

Appendix C: School Lockdown Planning Discussion Points

School Lockdown Planning Discussion Points

Special Note: Periodically, the Kentucky Center for School Safety (KCSS) is asked to provide suggestions to school district officials regarding a variety of emergency response procedures. Recently, KCSS was asked to provide a model lockdown procedure for a school setting.

KCSS, unfortunately, cannot provide such a policy due to the uniqueness of each school setting, specific local and state laws, and differing agency requirements. (It is all too common for different law enforcement agencies to have different requirements they wish to see in place upon arriving at a school that has become a crime scene.)

KCSS can, however, provide discussion points for school district officials and first responders to consider when developing a school-specific lockdown procedure. Therefore, as you will see below, each area addressed is offered only as a consideration for school officials and local responders to discuss as they develop their school's individual plan. Please note that a critical part of these procedures is that they must be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

Consideration I

Basic Lockdown Principles: To be discussed among school officials and first responders when developing procedures to protect building occupants from potential dangers inside a school building.

1. Announce that the school is in "lockdown."
2. Call 911.
3. Lock all doors. (Barricade the door if possible.)
4. Move students to a wall that is out of the line of sight from doorway.
5. Remain quiet.
6. Wait for an official to unlock the door to conclude lockdown.
7. Make certain the staff understands who the Incident Commander will be during a lockdown.

Consideration II:

Critical Questions: To be discussed with school officials and first responders when developing a school-based lockdown procedure to further refine the individual school's plan. Note: This not an all-inclusive list; rather, these are important questions to ask and have answered before an emergency requiring an official lockdown:

1. Should the lights in the classroom be left on or turned off?
2. Should door and exterior windows be covered and/or window shades pulled down or should they be left uncovered?
3. Should cards (red/green) be used to slide under classrooms doors to signal problems or a lack thereof?
4. If a fire alarm is activated during a lockdown, should the staff and students evacuate the building?
5. What should be done with students who are caught in a hallway or restroom when a lockdown is activated?
6. What should the staff and students do if an active shooting takes place during morning arrival, afternoon dismissal, class change, lunch period, when students are in the library or during an after-school activity?
7. What should staff and students do if they are outside (such as in P.E., at recess, etc.) when a building lockdown is activated?

8. What should staff and students do when they are in the cafeteria, library, restrooms or portable classrooms?
9. What should bus drivers do when:
 - A. They arrive at school during a lockdown?
 - B. They have an active shooter on the bus?
 - C. There is active shooting taking place during dismissal?
10. What should a staff member do when he/she and their class are held hostage?
11. What types/kind of official communication will be used and/or permitted during a lockdown?
12. What should students and staff members do when an armed intruder begins shooting in the classroom where they are present?

Consideration III:

Special Areas: To be discussed by school officials and first responders when examining special areas on a school campus that may be involved in a lockdown. This not an all-inclusive list; these are possible responses that have been taken by other schools.

1. Students Outside the School Building, but on Campus (P.E., recess, etc.):
Possible Response: Consider retreating to offsite location for safety. Example locations may be a business, residence, church. Notify first responders of location by phoning 911.
2. Gymnasium:
Possible Response: Consider moving to the locker room. If there are no locker rooms, use an equipment room, lock doors and find “safe area.”
3. Cafeteria:
Possible Response: Consider moving to the nearest classroom or kitchen area if this area can be locked.
4. Library/Media Center:
Possible Response: Consider locking the doors and moving out of line of sight. Also, consider moving to a back room within the library and locking that door as well. If none of these are available, consider assuming a dropped position near an exterior wall close to an exterior door for possible escape, or hiding behind a table that can be dropped on its side and used as barrier.
5. Restrooms:
Possible Response: Close-proximity teachers or non-classroom teachers/staff may consider conducting a cursory sweep of restroom areas for students and staff when possible and moving them to a secure classroom.
Possible Response: Consider, if there is no time to move to a classroom, whether or not the procedure should include suggesting students and staff move to a stall, locking it and standing on the toilet.
6. Hallways:
Possible Response: Consider moving into closest classroom.
7. Portable Classrooms or Trailers:
Possible Response: Consider moving to secure a classroom or decide if there is time to escape from school grounds. Who is responsible for making this decision?
8. Special Needs Students and Staff:
Possible Response: Consider making certain all plans include accommodations for disabled students and staff.