

Extreme Weather And Natural Disasters Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the measures our school will take in the event of extreme weather conditions or natural disasters to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students, staff, and visitors.

Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff, parents/guardians, and visitors of the school.

Definitions

- Extreme Weather: Severe weather events such as hurricanes, cyclones, heavy rainfall leading to flooding, thunderstorms, extreme heat, or strong winds.
- Natural Disasters: Events such as earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, landslides, and wildfires.

Preparedness Measures

1. Emergency Response Team

- Establish a Crisis Response Team (CRT) consisting of designated staff members trained in crisis management.
- Conduct regular emergency training and drills for staff and students.
- Assign backup personnel for critical roles in case of absence.

2. Communication Plan

- To ensure timely and effective communication, the school will use multiple channels:
 - Loudspeaker Announcements: For immediate on-campus alerts.
 - Emails and Text Messages: Direct alerts sent to parents/guardians by the Administration Team or the Head of School with important information.
 - Website Updates: An alert banner on the ProEd website, updated by the IT Coordinator.
 - Social Media: Official school accounts will post updates, managed by the designated social media team.
 - Parent Hotline: A designated phone number for emergency updates.
 - Maintain updated contact information for all families, to be verified every six months.
3. Emergency Supplies
- Stock emergency kits in key locations, including first aid supplies, non-perishable food, water, blankets, flashlights and batteries.
 - Ensure emergency kits are accessible.
 - Conduct quarterly checks to replenish regularly.

Response Procedures

Phase 1: Immediate Response

- Notification: Upon the occurrence of extreme weather or a natural disaster, the CRT will assess the situation and notify the school community.
- Evacuation: If evacuation is necessary, follow the established evacuation routes to designated safe areas.
- Sheltering in Place: If evacuation is not possible, students and staff will follow lockdown and shelter-in-place protocols in designated safe zones (e.g., gymnasium, reinforced classrooms).

Phase 2: Post-Disaster Assessment

- Safety Evaluation: After the immediate danger has passed, the CRT will evaluate the safety of the school buildings and grounds.
- Decision-Making: Based on the assessment, the CRT will determine if it is safe for students and staff to return to classrooms or offices. If the campus is deemed unsafe, alternative arrangements will be communicated to all stakeholders.

When Unsafe to Return

If the school is deemed unsafe for re-entry:

- Secondary Meeting Point: The CRT will move operations to a predetermined secondary meeting point. This location will be communicated to parents/guardians.
- Parent/Guardian Pickup: Parents/guardians will be notified to collect their children from the secondary meeting point.
- Supervised Care: Students will be supervised by staff at the secondary meeting point until they are picked up.

Special Considerations

- Students with Special Needs: Ensure that additional support is available for students with special needs during emergencies.
- Mental Health Support: Provide mental health resources for students and staff post-disaster to address trauma and anxiety.

Recovery Procedures

- Debriefing: The CRT and school leadership will conduct a formal review of the incident response to identify areas for improvement.
- Infrastructure Recovery: The school will coordinate with local authorities and engineering teams to restore facilities. A structural engineer will evaluate the premises within 24 hours to assess safety and necessary repairs.
- Community Outreach: Updates will be shared with parents and staff through email, meetings, and social media.
- Recovery Plan: A structured recovery plan will be implemented, including the restoration of school operations, counselling services, community outreach, and academic recovery measures such as catch-up lessons or temporary remote learning if required.\

Training and Drills

- The school will conduct annual emergency drills covering fire, earthquake, extreme weather, and lockdown scenarios.
- Parent Awareness Sessions will be held once a year to ensure families understand emergency procedures.