

**POLICY**  
**RI SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**SAFETY DRILLS – FIRE and LOCKDOWN**

**Guiding Principle and Purpose**

It is the policy of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf that the following legal mandates shall be strictly adhered to. The following is intended to assure that RISD students and staff are in a safe environment and that we comply with the law.

**RI G.L.16-21-4. Fire, evacuation and lockdown drills required**

**(a)** It shall be the duty of the principal or other person in charge of every public school or private school, college, university, or postsecondary institutions or educational institution within the state, having more than twenty-five (25) pupils, to instruct and train the pupils by means of drills, so that they may in a sudden emergency be able to leave school buildings and dormitories in the shortest possible time and without confusion or panic.

Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, in all schools or buildings used for educational purposes through the twelfth grade by six (6) or more persons for four (4) or more hours per day or more than twelve (12) hours per week, there shall be not less than one emergency egress drill conducted every month the facility is in session with all occupants of the building participating in said drill. One additional emergency egress drill shall be conducted in buildings that are not open on a year-round basis within the first (1st) thirty (30) days of operation. At least one out of every four (4) emergency egress drills or rapid dismissals shall be obstructed by means of which at least one or more exits and stairways in the school building are blocked off or not used. In addition, there shall be two (2) evacuation drills and two (2) lockdown drills. Evacuation drills shall be designed and conducted for use when conditions outside the school building are safer than conditions inside the building. Lockdown drills shall be designed and conducted for use to protect school building occupants from potential dangers in the building, and one shall be held in September and one in January, and in conjunction with the local police whenever possible.

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Rhode Island School for the Deaf will hold a drill for sudden evacuations (signed as /fire drill/ for our students) every month of the school year.

Lockdown drills shall also be designed, instructed, and conducted for use to protect school building occupants from potential dangers in the building, and one shall be held in September and one in January/February, and in conjunction with the local police whenever possible. (signed /lock down practice/ with students).

It is the responsibility of all employees to follow emergency procedures. Staff should remain calm and proceed as trained, leading students to safety as quickly as possible.

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***Helping Students to remain calm***

To avoid adding unnecessary fear and fright to young preschoolers and kindergarteners, Early Childhood Teachers shall instruct using simple language and avoid dramatic expression or blunt descriptions. ([Storm is Coming](#) is a recommended book to read and explain that they are going to practice being together and waiting together, just like the animals in the story.)

“What does drill mean?”

    “It means to practice.”

        “Why do we practice?”

            “We practice to be safe.”

All other grades should have direct instruction using honest and neutral language about the need to protect ourselves and each other in the occasion that the building feels unsafe. For those students who have limited or emergent language, teachers shall instruct using pictures to explain the procedures.

Each classroom and office have a TV monitor connected to the school’s emergency alert system. These monitors will display emergency alert messages and instructions, allowing anyone (hearing and or deaf) to get the same critical information at the same time.

Escape routes are posted on the wall in each room throughout the building, displaying routes to the nearest exits. Alert cards are provided in each room and therapy room to be carried outside by the teacher or therapist. Fire doors should be closed as people exit.

Students and staff who exit the school during a sudden evacuation drill shall proceed to the front of the property and line up along the sidewalks adjacent to the soccer field. Safety marshals will roam looking for anyone who needs assistance. Teachers shall take attendance. Any missing students will be reported to an administrator or fire marshall.

No one may reenter the building without permission until the *ALL CLEAR* signal is provided.

During sudden evacuation drills, there should be no talking or signing. All eyes should be on the safety marshals, attentive and looking for signed and voiced instructions as to how to proceed.

**Legal References:**

[RI Gen. Laws § 16-21-4 \(Fire Drills Required – Failure to Comply\)](#)

[RI Gen. Laws § 16-21-5 \(Uniform Fire Code or Drill Tactics – Reports\)](#)

**History:**

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