

R E S O U R C E G U I D E :

Crisis Management and Emergency Response in Virginia Schools

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Approved by the Virginia Board of Education on
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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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January 23, 2008

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Dear Educators,

School safety and the safety of children have always been important priorities in Virginia. This priority has been clear, beginning in the early 1990s when the Department of Education's Youth Risk Prevention Project developed the publication, *Crisis Affecting Youth*. It was the first publication of its kind in the Commonwealth.

Since that time, the Department has developed a number of nationally recognized crisis management publications, all designed to support the efforts of school administrators to plan and implement plans for crisis and emergency management. Numerous permissions have been provided to state departments of education across the country to reprint materials from the different publications.

In 1999, the Virginia General Assembly amended Section 22.1-278.1 of the *Code of Virginia* to require that the Board of Education develop a *Model School Crisis Management Plan* and that each school develop a school crisis emergency management plan. The 2006 Virginia General Assembly required changing the term "school crisis emergency management plan" to "school crisis emergency management and medical emergency response plan" and that the plan would also address medical emergencies.

The information available to school administrators has grown tremendously since the development of the first crisis guide – so much so, that it has now become a challenge to locate and provide the most important and essential steps in developing and maintaining plans for crisis and emergency management and medical emergency response. We believe that this new guide meets that challenge.

This publication, *Resource Guide for Crisis Management and Emergency Response in Virginia Schools*, represents both best practice and the most recent information available. It was developed with the assistance of a representative advisory group from school divisions and state agencies and is soundly based on both research and "lessons learned" from schools' experiences.

School safety continues to be very important. I encourage you to review and revise your school safety plans as needed. Be sure to involve parents and community representatives in the process. We all want safe schools, safe students, and safe communities. We will all have to work together to accomplish these goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.", written over a white background.

Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.

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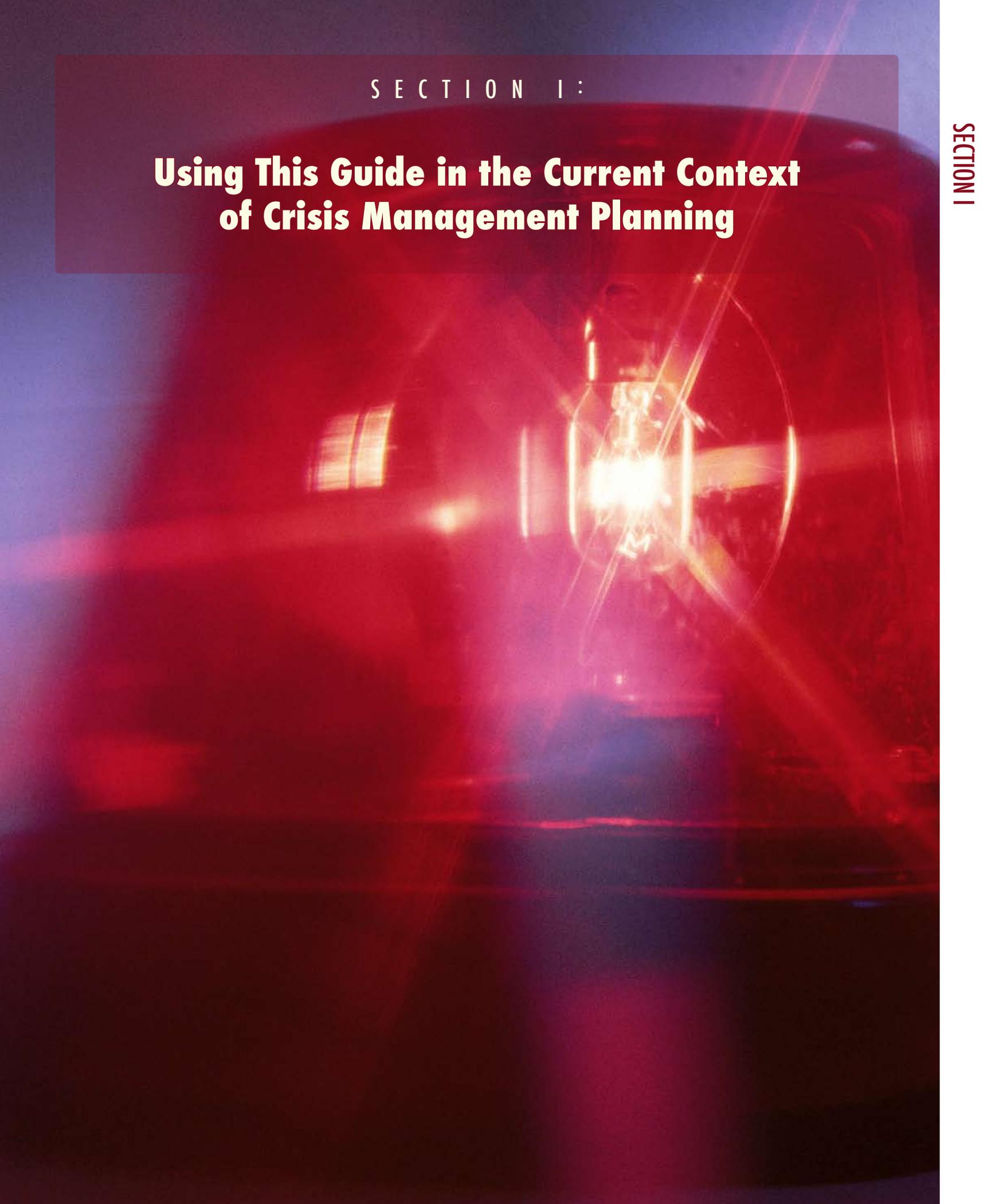
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SECTION I:

