

Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

SECTION:	100 – GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	CODE:	AP 169.3
PROCEDURE:	BOMB THREAT		

BACKGROUND

Information concerning the presence of a bomb on school property will usually be received by a telephone or written message. Generally, it is the intent of the caller to have the building evacuated thereby causing a disruption of normal business. However, every bomb threat must be considered genuine. A "bomb threat" poses a serious potential hazard to the safety of students and staff and, therefore, requires immediate action.

Persons guilty of making "bomb threats" shall be subject to both Division and legal disciplinary action.

Emergency Code: "Attention all students and staff, we have a code yellow situation, please evacuate the building."

PROCEDURES

1. Staff Response

1.1 Bomb Call Recipient:

- 1.1.1 Keep the caller on line as long as possible. Do not hang up or attempt to transfer the call.
- 1.1.2 Utilize the "Bomb Threat" form at the time of the call.
- 1.1.3 Notify another staff member by a pre-arranged signal while the caller is on the line.
- 1.1.4 Even after the caller hangs up, keep the phone off the hook so the police can trace the call
- 1.1.5 Initiate call trace: (*57 St. Michael's, Sacred Heart, & Board Office/*957 St. Alphonsus, St. Mary's, & St. Paul's)
- 1.1.6 Notify the Principal immediately.

1.2 Evacuation Guidelines

- 1.2.1 Remain calm.
- 1.2.2 Follow instructions of administrator.
- 1.2.3 Conduct a rapid scan of your work area and your evacuation routes (ceiling to floor) for unusual packages. After evacuation, report these to the administration.
- 1.2.4 Do not open drawers, cabinets, hallway lockers, or turn lights on or off.
- 1.2.5 Open classroom doors and windows. This will decrease the pressure exerted by an explosion.
- 1.2.6 Students are to remain seated until given instructions to evacuate by their teacher.
- 1.2.7 Bring classroom rosters.
- 1.2.8 When the building evacuate signal is activated, walk quickly to the nearest exit. Take your personal property from the classroom with you, I.E., briefcase, purse, lunch bag, etc.
- 1.2.9 Once outside, move to a clear area at least 100 meters away from the school.
- 1.2.10 Once safe, take attendance and report search results and student count to your administrator.
- 1.2.11 If necessary, an administrator will direct the classes to proceed directly to the designated safe location off the school grounds (church, parish centre, neighbouring school).
- 1.2.12 Wait with students until the search for the bomb has been conducted.
- 1.2.13 A decision to re-enter the building will be made after an “all clear” signal is given.

2. Administrators and/or Response Team

- 2.1 Notify the Director.
- 2.2 Notify the RCMP.
- 2.3 Alert staff through the use of a code for a bomb threat (code yellow)
- 2.4 Start evacuation procedures according to normal fire drill procedures
- 2.5 Do not use portable phones, pages or other radio-activated equipment as they trip the explosive devices.
- 2.6 Instruct staff to direct all inquiries to the Director’s Office.
- 2.7 The Police will be fully in charge when the building is being searched. Appropriate school personnel (voluntary) should assist, as necessary.
- 2.8 The Police will determine when re-entry is permitted.

- 2.9 The Principal shall provide to the RCMP the bomb threat report form, a list of any absent students on the day the threat was made, and any other information that may assist with the investigation.
- 2.10 No media statements are to be given with respect to the threat.
- 2.11 Complete an incident report and file in the Principal's office.

3. Decision Making

- 3.1 All bomb threats must be taken seriously and carefully analyzed. The bomb report should be treated as genuine until investigated and until a search of the school has been completed. Begin your decision-making process by gathering as much information about the bomb report as possible. Factors you will be considering include:
 - 3.1.1 Have there been national bomb incidents lately?
 - 3.1.2 Have there been other hoaxes lately?
 - 3.1.3 Has a hostile student been suspended recently?
 - 3.1.4 Are there exams scheduled for today?
 - 3.1.5 Is it senior skip day?
 - 3.1.6 Any unexplained student unrest?
 - 3.1.7 Any rumors circulating about a student threatening to harm others?
 - 3.1.8 How much information did the caller provide? (You can generally get more information out of a caller when it is not a hoax.)
 - 3.1.9 Consider the seriousness in the voice of the caller?
 - 3.1.10 Were any specific details given?
 - 3.1.11 Any missing chemicals?
 - 3.1.12 Did the caller have knowledge of the design of the school?
 - 3.1.13 Any recent break-ins? (Look for evidence of illegal entry.)
 - 3.1.14 Did the caller give repeated warnings? This seriously escalates the degree of danger.
- 3.2 Once you have gathered the information, subjective judgment must be made regarding the degree of credibility or dependence that can be placed upon it. Trust your intuitions and experience.
- 3.3 School administrators are faced with at least five possible alternatives:
 - 3.3.1 Conduct a low profile search of the exterior grounds and public areas of the building.
 - 3.3.2 Conduct a comprehensive search having all staff search their work area, in addition to the grounds and public areas so the entire building is covered.
 - 3.3.3 Search with partial evacuation.
 - 3.3.4 Evacuate after searching or

