

## **Statements: Emergency, Crisis, etc.**

Credit: Tracy Jentz, Grand Forks School District

Note: The scripts are guides to use during an incident. You will need to fill in the appropriate information in the parenthesis of the script. Each emergency situation is unique, and the information to include, the medium used to disseminate it, and the timeframe in which it is released will vary.

Remember: If a school-wide message, share the completed script with your school secretary and the district prior to distribution, as they may receive follow-up questions from parents. If it is a district-wide message, share the completed script with the following Mail Lists: Elementary Principals, Secondary Principals, Elementary Secretaries, Secondary Secretaries, MSEC Secretaries.

### **Accidental Death (One person)**

At (TIME) on (DATE), an accident occurred while (DESCRIPTION OF EVENT), resulting in the death of an (EMPLOYEE/STUDENT) at (LOCATION). Emergency personnel responded to the accident. The identity of the deceased is being withheld until family is notified. Further information will be released by the Grand Forks Police Department, when available.

### **Accidental Death (Multiple people)**

At (TIME) on (DATE), an accident occurred while (DESCRIPTION OF EVENT), resulting in the death of (NUMBER) (EMPLOYEE(S)/STUDENT(S)) at (LOCATION). Emergency personnel responded to the accident. The identities of the deceased are being withheld until family is notified. Further information will be released by the Grand Forks Police Department, when available.

### **Active Shooter**

At (TIME) on (DATE), an active shooter was reported at (LOCATION/SCHOOL). Students and staff (EVACUATED TO THE SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED ALTERNATE SITE AND WILL REMAIN THERE FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE/WENT INTO LOCKDOWN). Emergency personnel and first responders are on the scene. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

### **All Clear**

At (TIME) on (DATE), the emergency at (SCHOOL) ended. Traffic in and out of the area is no longer restricted.

### Biological Threat

At (TIME) on (DATE), a biological threat was reported at (LOCATION/SCHOOL). Students and staff evacuated to the school's designated alternate site and will remain there for the immediate future. Emergency personnel and first responders are on the scene. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

### Bomb Threat

At (TIME) on (DATE), a bomb threat was reported at (LOCATION/SCHOOL). Students and staff evacuated to the school's designated alternate site and will remain there for the immediate future. Emergency personnel and first responders are on the scene. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

### Downed Electrical Line

At (TIME) on (DATE), a downed electrical line was reported at (LOCATION). Students and staff are safe and have been asked to stay inside until further notice. Emergency personnel are on the scene. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

### Drill (Evacuation and Reunification)

Today (DATE), one of our schools is participating in a practice evacuation and reunification drill. There is no emergency situation involved. This drill allows us to practice evacuation and reunification procedures involving students, parents, and school/district support personnel, and provides Grand Forks Public Schools and emergency responders with an opportunity to evaluate our emergency operations plan and improve our response skills.

Response if asked for additional information: Due to the confidential nature of emergency plans, no other information will be provided regarding the drill.

### Explosion

At (TIME) on (DATE), an explosion occurred at (LOCATION). Students and staff evacuated to the school's designated alternate site and will remain there for the immediate future. Emergency personnel and first responders are on the scene. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

### Fire

At (TIME) on (DATE), a fire occurred at (LOCATION). Students and staff evacuated to the school's designated alternate site and will remain there for the immediate future. Emergency personnel and first responders are on the scene. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

#### Gas Leak

At (TIME) on (DATE), a gas leak occurred at (LOCATION). Students and staff are safe and (HAVE BEEN ASKED TO STAY INSIDE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE/HAVE EVACUATED TO THE SCHOOL'S ALTERNATE SITE AND WILL REMAIN THERE FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE). Emergency personnel and first responders are on the scene. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

#### Hazardous Materials Incident

At (TIME) on (DATE), a hazardous materials incident occurred at (LOCATION). Students and staff are safe and have been asked to stay inside until further notice. Emergency personnel and first responders are on the scene. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

#### Health Emergency (Not contagious)

At (TIME) on (DATE), (SCHOOL) was notified of a (STUDENT/EMPLOYEE) diagnosed with (ILLNESS/DISEASE). The individual(S) (IS/ARE) receiving care and (IS/ARE) no longer attending school. This (ILLNESS/DISEASE) is not highly contagious and can only be transmitted by (VECTORS). Any student or employee exhibiting (SYMPTOMS), or who think they have come in contact with the individual, should contact their physician.

#### Health Emergency (Contagious)

At (TIME) on (DATE), (SCHOOL) was notified of a (STUDENT/EMPLOYEE) diagnosed with (ILLNESS/DISEASE). The individual(S) (IS/ARE) receiving care and (IS/ARE) no longer attending school. This (ILLNESS/DISEASE) is highly contagious and can be transmitted by (VECTORS). Any student or employee exhibiting (SYMPTOMS), or who think they have come in contact with the individual, should contact their physician.

#### Law Enforcement Emergency

At (TIME) on (DATE), law enforcement asked (SCHOOL) to go into a (LOCKDOWN/LOCKDOWN INSTRUCTION CONTINUES) due to an incident near the school. Students and staff are safe and have been asked to stay inside until further notice. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

#### Lockdown

At (TIME) on (DATE), (SCHOOL) went into a lockdown due to (DESCRIBE INCIDENT). Staff has secured the areas for which they are responsible and they and students will stay inside until further notice. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Please do not call the school. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

#### Lockdown Instruction Continues

At (TIME) on (DATE), (SCHOOL) went into a lockdown instruction continues due to (DESCRIBE INCIDENT). Students and staff are safe and have been asked to stay inside until further notice. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Please do not call the school. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

#### Power Failure

At (TIME) on (DATE), a power failure was reported at (SCHOOL). A restoration crew is on the scene, and repairs are underway. Students and staff are safe inside and there (IS/WAS) no immediate need for an evacuation. Power (WILL BE/WAS) restored by (TIME).

