SANTA GERTRUDIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Safety Protocols and Emergency Response

Parent & Community Guide • 2026–2027

PREPARE • RESPOND • REUNIFY • RECOVER

Santa Gertrudis ISD is committed to maintaining safe, secure, supportive, and welcoming schools. This public guide explains our approach to emergency preparedness and response in clear, family-friendly language.

Safety Planning and Preparation

The safety and security of our students, staff, families, and visitors is a top priority of Santa Gertrudis ISD. SGISD uses a comprehensive approach to school safety focused on prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, reunification, and recovery.

Our safety program is built around:

- Building a positive and supportive school climate.
- Identifying and addressing safety concerns before they become emergencies.
- Preparing students and staff to respond to emergencies.
- Coordinating with law enforcement, fire, emergency management, health, and other community partners.
- Supporting students, staff, and families during and after an emergency.

Building a Positive School Climate

A safe school begins with a positive environment in which students feel connected, supported, and comfortable reporting concerns. SGISD promotes positive relationships between students and staff and uses appropriate behavioral, social-emotional, and student-support practices.

Students and staff are encouraged to report threats, weapons, concerning behavior, bullying, harassment, suspicious activity, or other safety concerns to a trusted adult, campus administrator, counselor, or designated reporting mechanism.

Student Supports and Behavioral Threat Assessment

SGISD maintains behavioral threat assessment processes consistent with Texas Education Code, District policy, and Texas School Safety Center guidance. The purpose is to identify concerning behavior, determine risk, and connect individuals with appropriate interventions before a situation escalates.

Appropriately trained campus teams evaluate reported concerns and coordinate with families and appropriate professionals when required. Operational team procedures, case information, and other sensitive details are maintained in District records and applicable EOP materials.

Safety and Security Assessments

SGISD continually evaluates school facilities, procedures, and practices to identify hazards, threats, vulnerabilities, and opportunities for improvement. The District conducts required safety and security audits and uses ongoing monitoring, drills, exercises, maintenance reports, and stakeholder feedback to strengthen safety.

- Access points and doors
- Fencing and gates
- Lighting and visibility
- Surveillance and emergency communication systems
- Visitor access and identification
- Emergency equipment
- Evacuation and protective-action procedures
- Facility conditions that may affect safety

Emergency Preparedness

SGISD maintains a Multi-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for District facilities. The EOP addresses prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, reunification, and recovery and is coordinated, as appropriate, with emergency response partners.

The public guide intentionally does not identify exact evacuation locations, reunification sites, radio frequencies, access-control procedures, security vulnerabilities, or other sensitive operational information. Those details are maintained in the District EOP, campus annexes, and other controlled safety documents.

Standard Emergency Response

SGISD uses standardized emergency response terminology and procedures to promote consistent communication among students, staff, administrators, emergency responders, and families. The appropriate action depends on the specific circumstances of an emergency.

HOLD

Students and staff remain in their assigned areas and continue normal activities unless otherwise directed.

SECURE

Exterior doors are secured and building access is restricted because of a potential concern outside the school building.

LOCKDOWN

Immediate action is required because of a threat or danger inside the building or on campus. Students and staff follow District procedures and directions from school officials and emergency responders.

EVACUATE

Students and staff leave a building or area and move to a designated safe location using the safest available route.

SHELTER

Students and staff move to or remain in an appropriate protective location based on the hazard and follow instructions from school officials.

Emergency Training

SGISD provides emergency preparedness and response training to District employees, including substitute teachers, consistent with applicable law and District procedures. Training may address emergency operations, protective actions, communications, threat reporting, behavioral threat assessment, reunification, and crisis response.

Emergency Drills and Exercises

Drills and exercises give students and staff an opportunity to practice appropriate responses before an actual emergency. SGISD conducts required drills and exercises in accordance with Texas law, Commissioner of Education requirements, local requirements, the District EOP, and applicable Texas School Safety Center guidance.

