

	Superintendent's Circular	NUMBER: FSE-08 Version 01
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SAFE MODE AND INTERNAL THREAT PROCEDURES

This Circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version.

Mandatory SAFE MODE drills are to be planned, conducted and reviewed during September and January of each school year. Each school should conduct two SAFE MODE drills every year. These exercises are to be coordinated through your school superintendents. A report on each safe mode drill must be documented on the Google form, which can be found at the [BPS Fire & Safety Drill Report](#). If you have any questions, please contact the [BPS Office of Emergency Management](#).

These drills will help prepare the school community for any real life situation that may occur.

During any real-life situation:

- Call 911 as soon as you can do so safely.
- Call the Department of Safety Services at 617-635-8000, after calling 911, if you can do so safely.

Objectives of SAFE MODE drills:

- Staff will be able to describe what SAFE MODE is and their responsibilities during a SAFE MODE event.
- Staff will have the opportunity to have their questions concerning SAFE MODE heard and answered.

- Staff will have the opportunity to raise potential concerns that have not yet been addressed to assist in better anticipating issues during SAFE MODE situations.

DEFINITIONS AND PROTOCOL FOR ACTUAL EVENTS

SAFE MODE (External Threat)

SAFE MODE is a protective action used to safeguard faculty, staff, and students from an external threat as a result of law enforcement activity near the school or a potentially dangerous situation near the school. Schools will typically be placed into SAFE MODE by the Boston Police Department or BPS Safety Services, but each school can enter SAFE MODE on its own.

Examples of reasons why schools go into SAFE MODE:

- Police activity around or near your building
- Shooting outside your building
- Fire or accident near your building

How will you know when you are in SAFE MODE?

The Principal/Head of School, Site Coordinator or designee will announce the following via intercom and/or using the school safety team:

"Attention faculty and students: We are now in SAFE MODE.

Remain in your classroom. If you are in the hallway, stairs, or lavatory, move into the nearest classroom. Do not leave the room until told to do so, even if an alarm sounds."

NOTE: The Principal/Head of School, Site Coordinator or designee will also be alerting Safety Services and calling 911 to alert them that they are in SAFE MODE if not a drill, as mentioned above.

What should faculty and staff do upon notification of SAFE MODE?

1. If you see, hear, or observe a potential threat outside your building, bring all students and staff back into the building immediately and initiate SAFE MODE and notifications.
2. Depending on the circumstances and the direction of the Principal/Head of School, Site Coordinator or their designee, learning activities may continue during a SAFE MODE. If continuing learning activities, be sure the volume in the room is low enough to hear further announcements.
3. Check the hallways for people nearby and bring them into the classroom.
4. Check adjacent classrooms through interior doors for unsupervised students.
5. Lock the classroom door.
6. Be prepared to barricade your doors, cover large door windows using any available resources (e.g., large paper or felt), and close the windows and shades (if you have them). Turn the lights off and silence cell phones, radios, Tv and any other source of noise as necessary.
7. Be prepared to move students away from windows and doors and stay in your safe location.
8. Take attendance. Verify the missing and extra people in your room. Write the names on a sheet of paper and wait for someone to contact you for that list (may be by intercom or in person).

9. Remain with your students in the classroom until further instructions are given.
10. Only use the intercom to notify the main office of emergencies or special needs.
11. SAFE MODE ends only when the principal/head of school, site coordinator or designee announces it via intercom or through door to door notifications.

What will the safety team be doing during SAFE MODE?

1. Administration will make sure exterior doors are locked.
2. Floor captains will check classrooms and lock bathrooms.
3. Administration will notify all staff via the public address system of the situation.
4. Administration will notify Safety Services and their school superintendent if they are in an actual SAFE MODE. *They will notify their school superintendent if they will be conducting a SAFE MODE drill.*
5. Administration or police will monitor cameras.
6. Administration or police will monitor the entire school to make sure no one is in the hallways or leaving or entering the building.
7. Administration will work with BPS Communications to send a notice to all families within a short time after the incident when the situation is clear.

Preventative Safe Mode: This version of SAFE MODE can be used to stop motion in the building under certain circumstances to resolve an internal issue (e.g., lost children, student/adult behavior, K9 search, etc.).

How will you know when you are in PREVENTATIVE SAFE MODE?

The Principal/Head of School, Site Coordinator or designee will announce the following via intercom and/or using the school safety team:

"Attention faculty and students: We are now in PREVENTATIVE SAFE MODE. Remain in your classroom. If you are in the hallway, stairs, or lavatory, move into the nearest classroom. Do not leave the room until told to do so, even if an alarm sounds."

