



BERLIN BROTHERSVALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
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BERLIN, PENNSYLVANIA 15530-1498
814-267-4621 FAX: 814-267-6060
"HOME OF THE MOUNTAINEERS"

Dr. David Reeder
Superintendent

Lori Gindlesperger
Business Manager

Dear Parent/Guardian:

RE: School Emergency Procedures

This letter is to inform you that Berlin Brothersvalley School District has steps in place to address student and staff safety issues through the adoption of a District-wide Emergency Response Plan. This plan would be implemented in the event of a local disaster or school emergency. The Emergency Response Plan is a preparatory measure. Statistics show schools are still among the safest places to be on a day-to-day basis, due to the strong commitment of educators, parents, and communities to their children. Nevertheless, disasters do happen and, because of that, no community can be complacent in its efforts to make its schools even safer. For this reason, we have developed a Comprehensive Emergency Response Plan for our school district, but please do not be alarmed by this precautionary action.

Drills

Although it is unlikely that the Emergency Response Plan will need to be fully activated at your child's school, the possibility still exists. Therefore, to prepare all members of our school community to act quickly, we will be holding discussions with students regarding the appropriate actions to take during a number of emergencies. We will also be conducting safety drills on a periodic basis throughout the year. Many of these are already familiar to you such as fire and severe weather drills. These drills and accompanying discussions are designed to prepare your child to act quickly and to minimize your child's fear should an emergency occur. Please be assured that no unnecessary fear or anxiety will be created for the students.

Parent-Child Reunion Center

The Emergency Response Plan also incorporates a systematic approach to reuniting children with their parents. The plan identifies two possible sites for the Parent-Child Reunion Center associated with your child's school. The first site is located on the school grounds. The second site is located at the School Emergency Evacuation Center – this location is activated only when the school premises must be evacuated. Due to the unpredictable nature of any emergency, we will only be able to tell you where the Parent-Child Reunion Center is located at the time of the emergency. Should it be necessary to activate either of these Parent-Child Reunion Centers, you will be notified of the location via the District's mass communication system.

Reuniting With Your Child

In order to ensure your child's safety, it is necessary for us to establish some protocols for picking up your child. Therefore, please be advised of the following guidelines if it would be necessary for you to pick up your child from a Parent-Child Reunion Center:

- No student will be released unless you or an individual designated on the student's Child Authorization for Pickup Form and/or the Powerschool Emergency Contacts Page arrives to pick up that student. **It is critical that the information and phone numbers on your child's Powerschool Emergency Contacts Page is current.** We will be using this information to contact you through the District's mass communication system with the evacuation process and location for picking up your child.
- **You will be required to present valid identification.** This step is required to protect your child from any unauthorized individuals attempting to pick up your child. The school may be receiving assistance from other schools or outside agencies and, therefore, may not know you.
- **You will be required to sign for the release of your child.** This is extremely important as it is our only means of ensuring that all students are accounted for at all times. Please do not just take your child from the center without signing for their release. We recognize that you may be worried and want to be reunited with your child as quickly as possible. However, this system has been established to ensure your child's safety. You may be jeopardizing your child's or another child's safety by not adhering to these procedures.
- Should our normal transportation system be unable to transport your child home, your child will be kept at the center until such time as you can arrange to pick them up.
- If you are unable to pick up your child, he/she will be kept at the Parent-Child Reunion Center until alternate arrangements are made. Your child will be supervised at all times.

Keeping Informed During an Emergency

During a real emergency, you probably will not be able to reach the school by phone, as staff will be busy responding to the emergency and the needs of the students. We will, however, make every effort to contact parents, either directly, or through the District's mass communication system. Additionally, we may utilize local radio and television station broadcasts to relay information. **Please do not call the school and do not call your child's cell phone during an emergency.** Phone lines need to be kept accessible at all times, and overloading the phone system may mean that the school will not be able to communicate with first responders. The District will also keep parents informed by posting information and updates regarding the emergency on the District's website and, coming soon, Facebook and Twitter. District's website: www.bbsd.com

Finally, we want you to know that your cooperation in preparing your child for the possibility of an emergency and helping us to ensure their safety is greatly appreciated. As always, should you have any questions or concerns regarding anything stated in this letter, please feel free to contact your school administrator during regular school hours.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Reeder
Superintendent

