

Hold and Secure and Lockdown Information for Parents

Dear Parent/Guardian:

St. James-Assiniboia School Division has developed many policies and procedures to provide a meaningful, safe, and caring environment for staff and students. Two of the procedures are (a) **Hold and Secure** and (b) **Lockdown**. It's important to know the difference between the two procedures to avoid confusion and undue anxiety.

A) Hold and Secure

A **Hold and Secure** may occur if a serious situation is taking place in the community and can be unrelated to the school. A school-based administrator or the Winnipeg Police Service may initiate a hold and secure notification. During a Hold and Secure situation, it is "business as usual" within the school, except all outdoor activities move indoors. Principals ensure students and staff do not leave the building (Hold) and all doors are locked (Secure) and monitored by staff to prevent entry by unknown persons. Once the situation is resolved, police will notify the principal and the **Hold and Secure** will be lifted.

B) Lockdown

A **Lockdown** is a very serious and rare event. Lockdowns are a response to immediate physical danger or a credible threat of physical danger such as a threat with a weapon, in the school or on school property.

During a **Lockdown** event, all staff and students quickly move to a pre-determined secure safe zone away from hallways and other public areas. Police will attend and assume control of the situation. All schools have Lockdown Plans and perform Lockdown Drills to ensure all staff and students know what to do.

Parent Communication in the Event of an Actual Hold and Secure or Lockdown Situation

If there is an actual event taking place, parents will be contacted via School Messenger, as soon as it is possible to do so, to inform them of the situation as outlined below.

Hold and Secure Message:

Parents and guardians, we are currently in a hold and secure due to an issue in the community. Classes will continue as normal, and the doors to the building are locked. No one will be permitted to enter or exit the building at this time. We will inform you when the hold and secure is lifted and share any pertinent information at that time if it is available to us.

Lockdown Message:

Parents and guardians, we are currently in a lockdown situation. We will notify you when the lockdown is lifted.

*Once it has been deemed safe to do so, the Hold and Secure or Lockdown will be lifted, and parents will be contacted again via School Messenger to indicate that the situation has been resolved. If there are any pertinent details to be shared, we will inform the community at our earliest opportunity to do so.

Practicing Lockdown Procedures

Like fire drills, it is important that we are well prepared in the event of an actual emergency. Lockdowns are practiced twice per year at all schools to ensure staff and students know what to do to ensure their safety in the case of an actual event. Teachers help students to understand how to behave calmly and quietly when requested by the teacher to do so.

For the duration of a Lockdown practice, a notice will be placed on the front door of the school to let visitors know that a practice is occurring. During this time (approximately 5 – 10 minutes), no one will be permitted to enter or exit the building until the practice has ended.

If you have any questions about these procedures, please feel free to contact us.

Thank-you for your assistance and cooperation in maintaining safe practices for all of our staff, students.

Sincerely,

T. Baydock
Principal

Jody O'Brien
Vice-Principal