

New Braunfels ISD

Emergency Preparedness and Response Information for Parents

New Braunfels Independent School Districts makes every effort to take proactive measures to protect the safety of all students and staff members. NBISD representatives meet with Comal County local emergency planning committees and emergency management teams that are planning our community's responses to potential threats. Our plans are made in concert with all other local emergency preparedness plans.

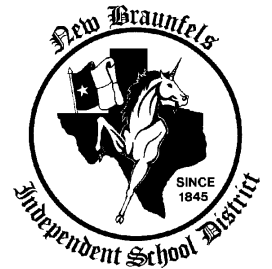
All NBISD school campuses have safety and security plans in place. The plans are designed with the help of school security staff members, as well as local law enforcement, emergency management, and public health officials.

Plans are regularly reviewed and updated. These plans include procedures to respond to critical incidents, such as a fire or tornado, and school system personnel practice these drills regularly.

School district personnel work in close collaboration with local and state emergency personnel to develop and maintain plans for coping with a variety of emergency response situations. These plans involve efforts to protect all students while they are at school.

The actions taken during any type of emergency situation depend a great deal on the specifics of the incident. For example, one or more schools may evacuate, lock down, or initiate a "shelter-in-place" response, according to the nature of the threat. The main objective is the protection of the students and staff members. School administrators have a variety of "tools" to use and have received training on how to work with each of these. The ability to remain flexible is a key component of each school's plan and of district-wide preparations. Keep in mind that during an emergency, NBISD employees are required to follow direction from public safety officials.

If you have questions about the safety procedures at your child's school, please contact your principal. Everyone in NBISD will continue to work to make all of our schools safe and secure environments for all of our students.



In the event of an emergency, NBISD will activate the following crisis tools:

- Emergency messages are sent to parents and other patrons through the television and radio stations, and NBISD educational Cable Channel 19 (on the Time Warner system). In addition, NBISD uses its website at www.newbraunfels.txed.net and its hotline at 830-643-5700, option 4.
- The district's crisis management team is activated and works closely with local and state law enforcement and emergency personnel. This team directs the response of the local school crisis management teams.
- The NBISD Public Information Offices ensures that students, staff members, parents, the media, and the community have accurate and current information about the situation as it becomes available. For more information, contact Stephanie Ferguson, 830-643-5720.
- The district's website includes its responses to federal, state, and local homeland security advisory systems and are found under the Emergency News Link.

ANTICIPATED RESPONSE TO HOMELAND SECURITY CODE READ

If the federal government moves its threat condition to red, NBISD may institute one or more of the following measures, in addition to the security measures already in place:

1. Offer NBISD staff members to Comal County Emergency Operations Center (CCEOC) (24/7). The CCEOC directs all emergency operations in the county, under the direction of the county executive. NBISD staff members will participate with other county agencies, including fire and police in crisis management decisions.
2. Activate NBISD's Crisis Command and Support Centers (24/7). These command centers, located at central office, under the direction of the Superintendent, will make management decisions regarding schools and school personnel that are not the domain of public safety officials.
3. Assess threat level to determine status of school openings and closings.
4. Address critical emergency needs under the direction of public safety officials and in accordance with school crisis plans and the NBISD crisis management plan. A variety of means are available to protect students and staff members, depending on the event, including evacuation, shelter-in-place, or lock-down.
- 5. Coordinate parent-child reunification process, if necessary. If children have been evacuated from a school, an appropriate site will be established where children can be reunited with their families. Parents will be notified and will need to present identification when they pick up their child.**
6. Continue staff, parent, and community communication. NBISD will use all available means (including the web site, hot lines, telephone trees, Cable Channel 19, and the media) to communicate quickly and effectively with parents and the community about the health and safety of students and staff members.
7. Cancel all outside activities and field trips if schools are open. Cancellations could also include community programs and other events.
8. Increase building security. A number of actions may be taken, depending on the nature of the critical event. Among possible measures are restricted visitor access with staffed entries, limited parking near buildings, and enhanced exterior security (including lockdown drills).

Questions to Consider

How can I stay informed?

NBISD will issue emergency messages, when necessary, using a number of media. General emergency messages, early and late school openings and closings can be found on Cable Channel 19, the school district's website at www.newbraunfels.txed.net and on radio stations KGNB/KNBT (1420 AM/92.1 FM), WOAI (1200 AM), and KTSA (550 AM). Emergency news also can be accessed through NBISD's information line at 830-643-5700, option 4. Emergency messages are transmitted to local media, and parents are encouraged to listen to radio or television.

How will my children know what to do in the event of a crisis?

Inform your children that, if a crisis occurs while they are in school, their teacher will provide them with appropriate instructions.

What is shelter-in-place?

Shelter-in-place is a short-term solution to a short-term problem. If an accident or attack that created contaminated air occurred in the nearby area, everyone would be brought indoors. Building personnel would close all windows and doors and shut down the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system (HVAC). This would create a neutral pressure in the building, meaning the contaminated air would not be drawn into the building.

Shelter-in-place is a short-term measure (measured in minutes or hours, not days) designed to use a facility and its indoor atmosphere to temporarily separate people from a hazardous outdoor environment. The alternative would be to evacuate into a hazardous situation, thereby causing harm to all involved.

No stockpiling of water and food is needed for a shelter-in-place. Any event of a magnitude that required such stockpiling would require that we all take our direction from federal emergency management officials. Parents are concerned that, during a shelter-in-place activity, they couldn't pick up their children and might be separated from them for long periods of time. School system personnel have developed a plan that uses the best possible method for ensuring the safety of students and staff members in this type of crisis. Remember, it is not the school system's intention to keep children from their parents. NBISD personnel are merely endeavoring to keep children safe for parents until the parents can pick them up.

Pickup Procedures/Parent-Child Reunification

Can I pick up my child?

Parents are allowed to pick up their children unless public safety officials have declared a shelter-in-place response, or there is some other reason why access to the facility is restricted. During any emergency, school personnel will maintain as safe and normal environment for children within the school as is possible. School is not automatically canceled in emergency situations. Remember, school may be the safest place for children to be.

Who can pick up my children?

Children will not be released to individuals who are not authorized on the student's emergency care card or who do not have written parent authorization.

The emergency care form is completed by parents and guardians at the start of each school year. Parents and guardians are encouraged to update the emergency card and numbers as needed throughout the school year. Friends and neighbors may sign a child or children out with written permission from a parent or parents. Schools will also ask for identification when the child is released to the one(s) mentioned in the permission note.

Why are you keeping children from their parents?

NBISD personnel do not intend to keep children from their parents if a crisis occurs during school hours or school activities. It is the school systems' intent to make sure that children are safe inside their schools until such a time that the threat has been reduced. Parents will be informed of the parent-student reunification center location via the school system and local media.

What is a parent-student reunification site?

If public safety officials require that a school building be evacuated, students and staff members will be safely transported by bus to a designated parent-student reunification center. Parents will be informed of the reunification location via the school system and local media. At the reunification center, students will be released to their parents upon presentation of proper identification.

Why can't I get the evacuation and parent-student reunification locations ahead of time?

NBISD does not release this type of specific information, prior to or during emergency situations due to circumstances that could arise which might force changes to previously designated locations. Parents will be informed of parent-student reunification center locations via the local media and through school resources.