

The School Committee recognizes that bomb threats are a significant concern to the school unit. Whether real and carried out or intended as a prank or for some other purpose, a bomb threat represents a potential danger to the safety and welfare of students and staff and to the integrity of school property. Bomb threats disrupt the instructional program and learning environment and also places demands on school financial resources and public safety services. These effects occur even when such threats prove to be false.

Any bomb threat will be regarded as an extremely serious matter and treated accordingly. The School Committee directs the Superintendent to react promptly and appropriately to information concerning bomb threats and to initiate or recommend suitable disciplinary action.

A. Conduct Prohibited

1. No person shall make, or communicate by any means, whether verbal or non-verbal , a threat that a bomb has been, or will be, placed on school premises. Because of the potential for evacuation of the schools and other disruption of school operations, placement of a bomb or of a “look-alike” bomb on school premises will be considered a threat for the purpose of this policy.
2. It is also a violation of School Committee policy to communicate by any means that any toxic or hazardous substance or material has been placed, or will be placed, on school premises with the intent to endanger the safety and welfare of students or staff and/or to disrupt the operations of the schools. For the purpose of this policy, “toxic or hazardous substance or material:” means any material or substance, including biomedical materials or organisms, that, when placed as threatened, could be harmful to humans.

B. Definitions

1. A “bomb” means an explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket, missile, mine, “Molotov cocktail:” or other destructive device.
2. A “look-alike bomb” means any apparatus or object that conveys the appearance of a bomb or other destructive device.
3. A “bomb threat” is the communication, by any means, whether verbal or non-verbal, that a bomb has been, or will be, placed on school premises, including possession or placement of a bomb or look-alike bomb on school premises.
4. “School premises” means any school property and any location where any school activities may take place.

Approved: Brooksville School Committee - 9/3/02
Castine School Committee - 10/3/02
Blue Hill School Committee - 9/11/02
Penobscot School Committee - 9/9/02

Bomb Threat Procedures

A. Development of Bomb Threat Procedures

The Superintendent/designee shall be responsible for developing and implementing procedures specific to bomb threats as part of the school unit's Crisis Response Plan. These procedures are intended to inform administrators and staff of appropriate protocols to follow in the event that a bomb threat is received and should include provisions to address:

1. Threat assessment. Following the Hancock County Sheriff's Department Bomb Threat Protocol;
2. Building evacuation and re-entry (including selection of potential alternative sites for those who are evacuated);
3. Incident "command and control" (who is in charge, and when);
4. Communications contacts and mandatory bomb threat reporting;
5. Parent notification process;
6. Training for staff members; and
7. Support services for students and staff.

The initial bomb threat procedure will be subject to approval by the Board. The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for overseeing a review or evaluation of bomb threat procedures prior to the Board's required annual approval of the school unit's Crisis Response Plan, or following implementation of the procedure in response to a specific threat.

B. Reporting of Bomb Threats

A student who learns of a bomb threat or the existence of a bomb on school premises must immediately report such information to the building principal, teacher, or other employee in a position of authority.

An employee of the school unit who learns of a bomb threat shall immediately inform the building principal. The building principal shall immediately take appropriate steps to protect the safety of students and staff in accordance with the school unit's bomb threat procedure.

All bomb threats shall be reported immediately to the local law enforcement authority, as provided in the bomb threat procedures.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for reporting any bomb threat to the Department of Education within two business days of the incident. Reports will include the name of the school, the date and time of the threat, the medium used to communicate the threat, and whether or not the perpetrators have been apprehended.

C. Student Disciplinary Consequences

Making a bomb threat is a crime under Maine law. Any student suspected of making bomb threat shall be reported to law enforcement authorities for investigation and possible prosecution. Apart from any penalty imposed by law, and without regard to the existence or status of criminal charges, a student who makes a bomb threat shall be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

The administration may suspend and/or recommend for expulsion any student who makes a bomb threat. The making of a bomb threat will be considered deliberately disobedient and deliberately disorderly within the meaning of 20-A M.R.S.A. 1001 (9) and will be grounds for expulsion if found necessary for the peace and usefulness of the school.

