

February 5, 2024

Dear Families,

The safety and security of our students and staff is a top priority for *Crichton Park Elementary School* and the Halifax Regional Centre for Education. We implement a number of measures as part of a comprehensive plan aimed at ensuring our school remains a safe place for our students to learn.

One of the procedures our school will be practicing is a hold and secure drill and the other is a lockdown drill. During a hold and secure drill, classroom doors are secured, and the students remain inside the room doing regular activities until the drill is concluded. All exterior doors are locked, and no one is permitted to enter or leave the building. During a lockdown, students move to a location within the classroom so they are not visible through a window or door. Admin will open each door and communicate to each class that the drill is over.

Students are kept inside the school and classrooms when circumstances make it safer to stay in the classroom rather than evacuate. Just as we prepare our students to properly respond to a fire drill, they also need to be aware of the proper response during a lockdown or hold and secure drill. These drills should be treated with the same level of importance as fire drills.

Please be assured that staff at our school will spend time discussing the importance of this procedure with students prior to running a drill. We will also take time after the drill to remind them that it was only a practice and there was no danger. When possible, our Community Officer may assist us in conducting the lockdown drills just as the Fire Department assists with evacuation drills.

Please take the time to speak with your child about this procedure and reinforce its importance. We practice these drills to ensure our school remains a safe place for teaching and learning. **We have a lockdown drill planned the week of February 12-16.**

Please be assured that staff at our school will spend time discussing the importance of this procedure with students prior to a drill. We also take time after the drill to remind them that it was only a practice and there was no danger.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Regards,

Suzanne Hawkes

