



Unit 1

Universal Emergency Response Procedures

Introduction

Universal Emergency Procedures are a set of standard, clear directives that may be implemented across a variety of emergency situations.* When an emergency begins, the principal, as Incident Commander (IC), will decide which Universal Emergency Response Procedures to implement, based on the situation. A flowchart is included to aid the IC in making that decision.

There are four basic procedures which can be utilized in responding to various emergencies:

- Evacuation Procedures for Buildings
- Alert Status
- Lockdown Procedures
 - Shelter-in-Place
- Severe Weather Safe Area Procedures
 - Drop, Cover, and Hold

These emergency response procedures are listed in the chart on the following page. Note that there are two variations of procedures—Section C, Lockdown and Shelter-in-Place; and Section D, Severe Weather Safe Area and Drop, Cover & Hold—to address special circumstances. For student/adult accounting, use the Emergency Attendance Sheet on Section 3 of this Guide.

When to Call 911

In an emergency, anyone who has access to a wired or wireless phone should immediately dial 9-1-1 for immediate assistance from the Metropolitan Police Department, DC Fire Department, or Emergency Medical Services. It is imperative that the school principal or designee is then notified of the emergency call, as soon as it is safe to do so. In a medical emergency, notify the school nurse to assist you, if possible.

* Adapted from FEMA, 1999, and Henniker Community School, 2000.

If you're not sure whether the situation is a true emergency, call 911 and let the operator determine whether you need emergency help.

When you call 911, be prepared to answer the operator's questions which may include:

- The location of the emergency, including the street address
- The phone number you are calling from
- The nature of the emergency
- Details about the emergency, such as a description of the injuries or symptoms being experienced by a person having a medical emergency

Remember the operator's questions are important to get the right kind of help to you quickly. Be prepared to follow any instructions the operator gives you. The 911 operator may tell you exactly what to do to assist in an emergency until help arrives, such as providing step-by-step instructions to aid someone who is choking or needs first aid or CPR.

Finally, do not hang up until the 911 operator instructs you to do so.

If 911 is dialed by mistake, when no emergency exists, do not hang up—that could make the 911 operator think that an emergency exists, and possibly send responders to your location; instead simply explain what happened.