**Using This Guide in the Current Context
of Crisis Management Planning**



I. Using This Guide in the Current Context of Crisis Management Planning

A. Purpose and Organization of this Guide

Purpose and Focus of the Guide

Information available on school crisis planning, emergency management, and medical emergency response has grown exponentially in the past decade. School administrators seeking information to use in developing school crisis plans face a daunting task of sorting through dozens of Web sites and hundreds of publications that may or may not have practical application for schools. In many cases, content related to schools is strongly oriented to public safety and/or emergency management personnel and is of lesser practical value to school administrators. Even a highly selective compilation of materials and samples judged to be the best available from the most authoritative sources would likely exceed a thousand pages.

This *Guide* is designed for use by school administrators responsible for developing and maintaining plans for crisis and emergency management and medical emergency response required by Virginia law. It focuses on the essential steps involved in developing such plans and maintaining preparedness. Each step is described and is accompanied by lists of the most useful and authoritative sources of additional information as well as tips and/or “lessons learned” from schools’ experiences. The *Guide* organizes crises that schools may experience into five categories, describes each, and discusses approaches for each. Also included are numerous samples of policies, procedures, protocols, and communication documents that can serve as models and be adapted for use by school divisions and schools.

Organization of Guide

This *Guide* is organized to support the systematic development of crisis plans at the school division and school levels.

Chapter I. Using this Guide in the Current Context of Crisis Planning

Chapter I is an introductory chapter containing an overview of the *Guide*, descriptions of five categories of crises, and an update on key concepts and frameworks currently being used for emergency response and crisis management. The chapter concludes with descriptions of key Virginia and federal resources for crisis planning.

Chapter II. Steps in Developing a Crisis Plan

Chapter II describes key steps in developing a school crisis plan and includes roles and responsibilities of those involved in crisis planning and response, planning for students with special needs, and training for preparedness.

Chapter III. Non-Emergency School Crises

Chapter III focuses on events that negatively affect schools and to which schools must respond, but that typically do not require an emergency response. Non-emergency school crises include student/staff deaths and/or injuries, suicides or attempted suicides, criminal acts where students/staff are victimized, and perceived crises.

Chapter IV. Medical Emergencies

Chapter IV focuses on medical emergencies and includes information on school emergency response planning and protocols including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automatic electronic defibrillator (AED) programs.

Chapter V. Critical Incidents and Emergencies at School

Chapter V focuses more narrowly on critical incidents and emergencies at school and discusses the four key phases of emergency management: 1) prevention/mitigation; 2) preparedness; 3) response; and 4) recovery. The chapter addresses threat assessment, school shootings, and weather-related and natural disasters.

Chapter VI. Communications

Chapter VI deals with the important issue of communication – within the school and school division, with responders, with parents, and with media. Included are strategies for effective and timely communication, sample announcements, statements, and letters for use within the school and with parents, and an extensive section on working with the media.

