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# SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY TIPS FOR STAFF

*A periodic publication of best practices in keeping schools safe*

## SEVERE WEATHER—Are You Ready?

### GETTING PREPARED:

#### Here is how:

Severe weather can happen anywhere. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), there were 450 fatalities and nearly 2,600 injuries related to severe weather in 2012 alone.\* Knowing what to do in the event of severe weather can save your life!

- **ARE YOU READY?** Identify areas in your main building where sheltering the students, staff, and visitors will provide shelter and protection. Federal authorities recommend using the lowest floor and as close to the interior of the building as possible, keep clear of windows, doors, and skylights with glass.
- Plan a Severe Weather Shelter drill and ensure that students and staff are familiar with the procedures.
- **SEVERE WEATHER IN THE FORECAST?** Prepare a plan. Consider the day's scheduled outside activities and how long it will take to evacuate your portable classrooms, and clear the athletic fields into your building.
- Identify times students and staff are outside or in relocatable classrooms.
- Assign a staff member to monitor the weather and ensure that administration is made aware of any changes or severe weather "WARNINGS" in your area.
- **YOU MUST MOVE QUICKLY.** Be prepared to institute your severe weather plans at a moment's notice.
- Develop a communication plan for staff and parents.
- Remind parents in your August newsletter or on your school's website to develop an emergency plan with their children, including where children should go if there is an early dismissal.

### THERE IS SEVERE WEATHER: Here is what to do:

- IMMEDIATELY on receipt of a high wind severe weather warning in your area, activate your Severe Weather Shelter Plan.
- Bring students, staff, and visitors into the building and evacuate relocatable classrooms to the main building.
- Direct students, staff, and visitors to the identified weather safe areas. Close fire doors to increase separation.
- Place students on the floor in the weather-safe position.
- Continue to monitor the NOAA weather radio announcements, if possible.

### Security Contact INFORMATION

**CONTACT** your cluster security coordinator or the Department of School Safety and Security at **301-279-3066** between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

**CONTACT** the Department of School Safety and Security after hours at **301-279-3232**.

\*FEMA-SEVERE WEATHER: <http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather>