

Emergency Lockdown Procedures

If an emergency situation occurring in the vicinity of a school threatens student or staff member safety, the school/department may be placed under “lockdown” or “stay in place”. I encourage you to carefully review the following information regarding the types of notification codes, safety procedures, and notification process implemented should an emergency and/or potential threat or crisis occur in the vicinity of a school which may endanger the safety of the students and staff.

What does the term “lockdown” mean?

A lockdown protects students and staff members from internal or external threats. Classroom and exterior doors are secure, and movement within the building(s) is restricted.

Why is it necessary for schools to activate a lockdown?

If an emergency situation occurring in the vicinity of a school endangers student safety, the school may be placed under lockdown. Whenever a threat arises, schools are the focus of heightened attention for Police and local authorities. Although such measures may seem extreme, they have proven effective to make sure students and staff members are safe.

What happens when lockdown procedures are activated?

All doors, windows, classrooms, and administrative offices are locked. Students and staff must remain in their classrooms or offices. No one, with the exception of law enforcement personnel, will be allowed to exit or enter the school until authorities give the “all clear” message.

When a lockdown is activated, what should parents do?

If a lockdown were to be implemented, parents should:

- Remain calm as school and local authorities manage the situation.
- The school district will send an automated telephone message to keep parents informed.
- If a lockdown lasts for an extended period of time, or goes beyond dismissal time, students will not be allowed to leave until recommended by the appropriate authorities. School staff will attempt to notify parents by phone.
- Once it is determined safe, parents may be required to pick up children from school or another designated staging area.
- To further ensure student safety, parents may be required to present identification.
- The location for reuniting with the students will be given to parents over the phone, if possible, and will always be publicized to the media.
- School officials will work with the district’s transportation department regarding bus transport.
- Students and parents are reminded that during an emergency situation, cellular sites may be overwhelmed due to a high volume of calls. It is critical that text messaging and cell phone use be kept to a minimum so that emergency services have priority to assist the students and staff on the site.

What does the term “stay in place” mean?

This refers to protecting students, faculty and staff within the building(s). This option is useful for students and staff members to remain in their classrooms/designated areas due to weather situations, a disturbance that occurred on campus, or other such type of situation.

Crisis Training

Campus administrators and staff members have been trained according to United ISD’s crisis procedures to help prepare our schools in the event of an actual crisis.

Are routine drills conducted at campuses?

United ISD campuses conduct drills, such as lockdown drills and fire drills. Staff members receive training regularly.

How can I ensure I am receiving important messages?

Please update contact information with your child’s school. The automated phone messaging system will alert parents using the phone number on file with the school.

Where can parents check for updates?

The district will post “official” and “factual” information to the district’s web page (www.uisd.net), on the district’s official Facebook page, (www.facebook.com/uisd), via KGNS, KLDO, and through the local radio stations.

How else will parents be informed?

If the event warrants, a letter will be sent home with students informing parents about the incident/situation. The district places great emphasis on communicating with our parents, and as such, we will do our best to keep parents informed about major incidents as quickly as possible.

Maintaining Control of Rumors

During a school crisis/threat, please **DO NOT ACCEPT AS TRUE** “rumors” that you may hear via social media. The school district will keep parents updated with the district’s automated phone messaging system, via the district’s website, Facebook page and/or local media stations.

An Important Reminder to Parents

Please remind your children about the importance of being alert, avoiding strangers, and reporting suspicious behavior, activities or rumors to adults on campus.

Your cooperation is extremely critical, especially during a crisis. Thank you in advance for your partnership in ensuring the safety and welfare of our students and staff.

WEATHER RELATED SITUATIONS

The following information is provided to help parents understand how the District makes the determination to cancel or delay the opening of school due to bad weather. In addition, it details the notification procedures utilized to inform parents of weather related school schedule changes. Please note that that student and staff safety is our first priority. The decision to cancel or delay school is significant and is only made after thorough consideration if the decision is made to cancel school or to start late, the phone messaging system will alert parents using the phone number on file with the school. In addition, the announcement will be communicated via the United ISD website (uisd.net), Facebook page, and/or local media stations.

Will Schools be Closed Today Due to Inclement Weather?

When the threat or condition of extreme weather exists, United ISD officials will begin checking roads as early as 4:30 a.m. in order to determine if school will be held as scheduled. Campus administrators who can safely reach the campus will be at the school to ensure that students are not dropped off in the event a parent does not receive notification of the school closing. For safety and security purposes, parents should never drop off or leave their children unattended.

In the event of inclement weather the decision to open or close schools will be made no later than 6 a.m. on the day in question and communicated as soon as possible to parents/guardians and staff in several ways:

- The district will call local radio and television stations by 6 a.m. to inform them whether or not schools are to be open or closed. The stations will then broadcast this information to the public.
- Automated phone calls stating whether schools are to be open or closed are made as soon as possible to parents. Parents must ensure that their contact information is kept current.
- The information is posted on the district's website at *www.uisd.net*
- Campus administrators who can safely reach the campus will be at the school to ensure that students are not dropped off in the event a parent does not receive notification of the school closing.
- For safety and security purposes, parents should never drop off or leave their children unattended.

Once schools are open for the day, classes are held for the entire school day so as to not inconvenience working parents or disrupt the learning environment.

ELECTRICITY/WATER OUTAGES

Schools may experience a power failure/water outage ranging from a few minutes to several hours. Typically, United ISD does not close school unless there are compelling reasons to do so.

Please be aware that during a power outage, campus phones will not work and the affected school will not be able to answer incoming calls. This is not a cause for concern, but parents should be aware of this fact so as not to be alarmed. During power outages, campuses do have the ability to reach emergency services via our phone system, as well as communicate with the District Office.

District personnel confers with the respective utility company about the timeline for the restoration of electrical services or water to an affected campus(es). The findings are reported to the Superintendent of schools, who makes the final decision to open or close schools.

In the event of a school closing or early release due to a suspension of electrical/water outage, parents will be notified in several ways:

- The district will call local radio and television stations to inform them. The stations will then broadcast this information to the public.
- Automated phone calls will be made as soon as possible to parents. Parents must ensure that their contact information is kept current.
- The information will be posted on the district's website at *www.uisd.net*
- School officials will work with the district's transportation department regarding bus transport. Staff members will ride the buses with the students to ensure that students are released to an adult.

Sites not directly affected by power failure/water outages will remain open.