Chapter VII. New Challenges in Crisis Planning

Chapter VII discusses new challenges in crisis planning, including terrorism and pandemic flu.

Chapter VIII. Quick-Reference Responses to Crises

Chapter VIII lists crises to which schools may need to respond and provides abbreviated sample procedures for “quick response” to each event. Schools can tailor the sample procedures to suit their needs and make them available to staff throughout the school in “flipchart” or other quick-reference formats.

Chapter IX. Tools for Crisis Management and Emergency Response Planning

Chapter IX is a compilation of sample tools for use by schools and school divisions in their crisis management and emergency response planning.

Chapter X. Key Resources

Chapter X lists key Virginia and national resources for school crisis planning. Included are key publications available online and a list of selected crisis management/emergency response guides developed by other states.

A **Glossary** and **Supplementary Materials** are included at the end of the *Guide*.

Sources of additional related information are cited throughout the *Guide* and are indicated by the following icon:



B. What is a School Crisis?

For purposes of this *Guide*, crises are organized into five categories. Listed below are brief descriptions and examples of the categories of crises.

1. Non-Emergency Crises

Non-emergency crises are events that negatively affect schools and to which schools must respond, but that typically do not require an emergency response. Examples include the death of a student or staff member and non-school incidents injuring or victimizing a student or staff member. Perceived crises such as tensions arising from racial incidents and rumors of potential violence between rival students are also crises to which schools must respond but that do not necessarily constitute emergencies. School administrators, guidance counselors, and other student services professionals typically have primary responsibilities in responding to non-emergency school crises.

2. Medical Emergencies

Medical emergencies are those arising from health conditions as well as unintentional and intentional injuries. Examples include seizures, playground accidents, and acts of violence. School administrators, school nurses, and community emergency medical personnel typically have primary responsibilities in responding to medical emergencies. Acts of violence will also require law enforcement involvement.

3. Critical Incidents at Schools

Critical incidents are events requiring an immediate response by public safety and/or emergency management officials. Examples include school shootings, situations involving hostage and/or weapons, fires, and gas leaks. Critical incidents are typically managed by school administrators only until public safety and/or emergency management officials arrive. These types of crises typically involve activation of a school incident command system (ICS).

4. Emergencies Affecting Schools

Emergencies affecting schools are events typically not occurring on school property but constituting a threat to the school. Examples include terrorist attacks, chemical spills near schools, or a fugitive being pursued near a school. In such emergencies, the school administrator typically manages the school response while remaining in contact with public safety officials who are managing the broader community response.

5. Natural Disasters

Natural disasters include floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, and other emergencies arising from natural events. Emergency management officials typically provide the leadership in preparing for and responding to natural disasters.

C. Key Principles for Effective Crisis Planning

Content in this section is adapted from *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide to Schools and Communities* (January 2007). U.S. Department of Education.

Effective crisis planning begins with leadership at the top. Every governor, mayor, legislator, superintendent, and principal should work together to make school crisis planning a priority. Top leadership helps set the policy agenda, secures funds, and brings the necessary people together across agencies. Other leadership also needs to be identified—the teacher who is well loved in her school, the county’s favorite school resource officer, or the caring school nurse. Leaders at the grassroots level will help your school community accept and inform the planning process.

Crisis plans should not be developed in a vacuum. They are a natural extension of ongoing school and community efforts to create safe learning environments. Good planning can enhance all school functions. Needs assessments and other data should feed into a crisis plan. Crisis plans should address incidents that could occur inside school buildings, on school grounds, and in the community. Coordination will avoid duplication and mixed messages, as well as reduce burden on planners.

Schools and divisions should open the channels of communication well before a crisis.

Relationships need to be built in advance so that emergency responders are familiar with your school. Cultivate a relationship with city emergency managers, public works officials, and health and mental health professionals now, and do not overlook local media. It is important that they understand how the division and schools will respond in a crisis.

Crisis plans should be developed in partnership with other community groups, including law enforcement, fire safety officials, emergency medical services, as well as health and mental health professionals. Do not reinvent the wheel. These groups know what to do in an emergency and can be helpful in the development of your plan. Get their help to develop a coordinated plan of response.

