



## Fire Safety and Fire Safety Plans

Board Received: April 27, 2020 Review Date: May 2024

### Accountability

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – Completion of Fire Safety plans  
– Compliance with Fire Code and no violations noted by local fire service.

### Background

In Ontario, all Schools, Educational Facilities and Board Owned buildings, must comply with the Ontario Fire Code and the Ontario Building Code. This compliance includes ensuring; proper storage of materials, keeping exit corridors, hallways and stairways clear of combustibles and obstructions, maintaining fire doors and fire separations, proper use of extension cords, correct occupant load for assembly events, etc.

Compliance also includes the creation of a fire safety plan at all sites that is reviewed at least annually or as soon as changes are required. For the safety of both staff and students, procedures should be in place, annual training (including fire drills) and information provided related to both fire safety and the fire safety plan specific to the location.

### Procedures

#### Fire Alarm Response (See the Fire Safety Reference Manual)

#### Required to Report

The local Fire Services Authority has jurisdiction over all fire safety matters and Grand Erie DSB requires that all fire related occurrences or incidents be reported immediately. All fires will be investigated by the fire service authority having jurisdiction and school board personnel. A copy of the school board report shall be submitted to the agency having jurisdiction. The local Police are to be contacted for any confirmed or suspected arson-related fire-incident.

Schools are also required to report any fire system shutdowns to the local fire chief. This notification is done through Facility Services, but in their absence that notification must be made by the administrator in charge of the building.

#### Required to Evacuate

Ontario Fire Code and Grand Erie DSB requires schools to evacuate completely and immediately anytime the fire alarm is activated, or a fire is discovered on site no matter how small, even if the fire is extinguished by personnel. All Occupants are not allowed to re-enter the building until an “All Clear” is obtained by the local fire services. The fire panel is not to be re-set until the area of the fire has been investigated and the “All Clear” is confirmed by the local fire services,

#### Fire Drills

Schools shall conduct total evacuation fire drills three (3) times in each of the fall and spring terms. If a school is operating summer programs, they shall conduct one during each month of operation. Fire drills shall be held during operating hours when the school is occupied by students. The first

fall term evacuation drill should be held early in the school year to ensure that students are familiar with proper evacuation techniques. Fire drills must also occur at any off-site locations utilized by Secondary Program (i.e. Turning Points etc.) These drills must be documented in the fire logbook. In order to qualify as a fire drill, ALL building occupants must evacuate. Review any issues that occurred during the fire drill and resolve for future drills.

### **Fire Safety Plan (See the Fire Safety Reference Manual)**

#### **Purpose**

The Fire Safety Plan shall be followed by all personnel in case of a fire or any other emergency requiring the evacuation of a Grand Erie Building. All locations must use one of the approved Fire Safety Plan templates as found on the staff portal .

<https://staff.granderie.ca/index.php/departments/health-and-safety/administrator-and-site-rep-health-and-safety-information/fire-safety-plans>

A complete copy of the approved fire safety plan shall be located at the main entrance to the school by the fire alarm panel for use by firefighters . A copy of Appendix 5 (of the school's fire safety plan) – Procedures for Off-Site Educational Locations must be available at the off-site location.

The fire safety plan shall be reviewed annually, or as any changes are needed by the building administrator or Manager. Any physical changes may result in a revision of the present Fire Safety Plan; temporary changes may possibly be addressed under alternate measures. The review shall include provisions for dealing with students with special needs or disabilities. Revisions to the Fire Safety Plan must be approved by the local Fire Department

Any person given any responsibility identified in the Fire Safety Plan shall be made aware of their duties under the Fire Safety Plan and shall receive training prior to assuming responsibilities.

#### **Fire Safety Committee**

A Fire Safety Committee is to provide an organized distribution of the duties and responsibilities as set out by the Fire Safety Plan. Each member of the Fire Safety committee will have their specific responsibilities pertaining to the Fire Safety Plan whether it pertains to maintenance and/or readiness of fire safety or the responsibilities during a fire alarm situation.

- Building Administrator – Principal or Building Manager
- Teacher in Charge or Admin Designate
- Building Facility Personnel
- Building Secretary

#### **Responsibilities**

##### **Principal**

- Be in complete charge of the approved Fire Safety Plan and the specific responsibilities of the personnel.
- Designate and train enough workers to act in this position, during any absence of administrators from the building.
- Ensure that all Fire Safety Committee members have been provided with the appropriate sections(s) of this Plan and trained to perform related duties.
- Educate and train all staff and students in the actions to be taken under the approved Fire Safety Plan.
- Maintain adequate records of all staff training for future reference.

