

SPARTANBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT THREE Emergency Safety Procedures

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Because schools are not immune to natural or man-made hazards, all Spartanburg School District Three schools have emergency plans for the safety and well-being of students and staff. These safety plans include provisions for sheltering in place, school lockdowns, and evacuation to off-site shelters where parents may be asked to pick up their children in the event of crisis situations. The type of emergency will guide where and what special care will be provided. The cooperation of parents and our community will be of major importance to ensure security and the unhampered efforts of emergency responders when they are needed.

- **Shelter in place**—This plan will be put into place in the event of a weather emergency or other unsafe outside condition that is best handled by staying inside. During severe weather such as thunderstorms, lightning, or tornadoes, students are brought into the building from outside activities and held inside until conditions are safe. Should dangerous weather conditions exist at the time of school dismissal, students may be sheltered inside until outside conditions are deemed safe. Parents who have arrived at the school to pick up their children may have to wait in their cars until students are dismissed, or they may park in a designated area and enter the school to pick up their children. Parents also will be notified through media outlets and other available means if students should be picked up before regular dismissal time.
- **School lockdown**—This plan will be put into place in the event of a threat or a potential threat in or around a school. In this plan, the **school will be closed to all visitors**, and students will be cared for inside the school. **During a school lockdown, parents and other citizens are urged not to come to the school until the lockdown has been lifted. Opening a school during a lockdown could breach security and endanger everyone in the building. Should an emergency response be required, complete, unblocked access to the campus is very important, as response time can be a critical factor.** In the case of a necessary extended lockdown, the media will be asked to communicate the situation and keep our parents and other the public informed.
- **Evacuation to off-site shelter**—This plan will be put into place when it is not safe for students to remain at the school. In this situation, the school has predetermined alternate sites for care. The choice of a site will be determined by the specific emergency and what site would be appropriate. In the case of an evacuation to an alternate location, media will be asked to announce the site for parents to safely reunite with their children. Students will be released only to authorized persons as specified in the student emergency record. To assure

that students are properly accounted for, an orderly system for reunification will be established. Parent cooperation, understanding, and patience will help to make the evacuation and reuniting easier and less stressful.

The safety of your children is our unquestioned priority, as it is with you. With your help, we will do everything possible to keep our schools safe and healthy “homes away from homes.” We are not sharing this information with you to cause you worry, but to reassure you that we are prepared to handle all emergencies in a way that will ensure the safety of your child or children. **In the event of an actual emergency, please do not call the school because we must keep the telephone lines open. Local radio and television stations will be notified in the case of school closings, evacuations, or extended lockdowns, and other means of communication such as our Alert Now with parents will be implemented.** If you have any questions regarding this information, talk with your principal or child’s teacher as soon as possible.