

Re: **Emergency Response Plan Updates**

Given a state prone to earthquakes, and the state of world affairs, we wish to remind you that our school has in place an emergency program for the safety of all students and staff. The OMS Emergency Response Plan revised in the fall. In summary, it provides safety procedures for staff-assigned emergency teams to respond to emergencies, including fire, earthquake, nuclear disaster, bomb threat, hostile intruder, flooding, severe windstorm, explosion, and chemical spills. The Nativity campus, which is smaller and physically different from the OMS campus, maintains an emergency plan adapted to meet its needs and which has also been updated for the spring.

To give you an idea of some of the safety features currently employed at OMS, each classroom contains a duffel bag of extensive first aid supplies. All teachers have been First Aid/CPR trained and update these skills annually. In addition to a fire alarm and school bell system, the OMS campus has installed a "Shelter Alarm" which alerts all staff and students to take shelter indoors when necessary. Teachers who are instructing students off-site are in telephone contact with the main campus. As well, the school maintains a Tone Alert system from which it may receive information passed along from the Office of Emergency Services in the event phone lines fail. Most recently, we have added the exterior security doors to our OMS playground. We upgraded our school phone system to include intercom broadcast capability so that the front office may, when necessary, calmly and swiftly interrupt classroom activities to provide appropriate announcements in the event of an emergency. On-site emergency drills are practiced with the students and staff on a regular basis.

Upon reviewing our current emergency plans for use next fall, there are three items we wish to implement again for the current school year. First, we need volunteers to be part of a Car Pool Evacuation program. Second, each student at the OMS campus needs once again to provide a zip-loc bag of individual food and water supplies. Details of this emergency bag are listed below. Third, each family should maintain in the car a copy of directions to anticipated evacuation sites for the purpose of ultimately re-uniting families after students have been evacuated to distant locations. Details of these emergency requirements are addressed below.

Emergency Car Pool Evacuation List - Volunteers needed.

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, the location of the evacuation site will depend on the scale and type of emergency. Some evacuations may be by foot to nearby locations such as the Mission Church. Other evacuations may require students to be transported to off-site locations in North or South County. As part of our updated process, we have met with the county Office of Emergency Services (OES). The OES has advised us that in the event of a major disaster requiring all local schools to evacuate off-site, county transit/school busses will not likely be immediately available for private schools, including OMS. Therefore, we must prepare for our own quick-response transportation.

In the spring of last year, through our Friday newsletter, we asked for volunteer drivers to help us form an emergency evacuation car pool. The response was solid. At this time, however, we are renewing our request for the new year. We need your help. Please once again consider helping us form our Emergency Car Pool Evacuation program. We have attached a volunteer form.

The role of volunteer car pool evacuation drivers will be to come to the school *immediately*, once notified, in order to drive students *directly* to a designated off-site evacuation location. Students will be assembled inside their respective school campuses in alphabetical order by last name so as to try to keep siblings together. Our goal will be to evacuate children from the school through a single monitored exit. (At Nativity, the monitored exit will likely be through a single church door. At OMS, the monitored exit will likely be through the Front Office door facing Broad Street). We will record each child's release, as they are loaded into available cars as rapidly and appropriately as possible. *Depending on the exigency and direness of the circumstances, drivers may or may not end up transporting their own children, but, with the utmost safety of all children in mind, our best attempts will be made to keep families together.* (For example, keep in mind that a driver's child may have already been evacuated in another car prior to the time of this driver's arrival.) We ask for all parents' cooperation in this regard. The best interests of the children must be our top priority. In an extreme emergency, getting our students off campus as rapidly and safely as possible will take precedence above all.

With respect to "who should be an emergency car pool volunteer," we encourage any and all available parents to participate. Which volunteers will actually be contacted in the event of evacuation will depend on the circumstances and needs, as well as the number of volunteer drivers we have. Our goal will be to prioritize the Car Pool Evacuation list according to the driver's proximity to school. For example, for the OMS campus we are optimally searching for drivers who work, *during school hours*, near the OMS campus or in the downtown SLO area. We believe these people will be the easiest to reach and the *quickest to arrive*. Similar proximity priorities hold true for the Nativity campus. Remember, if the entire SLO area is trying to evacuate, the roads will become quickly jammed. Proximity to our campuses will be a tremendous asset for any evacuation driver— and a tremendous blessing for our children. All parents on the Car Pool Evacuation List will be asked to try to keep 8 individual bottles of water and ½ tank of gas in their cars at all times.

If you and/or your spouse are willing to participate in the Emergency Car Pool Evacuation List for this year, please fill out the attached form and return it in to the front office as soon as possible.

Zip-Loc Baggie with Individual Supplies

For the school year, we are asking each student at the OMS campus to provide a plastic zip-loc baggie containing the following:

- one 12 ounce bottle of water
- two non-perishable snacks (e.g. protein or granola bars)
- one aluminized/mylar compact emergency blanket, sometimes called a solar blanket. (These are very compact, approximately 4" when folded up. You can typically find them in stores that sell general emergency supplies and camping supplies (e.g. \$2.99 at K-mart; \$2.95 at Camp and Pack; and \$3.95 at Mountain Air Sports)

- a photo of the family and/or a personal note, if desired.

Please **label** you child's name on the bag. Unlike at the Nativity campus, please do **not** include a toy due to space limitations. Please try to keep the baggies as compact as possible. These supplies will be maintained in the homeroom classrooms. They will be returned to each student at the end of the year to be freshly refilled for the next year.

Directions to Evacuation Sites

As previously stated, the location of an off-site evacuation will be determined based on the circumstances of the particular emergency. Typical evacuation sites include St. Patrick's School in Arroyo Grande, St. Rose Elementary in Paso Robles, and the Mid-State Fairgrounds in Paso Robles. All families, including those on the Car Pool Evacuation List, should place these directions in their vehicles to aid in reuniting students with their families after an evacuation.

Thank you, in advance, for helping us to enhance our school safety program through the creation of our Car Pool Evacuation program, by providing food and water supplies for your child in a swift and timely manner, and by maintaining evacuation site directions in your vehicles. We will continue to do our best to keep all students and staff safe and to be prepared for whatever emergencies may arise– which hopefully, will be never.