

**Instruction**

**EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY PROCEDURE SYSTEM**

Earthquakes occur without warning. For their safety, children shall be taught methods of protecting themselves.

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:

1. A school building disaster plan, ready for implementation at any time, for maintaining the safety and care of students and staff. This plan should outline roles, responsibilities and procedures for students and staff.
2. A DROP procedure, whereby each student and staff member takes cover under a table or desk, drops to the knees, protects the head with arms, and faces away from the window.
3. Protective measures to be taken before, during and after an earthquake.
4. A training program to ensure that all students and all certificated and classified staff are away of, and properly skilled in, the earthquake emergency procedure system.  
(Education Code 35297)

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)

Legal Reference:

**EDUCATION CODE**

35295-35297 Emergency procedures for earthquakes

Management Resources:

**CDE MANAGEMENT ADVISORIES**

0319.09 Disaster preparedness planning

## **Instruction**

# **EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY PROCEDURE SYSTEM**

## **EARTHQUAKE WHILE INDOORS AT SCHOOL**

When an earthquake occurs, the following actions shall be taken inside the school building and in individual classrooms:

1. The teacher or other person in authority shall implement the DROP action. Each student shall:
  - a. Get under equipment (desk, table, etc.) where available. Otherwise get next to an inside wall or under an inside doorway.
  - b. Drop to knees with back to the windows and knees together.
  - c. Clasp both hands firmly behind the head, covering the neck.
  - d. Bury face in arms, protecting the head. Close the eyes tightly.
  - e. Stay there until the procedure or emergency is over or until subsequent instructions are given. Such instructions will depend upon circumstances and the extent of damage to the buildings.
2. As soon as possible, teachers shall move the children away from windows and out from under heavy suspended fixtures.
3. Teachers shall implement action to LEAVE THE BUILDING when the earthquake is over. Teachers shall ensure that students do not run, particularly on stairways.

## **EARTHQUAKE WHILE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS**

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

1. The teacher or other person in authority shall direct the children to WALK away from buildings, trees, poles, or exposed wires.
2. The teacher shall implement the DROP action. Teachers and students shall cover as much skin surface as possible, close eyes, and cover ears.
3. Teachers and students shall stay in the open until the earthquake is over, or until further directions are given.

**EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY PROCEDURE SYSTEM (continued)**

**SUBSEQUENT EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

1. Teachers shall see that students avoid touching electrical wires that may have fallen.
2. Teachers or students shall not light any fires after the earthquake until the area is declared safe. Laboratory or shop teachers shall be watchful of students' relighting burners or stoves.
3. Teachers shall render first aid if necessary.
4. Teachers shall take roll of their classes.
5. The principal shall see that guards are posted at a safe distance from all building entrances to see that no one reenters for any reason until the buildings are declared safe. Guards may be custodians, teachers, or students.
6. The principal shall direct a custodian to shut off all pilot lights on water heaters or furnaces, as well as stoves in homemaking classrooms.
7. The principal shall request assistance as needed, through appropriate channels, from the county or city civil defense office or fire and police departments.
8. 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.
9. The principal shall, if possible, contact the district office for further instructions.
10. The principal shall determine the advisability of closing the school, with the advice of the City Building Inspector if possible.
11. Following the quake, the principal and custodian shall inspect all buildings for safety in accordance with inspection procedures below.
12. If the building is safe for use, the principal or designee shall clear debris in order to resume educational activities as soon as possible.
13. Until such time as the buildings are safe for use, the principal shall provide educational facilities outside so that the educational program may be continued with as little interruption as possible.

**GENERAL PROCEDURES**

Students shall be taught the following safety precautions to be taken during an earthquake in the event that adults are not present to give specific directions:

**EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY PROCEDURE SYSTEM (continued)**

1. The school custodian shall make a thorough inspection immediately after a severe earthquake.

Check points:     Large cracks affecting buildings  
                      Earth slippage affecting buildings  
                      Water leaks  
                      Gas leaks  
                      Electrical breakages

If leaks are detected, the custodian shall shut off the utility in the building affected and notify the maintenance department.

2. The building principal shall inspect the facility. If the principal believes the school is damaged sufficiently to be a hazard, he/she shall notify the Superintendent or designee and ask the City Building Inspector to check for structural failure and equipment adequacy. Until this is done, the building shall not be occupied.
3. The City Building Inspector shall be responsible for determining if the structure is safe for occupancy. The Superintendent or designee shall expedite reconstruction and replacement equipment.

**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 issue the DROP action.
2. The driver shall set the brakes and turn off the ignition.
3. The bus driver shall wait until the earthquake is over before proceeding on the route.
4. The bus driver shall contact the director of transportation for instructions.
5. If the bus driver continues on, he/she shall watch for hazards created by earthquakes, such as fallen electrical wires, cracked roads, or fallen poles.