



# Five Minutes to ***Fire Safety***

## **Topic: Fire Drills and School Security**

Over the past decade, a stark reality has emerged: in addition to protecting school children from the dangers of fire and explosion, administrators and teachers must also find ways to protect students from strangers and fellow students intent on entering the school with the express purpose of injuring, kidnapping, or killing.

At a conference last year on school safety and security held at Emporia State University, presenter Dr. John Dudley gave some ideas for fire drills that will help students and teachers prepare for lock-downs and non-fire evacuations.

### **Who is a staff member?**


Whether students are being evacuated for a fire or for some other reason, chances are very good that other adults, anxious parents and legitimate responders to the emergency scene will be overwhelming on the school property at the same time. How can law enforcement officers and other emergency workers tell who the teachers and staff members are? Consider issuing orange traffic vests to faculty and staff members, to be grabbed and worn during all drills or evacuations. This will make it clear to students which adults are associated with the school and who they can safely approach if they become separated from their class or group. This will also make it clear to law enforcement officials and other responders which adults are in charge of students or have knowledge of the school building.

### **Reverse Evacuation**

In Kansas, weather can change quickly and drastically. When's the last time your school practiced getting children quickly from the playground to a tornado shelter? There will also be times children are safer inside than outside, such as drive-by shootings or law enforcement activity taking place close to the school. In addition to practicing building evacuations, practice getting children from an outdoor setting to an indoor site of safety.

These are just a few suggestions that might make a difference in the emergencies we hope will never happen. More suggestions will follow in the next installment.

To access this and previous topics online, visit us at [www.accesskansas.org/firemarshal](http://www.accesskansas.org/firemarshal).



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