

## **STUDENTS**

### Earthquakes

The threat of an earthquake in Washington is ever-present. As with other unforeseen events, the district must be prepared to care for students and staff until danger subsides.

Each school principal in consultation with staff is required to prepare a plan and conduct an emergency earthquake drill at least twice annually. The building staff is encouraged to contact the district office and the county emergency service department for technical assistance.

### Preparation

The principal and building staff shall be responsible for conducting an annual inspection of the building early in the school year for the purpose of identifying potential hazards in the event of an earthquake, e.g., securing all bookcases to wall to prevent collapse. Those hazards that cannot be corrected by building level personnel will be corrected by district maintenance personnel as soon as resources permit.

### Information to Parents

Parents should be advised that:

- A. If there is an earthquake while children are on their way to school, they should "duct and cover away from power lines, buildings, and trees." Once the earthquake has stopped, they should proceed to school. If the quake occurs on their way home, after protecting themselves until the quake stops, they should proceed to their home.
- B. A parent is advised not to remove a child from the school grounds unless they have first checked with school officials. If a parent were to remove a child without checking out, others could be needlessly hurt while searching for a missing child.
- C. They should avoid calling the school. The phones, if they are functioning, may be needed by school staff. Parents of injured children will be notified first. All schools will have trained staff to help injured children until other medical assistance arrives.

Staff members should attempt to account for all students and staff before re-entry, the principal must feel absolutely certain, on the basis of thorough inspection of both structures and utility conduits, that the facility is safe; but no students or staff will be dismissed until procedures have been approved by the superintendent's office if district-wide communications are in operation.

### General Responsibilities

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The principal must become familiar with the alarm system, all means of egress, and any special features of the facility which might endanger human life. Staff should be appointed and instructed in the general earthquake plan. The building administrator should carry out all communications functions, coordinate post-quake building inspections, and signal re-entry when safety is assured.

Teachers shall see that all members of their respective classes take protective action appropriate to their situations; evacuate classes in an orderly and expeditious manner; maintain order; supervise evacuated students; and, insure orderly re-entry when signalled. Monitors may be appointed from the more mature pupils in each class to assist teachers. Monitors should be assigned to substitute for any teacher who may be injured.

The custodian shall assist in the inspection of the facility, including utility conduits, and shut down mechanical/electrical systems as required. Other staff members shall act as searchers; assist in evacuation and care of injured or disabled individuals; help remove hazardous materials or debris; and, carry out any additional assigned functions.

Staff Instructions (During quake)

- A. In a classroom student should get under desk or table, face away from window, away from bookshelves and heavy objects that may fall, crouch on knees close to ground, place head close to knees, cover side of head with elbows and clasp hands firmly behind neck, close eyes tightly and remain in place until instructed otherwise or until the "all clear" signal is given.
- B. In gymnasiums or assembly areas, students should exit such facilities as expeditiously as possible. Individuals should move to designated areas.
- C. On a stairway students should move to the interior wall and "duck and cover." (Individuals should evacuate exterior stairs and move to designated areas.)
- D. If outdoors, students should move to designated areas, as far away as possible from buildings, poles, wires, and other elevated objects, and lie down or crouch low to the ground. Staff and students should be aware of encroaching danger that may demand further movement.

Staff Instructions (After quake)

The principal and custodian should inspect facilities before instructing staff and students to evacuate. Classes should be evacuated through exits to a safe area. Students should move away from buildings and remain there until given further instructions. Responsible student

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or staff should be posted to prevent re-entry. Following this evacuation, the principal should:

- A. Check for injuries among students and staff. (Do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury.)
- B. Check for fires or fire hazards.
- C. Check utility lines and appliances for damage. If gas leaks exist, shut off the main gas valves and shut off electrical power if there is damage to the wiring. (Do not use matches, lighters, or open flame appliances until you are sure no gas leaks exist, and do not operate electrical switches or appliances if gas leaks are suspected.)
- D. Instruct students not to touch power lines or objects touched by the wires. (All wires should be treated as live.)
- E. Clean up spilled medicines, drugs, chemicals, and other potentially harmful materials immediately.
- F. Do not eat or drink anything from open containers near shattered glass. (Liquids may be strained through a clean handkerchief or cloth if danger of glass contamination exists.)
- G. Check the chimney over its entire length for cracks and damage, particularly in the attic and at the roof line. (Unnoticed damage could lead to a fire.)
- H. Check closets and storage shelf areas. (Open closet and cupboard doors carefully and watch for objects falling from shelves.)
- I. Keep the streets clear for emergency vehicles.
- J. Respond to requests for help from police, fire department and civil defense, but do not go into damaged areas unless your help has been requested.
- K. Be prepared for "after-shocks".
- L. Plan for student/staff needs during the time that may elapse before assistance arrives. (e.g., four to eight hours.)