



PROCEDURE PR.604.SCO

TITLE: BOMB THREATS

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1.0 OBJECTIVE

To outline the process for dealing with bomb threats, so as to ensure the safety of students and staff in the event of such a threat.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this procedure,

2.1 **Command Centre** means an area designated by the principal to be used as the source for all communication under this procedure.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

3.1 The responsibility for dealing with bomb threats, as presented in this guideline, lies with the principal, manager or other Ottawa Carleton District School Board employee in charge of a Board facility, or his/her designate.

4.0 PROCEDURE

4.1 **Every bomb threat is to be taken seriously.**

4.2 As part of their daily routine, building staff should survey their own workplaces and become familiar with the location of items, so as to remove some of the uncertainty when threats are received. In this way, if something is out of place, it should become easier to spot.

4.3 The principal is responsible for organizing a detailed but uncomplicated Bomb Threat Plan (see Attachment 1), and for ensuring that all staff members are aware of the plan. The Bomb Threat Plan developed by the principal will be the plan used at all times in the school. While this procedure and the generic checklist in Attachment 1 can serve as the basis for the plan, each school should document specifics for its particular site. Site-specific information may include, but is not limited to:

- a) pre-arranged signals/phrases that inform staff of a threat;
- b) important phone numbers;

- c) location where staff and students should congregate if/when an evacuation occurs (reference school plan as per Board Procedure PR.506.SCO: Emergency School Evacuations/School Closings;
- d) alternate site/school that will accommodate students if necessary.

4.4 An annual checklist for overall preparation is advised (see Attachment 2).

4.5 **When a threat is received**

- a) The recipient of the telephone call should obtain as much **precise** information as possible using the Bomb Threat Report form (Attachment 3) during the call. Forms should be located at or near any telephones which can receive incoming calls. After the caller has disconnected, **immediately dial *57** which initiates a call trace internally within Bell Canada. This 'call trace' telephone number can be retrieved at a later date within the context of a police investigation.
- b) **Call 911.** Bomb Threat Plans could include having a pre-arranged signal which alerts an assistant to notify the police on another line while the caller is held on the line as long as possible.
- c) The principal, manager, or designate must be informed of the call immediately.
- d) During regular school hours, night school, and summer school, the principal, manager, or designate will then inform the appropriate Superintendent of Schools.
- e) During rental use, or other times not specifically covered, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board employee in charge will inform the Plant Supervisor for the school and/or the 24-hour on-duty Plant Supervisor.
- f) The principal/designate may contact the Communications Office. Any release of information to the media with respect to the bomb threat should be handled by the Communications Office.
- g) A staff person should be assigned to be in the Command Centre, to receive search results and to be available to provide information to responding agencies.
- h) Unless ordered to evacuate, movement of large groups within the building should be strictly controlled.

4.6 **Search Procedure - In Class**

- a) The principal, manager, or designate will initiate a search. Each employee is best qualified to carry out a search of his/her own work area by reason of his/her familiarity with what should be in it. That being said, participation in the search is voluntary. The principal/designate may wish to use a pre-established signal to alert staff to participate in the search. Police and other responding agencies may assist in the search.
- b) The following guidelines are to be adhered to in conducting the search:
 - (i) do not alarm students and staff. Maintain calm authority;

- (ii) the decision to evacuate at this time, during the course of the search, will be made by the principal/designate, in consultation with the police if appropriate;
- (iii) if possible, use the buddy system: send two to three people per team to search an area;
- (iv) warn searchers that should an unidentified package or object be found, they are **NOT TO TOUCH IT** and a safe method for identifying the object will be utilized;
- (v) search areas should not be larger than that which would take more than 15-20 minutes to search;
- (vi) the focus of the search is to “look-and-see” in general areas, and does not include cupboards, drawers, closets etc. Search personnel are to look for an unusual object in a usual place, and are not expected to search through items which may endanger their own safety. Items to look for may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (A) unrecognizable packages;
 - (B) ceiling panels which are clearly out of alignment;
 - (C) packages from which there are methodical or strange noises;
 - (D) packages which smell of gasoline, chemicals, or other noxious odours;
- (vii) special attention should be given to hallways, lobbies, washrooms, stairways, unlocked student lockers, chemistry laboratories, and areas used by teachers;
- (viii) staff/student lockers should not be opened. If a locker search is necessary, it may be undertaken after consultation with local police officials;
- (ix) the outside of the building and parking lot must be included in the search plans.