3.3.5 Evacuate immediately.

Evacuating immediately is an alternative that on face value appears to be the preferred approach, however, under certain circumstances and evacuation personnel may increase rather than decrease the risk of injury. Bombs are three times more likely to be planted outside buildings than inside. A bomber wishing to cause personal injuries could place a bomb in the shrubbery near an exit. Public areas inside the school are the second most frequent place devices are located. Any evacuation that requires students and staff to move through public areas such as halls, public restrooms, lobbies, parking lots, playgrounds, might increase the risk of injury during any detonation.

4 Searches

Administrators may identify staff willing to help investigate when these calls occur. School personnel are perhaps in the best position to scan the building for suspicious objects because they know when something is out of place. When indicated and there is sufficient time, school personnel can conduct a preliminary check of the building and grounds. The search should only be initiated if this can be accomplished in a safe manner. The objective is to identify objects that do not belong there. General search guidelines include:

- 4.1 Start on the outside of the school and work inward
- 4.2 When inside, start at the bottom and work up
- 4.3 Search personnel always work toward each other
- 4.4 Listen for background noises
- 4.5 As staff members scan their work area, they are instructed:
 - 4.5.1 to divide the room into various search levels, the first sweep covers all objects resting on the floor or built into the walls, up to your waist;
 - 4.5.2 the second sweep is a scan of the room from your waist to chin height; and
 - 4.5.3 the third sweep covers the room from the top of your head to the ceiling, including air ducts, window tops and light fixtures.
- 4.6 If a suspicious object is found, under no circumstances should it be touched, tampered with or moved. Staff are to immediately report the object to the building administrator and follow their instructions. Law enforcement will need to know where the bomb is located and if there are there any others as well as where the explosive package came from, who discovered it, why it is suspected of being a bomb, and if it has been disturbed or moved?

5. Media

- 5.1 It is important that all inquiries by the news media be directed to one person. Staff should refer media personnel to the Director/designate. Do not permit interviews with students or filming in the building. The Director/designate and law enforcement spokesperson can organize a press conference together, if appropriate. Specific details about the bomb configuration, triggering device, or explosive used should not be

disclosed. Statements to the media should be brief and factual, avoiding speculative opinion, and emphasizing what the district is doing to contain and resolve the crisis. Include counselling resources, crisis hotlines, and a list of common reactions to traumatic events.

- 5.2 It is entirely appropriate for school officials to raise concerns about the impact that news stories can have on other students. The longer the news media concentrates its attention on a bomb threat situation, the more likely it will cause additional bomb threat incidents. Media spokespersons can request limited coverage of incidents likely to be imitated by other troubled youth as a means of eliciting protection for all children. Limiting coverage would also benefit past victims with untreated posttraumatic stress symptoms who may be more vulnerable to reacting impulsively.

6. Pre-Incident Preparation

- 6.1 Network with law enforcement officials early and learn what resources are available to help you. Share your emergency procedures and clarify roles.
- 6.2 Using a building floor plan, identify which school personnel will be assigned to scan all areas of your school. Be sure to assign staff to bathrooms, utility areas, storage areas, exterior grounds, and doorways.
- 6.3 Using a building floor plan, identify alternative exit routes and partial evacuation strategies.
- 6.4 The public address system and telephones can be used to warn and communicate with all school personnel. Do not use radios, electronic bells, or walkie-talkies, because electronic devices can activate bombs.
- 6.5 Internal communication plan: There may be times when you decide not to use the public address system to communicate instructions to staff. To help convey verbal instructions to staff, assign a staff member to each wing of your school. The wing leader will deliver messages between staff and building administrator(s). Include the names of your wing leaders on your bomb threat floor plan.
- 6.6 Identify school personnel willing to investigate during low profile searches. They will be scanning the public areas and grounds on short notice. Low profile searches are utilized when you have grounds to believe that the incident is a hoax.
- 6.7 Review the phone call recipient role with front office personnel.
- 6.8 Keep the bomb threat checklist and emergency phone numbers accessible to all front office personnel.

Date Issued: November 21, 2007

Date Revised: May 31, 2016