In addition, a student who is found after hearing by the Board to have brought a bomb to school shall be expelled from a school for at least one year in accordance with 20-A M.R.S.A. 1001 (9-A) and Policy JICIA, except that the Superintendent may modify the requirement for expulsion based on individual circumstances.

A student who has been identified through the PET process as having a disability and whose conduct is in violation of this policy, shall be disciplined as provided by the Pupil Evaluation Team.

D. Aiding Other Students in Making Bomb Threats

A student who knowingly encourages, causes, aids or assists another student in making or communication a bomb threat shall be subject to the disciplinary consequences described in Section E of this procedure.

E. Failure to Report a Bomb Threat

A student who fails to report information or knowledge of a bomb threat or the existence of a bomb or other destructive device in a school building or on school property may be subject to disciplinary consequences, which may include suspension and/or expulsion.

F. Staff Disciplinary Consequences

A school system employee who makes or communicates a bomb threat will be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Disciplinary action taken shall be consistent with collective bargaining agreements, other employment agreements and Board policies.

A school system employee who fails to report information or knowledge of a bomb threat or the existence of a bomb on school premises will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

G. Civil Liability

The school unit reserves the right to bring suit against any individual responsible for a violation of this policy and to seek restitution and other damages as permitted by law.

H. Lost Instructional Time

Instructional time lost as a result of a bomb threat will be rescheduled at the earliest appropriate (or: practicable) opportunity, as determined by the School Committee.

The School Committee and Superintendent will take into consideration the terms of applicable collective bargaining or other employment agreements, potential conflicts with holiday or vacation periods or with planned school events, and school bus schedules in determining an appropriate make-up time.

I. Notification Through Student Handbook

All student handbooks shall address the school unit's bomb threat policy and procedures and explain the educational consequences of bomb threats. In addition, student handbooks shall notify students and parents that bomb threats violate School Committee policy and civil and criminal law.

The school system's Student Code of Conduct identifies the making of bomb threats as unacceptable behavior, describes the disciplinary consequences associated with bomb threats, and provides that students suspected of making bomb threats will be reported to law enforcement authorities.

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Castine School Committee - 10/3 /02
Blue Hill School Committee - 9/11/02
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Hancock County Sheriff's Department Bomb Threat Protocol As An Insert To The Crisis Response Plan

Purpose:

It is the purpose of this policy to provide law enforcement officers with a protocol for dealing with threatened bombings to include: response, deployment, threat assessment, search, evacuation and assistance to specialized units.

Definitions:

- A. Bomb Threat: A bomb threat condition exists when an explosive device has been reported or is suspected to be at a given location.
- B. Bomb Emergency: A bomb emergency exists when a suspected or actual explosive device has been located or has been detonated.

Procedures:

A. Secretaries Responsibilities:

- 1. Dispatch personnel receiving bomb threats or warnings from callers shall, to the degree possible:
 - a. Keep the reporting party on line.
 - b. Identify the location of the device with as much precision as possible and determine when it will be or if it has been detonated.
 - c. Determine what type of explosive device is involved.
 - d. Attempt to determine:
 - 1. What does the device look like.
 - 2. What type of bomb is involved.
 - 3. What will make it detonate, (e.g., radio signal, time delay fuse).
 - 4. Why it was placed.
 - e. Be alert to:
 - 1. The exact wording of threat.
 - 2. The estimate of sex, race and age of caller.
 - 3. The nature/character of the caller's voice.
 - 4. The nature of any background noises.
- f. Contact the Sheriff's Department following the Union #93 Crisis Response Plan

Sheriff's Department

- A. 1. Communications personnel receiving reports from individuals or organizations that have received bomb threats shall:
 - a. Alert the communications OIC.
 - b. Determine the location, time of detonation, appearance and any other available information concerning the nature of the threat or the identity of the perpetrators.
 - c. If no explosive device has been identified, ask that the caller alert employees and others to unusual parcels or items on the premises.

Sheriff's Department Cont'd

- d. Dispatch required patrol units and emergency personnel.
- e. Ensure that the supervisor is notified as soon as possible.