Note: Search procedures other than during in-class situations, for example prior to the start of class, lunch, or after school, are outlined in detail in Attachment 3, pages 4-6.

4.1 **If A Suspicious Object/Package Is Not Found**

- a) Communicate an all-clear to staff and that no further action is required. If the premises were evacuated, re-enter the building following consultation with the police.
- b) Inform the Superintendent of Schools and, if applicable, the Communications Office. Complete an “After Action Report” (Attachment 4), two copies of which are to be forwarded to: 1) the appropriate Superintendent of Schools; and 2) the Chief of Social Work.

4.2 **If A Suspicious Object/Package Is Found**

- a) If a suspicious object or package is found, the finder must not attempt to move or handle it. Instead, the person designated to stay in the Command Centre must be contacted and the following information given:
 - (i) location of the object;
 - (ii) description of the object; and
 - (iii) reason it is suspicious.

- b) If occupied, the room in which the device is found is to be evacuated calmly and quietly.
- c) The principal/manager/designate must then establish perimeter control of the area and ensure that no one approaches, or attempts to move the object, and will endeavour to establish ownership of the object.
- d) Ensure that access routes have been searched prior to any evacuation and that persons are detailed to direct students along these access/exit routes. In cases where terrorist-motivated acts against evacuees is a possibility (for example, foreign students), direct supervision must be provided during evacuation and in the safe area.
- e) There may be a need for special instructions regarding hazardous areas or evacuation routes to be avoided because of the existence of a real or suspected danger.
- f) Rooms should be evacuated systematically, starting with adjacent rooms and radiating to the farthest, until the whole building has been evacuated.
- g) Evacuate by using the fire alarm if other methods have not been effective.
- h) Special provision will be made for the transportation of physically challenged persons.
- i) If necessary, the procedures regarding transportation requirements outlined in Board procedure PR.506.SCO: Emergency School Evacuations/School Closings will be followed. Use of alternate shelter and parental notification of changes to transportation arrangements will follow the regular pattern for emergency evacuations/closing.
- j) At this point, the building should be relinquished to police for removal and/or defusing of the device. Provide police with the location of the object, and information on the most direct route to the object. School staff, where required, will aid police in securing exits.

4.3 **Return To School**

- a) Students and school personnel will return to the school building on the direction of the principal/manager/designate, after consultation with the police. During rental use, the custodian on duty, in consultation with a Plant Supervisor, will provide direction to rental users regarding return to the building.
- b) An "After Action Report" (Attachment 4) must be completed, two copies of which are to be forwarded to: 1) the appropriate Superintendent of Schools; and 2) the Chief of Social Work.
- c) A communication plan will be developed by the principal in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, for example a parental letter or press release, as appropriate.

5.0 IF A EXPLOSIVE DEVICE IS FOUND

- 5.1 DO NOT TOUCH – inform Command Centre of location and description;
- 5.2 Notify police immediately.
- 5.3 Immediately evacuate the area of all students and staff, in a calm manner.
- 5.4 Safely secure and seal the area.
- 5.5 Continually update Command Centre and all the appropriate personnel, for example the Superintendent of Schools.