A common vocabulary is necessary. It is critical that school staff and emergency responders know each other’s terminology. Work with emergency responders to develop a common vocabulary. The words used to give directions for evacuation, lockdown, and other actions should be clear and not hazard specific. The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends using plain language to announce the need for action, for example, “evacuate” rather than “code blue.” Many divisions note that with plain language everyone in the school building including new staff, substitute teachers, and visitors will know what type of response is called for. However, some divisions have found it useful to use—but streamline—codes. Rather than a code for each type of incident, they use only one code for each type of response. With either approach, it is critical that terms and/or codes are used consistently across the division.

Schools should tailor division crisis plans to meet individual school needs. In fact, a plan should not be one document. It should be a series of documents targeted to various audiences. For example, a school could use detailed response guides for planners, flipcharts for teachers, a crisis response toolbox for administrators, and wallet cards containing evacuation routes for bus drivers. Plans should be age appropriate. Elementary school children will behave much differently in a crisis than high school students.

Plan for the diverse needs of children and staff. A review of crisis plans conducted by the Government Accounting Office (GAO) found that few schools addressed children or staff with physical, sensory, motor, developmental, or mental challenges. Special attention is also needed for

children with limited English proficiency. Outreach documents for families may be needed in several languages.

Include all types of schools where appropriate. Be sure to include alternative, charter, and private schools in the planning process, as well as others who are involved with children before and after school.

Provide teachers and staff with ready access to the plan so they can understand its components and act on them. People who have experienced a crisis often report that they go on “autopilot” during an incident. They need to know what to do in advance not only to get them through an incident but also to help alleviate panic and anxiety.

Training and practice are essential for the successful implementation of crisis plans. Regulations establishing standards for accrediting schools in Virginia (8 VAC 20-131-260) require schools to conduct fire drills at least once a week during the first month of school and at least once a month for the remainder of the school term. The regulations additionally advise that at least one simulated lock-down and crisis emergency evacuation activity should be conducted early in the school year. These drills and simulations allow schools to evaluate what works and what needs to be improved.

D. New Understandings about Emergency Planning and Response

Events of recent years, including the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, and hurricanes and flooding in the Gulf Coast, have greatly contributed to the development of knowledge around preparing for and responding to emergencies. Described below are several emergency management concepts and frameworks that school administrators need to understand as they approach crisis planning. Understanding these concepts and frameworks will facilitate important collaboration with community emergency responders.

1. Crisis Planning Cycle

The U.S. Department of Education strongly advises schools to create comprehensive, multi-hazard emergency management plans that focus on four phases of emergency management – 1) prevention/mitigation, 2) preparedness, 3) response, and 4) recovery. In this chapter, each of these phases will be described with examples. In Chapter V. Critical Incidents and Emergencies at School, the phases will be applied to specific critical incidents and emergencies.

Prevention/Mitigation

The ***prevention-mitigation phase*** is designed to assess and address the safety, security and integrity of school buildings, learning environments and students and staff. *Prevention* is the action or actions taken by schools and school divisions to decrease the likelihood that an emergency will occur. *Mitigation* is the action or actions taken to eliminate or reduce risks, damages, injuries or deaths that may occur during an emergency, such as a natural disaster or chemical spill.

Examples of prevention activities that may be incorporated into a school’s emergency management plan may include:

- Establishing communication procedures for staff, parents, students and the media;
- Enforcing policies related to food preparation, mail handling, building access and student accountability; and
- Conducting comprehensive, strength-based vulnerability assessments—of school buildings and grounds, school cultures and climates, staff skills, and community resources—to help crisis response teams identify, analyze and profile hazards and develop appropriate policies and procedures.

Mitigation activities may include:

- Fencing hazardous areas;
- Anchoring outdoor equipment that could become flying projectiles in high winds; and
- Bolting bookshelves to walls and securing loose wires.

Preparedness

The **preparedness phase** readies schools and school divisions to respond in a rapid, coordinated and effective manner to an emergency.

