

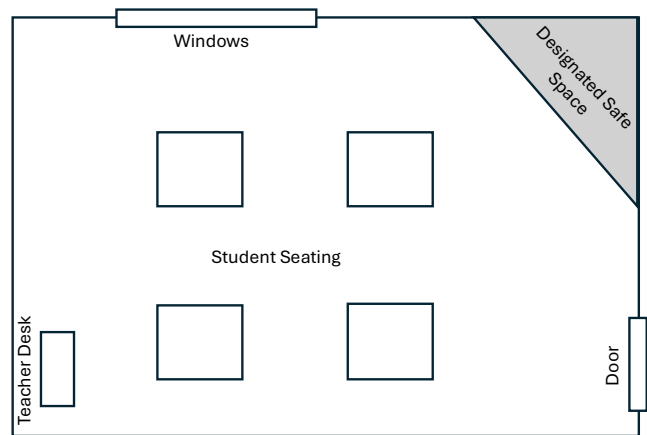


Implementing Physical Safety Measures Effectively at Schools: Classroom Safety Procedures

During an emergency lockdown, preventing a potential shooter from seeing and accessing individuals within a classroom is critical. Intruders are more likely to shoot when they see people, so remaining out of view and ensuring that access to the classroom is blocked can help keep individuals safe.

- ▶ **Door locks** — Door locks are vital during an emergency lockdown. It is important that individuals can lock the door from the inside to prevent a shooter from easily entering the classroom.
 - ▶ Ensure that doors lock from the inside. This allows students and staff to lock them without having to exit the room.
 - ▶ If doors currently only lock from the outside, install another type of lock or barricade on the inside that can be utilized in an emergency.
- ▶ Consider inside locks for non-classroom areas (e.g., library, cafeteria, bathrooms where students may hide during an emergency).
- ▶ Clearly define and teach expectations for using barricades or locks only in the context of a drill or emergency, and not during regular school operations or to interfere with active supervision by staff.
- ▶ Store master keys in a secure location and ensure that multiple school staff have access to master keys. Consider sharing this information with or providing access to local law enforcement.

- ▶ **Safe Spaces** — Safe spaces (also referred to as hard corners) are areas in classrooms where students and staff are not visible from hallways, windows, or door openings.
 - ▶ Create a “safe space” in each classroom by looking into the room from any possible vantage points (doorways, windows, etc.) and determine an area where there is no visibility.
 - ▶ Where feasible, consider establishing safe spaces in other non-classroom settings (e.g., library, cafeteria, etc.)
 - ▶ Consider marking the safe area on floors/walls so students and staff know where to go in the event of a lockdown.
 - ▶ Ensure that safe spaces are clear from physical items so that all students and staff, including those with mobility devices (e.g., wheelchairs), can safely access the area during an emergency.
 - ▶ Align safe space locations with fire and other safety codes.
 - ▶ Consider placing communication systems (e.g., intercom, phone, walkie-talkies) near or in designated safe spaces so that students and staff can communicate while remaining in the designated area.
- ▶ **Window Covers** — Covering classroom windows can help keep students out of sight and safe during an emergency lockdown.
 - ▶ Consider covering all windows that provide a line of sight into the classroom in the event of an emergency, even small windows on doors.
 - ▶ Use durable permanent or temporary materials to block visual access. Ensure temporary covers are stored in easily accessible locations for quick use.
 - ▶ Consider window glazing or tinting on windows to allow light but prevent a line of sight from outside the classroom.



School-wide practices to Promote Effective Use of Classroom Safety Procedures

- ▶ Develop a system to ensure that all school staff including short-term staff and substitutes are familiar with classroom safety procedures.
- ▶ Include regular monitoring and reporting of classroom safety procedures during required safety drills.
- ▶ Monitoring should include ensuring that door locks are functioning, master keys are in their designated areas, safe spaces are clear of furniture or other materials, and window coverings prevent lines of sight into the classroom.
- ▶ Provide additional support to staff and students as needed based on monitoring data and reported concerns to ensure everyone is following expectations related to classroom safety procedures.
- ▶ Ensure that any physical adaptations to the classroom spaces align with accessibility standards for persons with disabilities and other safety measures such as fire codes, egress access, etc..
- ▶ Consider sharing information about classroom physical safety procedures and updated school and campus maps and access to master keys with law enforcement in advance.

Classroom safety procedures should be implemented within a larger preventative MTSS framework to ensure practice implementation is guided by a team, aligned with local conditions, and supported for consistent and effective implementation. [For more implementation considerations see Implementing Physical Safety Measures Effectively.](#)

Resources

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These resources are provided to assist states, districts and schools in their gun violence prevention, preparation, response, and recovery to gun violence incidents. These resources are providing information based on published findings from past school incidents, experiences of state, local, and school-based personnel, families, and students, and emerging and promising practices.

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