



## Superintendent's Circular

School Year 2011-2012

NUMBER:  
FSE-2

DATE:  
September 1, 2011

### FIRE SAFETY PRACTICES

As we begin another school year, it is essential that we review and update fire prevention, life safety and evacuation plans / procedures in all of our schools. Accordingly, appropriate communications and cooperation with Fire Department Authorities is imperative. The Boston Fire Department and Director of School Safety / Emergency Preparedness cite specific areas of concern and responsibility in this directive, which must be brought to your attention.

*The following fire safety practices should be incorporated into your Fire Safety section of your School Safety / Contingency Plan:*

**A FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST (ATTACHMENT A) MUST BE COMPLETED AND READILY AVAILABLE IN THE MAIN OFFICE ALONG WITH APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTS INCLUDING: FIRE DRILL REPORTS, FIRE ALARM TESTS, \* FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEM TEST, FIRE EXTINGUISHER LOCATION DOCUMENT, \* FIRE PUMP TEST, AED LOCATION, A COPY OF MOST RECENT BFD QUARTERLY INSPECTION REPORT AND CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY. NOTE: (\*) IF APPLICABLE**

**THE BOSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT HAS DIRECTED THAT SCHOOL OFFICIALS DESIGNATE A MEMBER OF THEIR SCHOOL SAFETY TEAM TO REPORT TO THE MAIN ENTRANCE OF THE SCHOOL TO MEET AND DIRECT ARRIVING FIRE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL. THIS INDIVIDUAL IS IDENTIFIED AS THE BUILDING COORDINATOR POSITION IN YOUR SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN AND IS USUALLY THE SCHOOL CUSTODIAN.**

**THE BUILDING COORDINATOR SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH THIS CIRCULAR, YOUR BUILDING AND FIRE SAFETY REPORTS, YOUR FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST, KNOW THE LOCATION OF FIRE NOTIFICATION AND EXTINGUISHING SYSTEMS AND HAVE ACCESS TO ALL AREAS. YOUR PLAN MUST ALSO IDENTIFY AN ALTERNATE PERSON TO PERFORM THIS ROLE IN THE EVENT YOUR CUSTODIAN IS NOT AVAILABLE.**

#### **FIRE ALARMS**

All fire alarm systems must be maintained in working order at all times. It is important to remember that the sounding of any fire alarm box automatically transmits a signal to the Fire Alarm Office which simultaneously dispatches fire apparatus to the school.

Fire Department regulations and Mass. General Law Chapter 268, Section 32 prohibit the shutting off of or tampering with any fire alarm box unless the procedure has the approval of the Fire Department. Any deficiency or trouble noted with the Fire Alarm System must be reported immediately to Facilities Management/Fire Alarm Division at 617-635-8300.

Upon the evacuation of a school building because of an alarm, no person or persons shall re-enter the building without the authorization of the Fire Officer in charge. The Principal / Headmaster or his / her designee must, as a part of their fire drill procedures, establish a command procedure for such evacuations.

**Upon the sounding of a fire alarm, approved evacuation procedures for all building occupants are to be followed immediately, as well as a verification call made to the Fire Department at 911 or 617-343-2880.**

Upon arrival, the Boston Fire Department will exercise its authority to order any and all measures that are deemed necessary for the protection of persons and property. This authority includes building evacuation and reentry.

### **MEANS OF EGRESS**

Designated exits in every school must be maintained as means of egress.

- a. Means of egress must be kept free and clear at all times.
- b. The use of chains, ropes, bars, so-called "dutch locks" or any other unauthorized device that would impede egress is prohibited during times when school buildings are occupied.
- c. No exit door which is intended to be kept closed shall be blocked open and no device or arrangement shall be used to prevent a door designed to be self-closing or automatic-closing from functioning as intended. Use of wedges to hold corridor and stairwell doors open is prohibited.
- d. Interconnecting doors between rooms must be clear and free of any locks. Fire and smoke doors are not to be propped open with wooden wedges or any other means. This is an illegal practice and prohibited in all schools.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

All schools shall conform to the following fire drill regulations:

