

Earthquake Emergency Procedure System

An earthquake emergency procedure system shall be established in every school building having an occupant capacity of 50 or more students, or more than one classroom. (Education Code 32282)

Earthquake emergency procedures shall be incorporated into the comprehensive safety plan. The procedures shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 32282)

1. A school building disaster plan, ready for implementation at any time, for maintaining the safety and care of students and staff
2. A drop procedure whereby each student and staff member takes cover under a table or desk, dropping to his/her knees, with the head protected by the arms and the back to the windows
3. Protective measures to be taken before, during, and following an earthquake
4. A program to ensure that students and certificated and classified staff are aware of and properly trained in the earthquake emergency procedure system

(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 3516 - Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

The Superintendent or designee may work with the California Office of Emergency Services and the Seismic Safety Commission to develop and establish the earthquake emergency procedures. (Education Code 32282)

Earthquake emergency procedures shall identify and address potential earthquake hazards in classrooms and other district facilities. Equipment and furniture, such as bookshelves, cabinets, computers, and laboratory equipment, shall be secured to the extent possible, and heavy objects moved from high shelves, in order to minimize hazards in the event of an earthquake.

Earthquake emergency procedures also shall outline roles and responsibilities of students and staff during and after an earthquake.

Earthquake Education

Students shall be informed of the dangers to expect in an earthquake and procedures to be followed. Students shall be instructed to remain silent and follow directions given by teachers or other staff in such an emergency.

Drop procedures shall be practiced at least once each school quarter in elementary schools and at least once each semester in secondary schools. (Education Code 32282)

Students also shall be taught safety precautions to take if they are in the open or on the way to and from school when an earthquake occurs and an adult is not present to give specific directions.

Earthquake While Indoors at School

When an earthquake occurs, the following actions shall be taken inside buildings and classrooms:

1. Staff shall have students perform the drop procedure. Students should stay in the drop position until the emergency is over or until further instructions are given.
2. In laboratories, burners should be extinguished if possible before taking cover.
3. As soon as possible, teachers shall move the students away from windows, shelves, and heavy objects and furniture that may fall.
4. Teachers shall have students evacuate the building in an orderly manner when the earthquake is over.

Earthquake While Outdoors on School Grounds

When an earthquake occurs, the following actions shall be taken by staff or other persons in authority who are outdoors on school grounds:

1. Staff shall direct students to walk away from buildings, trees, overhead power lines, power poles, or exposed wires.
2. Staff shall have students perform the drop procedure.
3. Staff shall have students stay in the open until the earthquake is over or until further directions are given.

Earthquake While on the Bus

If students are on the school bus when an earthquake occurs:

1. The bus driver shall pull to the side of the road away from any buildings, poles, wires, overhead structures, or bridges if possible, set the brakes, and turn off the ignition.
2. The driver shall have students remain at their seats and perform the drop procedure.
3. The driver shall wait until the earthquake is over before proceeding on the route.
4. As soon as possible, the driver shall contact the director of transportation for instructions.

Subsequent Emergency Procedures

After the earthquake has subsided, the following actions shall be taken:

1. Small fires shall be extinguished if possible.
2. In outside assembly areas, staff shall provide assistance to any injured students, take roll, and report missing students to the principal or designee.
3. The principal shall request assistance as needed from the Superintendent or designee and shall confer with him/her regarding the advisability of closing the school. He/she shall also contact 911 Operator to report a medical emergency or fire as required.
4. The principal shall post staff at a safe distance from all building entrances to see that no one reenters until the buildings are declared safe.
5. All buildings shall be inspected for water and gas leaks, electrical breakages, and large cracks or earth slippage affecting buildings. The principal shall notify utility companies of any break or suspected break in lines which may present an additional hazard. If damage has occurred, the custodian shall shut off all utilities.
6. Staff and students shall not light any stoves or burners until the area is declared safe.
7. If the principal or designee believes the school is damaged sufficiently to be a hazard, he/she shall notify the Superintendent or designee and ask the county or city for structural failure and equipment adequacy. Until this is done, the building shall not be occupied.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

32280-32289 School safety plans

Management Resources:

FEMA PUBLICATIONS

Guidebook for Developing a School Earthquake Safety Program, 1990

WEB SITES

American Red Cross: <http://www.redcross.org>

California Office of Emergency Services: <http://www.oes.ca.gov>

California Seismic Safety Commission: <http://www.seismic.ca.gov>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): <http://www.fema.gov/hazards/earthquakes>

Regulation FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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