

Business and Non-instructional Operations

Earthquake Emergency Procedure System

The Superintendent or designee shall establish an emergency procedure system to be followed in case of earthquakes. This system shall include, but not be limited to, the following: (Education Code 35297)

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 in which students and staff members:
 - a. Drop to their knees
 - b. Take cover under a table or desk
 - c. Protect their head with their arms
 - d. Face away from the windows
3. Protective measures to be taken before, during and after an earthquake

School disaster plans shall outline roles, responsibilities and procedures for students and staff.

(cf. 3516 - Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

DROP procedures may be expanded to ensure that students get under stationary desks or tables where available, or otherwise get next to an inside wall or under an inside doorway. Students should stay in the drop position until the emergency is over or until further instructions are given.

Earthquake Education

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 35297)

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Earthquake Emergency Procedure System (continued)

Students also shall be taught to take the following safety precautions during an earthquake if adults are not present to give specific directions:

1. If you are in the open, stay there.
2. Move away from buildings, trees, and exposed wires.
3. After the earthquake, if you are on your way to school, continue to school.
4. After the earthquake, if you are on your way home, continue home.

Earthquake While Indoors at School

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

1. Teachers shall have students perform the DROP procedure.
2. As soon as possible, teachers shall move the students away from windows and out from under heavy suspended light fixtures.
3. Teachers shall have students leave the building in an orderly manner when the Earthquake is over.

Earthquake While on School Grounds

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

1. The teacher shall direct students to walk away from buildings, trees, poles or exposed wires.
2. The teacher shall have students perform the DROP procedure, covering as much skin surface as possible, closing eyes and covering ears.
3. Teachers and students shall stay in the open until the earthquake is over or until further directions are given.

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Earthquake While on the Bus

When students are on the school bus and an earthquake occurs, the following actions shall be taken:

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

Subsequent Emergency Procedures

1. In outside assembly areas, teachers shall provide assistance to any injured students, take roll and report missing students to the principal or designee.
2. The principal shall request assistance as needed from the county or city civil defense office or fire and police departments. He/she shall consider the possibility of aftershocks and shall determine the advisability of closing the school, with the advice of the county or city officials, as appropriate. He/she shall also contact the Superintendent or designee for further instructions.
3. The principal shall post guards at a safe distance from all building entrances to see that no one reenters until the buildings are declared safe. Monitors may be custodians, teachers or students.
4. Following the earthquake, the principal and custodian shall inspect all buildings 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 at the main valve.
5. Teachers or students shall not light any stoves or burners after the earthquake until the area is declared safe.

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6. If the principal believes the school is damaged sufficiently to be a hazard, he/she shall notify the Superintendent or designee and ask that the county or city building inspector check for structural failure and equipment adequacy. Until this is done, the building shall not be occupied.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35295-35297 Emergency earthquake procedures

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