- a. The responsible school administrator in charge of the school, shall formulate a plan for the protection and evacuation of all persons in the event of fire or other emergency, and shall include alternate means of egress for all persons involved; such plan is to be developed in consultation with appropriate representatives of the Boston Fire Department and Facilities Management.
- b. The Principal / Headmaster or his / her designee shall see that each staff member receives and understands proper instructions on the fire drill procedure specified for the room or area in which that person carries out his/her duties before he / she assumes such duties. A log or sign-off list must be maintained at the school which documents staff receipt of procedures and familiarization with Fire Safety Practices.
- c. A fire drill must be conducted **quarterly** (September, December, March and June) involving all students and staff. A record of each drill is to be documented on Form 482, Quarterly Report of Fire Drill (**see Attachment B**), and either emailed to Rick Deraney at [rderaney@boston.k12.ma.us](mailto:rderaney@boston.k12.ma.us) or faxed to 635-7854.

Record of Fire Drills should also be maintained with documents in the Fire Safety section of your building's School Safety / Contingency Plan.

- d. Every student in all schools shall be advised of the fire drill procedure and shall take part in a fire drill within three days after school begins in September. Fire drill procedures for particular rooms shall be posted within those rooms. Alternate and obstructed drills shall be exercised and every other quarter alternate routes shall be used.

- e. As required by Massachusetts Law, CMR 527, 10.09, the head of the Fire Department, or person designated by him, shall visit each school four times each year for the purpose of quarterly inspections, reviewing Building Fire Safety Plans, conducting fire drills and questioning the administrators. Drills may be conducted without advance warning to the school personnel other than the person in charge of the school at the time.
- f. Fire drill plans must ensure adequate procedures for the emergency evacuation of students and staff with handicaps. These procedures must also be incorporated in the School Safety / Contingency Plan for your school building. Fire Drill Procedures must address student and staff accountability in an evacuation. This element of plan should identify person(s) in charge, insure accurate class attendance rosters are available and identify specific location for evacuees to assemble.

## **OTHER PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **STORAGE OF FLAMMABLES AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

Flammables shall be stored in an approved locked metal cabinet suitably vented. If the amount being stored warrants, a locked storage vault should be provided. The storage facility must be under the control of a school official with authorized personnel only allowed access.

Faculty members should not allow students to fuel individual devices nor to transport any fuel container from one location to another.

All school personnel should be thoroughly instructed as to the hazard involved in a particular flammable liquid, chemical or gas and in its safe and proper handling prior to intended use. Material Safety Data sheets should be on file in the main office. No fuel container should be allowed to remain in any classroom but should be immediately returned to its permanent storage facility (THIS INCLUDES ANY DUPLICATING FLUID).

The above procedures should be incorporated in the School Safety / Contingency Plan for each school building. Materials used in school science laboratory experiments are to be stored in compliance with related laws, codes and ordinances. Quarterly school fire inspections are complemented by specialized inspections conducted by Boston Fire Department Special Occupancies' Officers.

\*Hazardous storage areas must be secured and identified with the appropriate warning label. The appropriate chemical storage room door identification is the National Fire Protection Association's 704 Diamond.

\*(Reference Superintendent's Circular FSE-6 - Student Safety / Health in School Shops, and / or Laboratories and Classrooms and the Chemical Inventory Sheet in Superintendent's Circular FMT-7 - Right to Know Law )

### **REPORTING OF FIRE INCIDENTS**

The Boston Fire Prevention Code requires the following:

- a. **Upon any person's discovery of a fire or smoke in a building or premises, he/she shall immediately notify the Fire Alarm Office of the Boston Fire Department of the location of the discovery and of the circumstances he/she has observed. The Boston Fire Department must be notified both by sounding the nearest fire alarm box (Pull Station) and by telephone (911 or 617-343-2880) in the event of a fire.**