#### Power Failure (Relocation)

At (TIME) on (DATE), a power failure was reported at (SCHOOL). During the outage, staff at (SCHOOL) reported an electrical smell. As a result, students and staff were relocated to their alternate location. The fire department was on the scene, determined (ISSUE) to be at fault, and has since determined the school safe to resume operations. At this time, students and staff have returned to their school.

#### Protest (Peaceful)

Families, this is (INSERT TITLE AND NAME) with an important message. Today, some of our students participated in a peaceful protest on campus in response to (INSERT REASON). Our students (INSERT WHAT HAPPENED) for about (INSERT NUMBER OF MINUTES) and then peacefully returned to class, as instructed, to continue learning. At (INSERT SCHOOL NAME), we understand that our students may be feeling anxiety, fear, and possibly anger about (INSERT REASON/TOPIC). We respect the right of our students to advocate for causes that are important to them and support their efforts to do so in an authorized and orderly manner while at school. We thank our students for the way they conducted themselves today while allowing their civic voices to be heard. Thank you for your continued support of (INSERT SCHOOL NAME).

#### Protest (Disruptive)

Families, this is (INSERT TITLE AND NAME) with an important message. At (INSERT SCHOOL NAME), we respect the right of our students to advocate for causes that are important to them. Unfortunately, some students on our campus today chose to protest in ways that significantly disrupted school operations and threatened the safety and order of our school. Swift action was taken by school staff and the Grand Forks Police Department to address the situation. No students or staff members were injured during the incident. The safety of our students and staff is our top priority. Inappropriate behaviors that threaten school safety will be handled immediately and firmly in accordance with our policies and procedures. I encourage you to talk with you child/children about how they may be feeling about (INSERT TOPIC) and the importance of expressing themselves in appropriate ways at school. We look forward to welcoming all students back tomorrow for a great day of teaching and learning. Thank you for your continued support of (INSERT SCHOOL NAME).

#### Reunification

(DESCRIBE INCIDENT) All students and staff are being transported, and at this time, parents/guardians can come to (REUNIFICATION SITE) to pick up their children. Parents/Guardians must bring photo identification in order to be reunified/pick up their children.

#### School Canceled – only the District office will send this message out

All Grand Forks Public and Grand Forks Air Force Base Schools are canceled for today, (DAY/MONTH/DATE). This cancellation includes Head Start and Early Childhood Special Education classes and all after school activities.

#### School Two Hours Late – only the District office will send this message out

All Grand Forks Public and Grand Forks Air Force Base Schools will start two hours late (TODAY/TOMORROW), (DAY/MONTH/DATE). Start times will be: 10 a.m. for Head Start and High School, 10:15 for elementary, and 10:40 for middle school. Also, there will be no morning Early Childhood Special Education classes, breakfast, and intramurals.

#### School Dismissed Early (weather related) – only the District office will send this message out

Due to winter weather conditions, Grand Forks Public and Grand Forks Air Force Base Schools will dismiss at (TIME), (DATE). Afternoon Head Start, Early Childhood Special Education, and all after school activities are canceled. Buses will pick up students at approximately (TIME). Students who do not ride the bus can be picked up at each school site. Parents or the emergency contact of elementary and middle school students will need to come into the school and check their student out before they can be released.

#### Sewage Incident

At (TIME) on (DATE), a release of sewage in (SCHOOL) occurred. Buildings and grounds personnel and other responders are on the scene, and repairs are underway. Students and staff are safe. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice.

#### Test of the system

This is a routine test of Grand Forks Public Schools' Blackboard Mass Notification system. If this had been about an actual emergency, you would have been informed about the nature and location of an emergency event.

#### Transportation Incident (No injuries)

At (TIME) on (DATE), a transportation incident occurred at (SCHOOL/LOCATION). First responders were dispatched to the scene, and reported there were no injuries. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

#### Transportation Incident (Injuries)

At (TIME) on (DATE), a transportation incident occurred at (SCHOOL/LOCATION). First responders were dispatched to the scene, and are attending to several injuries. Traffic in and out of the area is restricted, and you are asked to avoid this area until further notice. Additional information will be communicated to you as soon as it becomes available.

#### Tornado Warning

At (TIME) on (DATE), the National Weather Service issued a Tornado Warning for Grand Forks County through (TIME), (DAY). This means that a tornado has been sighted in Grand Forks County and more tornadoes are possible. Students and staff are inside (SCHOOL) and will remain sheltered until the warning has expired.

#### Holding Statements

- Used to acknowledge an incident, gives families/the media facts they can use immediately, and provides us more time to gather additional facts). This is the first opportunity to shape the message, so use it wisely.
- Provide an initial statement (who/what/when/NOT why), priorities and actions, and reassurance
- We understand an incident has occurred...
- Authorities are responding...
- We have no confirmation of injuries...
- We have implemented our emergency response plan, which places the highest priority on the health and safety of our students and staff.
- We are still trying to determine what exactly has occurred. We will be supplying additional information through our various communication channels as it becomes available.
- We are working with the Grand Forks Police Department to determine what happened and to assess the overall impact of the incident.
- District and school officials are assessing the situation and determining our next course of action.
- We are aware of the (INSERT SITUATION HERE) and assure you we are taking these allegations seriously.
- We will provide additional information at (DATE/TIME).

Resources: Margolis Healy and Associates, LLC; Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools; San Mateo County Community College District; University of North Carolina Wilmington; University of Texas at San Antonio.

Last updated: 5/18/2018