

Emergency Response Operations

## **WJHSD Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Pertaining to WJHSD Emergency Response Operations**

### **What is emergency preparedness?**

WJHSD has taken steps to ensure your child's safety while in school. Each school has developed a crisis response plan. Emergency preparedness is basically preparing the steps you will take in the event of an emergency, such as contact information, communications, and evacuation plans.

### **How can I stay informed?**

WJHSD broadcasts emergency messages, when necessary, using a number of media. General emergency messages, early and late school openings and closings can be found on the school system public web page at [www.wjhsd.net](http://www.wjhsd.net). Messages and emergency will be transmitted to local media. Parents are encouraged to listen to radio or television.

### **What is lockdown?**

An emergency may prevent the safe evacuation of a school building and require steps to isolate students and faculty from danger by instituting a school lockdown. In an interior lockdown situation, all students are kept in classrooms or other designated locations that are away from the danger. Faculty members are responsible for accounting for students and ensuring that no one leaves the safe area. School personnel will also secure building entrances, ensuring that no unauthorized individuals leave or enter the building. Exterior lockdown procedures may also be used to ensure the safety of students when an incident occurs in the community. Parents are permitted access to the building and to their children if it is safe for them to do so.

### **What is ALICE?**

We currently have three trained ALICE instructors on the WJHSD staff. ALICE ([Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate](#)) provides preparation and a plan for individuals and organizations on how to more proactively handle the threat of an aggressive intruder or active shooter event. Whether it is an attack by an individual person or by an international group of professionals intent on conveying a political message through violence, ALICE Training option-based tactics have become the accepted response, versus the traditional “lockdown only” approach. All of our staff members have now received ALICE training.

### **In the event of a terrorist attack or other emergency situation, will WJHSD go into lockdown?**

The specific actions taken by WJHSD in any emergency situation-both district wide and at individual schools-will depend on the specifics of the situation. Any action taken would depend on several factors, including the level of threat and the advice of local, state, and federal agencies. The safety of students and staff members will be the primary concern in any decision.

### **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 shelter-in-place. Any event of a magnitude that required such stockpiling would require that we all take our direction from the 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. That will not happen; if the air outside the school is safe for parents to breathe, it is safe for their children to breathe. 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. WJHSD personnel are merely endeavoring to keep children safe for parents until the parents can pick them up.

**Are schools stockpiling food and water?**

The school system is taking action to make sure that schools and offices have the appropriate resources available for a short-term event. In the event of a large-scale catastrophic event, WJHSD would rely on local, state and federal authorities for assistance.

There has been no request by state, local, or federal crisis experts that we stockpile food or water.

The WJHSD shelter-in-place plan is to be used only in the event of a chemical, biohazard, or radiological disaster situation.