- b. Any discovery or evidence of a fire or attempt to burn shall be reported to the Boston Fire Department by calling either 911 or 617-343-2880 in order to begin an arson investigation. BFD considers any fire started by a child as a potentially serious mental health issue that if addressed early enough, may prevent more serious problems in the future.
- c. This section shall not be construed to forbid any person who discovers a fire, or the owner, lessee, person in charge of the building or premises, any occupant, or any of their agents, after notifying the Fire Department, from using all means necessary to extinguish or control the fire prior to the arrival of the Fire Department.
- d. No person shall require, make, issue, post, or maintain any order, direction or regulation, written or verbal that would require or direct anyone to delay reporting a fire to the Fire Department.
- e. All personnel must be familiar with fire reporting procedures.
- f. The Boston Fire Department and then Facilities Management are to be notified of all fire-related incidents. These include but are not limited to following:
  - Fire or Explosion
  - Overpressure Rupture
  - Rescue and EMS
  - Hazardous Conditions
  - Service Calls
  - Fire Extinguished by Occupant
  - Good Intent Calls
  - False Alarm/False Call
  - Natural Disaster
  - Hazardous Materials (i.e. fuel spills or chemical leaks)
- g. Any fire (including paper towels or tissues, even if extinguished), must be reported to Boston Fire Department in accordance with procedure delineated in sections a. and b. above.
- h. The principal shall submit a written report (available with this link: <http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/dfs/osfm/forms/fp200.pdf>) of any fire within the school building or on the school grounds to Rick Deraney, Director of School Safety / Emergency Preparedness at 635-7854, who will then forward it to the Boston Fire Department within 24 hours. This is in compliance with Mass General Law, Chapter 148.s2A, which went into effective September 2006.

This information is also essential for arson-prevention action.

#### **FIRE EXTINGUISHERS/KITCHEN SYSTEMS**

- a. Portable fire extinguishers must be serviced annually and located in accordance with the building's Fire Safety Plan.
- b. Kitchen extinguishing systems must be serviced twice a year.
- c. It is the responsibility of senior custodians to ensure extinguishers are visually inspected weekly and recharged / inspected annually to ensure they are ready for emergency use.
- d. Requests for fire extinguisher servicing should be made to Facilities Management at 617-635-9122.
- e. If extinguishers are not hanging in corridors, they must be readily accessible. A list of fire extinguisher locations shall be posted in the office and maintained in the Fire Safety section of your building's School Safety / Contingency Plan.

## FLAMMABLE DECORATIONS

- a. Flammable decorations including examples of students work must not be displayed in paths of egress including doorways and stairwells.
- b. Boston Fire Department expects us to display reasonable amounts of student work. This is to be in accordance with National Fire Protection Association, Life Safety Code and 527CMR. **“Art work and teaching materials shall be permitted to be attached directly to the walls and shall not exceed 20 percent of the wall area.” Please see Attachment C from Boston Fire Department.**
- c. Certain buildings have more fire protection features than others and this may be considered when displaying student work.
- d. Please refer to Superintendent's Circular FSE-3 - Building Codes and Fire Regulations.

## RIGHT TO KNOW -- CHEMICAL INVENTORY

Each school / facility must maintain an accurate inventory of toxic and hazardous substances stored and used in the building. Please refer to Superintendent's Circular FMT-7 - "Right to Know" Law – Chemical Inventory.

Summary of significant dates and deadlines:

Date	Activity
September 2009	Quarterly Fire Drill Report Due
December 2009	Quarterly Fire Drill Report Due
March 2010	Quarterly Fire Drill Report Due
June 2010	Quarterly Fire Drill Report Due

For more information about this circular, contact:

<b>Name:</b>	Rick Deraney, Director
<b>Department:</b>	School Fire Safety & Emergency Preparedness
<b>Mailing Address:</b>	26 Court Street, Boston, MA 02108
<b>Phone:</b>	617-635-8300 or 617-212-2397
<b>Fax:</b>	617-635-7854
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:rderaney@boston.k12.ma.us">rderaney@boston.k12.ma.us</a>