6.0 APPENDICES

Attachment 1: Bomb Threat Action Plan
Attachment 2: Checklist for Year-Round Safety
Attachment 3: Bomb Threat Report
Attachment 4: After Action Report

7.0 REFERENCES

Board Policy P.011.SCO: Emergency School Evacuations/School Closings
Board Policy P.032.SCO: Safe Schools
Board Procedure PR.521.SCO: Safe Schools
Board Procedure PR.506.SCO: Emergency School Evacuations/School Closings

BOMB THREAT ACTION PLAN

	Action Plan	Planning Notes
1	Establish Command Centre as per Item 4.5.7	
2	When a bomb threat is received: a) complete a Bomb Threat Report (Attachment 3) during call; b) be prepared to activate *57 as soon as call is disconnected.	
3	Call 911 immediately (if possible during bomb threat call, on another line, using pre-arranged signal).	
4	Inform Superintendent of Schools.	
5	Communicate threat to staff.	
6	Proceed with search as per Procedures 4.6.	
7	If bomb or suspicious package is found, follow Procedures 4.8 - 5.0. Evacuate the building immediately and quietly.	
8	Complete "Bomb Threat – After Action Report" (Attachment 4)	

CHECKLIST FOR YEAR-ROUND SAFETY

- ___ establish Command Centre
- ___ daily attendance record
- ___ phone register and demographics
- ___ daily attendance from teachers
- ___ register all locker assignments
- ___ lock all unassigned lockers immediately, and empty classrooms, storage rooms, etc.
- ___ secure ladders, chairs and tables
- ___ review all protocols re: evacuation
 - emergency code word: in house 912 (dedicated line)
 - familiarize the ever-changing office staff
 - care staff responsibilities
- ___ visitor permits
- ___ visitor's notice on doors
- ___ locking of exterior doors except main door (wherever feasible)
- ___ alternate site contact in August
- ___ emergency contact number - superintendent
 - communications
- ___ one page notice to supply teachers
 - internal phone numbers
 - washrooms
 - codes, etc.
- ___ establish safe school committee/school climate committee
- ___ update and maintain safety equipment and resources, e.g. C.P.R., C.P.I., First Aid Kits
- ___ Search Procedure as per appendix IV

BOMB THREAT REPORT

Remain calm. Listen. Do not interrupt.

Date: _____ Time Received: _____ Duration of Call: _____

Exact wording of threat (include profanity):

Questions to ask:

1. When is the bomb going to explode? _____
2. Where is it? _____
3. What does it look like? (e.g. pipe bomb, letter bomb etc.) _____
4. What will cause it to explode? _____
5. Did you place the bomb? _____
6. Why? _____
7. Where are you calling from? _____
8. What is your name? _____

Identifying Characteristics:

Sex _____ Age Group: _____
Accent (English, French, etc...): _____
Voice (loud, soft, etc...): _____
Speech (rapid, slow, etc...): _____
Diction (nasal, lisp, stutter, etc...): _____
Emotional state (calm, excited, angry, etc...): _____
Was caller's voice familiar? _____
Was caller familiar with area? _____
Background noises (street, music, PA system, factory, etc...): _____

Threat Received by:

Name _____

Remarks _____

Bomb Plan Considerations

Sector Search Plans should be packaged and available in Command Centre:

- _____ Instructions in package to indicate procedures
- _____ Floor plan indicating specific areas to search
- _____ Master Key to allow access to all areas
- _____ Indicators to mark doors of areas searched (Marker or stickers?)
- _____ Flashlights??
- _____ Mark “all clear” – teachers initial

Bomb Threat – Checklist
(Students in class)

Initial Action when a bomb threat is received:

- _____ fill in “Bomb Threat Report” – concentrate on obtaining as much detail as possible. (“Bomb Threat Reports” should be by the desk of any staff taking the immediate incoming call
- _____ if possible (*57 to allow trace)
- _____ notify Principal or Designate of the threat.

Move to Command Centre Location initiate action from there.

(*Command Centre – problem if area changes according to emergency – fire, bomb, intruder, etc. – be consistent and alternate location identified)

- _____ print school attendance record for the day

Phone calls: - designate individuals to:

- _____ Superintendent/assistant
- _____ call 911
- _____ Notify Communication to be on standby

Initiate Search: (coded message so as not to alarm students – all staff not involved in teaching come to office to aid search)

- _____ classroom teachers search area and report anything unusual to Command Centre
- _____ Department Heads search offices – Lock office door after search
- _____ Sector Teams search assigned area – inside and outside school
- _____ Physical Education teachers outside informed

If nothing is found:

- _____ communicate all clear to staff
- _____ inform superintendent
- _____ inform communications
- _____ consult with police over follow up action
- _____ fill in “Bomb Threat – After Action Report” – forward two copies to: 1) the appropriate Superintendent of Schools; and 2) the Chief of Social Work.

If suspicious object is found:

- _____ don't touch – inform Command Centre of location and description
- _____ Superintendent and communication should be updated
- _____ secure area
- _____ if in occupied area room should be evacuate calmly
- _____ evacuate systematically from adjacent areas (do not use fire alarm or elevators) -Principal to determine extent of evacuation in consultation with the police, at least 100m away from school.
- _____ students who evacuate should be moved to a central area for communication purposes - in inclement weather they should move to alternate shelter area
- _____ secure area (evacuated area)

POLICE TAKE CHARGE OF INVESTIGATION OF OBJECT.

If police find a explosive device:

- _____ determine with police if the rest of the school needs to be evacuated
- _____ Principal in consultation with the police and superintendent decide regarding:
 - a) transportation needs (send students home or not?)
 - b) communication plan, (e.g. Parent Advisory Chain).
- _____ inform Communications
- _____ parent notification (e.g. hoax)

If police don't find a bomb:

- _____ announce an all clear and students return to classes
- _____ clarify actions and security of school with staff and students
- _____ inform Superintendent of Communications

Fill in “Bomb Threat – After Action Report” – file copy and forward two copies to: 1) the appropriate Superintendent of Schools; and 2) the Chief of Social Work.

3.

Debriefing Meeting for Staff

Bomb Threat – Checklist
(prior to start of day)

Initial Action when a bomb threat is received:

- _____ fill in “Bomb Threat Report” – concentrate on obtaining as much detail as possible. (“Bomb Threat Reports” should be by the desk of any staff taking the immediate incoming call)
- _____ if possible (*57 to allow trace)
- _____ notify Principal or Designate of the threat.

Move to Command Centre Location initiate action from there.

(*Command Centre – problem if area changes according to emergency – fire, bomb, intruder)

- _____ print school attendance record for the day (not appropriate)

Phone calls: - designate individuals to:

- _____ Superintendent/assistant
- _____ call 911
- _____ Notify Communication to be on standby

Initiate Search:

- _____ ask staff in school to report to office to help
- _____ send staff to cafeteria (or other areas where students congregate) to move students to outside and keep clear
- _____ three person teams move to sectors – two search, one clears out students
- _____ sector team remains at entrances to prevent re-entry of students
- _____ call in to indicate status of sector (cleared, report if something is found)
- _____ turn off bells

If nothing is found:

- _____ communicate all clear to staff and students
- _____ inform superintendent
- _____ inform Communications
- _____ consult with police over follow-up action
- _____ fill in “Bomb Threat – After Action Report” – forward report to Superintendent

If unidentified object is found:

- _____ don't touch – inform Command Centre of location and description
- _____ Superintendent and communication should be updated

_____ secure area

_____ evacuate students, - should be moved to a central area for communication purposes – in inclement weather they should be moved to alternate shelter area

Police take charge of investigation of object.

If police find a bomb:

- _____ Principal in consultation with the police and superintendent decide regarding transportation needs. (send students home or not?)
- _____ inform Communications

If police don't find a bomb:

- _____ announce an all clear and students return to classes
- _____ clarify actions and security of school with staff and students
- _____ inform Superintendent and Communications

Fill in "Bomb Threat – After Action Report" – file copy and forward two copies to: 1) the appropriate Superintendent of Schools; and 2) the Chief of Social Work.

Debriefing Meeting for Staff

Bomb Threat – Checklist
(lunch)

Initial Action when a bomb threat is received:

- _____ fill in “Bomb Threat Report” – concentrate on obtaining as much detail as possible. (“Bomb Threat Reports” should be by the desk of any staff taking the immediate incoming call)
- _____ if possible (*57 to allow trace)
- _____ notify Principal or Designate of the threat.

Move to Command Centre Location initiate action from there.