If schools want to conduct internal threats drills, they should only do so with staff. No students should be involved in an internal threat drill. If there are concerns about these drills or procedures, they should only be discussed with staff.

INTERNAL THREAT (Interior)

INTERNAL THREAT will be announced if there is any person in the building who is looking to cause harm to people. If an internal threat is in the building, all occupants should use the AVOID, DENY, DEFEND (formerly RUN, HIDE, FIGHT) model to protect themselves and anyone in their care. During this situation, occupants should use their own judgment to determine what they will do.

Examples of an INTERNAL THREAT are:

- Unknown or unidentified people in your building wandering around
- Out of control parent/family member
- Person with a weapon in the building
- Person shooting in your building

How will I know when we have an INTERNAL THREAT?

The Principal/Head of School, Site Coordinator or designee will announce the following via the school intercom (and call 911 if not a drill):

“Attention faculty and students: there is an INTERNAL THREAT (AVOID, DENY, DEFEND).”

What will be happening on campus during an INTERNAL THREAT situation?

1. No one will be in hallways.
2. Anyone with information on the threat should be calling 911 to alert police of the situation.
3. Occupants will be using the AVOID, DENY, DEFEND protocol to decide their actions:
 - AVOID (RUN) pay attention to your surroundings, know your exits if you know it is safe to do so: get as far away from the building or source of threat as you can (you should not be able to see the building/threat from where you have run to). If it is safe to do, call 911, call the School Leader and Safety Services at 617-635-8000. Cautiously alert people around you if possible.
 - DENY (HIDE) if you cannot run: barricade where you are (if you can) and stay out of sight of the threat, lock the door, turn off the light. Silence your phone, radios, tv and/or any other source of noise.
 - DEFEND (FIGHT) If you cannot Avoid or Deny be prepared to defend yourself. If fighting is your last resort and the threat is in your space and is going to hurt you or people

you are with, find something to fight (laptop, chair, fire extinguisher or any other available resources).

All staff should consider what to do during an internal threat on a regular basis. HAVE A PLAN!

HELPFUL HINTS: "KNOW YOUR SPACE"

- Know all available egress (EXIT) points if you ever need to **AVOID (RUN)**.
- Know what you can use to barricade your door(s) and conceal yourself from sight if you ever need to **DENY (HIDE)**.
- Know what you can use to **DEFEND (FIGHT)** if fighting is your only option (fire extinguisher, chair, laptop, etc.).
- The goal of both SAFE MODE and INTERNAL THREAT is to take cover and conceal yourself and your students from the active assailant. Covering glass (with large paper, shades, etc), shutting off lights, staying quiet (silence your phone, radios, TV or any other source of noise) and moving into a position of concealment is key.

POLICE RESPONSE: "KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT"

- Law enforcement priorities:
 1. Neutralize the shooter
 2. Stop the bleed of the first critical victim they encounter (only if the shooter is not in the immediate location. This is a new protocol.)
- When police arrive, follow their commands, show the palms of your hands, don't move quickly.
- BPD policy is that plainclothes officers can respond to an active assailant, **help may not be in uniform.**

DEFINITIONS AND PROTOCOL FOR SAFE MODE DRILLS

How to conduct a Safe Mode Drill at your school?

Identify a Safety Team if you have not already done so (Refer to Safety Contingency Plan [FSE-01](#)). This Safety Team should include the School Leader, Assistant School Leader, Site Coordinator, Secretary, Custodian or designees. Please review [FSE-01](#) page 24 for guidance.

The Principal/School Leader, Site Coordinator or designee must ensure that staff receive and understand proper instructions on the safe mode drill procedure. Students should also be informed of the procedure in order to align expectations prior to the drill. The drill must be recorded on [this form](#).

Prior to the Drill:

Confirm the Plan: School Leader/Site Coordinators or designee will review the Safe Mode and Internal Threat Procedures, including the various situations and levels of Safe Mode (ie external threat/ medical issue/ internal threat) with staff. Select the date of the drill and coordinate roles and responsibilities during and after the drill.

Day of the drill:

Just in Time Training: School Leaders/Site Coordinators or designee will instruct staff to review Safe Mode and Internal Threat Procedures ensuring everyone knows their roles

(Students/Staff). Also staff should confirm window covers are available (shades/blinds/paper/boards, etc) and classroom doors can lock properly from the exterior. Familiarize yourself with the system used to warn you to go into Safe Mode, this may be the public address system, if available, an intercom system, phones or radios. If the only method to communicate within the school is the bell system, note the warning bell system used to warn everyone to Safe Mode.

