

Berkeley Unified School District
Administrative Regulation
Communication Protocols for Threats to
Groups

AR XXXX

Background

The District has an existing Board Policy (3516) for Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness. Additionally, BUSD has protocols in place, as documented in every school's Comprehensive School Safety Plan, which are updated annually, and in the District's Emergency Operations Procedures, that have been developed in accordance with applicable Education and Penal Codes. While Education Code and Penal Code guide a school's responses involving student discipline matters, criminal activity, and safety threats that are under the school's jurisdiction, the codes do not provide guidance for communicating information to the community regarding threats that have been made towards groups. The Board recognizes the need for District-wide procedures for communicating information to students, families, staff, and community members regarding threats to groups in order to protect the safety of students, staff and the greater community, and provide timely, accurate updates regarding safety threats to groups, when they occur.

Criteria for Community Notification Regarding Threats to Groups

Types of threats that warrant providing prompt notification to the school community, including students, staff, and parents/caregivers, include, [but are not limited to](#):

1. [Armed intruder incidents on or near a school campus.](#)
2. [Reports of a firearm on or near campus.](#)
3. [Bomb threats.](#)

4. [Kidnapping or attempted abductions.](#)
5. [Law enforcement activity in the vicinity of a school.](#)
6. Hate crimes that include threats to inflict serious bodily harm on groups of individuals.
7. Major earthquakes.
8. Disasters that pose an immediate safety risk to students and staff, including gas leaks, toxic chemical spills, fire, etc.

Upon determination by the Superintendent or designee that a credible threat towards groups exists, the Superintendent or designee shall provide notification to the school community, as soon as practicable.

Protocols for Community Notification Regarding Threats to Groups

1. For threats that are made at a school, the Principal or designee shall immediately respond and investigate all reports of threats reported to district personnel. Upon determination by that a credible threat towards a group or groups of individuals has been made, the Principal or designee shall immediately take steps to ensure the safety of students and staff, which may include a school lockdown and/or notification of law enforcement, if an immediate safety threat exists.

As soon as practicable after ensure the safety of students and staff, the Principal/designee shall inform the Superintendent or designee of the threat and steps taken to ensure the immediate safety of students and staff, and provide information regarding the investigation of the threat.

2. For threats towards students and/or staff that are received directly by the Superintendent/District Office personnel, law enforcement shall immediately be notified, followed by immediate notification to the Principal of the school(s) targeted by the threats.

3. The Superintendent or designee shall immediately inform the Board [of the threat.](#)

4. The District shall provide a communication template to the Principal or designee, based upon the nature of the threat, for immediate distribution to the school community, including staff, students, and parents/guardians.
5. Notification to the school community by the Superintendent or designee regarding the threat shall be technology-based and may include phone messaging, text messaging, e-mail, social media, and/or technology based safety messaging systems such as Nixle. Whenever feasible, notification to the community shall be made within 2 hours of the Superintendent's/designee's receipt of the threat.
6. Following the initial notification regarding the threat, the Superintendent or designee shall provide periodic follow-up information regarding the status of the threat, with follow-up updates provided by 10am each morning, whenever feasible, until the incident has been resolved. The final update shall state "RESOLVED" in the subject line, and shall additionally state "this is the last update".
7. Communications regarding threats shall include directions regarding what parents/guardians should do (i.e. procedures for picking up one's child(ren), including the location of the unification center), and resources for support for individuals who have been impacted by the threat.
8. The Superintendent or designee shall have immediate access to all school listserves at all times.

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Approved XXXXXXXXX

E XXXX Sample Template for Threats to Groups

Dear XX School Community,

Your child is safe.

The following incident occurred at school today.

[answer each to the best of your ability]:

WHEN: date & time

WHAT: describe incident in brief

WHO: describe perpetrator or victim (if any) and respondent (school employee, if any) IF this seems like a good idea.

{For instance if this happened in a particular classroom, naming the teacher tells parents that their child was or was not in that classroom}

WHERE: which classroom or area of school?

CURRENT STATUS: fill in some details if possible

Responding to the incident was our primary priority.

Communicating with you was our next priority, and we hope that now you feel both more informed and more secure that your BUSD student is safe.

Now we must finish all follow up connected to this event, and as soon as that is finished we will check back in with you.

With serious concerns about your individual student that we may not know about, please call:

Thank you for your patience as we work through the rest of today's incident.

Sincerely,

DRAFT