

## INTRODUCTION

The safety and welfare of Nassau BOCES students is paramount, so being prepared for emergencies is a task that Nassau BOCES has always taken very, very seriously. Therefore, in compliance with New York State Commissioner of Education Regulations, Nassau BOCES has developed an Emergency Response Plan for each of our schools that is designed to minimize danger to anyone occupying the school, should an emergency occur.

The plan addresses an enormous range of issues, from reducing the likelihood of an emergency, to dealing with the onset of a crisis situation, to addressing the emotional and psychological needs of students and adults in its aftermath. The plan is always evolving to enable Nassau BOCES to respond better and better to any emergency.

When disaster strikes, the first and foremost concern of every Nassau BOCES staff member is the safety of the children in our care. This guide is a brief description of how Nassau BOCES will manage an emergency and how parents can support those vital efforts. The guide is designed to help answer some of the basic questions that parents frequently ask about their role during and after a crisis: Where do I get information? What should I do? Who can I contact for help?

Questions about the information in this guide should be directed to your building principal.

**It is recommended that you keep this guide in an accessible location for future reference.**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Nassau BOCES has established an Emergency Response Plan for each of our schools. Each plan is coordinated with Police, Fire and other officials in county- or state-wide agencies.

Each plan addresses many types of possible emergencies, some of which are listed below:



**Criminal Offenses** such as a bomb threat, kidnapping, intruder on campus, violent disturbance, weapons, hostage situation



**Natural Hazards** such as severe weather or earthquake



**Environmental/Human-Created Hazards**, for example, exposure to hazardous materials, fire, explosion, radiation



**Medical Emergencies** including illnesses, serious contagious disease and pandemic flu, accidents, injuries

## WHAT CAN I DO TO PLAN AHEAD?

The two most important things you can do are:

- Make sure your child's school has the most up-to-date emergency contact information.
- Periodically review with your child any alternative arrangements you have made in case an emergency prevents you from being at home.



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# EMERGENCY PLANNING

## A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Fall 2017



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## How Will The School Respond To An Emergency?

In the event of an incident occurring during the school day that disrupts normal classroom activity, the incident will be immediately reported to the school's main office. The principal will determine a course of action. If an emergency response is required, signals and instructions for staff and students will be issued from the main office. There are three possible plans of action: Go-Home (early dismissal); Sheltering (including Lockdown); or Evacuation.

### Go-Home Plan (early dismissal):

Returns students to their homes and family as quickly as possible. Schools maintain the names and contact numbers of family and designated surrogates, and identify students with special needs. Parents/guardians will be called in advance of students being dismissed early. **At no time will Nassau BOCES students be returned to unoccupied, unsupervised homes.** If there is no one at home, students will remain under the care of Nassau BOCES and will be transported to a Nassau BOCES shelter site or will be returned to the home district until a parent or other designated adult comes to get him or her.



### Shelter Plan:

It is Nassau BOCES' intent to return students to their home school district or homes, if appropriate, as quickly as possible, based on direction from local emergency authorities and as safety permits. However, there may be times when it is safer to stay inside than to go out. The Shelter Plan keeps students in their buildings. Generally, sheltering is for a short time during the school day, but Nassau BOCES is prepared to shelter students up to 24 hours, if necessary.



Areas of buildings are identified as the safest for occupants, depending on the nature of the emergency.



In the event that sheltering for up to 24 hours becomes necessary, only students with prior authorization for the administration of medication and a supply of that medication, stored in the school, will be able to have the nurse administer the medications. If your child takes any medications that are essential to his or her health that are normally taken outside of school, you are strongly encouraged to fill out a "MEDICATION PERMISSION REQUEST FORM" and return it to the school nurse with a 24 hour supply of the medication in a properly labeled container from the pharmacy. Parents are responsible to update medication orders and to replenish expired medications as needed.

### Evacuation Plan:

In most emergencies, students will remain and be cared for at school, but there may be times that it is necessary for all building occupants to evacuate and go somewhere else. Evacuation may mean only going outside and away from the building while waiting for the danger to pass. In some circumstances, students and staff may need to walk or be transported and sheltered temporarily at a pre-determined alternative location.



## If There's An Evacuation, Where Will Students Go?

For security reasons, it would be counter productive to announce an evacuation location prior to or during an actual emergency. If it becomes necessary to move students to a secure location outside their regular school building, we will be making every effort to contact you. Each school



has a separate copy of every child's emergency contact information that is taken with them in an emergency. All information regarding the status of the school, students and staff, will be issued through the Nassau BOCES Office of Information. Please refer to the section on "Where can I get information during an emergency?"

## What Provisions Are Made For Students With Disabilities?



Every Nassau BOCES school has a detailed plan of action to evacuate any students who may have special needs.

## Are There Emergency Planning Drills?

**YES** – Nassau BOCES conducts tests of its emergency plans, as per state regulations, including a minimum of 12 fire, lockdown and other safety drills each year.

## Should I Pick Up My Child At School During An Emergency?

# NO

We strongly encourage parents **NOT** to come to the school unless directed to do so.

While every parent's instinct in an emergency is to go to the school to protect his/her own child, it is important to realize that doing so may significantly affect the ability of Nassau BOCES to respond to the situation. Cars driving up to the building, for example, will restrict access by emergency vehicles that are responding to the emergency or school buses that are loading children either to evacuate them or take them home. The building's staff will be actively working to ensure the safety of ALL the students. It may seem logical that every student taken home by a parent reduces the responsibility of the staff, but in a fast-moving situation that requires a great deal of coordination and communication, it actually makes the critical task of keeping track of students more difficult. If you are called to the school to pick up your child, please be aware only those people listed on the child's emergency card will be authorized and allowed to take the child. Also, a child will only be released to authorized adults who provide proper picture identification.



## Where Can I Get Information During An Emergency?

We know that during an emergency you will want as much information as quickly possible, but please **do not telephone the school**. Our phone lines are limited and are needed to respond to the emergency.



## There are several ways to get information during an emergency:

- ▶ Check the Nassau BOCES website. As soon as the decision to close the agency is made, it's posted on the homepage at [www.nassauboces.org](http://www.nassauboces.org).
- ▶ Sign up for emergency closing emails. Join the Nassau BOCES emergency announcement email list and be the first to know about emergency closings. To sign up, go to [www.nassauboces.org/closings](http://www.nassauboces.org/closings) and enter email address in box "Notify me of Nassau BOCES closings".
- ▶ Call our emergency announcement number 516-396-INFO (4636). This phone line is dedicated to providing up-to-date information about any emergency situation.
- ▶ Log on to Social Media
  -  facebook.com/nassauboces or
  -  @NassauBOCES on Twitter
- ▶ Tune in to the media  
You can listen to school closings on the following radio stations: WMJC (94.3 FM), WKJY (98.3 FM), WBLI (106.1 FM), WBAB (102.3 FM), WBZO (103.1 FM), WOR (710 AM), WINS (1010 AM) and WHLI (1100 AM). You can also tune in to the following television stations: News 12 Long Island, FIOS1, WPIX/ Channel 11 and Fox 5.

