

CASS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CASS SCHOOL DISTRICT 63

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Mrs. Christine Marcinkewicz

School Principal & District Director of Technology



WHAT SHOULD PARENTS EXPECT IN A CRISIS AT SCHOOL?

As a parent, feeling confident in the safety of your child at school is extremely important. Cass School District 63 has an organized, systematic emergency plan in place to reduce risk, prepare for, respond to, and recover from a crisis. We have a district crisis committee comprised of parents, administrators, police representatives and fire department representatives. And, our teachers are trained and briefed often on the protocols necessary in various situations ranging from earthquakes, to fire, to an intruder in the building.

There are many reasons that schools do not publicly share our protocols. We keep these plans private, so bad actors cannot use them to harm our students. Please rest assured that we have a plan for every eventuality possible.

Here are some tips for parents:

- The WORST thing you can do is come to school or call school.
 - Our plans are in motion to secure the safety of nearly 500 people. We need to focus on those procedures.
 - Too many cars near the school can delay law enforcement and ambulance arrival.
 - If the crisis is a *big one*, we have left the school grounds and headed to a reunification point. (You will be made aware of where the children are once we are all safe.)
- I promise to communicate just as soon as I can.
 - The easiest thing for me to do is tweet. Follow us at @Cass63tweets
 - We have other communication tools such as alert now text, emails and phone calls. We will use them as soon as we are able, but those take a bit longer to initiate.
 - *Misinformation can easily spread in a crisis.* Please, please get your information directly from us.
 - Please remember that school officials are bound by confidentiality laws. We will never be able to tell you the names of involved students (unless you are *that student's* parent).

Administrative Office

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Laura Anderson, Ed.D.

School Principal & District Director of Teaching & Learning

- **Terms to know**

- **Evacuation** - students and staff have been removed from the building
- **Relocation** - students and staff have been moved to a pre-designated alternate site following evacuation when it is determined that returning to the school will not take place within a reasonable time period.
- **Shelter in Place** - usually used for weather or other environmental threat (like a tornado). Students and staff take shelter in pre-selected spaces. Again, please don't come to school. The office staff has responsibilities for safety protocols. We cannot answer the door.
- **Soft-lockdown** - used when there is an external threat (bank robbery or crime activity in area). All staff and students remain in the building and all exterior doors are checked and kept secure. The only entry or exit point in the building is the front door. Front door is monitored more closely. Parents may be advised via door intercom to wait outside and a staff member will come to the door for you. Another possibility for soft-lockdown could be a broken water pipe or some other reason that student movement within the building may be restricted until notified otherwise.
- **Hard Lockdown** - Used to secure the building from an imminent threat such as an unauthorized person on school grounds or criminal activity on or adjacent to our property. In this situation, the building is restricted and no one will enter or exit the building.

When it comes down to it, the point of my letter is to assure you that in an emergency situation, we all treat the students as if they were our very own child. Each one of us has the protection of your student as the #1 priority during a crisis.

Please feel free to ask questions. My hope is that we will never need to use any of these protocols.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Christine Marcinkewicz
Principal
Cass Jr. High School