Examples of preparedness activities that may be incorporated into a school's emergency management plan include:

- Identifying weaknesses in the current emergency management plan;
- Interpreting the data collected from the vulnerability assessments conducted during the prevention-mitigation phase;
- Developing or updating appropriate processes and procedures (based on the identification of weaknesses as well as the data from the vulnerability assessments) to ensure the safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors;
- Creating and strengthening relationships with community partners, including members of law enforcement, fire safety, local government, public health and mental health agencies and the media;
- Delegating roles and responsibilities, including levels of authority;
- Establishing an Incident Command System (ICS);
- Implementing functional training exercises for faculty and staff with first responders;
- Implementing evacuation, lock-down and shelter-in-place drills; and
- Coordinating emergency management plans with those of state and local agencies to avoid unnecessary duplication.

Response

When emergencies arise, schools and school divisions must quickly implement the policies and procedures developed in the prevention-mitigation and preparedness phases to effectively manage the crisis and protect the school community. Throughout the **response phase**, efforts focus on de-escalating the emergency and taking accelerated steps toward recovery. Examples of response activities include:

- Delegating responsibilities;
- Deploying resources;
- Activating the communication, accountability and decision making procedures outlined in the predetermined emergency management plan;

- Documenting all actions, decisions and events (e.g., what happened, what worked and what did not work);
- Holding debriefing meetings; and
- Reviewing after-action reports to determine recovery activities and necessary revisions to the emergency management plan based on lessons learned.

Recovery

The **recovery phase** quickly restores educational and business operations in schools and school divisions following an incident. Recovery is an ongoing process that includes not only the mental, emotional and physical healing process of students, faculty and staff, but a school's physical (buildings and grounds), fiscal (daily business operations) and academic (a return to classroom learning) recuperation. Strong partnerships with members of the law enforcement and public and mental health communities are essential for effective recovery efforts. Examples of recovery activities include:

- Outlining service delivery systems;
- Providing mental health services or offering referral services;
- Developing letter templates for emergencies;
- Predetermining strategies for accepting donations following a death or an incident;
- Establishing a policy for standing or temporary memorials and ensuring that it is consistent for all events;
- Ensuring that a process is in place for soliciting and receiving parental consent for such activities as providing medical treatment or receiving counseling services;
- Establishing a process for screening and registering volunteers; and
- Developing and practicing a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) at the school and school division levels.

2. Multi-Hazard Comprehensive Planning

Emergency management places great emphasis on the identification of potential hazards. Examples of hazards identified and assessed by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) include tornado, earthquake, flood, fire, and even chemical and biological threats. In school crisis planning, consideration should be given also to:

- Physical and environmental risks;
- Social and emotional well-being of students, faculty, and staff; and
- School culture and climate.



Course on Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools

FEMA offers an eight-hour, Web-based course that focuses on multi-hazard emergency planning for schools. The course:

- Describes emergency management operations, roles and duties;
- Explains how to assess potential hazards that schools may face; and
- Explains how to develop and test an Emergency Operations Plan that addresses all potential hazards.

Designed for school administrators, principals, and first responders and others with a personal or professional interest in school preparedness are welcome to participate. Teachers, students, bus drivers, volunteers, and parents are also allowed to enroll.

The course is offered by FEMA as part of its Emergency Management Institute. Additional information is accessible at <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/>

Additional information on vulnerability assessments is provided in Chapter V Critical Incidents and Emergencies.

3. The National Incident Management System (NIMS)

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is a comprehensive approach to crisis planning and is a framework for federal, state, local and private agencies to effectively and collaboratively manage incidents using a core set of concepts, principles, procedures, processes, terminology and standards. Through the NIMS, schools are better prepared to handle major incidents and work with first responders.



Publications on NIMS and Schools

The National Incident Management System, ECRMExpress,
Volume 2, Issue 6, 2006

*The National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Schools:
Frequently Asked Questions*

Both are available from the U.S. Department of Education's
Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERC) Technical
Assistance Center at <http://www.ercm.org/>

Benefits of Aligning School Planning and Procedures with Federal, State and Local Efforts

Schools and school divisions should coordinate their emergency management activities, plans and resources with federal, state and local agencies to ensure a smooth and effective response to all emergencies.

Benefits of aligning school and community responses include:

- Implementing well-integrated response procedures and resources during an incident;
- Facilitating a smooth transfer of command and effective activation of additional resources; and
- Providing clear communication to all first responders, school staff, families and the media.

