

SAMPLE SCHOOL POLLING LOCATION SAFETY CHECKLIST

School and district facilities often serve as polling places as designated by the County Board of Elections. While the school and district strive to maintain the sanctity of the election process, the safety of students, faculty and staff remain the primary responsibility. Election officials should remain cognizant of the importance of a safe and secure school, and work with the school leadership team to ensure safety. To maintain safety and security, the school staff tasked with coordinating the polling location should consider the following suggested safety measures. Please add any location-specific information applicable to your school.

PRIOR TO POLLING

- Obtain dates and hours for polling on school grounds.
- Discuss the portion(s) of the school building to serve as polling location with the County Board of Elections or their designee. If needed, discuss alternative locations for actual voting sites.
- Discuss signage, parking, and polling location entry and exit procedures.
- Determine if there is a need to change any normal school procedure to allow for school to serve as a polling place (i.e., after school activities are cancelled, "B" parking lot will be used for voter parking, students will not be present that day but staff will be present for staff development, etc.).
- If feasible, identify specific voter parking area.
- Coordinate with the County Board of Elections the schedule for delivery of polling equipment and inform the school and district staff of the schedule. Coordinate the schedule for removal of all polling equipment.
- Access to the building for polling place set-up, equipment removal, and voter entry and exit to the grounds and building should be coordinated with building and district staff and should include school and district security personnel.
- Voting areas should be separate from classrooms and areas where students will be present. Student access to polling area should be restricted. Voting locations should focus on reducing voter/student interaction, enhancing traffic/pedestrian safety, and voter access and complying with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Restroom access/use should be determined in advance.
- Inform polling place coordinator of all building-level protocols and procedures for responding to emergencies. Include communication and announcement systems as well as evacuation and lockdown procedures. Polling place coordinator should inform election workers of all building procedures and response to emergencies. Election workers are responsible for safety of individuals at the polls; school staff are responsible for students, staff, and other non-voting visitors during emergencies.
- Voting booth and equipment placement, including signage, should not interfere with any building-level security systems, including security cameras.
- Communicate voting dates and hours and any necessary change in normal procedure with parents and person(s) in parental relation.
- Provide local law enforcement with a list of polling places on school property and request additional assistance to increase police presence and response capability.
- Assign staff to check the grounds before the start of school on the morning of the election to watch for anything suspicious.
- Communicate any changes to normal school procedures to allow school to serve as a polling place (i.e., after school activities are cancelled, "B" parking lot will be used for voter parking, etc.).

- The District Superintendent should inform the building Principal of any approved authorization of special voting conditions that will occur between 7:00 pm and 9:00 pm.
- Establish response procedures if unauthorized individuals attempt to enter the school building or grounds.
- Other: _____

DURING POLLING

- Maintain a heightened awareness for suspicious activity including: suspicious vehicles, behavior such as taking photographs or videotaping, suspicious packages in or near the building. Report any suspicious activities or persons to law enforcement.
- Inform all building staff about polling location and hours. Remind staff about any change to normal school procedure to allow school to serve as a polling place.
- Remind school staff to wear their official identification. Ensure that school visitors wear their visitor management visitor badges. Make sure that each election worker wears proper identification.
- Make sure all polling places and access to facilities are clearly marked. Consider placing signs on all doors directing voters to the polling entrance; do not allow access through any other entrances. Instruct school staff on how to respond to and direct voters who stray.
- Post clear signs regarding restroom access/use.
- Post clear signs regarding parking for voters.
- Coordinate with school and district security staff to observe/monitor parking areas, polling location, and monitor voter interaction with students.
- Review protocols and procedures for responding to emergencies with polling coordinator. Include communication and announcement systems as well as evacuation and lockdown procedures. Ensure all election workers are provided with school building name and address in the event they need to contact emergency services.
- Stress to polling coordinator the importance of as little disruption to safe school operations as possible.
- Remind election workers that they must abide by school and district rules for safety; advise poll workers that they may not grant voters access to any part of the school beyond the voting area including restrooms and side exits. Establish specific restrooms for poll workers.
- Encourage school staff and poll workers to be vigilant, watching for suspicious behavior or objects. Be aware of strange vehicles parked for a prolonged period near the school.
- Be aware of packages or items (even lunch boxes) left out and unattended. Be particularly aware of chemical odors coming from a package or vehicle.
- Do not allow anyone, even voters waiting in line, to prop doors open. Do not open locked exterior doors for anyone.
- Carefully monitor and strictly enforce all loitering, parking and stopping policies especially those in and around bus zones, fire lanes, and driveways.
- Other: _____

AFTER POLLING

- Assign staff to check the school grounds before the start of classes on the morning after the election, checking for anything suspicious. Include the parking lot, polling location, and restroom(s) used by poll workers.
- Remove all polling location signage.
- Work with the Board of Elections to remove all polling equipment.
- Other: _____