Carol R. Johnson, Superintendent

Boston Public Schools

Attachment A

**SCHOOL BUILDING FIRE SAFETY PLANS**

School: \_\_\_\_\_

HEADMASTER/PRINCIPAL: \_\_\_\_\_

- |    |   |                            |                            |
|----|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | Does school have a Fire Safety Plan as part of School Safety/Contingency Plan?  | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | Is Plan readily available in main office?<br>(School Safety/Contingency Plan, Section 6)  | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | Is Plan current for this school year?   | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | Does Plan include following elements:   |                            |                            |
|    | - Description of building (type, height, occupancy)   | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Types of fire protection systems (sprinkler system, stand pipes)  | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Fire alarms (locations of pull stations, smoke detectors, heat detectors)   | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Location of exits (primary and alternate)   | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Evacuation routes (primary and alternate)   | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Stairwell designations  | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Smoke control (are corridor doors closed or held open by Magnetic devices that release when an alarm is activated?)                   | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Location of extinguishers   | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Identify and location of any occupants with disabilities  | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Floor Plans   | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Record of staff training  | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Fire Drill Reports  | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Fire alarm system test records  | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Copy of building occupancy permit   | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - Incident Control Team Members who are identified by name and title with defined responsibilities in an emergency (including back-ups) | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    | - In particular a follow-up phone call must always be made to Fire Alarm Office (911 or 617-343-2880) by designated staff member        | Y <input type="checkbox"/> | N <input type="checkbox"/> |

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment B

<b>Form 482 Boston Public Schools (Revised January, 2001)</b>	
<b>QUARTERLY REPORT OF FIRE DRILLS AND FIRE ALARM SYSTEM</b>	
Date:	School:
Date of Drill:	Hour: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> A.M. or <input type="checkbox"/> P.M.
Evacuation Time:	Minutes      Seconds
Type of Drill (check): Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate <input type="checkbox"/>	
Has the quarterly test report for the inspection of the fire alarm system been countersigned: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
By Whom?	
Signature of Principal / Headmaster: _____	

Please either E-Mail to Rick Deraney at [rderaney@boston.k12.ma.us](mailto:rderaney@boston.k12.ma.us)  
or fax to 635-7854.

**BOSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT  
 FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION**

**SCHOOL DISPLAY MATERIALS - 527 CMR 10.09(5)**

<b>AREA</b>	<b>WITH NO SPRINKLERS</b>	<b>WITH SPRINKLERS</b>
Classroom	<p>20% wall coverage with combustible materials allowed.</p> <p>Nothing within 5 ft. of egress door.</p> <p>No limit if in viewing cabinet, covered with Polycarbonate, or materials are flame retardant*</p>	<p>50% wall coverage with combustible materials allowed.</p> <p>Nothing within 5 ft. of egress door.</p> <p>No limit if in viewing cabinet, covered with Polycarbonate, or materials are flame retardant*</p>
Exit passageway, corridors, and assembly area.	<p>10% wall coverage with combustible materials allowed.</p> <p>Each grouping to be maximum of 6 ft. high and 12 ft. wide.</p> <p>Groups to be separated by at least the width of the largest adjacent group.</p> <p>No limit if in viewing cabinet, covered with Polycarbonate, or materials are flame retardant.</p> <p>No materials within 5 ft. of egress door.</p>	<p>50% wall coverage with combustible materials allowed.</p> <p>Each grouping to be maximum of 6 ft. high and 12 ft. wide.</p> <p>Groups to be separated by at least ½ the width of the largest adjacent group.</p> <p>No limit if in viewing cabinet, covered with Polycarbonate, or materials are flame retardant.</p> <p>No materials within 5 ft. of egress door.</p>
Exits and enclosed stairs	Nothing permitted.	Nothing permitted.

- NOTES:**
- (1) Door and window openings are to be included when calculating wall areas.
  - \*(2) Documentation must show compliance with NFPA 701 or CA 13115 to be flame retardant.
  - (3) Plexiglas is not allowed; covering must be glass or Polycarbonate.
  - (4) The posting of exit signage or evacuation plans shall not be prohibited by this regulation.
  - (5) 527 CMR 10.09(5) shall not be applicable to any election materials required by law to be posted during any local, state or federal election.

This regulation is effective 9-19-03