(*Command Centre – problem if area changes according to emergency – fire, bomb, intruder)

- _____ print school attendance record for the day

Phone calls: - designate individuals to:

- _____ Superintendent/assistant
- _____ call 911
- _____ notify Communication to be on standby

Initiate Search:

- _____ call staff room and offices to elicit help
- _____ inform staff in cafeteria to move students to outside
- _____ three person teams move to sectors – two search, one clears out students
- _____ sector team remains at entrances to prevent re-entry of students
- _____ call in to indicate status of sector (cleared, report if something is found)
- _____ use sector control, fire alarm, if all else fails

If nothing is found:

- _____ communicate all clear to staff and students
- _____ inform superintendent
- _____ inform Communications
- _____ consult with police over follow-up action
- _____ fill in “Bomb Threat – After Action Report” – forward report to Superintendent

If unidentified object is found:

- _____ don't touch – inform Command Centre of location and description
- _____ Superintendent and communication should be updated
- _____ secure area

_____ evacuate students, - should be moved to a central area for communication purposes – in
_____ inclement weather they should be moved to alternate shelter area

Police take charge of investigation of object.

If police find a bomb:

- _____ Principal in consultation with the police and superintendent decide regarding transportation needs and established communication protocols. (send students home or not?)
- _____ inform Communications

If police don't find a bomb:

- _____ announce an all clear and students return to classes
- _____ clarify actions and security of school with staff and students
- _____ inform Superintendent and Communications

Fill in "Bomb Threat – After Action Report" – file copy and forward two copies to: 1) the appropriate Superintendent of Schools; and 2) the Chief of Social Work.

Debriefing Meeting for Staff

Bomb Threat – Checklist
(after school)

Initial Action when a bomb threat is received:

- _____ fill in “Bomb Threat Report” – concentrate on obtaining as much detail as possible. (“Bomb Threat Reports” should be by the desk of any staff taking the immediate incoming call) if possible (*57 to allow trace)
- _____ notify Principal or Designate of the threat.

Move to Command Centre Location initiate action from there.

(*Command Centre – problem if area changes according to emergency – fire, bomb, intruder)

- _____ print school attendance record for the day

Phone calls: - designate individuals to:

- _____ Superintendent/assistant
- _____ Police 911 or local if more appropriate
- _____ Notify Communication to be on standby

Clear school by announcement over the P.A.

Initiate Search:

- _____ ask staff in school to report to office to help
- _____ three person teams move to sectors – two search, one clears out students
- _____ sector team remains at entrances to prevent re-entry of students
- _____ call in to indicate status of sector (cleared, report if something is found)

If nothing is found:

- _____ communicate all clear to staff and students
- _____ inform superintendent
- _____ inform Communications
- _____ consult with police over follow-up action
- _____ fill in “Bomb Threat – After Action Report” – forward report to Superintendent

If unidentified object is found:

- _____ don’t touch – inform Command Centre of location and description. Superintendent and communication should be updated
- _____ Secure area

_____ Evacuate students, - should be moved to a central area for communication purposes – in inclement weather they should be moved to alternate shelter area

Police take charge of investigation of object.

If police find a bomb:

- _____ Principal in consultation with the police and superintendent decide regarding transportation needs. (send students home or not?)
- _____ inform Communications

If police don't find a bomb:

- _____ announce an all clear and students return to classes
- _____ clarify actions and security of school with staff and students
- _____ inform Superintendent and Communications

Fill in "Bomb Threat – After Action Report" – file copy and forward two copies to: 1) the appropriate Superintendent of Schools; and 2) the Chief of Social Work.

Debriefing Meeting for Staff

BOMB THREAT AFTER ACTION REPORT

Name of School: _____ Date: _____

Who received the threat? _____

Who was the threat directed to?

School - general _____

Students _____

Staff _____

Specific person _____

What were the demands? _____

What were the school activities at the time of the threat?

Day School _____

Exam Program _____

Continuing Education program _____

Rental _____

Care Staff Supervision _____

Other _____

Report completed by: _____ Date: _____

Note: Copies of this report are to be sent to: 1) the appropriate Superintendent of Schools; and 2) the Chief of Social Work.