Following drills and exercises, campuses may conduct debriefs or after-action reviews to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Emergency Communications

During an emergency, SGISD's first responsibility is the safety and security of students and staff. The District will provide accurate, timely, and appropriate information to staff, families, and the community when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

- Campus or District status
- Type of emergency response, when appropriate
- General student and staff safety information
- Changes to normal school operations
- Evacuation or reunification instructions
- Recovery and support resources

Operational information may be limited during an active emergency when disclosure could compromise safety or an ongoing investigation.

Reporting Safety Concerns

Students, employees, parents, and community members are encouraged to report safety concerns promptly. Concerns may include threats of violence, weapons, concerning behavior, bullying or harassment, suspicious activity, unauthorized persons, unsafe facility conditions, security concerns, or threats communicated through social media.

Reports should be made to a campus administrator, teacher, counselor, District administrator, or other designated reporting mechanism. In an immediate emergency or situation involving an imminent threat to life or safety, call 911.

Anonymous Reporting:

- iWatchTexas - https://report.iwatchtx.org/iwatchtexas/
- See Something Say Something National - https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/say-something-tips/ or 1-844-5-SayNow
- Santa Gertrudis Reporting - https://www.sgisd.net/apps/form/form.SANGI.vsLy8Ck.sB

Support Following an Emergency

Emergencies and traumatic events can affect students, employees, and families after the immediate danger has ended. SGISD may provide counseling support, crisis response, mental health referrals, community resources, employee support, and additional assistance for students directly affected by an event.

The District will use appropriate trauma-informed practices to support students and staff following significant events.

Reunification

When an emergency requires evacuation or prevents normal dismissal, SGISD may activate a reunification process to safely release students to authorized parents, guardians, or other approved individuals.

- Protect student safety and accountability.
- Verify authorized adults.
- Maintain accurate records.
- Coordinate with emergency responders and District personnel.
- Provide clear instructions to families.

Exact reunification locations, traffic patterns, staging areas, staff assignments, and other operational details are maintained in controlled District emergency planning documents and will be communicated to families when activation is necessary.

What Families Should Do During an Emergency

- Remain calm and monitor official District communication.
- Avoid immediately calling the campus unless directed to do so.
- Do not come to campus during a lockdown, secure, shelter, or other restricted-access situation unless instructed.
- Avoid spreading unverified information or rumors.
- Avoid contacting students when doing so could interfere with emergency instructions.
- Wait for official instructions regarding dismissal or reunification.
- Bring required identification and follow reunification procedures when instructed.
- Follow directions from District personnel and emergency responders.

After an Emergency

Following an emergency, SGISD will work to restore safe operations as quickly as possible. The District may conduct an after-action review to evaluate the response, communications, accountability, coordination with emergency responders, reunification, facility concerns, and recovery needs.

Lessons learned will be used to improve training, procedures, emergency plans, and safety practices as appropriate.

Important Safety Terms

Threat

Information indicating a possible danger or concern that may require evaluation or investigation.

Credible Threat
A threat that, following appropriate evaluation or investigation, is determined to present a legitimate concern for safety.

Active Threat
A situation involving an individual or individuals who are actively attempting to cause harm.

Lockdown
An emergency response used when there is an immediate threat inside the building or on campus.

Secure
A response used when there is a potential threat or hazard outside the school building and access needs to be controlled.

Shelter
A response used to protect students and staff from a specific hazard by moving or remaining in an appropriate protective location.

Evacuation
The organized movement of students and staff from a building or area to a designated safe location.

Reunification
The organized process of safely releasing students to authorized parents, guardians, or other approved individuals following an emergency.

Our Commitment to School Safety
School safety is a shared responsibility. Students, employees, families, emergency responders, and community partners all play an important role in identifying concerns, preparing for emergencies, responding appropriately, and supporting recovery.

Santa Gertrudis ISD will continue to evaluate its safety practices, provide training, conduct drills, address identified vulnerabilities, coordinate with community partners, and use lessons learned to strengthen emergency preparedness and response.

PREPARE BEFORE AN EMERGENCY • RESPOND EFFECTIVELY • SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY AFTERWARD