Six Key Components of NIMS

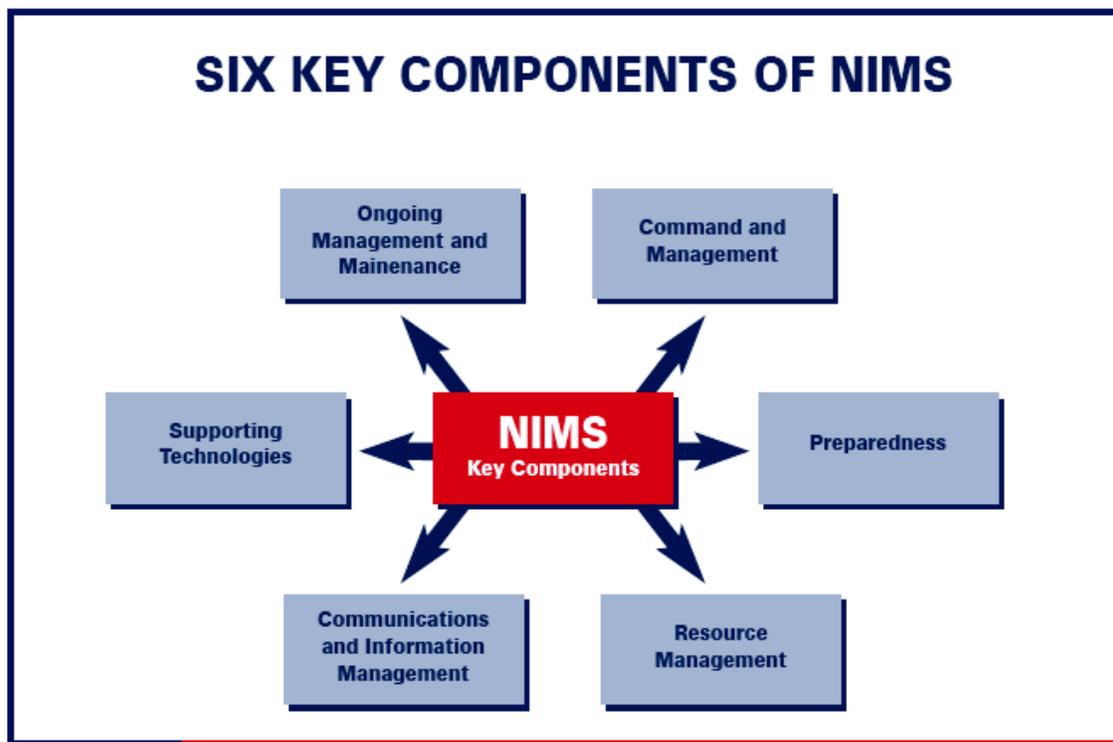
NIMS features six integrated components that are the foundation of its systematic approach for responding to incidents. They are: 1) Command and Management; 2) Preparedness; 3) Resource Management; 4) Communications and Information Management; 5) Supporting Technologies; and 6) Ongoing Management and Maintenance.

The Command and Management component of the NIMS framework creates three vital response systems: an Incident Command System (ICS); multi-agency coordination systems; and public information systems.

Figure 1 shows the six key components of NIMS. It is important for schools to understand that this is the framework currently being used for federal and state crisis planning and response and

that there is an expectation that schools and other community institutions will plan for and respond to crises within this operational framework.

Figure 1. Six Key Components of NIMS



4. Incident Command Systems (ICS) and Schools

The Incident Command System (ICS) provides a unified command in a multi-responder emergency in which multiple agencies have responsibilities. Each agency contributes to the process of:

- determining the overall objectives to gain control of the incident;
- selecting strategies to achieve their objectives;
- planning jointly for tactical activities;
- integrating appropriate tactical operations, and
- making maximum use of all assigned resources.

As a rule of thumb, if a crime is involved, the police take over the scene; most other emergencies are controlled by the fire department or local emergency response system.

School staff members need to be familiar with their local jurisdiction's ICS to avoid any confusion when responding to a critical incident. It is a good idea to identify in advance a liaison officer for the school; this is typically the principal.

There is a clear chain of command among law enforcement, emergency personnel of the fire department, and paramedics. It is very important for school leaders to meet them ahead of time and learn about their ICS so that the school can become a functioning member of the ICS team.