2. Based on the nature of the threat, the supervisor will, as required, have dispatch alert these agencies:
 - a. Authorized Bomb Disposal unit.
 - b. Authorized Fire and Rescue units.
 - c. Authorized HAZMAT units.
 - d. Authorized Canine team(s).
 - e. Sheriff.

B. Responding Officers' Responsibilities:

1. Responding patrol units may use only land-based telephones for communication within 300 feet of the location in question. (some explosive devices may be detonated by stronger radio signals).
2. If applicable, contact the individual who received the threat to obtain additional information, to include:
 - a. Whether previous threats have been received.
 - b. Possible motives and/or suspects.
 - c. Vulnerabilities of equipment and personnel.
 - d. Exploration of any basic information provided to communications.
3. In bomb emergencies, establish and secure a suitable perimeter, per the requirement of the responding Emergency Ordinance Disposal (EOD) team.

C. Searching for Explosive Devices:

1. If an explosive device is alleged to be within a building, but has not been located, the supervisor will contact building owners/management or other responsible persons to determine if a search of the facility is desired.
2. The decision to search, evacuate or to reenter a structure/location during a bomb threat will be the responsibility of the individual in charge of the property, unless the threat is verified, then it becomes exclusively a law enforcement responsibility.
 - a. The on-scene supervisor shall provide information as available to the responsible parties in order to assist them in making decisions on searching, evacuation or reentry.
 - b. If management or the responsible agent does not wish that a search be conducted, no further action of this agency is warranted with the exception of standardized agency reporting requirements.
 - c. Only in cases where a real or suspected explosive device has been detected shall an evacuation be conducted regardless of the desires of building management.
3. Searches of target buildings shall be conducted only with the direct assistance of employees or others knowledgeable of the contents and layout of the building.

- a. The supervisor may request the assistance of a bomb detection canine and/or bomb disposal personnel in order to assist in conducting the search.
 - b. A search plan shall be developed identifying the extent of the search depending upon the type of establishment, the motivation of the perpetrator and the accessibility of the building, prior to searching the building.
 - c. A floor plan shall be obtained whenever possible, and a systematic search organized by the supervisor.
 - d. In no case, shall agency personnel declare that no bomb is present or in any way make the representation that the building is safe to occupy, no matter how thorough the search.
4. When conducting a search without the assistance of bomb disposal personnel, employees should be particularly alert to the following items as indicators that there may be explosives at the location. Employees should be cautioned that absence of the following does not assure that there is no bomb present:
- a. Explosives related pamphlets, periodicals and books.
 - b. Excessive amounts of galvanized or PVC pipe nipples and end caps, especially if they have drill holes in the nipple or cap.
 - c. Low explosive powders or other incendiary mixtures.
 - d. Fuses of any type to include homemade burning fuses, such as string soaked in a burning powder.
 - e. Electrical switches.
 - f. Electrical matches, blasting caps or similar indicators.

D. Located Explosive Devices:

1. If a real or suspicious device has been located, or paraphernalia identified (such as noted in item C-4 above), law enforcement officers should:
 - a. Not attempt to move or otherwise disturb the device (s).
 - b. Use only land based telephones for communication within 300 feet of the device (s).
 - c. Proceed with immediate evacuation of the structure and/or the area to a point consistent with the threat, but not less than 300 feet from the device(s).
 - d. Define and secure the perimeter.
 - e. Notify emergency services personnel.
 - f. Contact communications by telephone and request assistance of the designated bomb disposal unit.
2. The supervisor is responsible for command of the scene and briefing of investigators and ordinance specialists as appropriate.
3. The bomb disposal commander shall have functional authority at any bomb emergency to direct agency personnel in a manner necessary to accomplish its mission in a safe and efficient manner.

E. Post-Explosion Investigation:

This agency's designated bomb disposal unit shall have primary responsibility for investigating bombing incidents, to include:

1. Checking the site for unconsumed explosives or secondary devices.
2. Supervising evidence recovering in accordance with agency guidelines.
3. Requesting the assistance of other agencies to determine the nature and construction of explosives and the identification of perpetrators.
4. Coordination with intelligence operations of this agency and those of State and Federal source.
5. Assisting in the evaluation of evacuation procedures, area and the perimeter security, the availability of emergency services and coordination with the incident commander.