

Nurse's Notes

Earthquake Preparedness

Spring is a good time for families to prepare or update their own emergency plans. Our school regularly practices several emergency drills. In fact, our recent vaccination clinics were part of a larger district and municipality emergency preparedness exercise.

Our school earthquake procedures are posted in the copy room. As a reminder, if you are in the building during an earthquake:

1. Duck (under a desk, table or doorway), cover (the back of your neck with your hands) and hold (your position and table leg, etc.) until shaking stops and you hear the "all clear" signal.
2. Anticipate aftershocks.
3. Place a color-coded door tag on the hallway door handle if you are in the copy room (provided with procedures on bulletin board) to alert Search and Rescue team members (red/need help now, yellow/can wait until seriously injured are cared for, or green/all OK).
4. Report to front office so that we can make sure you are all right and direct you to the area most in need of extra assistance.



In order to provide for the safety of everyone, the following steps will be taken in the event of a true emergency. Access to the building will be controlled through the front doors (if operational). The staff Security Team will quickly check to see that you are a parent, guardian, or listed as authorized to pick up student(s). Please be sure to discuss with your child who you have authorized to pick them up in the event of a disaster on the Student Information Card, which you completed earlier this year. It is also important that you let the people that you have listed know that they are authorized to pick up your child in the event of a disaster. Please be sure to notify the office staff of any changes, such as new phone numbers, new contact people for those that have moved away, etc. As a reminder, these cards are only for the purpose of disaster emergencies. Updated medical information should be provided to me separately.

In the event that our school is ever severely damaged and cannot be reentered, or we are without heat, light or sewer, students and staff will go to Dimond High School. They will remain there until they can be released to parents or dismissed under normal dismissal procedures into a safe environment or transported to a holding center.

The next big earthquake will be less traumatic for you and your children if you:

- 1) Know what to do during a big earthquake. During an earthquake, duck, cover, and hold wherever you are. Remember that severe shaking will make it hard to move. Take cover under a sturdy desk or table to shield you from falling items, and hold onto it so that it doesn't move away from you. Wait there until the shaking stops. Avoid bookcases and hanging objects. If you are not near a desk or table, drop to the floor beside an inside wall and protect the back of your neck with your hands. Don't try to leave the room until the shaking stops. Children should walk out if directed by an adult, watching for anything that could fall from the aftershocks. Stay away from the danger zone-the area near the exterior (outside) walls (windows are the first parts of the building to collapse). Stay inside if you are inside and outside if you are outside.
- 2) Prepare an earthquake plan with your family and practice it frequently so habit can overcome fear. Play an earthquake game-We Shake in a Quake, so Duck, Cover, and Hold! Pretend that an earthquake is happening and call "earthquake." Duck, cover, and hold for 15 seconds. Afterward everyone should take five slow breaths to practice calming down. Discuss how everyone responded and what could be done better during your next family earthquake drill.
- 3) Buy and store water and supplies to make life more comfortable after the earthquake.