Information on Incident Command System (ICS) for Schools

Course on Incident Command System (ICS) for Schools

FEMA offers a 2.5 hour, Web-based introductory course on Incident Command System for Schools for K-12 school personnel. The course focuses on:

- ICS applications in school-based incidents.
- ICS facilities and functions.
- ICS organizational principles and elements.
- ICS planning.
- ICS positions and responsibilities.
- Accountability steps.

The course is offered by FEMA as part of its Emergency Management Institute. Additional information is accessible at <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/>

Incident Command System (ICS) Fact Sheets

ICS-100 Fact Sheet accessible at http://www.fema.gov/pdf/nims/ics_100_fs.pdf

ICS-200 Fact Sheet accessible at http://www.fema.gov/pdf/nims/ics_200_fact_sheetm.pdf

More detailed information on ICSs in relation to critical incident planning and response in schools is provided in Chapter V.

5. Framework for Crisis Management Planning

A framework that school administrators have found helpful in developing crisis management procedures organizes activities into three phases: a) pre-incident identification/intervention, b) non-emergency crisis response, and c) critical incident response. The framework is shown below in Table 1.

a. Pre-Incident Identification/Intervention

Pre-incident identification/intervention procedures provide a systematic process for identifying, assessing, and intervening with students who may be suicidal or constitute a potential or imminent threat to others. These procedures are designed to prevent or reduce risk to the health, safety, and welfare of students and staff. Policy establishing such procedures involves:

- training of students and staff to recognize warning signs of risk;
- immediate, mandatory reporting of concerns;
- qualified assessment of threats; and,
- expedited access to school and/or community resources for appropriate intervention.

b. Non-Emergency Crisis Response

Non-emergency crisis response procedures guide staff in responding to the more frequently occurring crises such as the death of a student or teacher by accident or illness, suicide threat, or vehicle crashes. Interventions are problem-focused and time-limited and designed to determine the facts, disseminate accurate information, restore equilibrium, and support productive, appropriate responses. Key tasks involve:

- gathering accurate information about the event;
- disseminating accurate information to staff, students, parents, and, if appropriate, the media;
- intervening directly with students most likely to be affected;
- increasing the available supportive counseling for students and staff; and,
- guiding students and staff to engage in productive, appropriate responses.

c. Critical Incident Response

Critical incident procedures focus narrowly on situations which involve imminent danger to life and limb such as school violence with death or major injuries, natural disasters, and terrorist acts. Such procedures emphasize a coordinated interagency response and are designed primarily to preserve and protect life. Sound policy requires the development, in advance of a critical incident, of interagency agreements that specify channels of communication, types of services, and areas of responsibility. Such interagency agreements typically are established with public safety (i.e., police department, sheriff's office, fire department, emergency services), health and mental health agencies (i.e., Health Department and Community Services Board).

Table 1. Framework for School Crisis Management Planning

Framework for Crisis Management Planning			
<i>Phase</i>	<i>Target of procedures</i>	<i>Designed to . . .</i>	<i>Involves</i>
<i>Pre-Incident Identification / Intervention</i>	a systematic process for identifying, assessing, and intervening with students who may be suicidal or constitute a potential or imminent threat to others.	. . . prevent or reduce risk to the health, safety, and welfare of students and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ training of students and staff to recognize warning signs of risk; ▪ immediate, mandatory reporting of concerns; ▪ qualified assessment of threats; and, ▪ expedited access to school and/or community resources for appropriate intervention.
<i>Non-Emergency Crisis Response</i>	guide staff in responding to the more frequently occurring crises such as the death of a student or teacher by accident or illness, suicide threat, or vehicle crashes, but do not necessarily address critical incidents such as school shootings or hostage-taking.	. . . determine the facts, disseminate accurate information, restore equilibrium, and support productive, appropriate responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ gathering accurate information about the event; ▪ disseminating accurate information to staff, students, parents, and, if appropriate, the media; ▪ intervening directly with students most likely to be affected; ▪ increasing the available

Framework for Crisis Management Planning			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ supportive counseling for students and staff; and, ▪ guiding students and staff to engage in productive, appropriate responses.
<i>Critical Incident Response</i>	focus narrowly on situations which involve imminent danger to life and limb such as school violence with death or major injuries, natural disasters, and terrorist acts; procedures emphasize a coordinated interagency response.	... preserve and protect life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ interagency agreements developed in advance, specifying channels of communication, types of services, and areas of responsibility. ▪ agreements typically established with public safety, health, and mental health agencies.