Listen carefully for instructions

Conducting Safe Mode Drill:

1. Inject: Safe Mode ANNOUNCEMENT is made via the PA, with the support of radios to areas where the PA does not reach.
2. Staff and students go inside the building into the nearest classroom immediately if they are not already.
3. Staff check the hallways for other staff/students nearby and bring them into the classroom.
4. Staff check adjacent classrooms through interior doors for unsupervised students.
5. Lock the classroom doors.
6. Close and lock the windows.
7. Be prepared to barricade your doors, cover large door windows using any available resources (e.g., large paper or felt), and close the windows and shades (if you have them).
8. Move students away from windows and doors and stay in your current location.
9. CONDUCT AN ACCOUNTABILITY SURVEY Verify the missing and extra people in your room. Write the names on a sheet of paper and wait for someone to contact you for that list (may be by intercom or in person).

10. Stay with your students in the classroom until further instructions are given.
11. Only use the intercom to notify the main office of emergencies or special needs.
12. Silence all cellular devices.
13. Shut off the lights.

IF THE FIRE ALARM SYSTEM SOUNDS:

- Evacuate if there are visible signs of fire.
- Await instructions if there are no signs of fire.

14. ALL CLEAR/ RETURN TO SCHOOL

School Leader, Assistant School Leader, Site Coordinator, Secretary, Custodian or designee announces ALL CLEAR via intercom or through door to door notifications.

Action: Staff return to normal classroom activities.

15. School Leader, Site Coordinator or designee reports the drill on [this form](#). If you have any problem with this link, please contact the [OEM Team](#) for assistance.

Note: Learning activities may continue during a SAFE MODE drill, unless you are instructed otherwise by the Principal/School Leader, Site Coordinator or designee. If continuing learning activities, be sure the volume in the room is low enough to hear further announcements.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: The [BPS Office of Emergency Management](#) is available to support schools drills as well as facilitating tabletop exercises or functional tests of school buildings plans and protocol. Please contact us for more information.

Superintendent's Circular FSE-08

Page 11 of 13

All staff should view [the following video from the Ohio State University](#), to obtain important additional information that will be helpful in the event that an incident occurs at the school or another location.

For more information about this circular, contact:

Owner:	Director of Emergency Management and Preparedness
Department:	Safety & Emergency Management
Mailing Address:	205 Townsend Street Boston, MA 02121
Phone:	(857) 701-9404
Email:	Operations-Department-Heads@bostonpublicschools.org

Mary Skipper, Superintendent

BPS Safe Mode Announcement Scripts (English)

Safe Mode (External Threat/ Danger Outside of the School)

Announcement:

"Attention faculty and students: We are now in SAFE MODE. Remain in your classroom.

If you are in the hallway, stairs, or lavatory, move into the nearest classroom.

Do not leave the room until told to do so, even if an alarm sounds."

Preventative Safe Mode (ex. Missing Student/ Medical Emergency)

Announcement:

"Attention faculty and students: We are now in PREVENTATIVE SAFE MODE.

Remain in your classroom. If you are in the hallway, stairs, or lavatory, move into the nearest classroom.

Do not leave the room until told to do so, even if an alarm sounds."

Internal Threat (Active Shooter/ Armed Intruder Inside)

Announcement:

"Attention faculty and students: there is an INTERNAL THREAT (Avoid, Deny, Defend)."

Know Your Space. Get Safe Before You Call 911.

Cover versus Concealment.

Silence is Golden.

BPS Guía para anunciar el “modo seguro”(Spanish)

Modo seguro (amenaza externa/peligro fuera de la escuela)

Anuncio:

"Atención profesores y estudiantes: ahora estamos en MODO SEGURO. Permanezcan en su salón de clases. Si está en el pasillo, las escaleras o el baño, diríjase al salón de clases más cercano. No salga del salón hasta que se le indique, incluso si suena una alarma".

Modo seguro preventivo (por ejemplo, estudiante desaparecido/emergencia médica)

Anuncio:

"Atención profesores y estudiantes: Ahora estamos en MODO SEGURO PREVENTIVO. Permanezca en su salón de clases. Si está en el pasillo, las escaleras o el baño, diríjase al salón de clases más cercano. No salga del salón hasta que se le indique, incluso si suena una alarma".

Amenaza interna (tirador activo/intruso armado en el interior)

Anuncio:

“Atención profesores y estudiantes: hay una AMENAZA INTERNA (Evita, Deniega, Defiendete).”

Conozca su espacio.

Antes de llamar al 911, asegúrese de no estar en peligro (busque un lugar seguro con precaución)

El silencio es oro.