- Survey the building to determine the number of exits available from each floor or area and then prepare and post in each classroom or area, a schedule for use by the occupants of such exits (primary and secondary) in case of an evacuation.
- Ensure that a floor plan (schematic diagram), showing type, location and operation of all building fire emergency systems, is maintained and posted in the main entrance and in conspicuous locations throughout the building.
- Total evacuation fire drills should be held (3) three times in each of the fall and spring terms and as required if operating during summer months.
- Maintain adequate records of all fire drills for future reference.
- Ensure that revisions to the Fire Safety Plan are approved by the local Fire Department.
- Keep stairways, landings, hallways, passageways and exits (inside and outside), clear of any obstructions, at all times. Do not permit combustible materials to accumulate in quantities or locations which will constitute a fire hazard.
- Ensure removal of all combustible waste from all areas where waste is placed for disposal.
- Keep access roadways, fire routes and fire pumper connections clear and accessible for Fire Department use.
- Have a working knowledge of the fire alarm system and how to reset. Ensure that the FIRE ALARM SYSTEM IS NOT SILENCED OR RESET until the Fire Department has responded, the cause of the alarm has been investigated and the Senior Fire Official authorizes it.
- Ensure the local fire chief is advised of any fire system shutdowns.
- Designate someone to check washrooms in the event of a fire alarm.
- Ensure that a list **and** evacuation plans are created for ALL students (upon registration) and/or staff who require assistance to evacuate due to physical or mental disabilities as required and designate staff to carry out those duties. Ensure these staff are adequately trained in methods of evacuation for individual students and/or staff
- Ensure fire access routes and emergency exits are kept free and clear and unobstructed, at all times.
- Be familiar with floor areas, exits and the locations of firefighting equipment.
- Ensure that the check, inspect and test requirements of the Ontario Fire Code as summarized in the Fire Safety Plan are implemented.
- For Secondary locations ensure the plan includes procedures in Appendix 5 – Procedures for Off-Site Educational Locations and that a copy of these procedures is kept at the Off-Site Location.

#### **In the event of fire:**

- Ensure the fire alarm has been activated.
- Supervise the evacuation of the occupants by using the PA system if required.
- Ensure that 9-1-1 has been called and the Fire Department notified.
- Upon arrival of the firefighters inform the Fire Officer regarding conditions in the building.
- Provide access and vital information to firefighters (e.g. Master keys for service rooms, elevators etc.)
- Provide access and vital information about ALL students and/or staff who require assistance to evacuate due to physical or mental disabilities. A current list of people should be kept in the **FIRE PLAN SAFETY BOX** along with a copy of the Fire Safety Plan.
- See that the FIRE ALARM SYSTEM IS NOT SILENCED OR RESET until the Fire Department has responded, the cause of the alarm has been investigated and the Senior Fire Official has authorized
- Do not allow anyone to re-enter the building prior to consultation with the senior Fire Official on scene.

**NOTE:** The Fire Department **MUST** be called any time the fire alarm system is activated, or a fire is discovered (even if the fire is extinguished).

### **Teacher Designate (Vice-Principal)**

- To perform the duties of the principal in their absence.
- To be familiar with the fire plan and duties of the principal.

### **Duties of Teachers**

- Familiarize students with prescribed exits from the school as well as alternate exits.
- Ensure exit signs are posted in prominent location in the classroom (I.e. at eye level for the students).
- Ensure students are aware of procedures to be followed in case of an emergency. this should include directions given to students on what to do if they are away from their classroom, e.g., in the washroom, library, hallways, etc., or special needs children.
- Practice evacuation procedures with the class:
  - single file
  - quietly
  - walk quickly
  - who holds the exit door open
  - line up in silence outdoors so attendance can be taken
- Take attendance records when leaving the classroom.
- Take the roll and let the principal/designate know whether all students are accounted for.
- Close all doors and windows during an alarm - if it is safe to do so.

### **Custodian Responsibilities**

- Check, test and inspect fire safety equipment as per the Ontario Fire Code and note it in the log book.
- Post exit signs in a prominent location in the classrooms, at eye level for the students.
- Ensure all fire doors and service doors are closed.
- Ensure exit doors are functioning and clear from hazards, snow, etc.
- Maintain the fire alarm system and other fire protection equipment in operating condition, at all times.
- In the event of any shutdown of the fire protection equipment, notify your immediate Supervisor and the Maintenance Supervisor. Direction will be given by them to notify the Fire Department and patrol the school once every hour (during occupied times) and once every 4 hours (during unoccupied times), (Fire Watch). Check closets and unoccupied rooms, etc. and keep a written record of each patrol notify the principal who will notify staff that the fire alarm is shut down.
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- In the event of any shutdown of the fire protection equipment, alternate alarm notification to occupants will be made through a whistle or a signal through the PA system. In the event of an emergency this notification will be made and Verbal instructions will follow, and the school will be evacuated IMMEDIATELY.
- Have a working knowledge of the fire alarm system and how it is reset.
- Keep a record of fire drills.

### **Secretary's Duties**

- Keep the emergency plans up to date with current names, phone numbers and addresses.
- To ensure the emergency numbers are taped directly to the telephone.

- Call 911 and advise the need for fire services response - giving name and address of the school.
- Take the emergency contact list for students' outdoors during an emergency evacuation.
- Have a working knowledge of the fire alarm system and how it is reset.

**Related Resources:**

SO5: School/Site Security (Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery)