



Dear NCS Parents and Guardians:

I wanted to let you know that New York State mandates that all schools hold at least four lockdown drills each year, and the exercises give us important chances to practice our emergency response procedures.

While our staff members will explain the purpose of these drills to students using age-appropriate language and examples, we know that it may be one of the first times your son or daughter has participated in a formal safety drill. With this in mind, we would encourage you to talk with your child about the importance of staying safe and listening to trusted adults. To help with these conversations, Mrs. Matthews and Dr. Meteyer (Naples CSD School Psychologists) have put together some helpful suggestions for teachers and parents that can be found below.

Thank you for supporting safety here at NCS, and please do not hesitate to call or email if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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Naples Elementary Principal
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Suggestions on how to discuss Lockdown & Shelter in Place Drills:

Every day, we do things to keep ourselves safe. Let's think of some examples. What do you put on before you start biking? What do you do before walking across the street? What do you put on in the car to be safe? Another way we stay safe is by practicing for things that probably won't happen but it is good to be prepared for just in case. Practice means being prepared. Just as we sometimes practice fire drills so that we'll know what to do in case there is a fire, we are now going to practice being safe when there's trouble around. Practice helps us know what to do just in case of an emergency. We can practice our response so we are prepared.

During the year we will practice this in a drill called a “Shelter in Place/Lockdown Drill.” You will know we are having a drill when you hear the announcement. Just like a fire drill, you will not hear that this is a “practice” or a “drill” until it is all done. But we must act like it is real for it to be a good practice of what to do.

Specific class procedures would be reviewed at this time. When everything is safe, the adult will tell you that everything is all clear and we can go back to our regular school day.

We are all here to keep you safe. Practice means we are prepared and can feel confident that we all know what to do just in case. Having a plan like this and practicing what to do in a shelter/lockdown drill means that we don’t have to worry about these concerns and instead we can focus on having fun and learning at school.

Points to remember:

- For young children, it's probably enough to say that bad things sometimes happen and we can protect you in school by doing this drill. At 10 or so, kids begin to get a little bit more of a impression of the world, and may have more specific questions about what kinds of circumstances would need these drills. It’s important to not get emotional when talking about further details, since that will help kids feel more secure. The less upset you are, the more matter of fact you are, the more they'll take it in stride.
- Be honest
- Prepare, but don’t scare.
- Explain/remind that it’s not always an emergency. Lockdown procedures are truly a way to keep kids safe, but aren’t always an emergency situation. For example, if a pipe were to burst and was spraying water, kids would need to be put in a safe location. Knowing that adults have student safety in mind at all times can also help keep the kids calm.