

Emergency Letter to Parents

Dear Parents:

Should an emergency or disaster situation ever arise in our area while school is in session, we want you to be aware that the schools have made preparations to respond effectively to such situations. In fact, public schools in Maryland are built to meet stringent construction standards and they may be safer than your own home in the event of a disaster.

Should we have a major disaster during school hours, your student(s) will be cared for at this school. Our School System has a detailed disaster plan, which has been formulated to respond to a major catastrophe. Your cooperation is necessary in any emergency, for both the safety of staff and students, and the expedient reunification with your child.

1. Do not telephone the school. Telephone lines may be needed for emergency communication.
2. Do not go to the school, or evacuation site, until notified to do so.
3. In the event of a serious emergency, students will be kept at their schools, or evacuated to an alternate site. Only a responsible adult, who has been identified as such on a School System Emergency Card, will be permitted to pick up a student. This card is required to be filled-out by parents at the beginning of every school year. Please be sure you consider the following criteria when you authorize another person to pick up your child at school:
 - * He/she is 18 years of age or older.
 - * He/she is usually home during the day.
 - * He/she could walk to school, if necessary.
 - * He/she is known by your child.
 - * He/she is both aware and able to assume this responsibility.
4. Turn your radio and television to those channels listed in the school calendar, the HCPSS website www.hcpss.org , or www.schools-out.com for emergency announcements. If students are to be kept at school, the media will be notified. If electrical service is not affected, the information will be relayed via the School System cable on Channel 72.
5. Impress upon your children the need for them to follow directions of any school personnel in times of an emergency. Students will be released only to parents, and persons identified on the School System Emergency Card. During an extreme emergency, students will be released at designated reunion gates located on school campuses, or an alternate evacuation site.

Parents should become familiar with the School Emergency Disaster Plan and be patient and understanding with the student release process. Please instruct your student to remain with school personnel until you, or a designee, arrives. Because local telephone service may be disrupted, also list an out-of-state contact on the emergency card, as calls may still be made out of the area while incoming calls are affected.

The decision to keep students at school will be based upon whether or not it is safe to transport students/release on streets in the area. If this occurs, the media will be notified. In the event that an emergency takes place during the time that students are being picked up and transported to school, students will be kept on the bus, additional student pick ups will cease, and the driver will immediately proceed to the intended school to await further instructions. Any child who has not been picked-up remains the responsibility of the parent or guardian. In the event that an emergency occurs in the afternoon, the driver will make every attempt to continue delivering students to their homes. Should road conditions prevent the driver from delivering students to their homes in the afternoon, or to school in the morning, the driver will deliver students to the nearest school and await further instructions. The receiving school will attempt to communicate to the home school, to inform them of the students' location.

The emergency actions your school may take are dependent on the emergency situation. You are encouraged to review these steps, and become familiar with terminology, by reviewing material on the HCPSS website www.hcpss.org If you have additional questions about HCPSS emergency plans, you may call the office of Safety Environment & Risk Management at 410-313-6739, or a school administrator.

Please discuss these matters with your immediate family. Planning ahead will help alleviate concern during emergencies.

Sincerely,

Hollifield Station Elementary School