



Capital Area School for the Arts
Charter School

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August, 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian:
RE: School Emergency Procedures

This letter is to inform you that Capital Area School for the Arts (CASA) Charter School has steps in place to address student and staff safety issues through the adoption of a School-Wide Emergency Response Plan. The plan would be implemented in the event of a local disaster or school emergency.

The Emergency Response Plan is a preparatory measure. Statistics show schools are still among the safest places to be on a day-to-day basis, due to the strong commitment of educators, parents, and communities to their children. Nevertheless, disasters do happen, and, because of that, no community can be complacent in its efforts to make its schools even safer. For this reason, we have implemented the plan, so please do not be alarmed by the precautionary action.

Drills:

Although it is unlikely that the Emergency Response Plan will need to be fully activated at CASA Charter School, the possibility still exists. Therefore, to prepare all members of the school community, including your child, to act on a moment's notice, we will be conducting emergency practice drills at the school. These drills, which will occur on a periodic basis throughout the year, will cover a variety of circumstances. In addition to practicing the drills, we will also be discussing, with the students, appropriate actions to take during a number of emergencies. These drills and accompanying discussions are designed to prepare your child to act quickly and to minimize your child's fear should an emergency occur.

Parent-Child Reunification Center:

The Emergency Response Plan also incorporates a systematic approach to reuniting children with their parents. The plan identifies two possible locations for the Parent-Child Reunification Center. Both sites are located near the school grounds. Due to the unpredictable nature of any emergency, we will only be able to tell you where the Parent-Child Reunification Center is located at the time of the emergency. Should it be necessary to activate either of these Parent-Child Reunification Centers, you will be notified of the location via CASA Charter School's mass communication system. If the telephone system is not working, parents will be notified of the location via signage on the doors of the school.

Reuniting with Your Child:

In order to ensure your child's safety, it is necessary for us to establish some protocols related to picking up your child. Therefore, please be advised of the following guidelines when picking up your child from a Parent-Child Reunification Center:

- No student will be released unless you or an individual designated on the student's Emergency Information Form arrives to pick up the student. **It is critical that the information and phone numbers on your child's Emergency Information Form is current.** We will be using this information to contact you through CASA Charter School's mass communication system with the evacuation process and location for picking up your child.
- **You will be required to present valid identification.** This step is required to protect your child from any unauthorized individuals attempting to pick up your child. The school may be receiving assistance from other schools or outside agencies and, therefore, may not know you.



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- **You will be required to sign for the release of your child.** This is extremely important as it is our only means of ensuring that all students are accounted for at all times. Please do not just take your child from the center without signing for their release. We recognize that you may be worried and want to be reunited with your child as quickly as possible. However, this system has been established to ensure your child's safety. You may be jeopardizing your child's or another child's safety by not adhering to these procedures.
- If you are unable to pick up your child, he/she will be kept at the Parent-Child Reunification Center until alternate arrangements can be made. Your child will be supervised at all times.

Keeping Informed During an Emergency:

During a real emergency, you probably will not be able to reach the school by phone, as staff will be busy responding to the emergency and the needs of the students. We will, however, make every effort to contact parents, either directly, or through CASA Charter School's mass communication system. Additionally, we may utilize local radio and television station broadcasts to relay information. **Please do not call the school and do not call your child's cell phone during an emergency.** Phone lines need to be kept accessible at all times and overloading the phone system may mean that the school will not be able to communicate with first responders. CASA Charter School will also keep parents informed by posting information and updates regarding the emergency on the school website at www.casa-arts.org.

Finally, we want you to know that your cooperation in preparing your child for the event of an emergency and helping us to ensure their safety is greatly appreciated. As always, should you have any questions or concerns regarding anything stated in the letter, please feel free to contact the main office at 717-732-8450.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Timothy Wendling
Chief Executive Officer