and lines must remain open. Please also refrain from calling or texting your child. Staff and students are discouraged from using cell phone communication for safety reasons.

Review with your child any alternative arrangements you have made in case an emergency prevents you from being home or picking up your child.

Southern Westchester Boces is committed to providing a safe environment for students, staff and visitors. The District works closely with area law enforcement, Fire, EMS, so that our schools are well-prepared in the event of an emergency. Each school conducts several drills throughout the school year to help students and staff prepare for possible emergencies. Parents or persons in parental relation will receive advance notice of each drill within one week prior to the drill. The notification procedures are outlined in the District Safety Plan, which is accessible on the district's website.

Each year, the District's Emergency Plan is reviewed and updated. Please note that Building-Level plans are confidential for security reasons.

Southern Westchester Boces
17 Berkley Drive
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www.swboces.org

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST
What Parents Should Know

Southern Westchester Boces is committed to protecting the health and safety of every student, staff member and visitor. While Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is uncommon, it is a life-threatening emergency that requires immediate response.

New York State requires schools to maintain emergency procedures, Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), and annual awareness training to help ensure schools are prepared to respond.

RECOGNIZE THE EMERGENCY

A cardiac emergency requires immediate action.

Possible signs include:

- Sudden collapse
- Unresponsiveness
- Abnormal breathing or gasping
- Seizure-like movements

IMMEDIATE ACTION IS IMPORTANT

Quick recognition, calling 911, CPR and early AED use work together to save lives.

NEW YORK STATE REQUIRES SCHOOLS TO BE PREPARED

- **AEDs are maintained in District facilities and at required school-sponsored activities** and are available at school-sponsored athletic events held off-site.
- During the regular school day, at school-sponsored events held on-site and at off-site athletic events, the District ensures that **at least one individual trained in CPR/AED use is present.**
- The District maintains a **Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP)** to coordinate the response to cardiac emergencies occurring on school property and during applicable school-sponsored events.
- District staff and students receive Sudden Cardiac Arrest **awareness training** annually.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

Parents and guardians play an important role in supporting school safety.

- Keep Emergency Contact Information current.
- Notify the School Nurse of any known heart conditions or changes in your child's medical history.
- Encourage your child to immediately notify a teacher, coach or other adult in the event they witness someone experiencing a medical emergency.
- f an emergency occurs, rely on official District communications or accurate information and instructions.

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