6. Key Resources for Crisis and Emergency Response and Management

School divisions and schools developing plans for emergency response and crisis management will benefit from consulting the key Virginia and federal resources. Key resources are listed below in Table 2.

Table 2. Key Resources for School Crisis Management Planning

Key Resources for School Crisis Management Planning

Resource	Web site	Examples of Resources Available
Virginia Resources		
Virginia Center for School Safety (VCSS)	http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/ School Safety Audit Program http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/audit/ School Crisis Plan Review Certification http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/audit/crisis.cfm	Training for school resource officers and school security officers; annual school safety conference; publications.
Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)	http://www.doe.virginia.gov School Safety Information Resource (SSIR) https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/pti/ Other publications: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/studentsrvcs/ - Model School Crisis Plan - Annual Discipline, Crime, and Violence Reports - Student Conduct Policy Guidelines - Suicide Prevention Guidelines	Publications and training. Web-based reporting tool that allows users to display school-safety data at the state, division and school levels.
Virginia Department	http://www.vdem.virginia.gov/ or http://www.vaemergency.com/	Lead agency in coordinating state's emergency preparedness, mitigation,

Key Resources for School Crisis Management Planning

Resource	Web site	Examples of Resources Available
of Emergency Management (VDEM)	<p>Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Center for Injury and Violence Prevention Emergency Preparedness and Response</p> <p>http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/</p> <p>Division of Injury and Violence Prevention http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/civp</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suicide prevention information and training - School-based injury prevention <p>Emergency Preparedness and Response http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epr/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information on emergencies impacting public health including bioterrorism, infectious disease outbreaks and other public health emergencies 	<p>response and recovery efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training in emergency management, hazardous materials response and search and rescue to prepare local responders. ▪ Teen CERT Train-the-Trainer course ▪ Web site contains information on how to prepare for, respond to, and recover from numerous threats and emergencies. <p>Public awareness, training, guidelines, publications.</p> <p>Key topics: Suicide prevention School-based injury prevention Emergency preparedness and response Pandemic flu</p>
	<p>Pandemic Flu http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/PandemicFlu/index.asp</p>	
Federal Resources		
Emergency Response and Crisis Management Technical Assistance Center (ERCM) National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities (NCEF)	<p>http://www.ercm.org/</p> <p>Established by the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, U.S. Department of Education to support schools receiving Emergency Response and Crisis Management grants. Non-grantees may also receive information and technical assistance in strengthening their crisis management plans.</p> <p>http://www.ncef.org/</p> <p>Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the clearinghouse serves as the clearinghouse for a broad range of information related to school facilities.</p>	<p>Web site contains numerous publications related directly to school crisis management and emergency response.</p> <p>Web site contains subject-specific <u>resources</u> on more than 140 school facilities topics.</p> <p>NCEF Safe Schools Facilities Checklist http://www.ncef.org/checklist/checklist.cfm - a customized resource for assessing the safety and security of a school.</p>
National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology	<p>http://www.nlectc.org/</p> <p>NLECTC – Southeast – Charleston, SC (serves Southeast) http://www.nlectc-se.org/</p>	<p>The NLECTC system's regional centers and specialty offices work directly with communities to foster technological innovations that result in new products, services, systems, and strategies for the criminal justice professionals.</p>

Key Resources for School Crisis Management Planning

Resource	Web site	Examples of Resources Available
Center (NLECTC) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	<p>http://www.fema.gov</p> <p>Comprehensive informational resource for disaster preparedness.</p> <p>FEMA for Kids http://www.fema.gov/kids/ - Teaches you how to be prepared for disasters and prevent disaster damage. (Resources for parents and teachers also available)</p>	<p>Publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Primer to Design Safe School Projects in Case of Terrorist Attacks- Making Schools Safe Against Winds- Making Schools Safe Against Floods- Making Schools Safe Against Earthquakes
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control	<p>http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc</p>	<p>Publications on numerous topics including data, Fact Sheets, violence and unintentional injury prevention, school shootings, and mass casualty events.</p>
National Association of School Nurses (NASN)	<p>http://www.nasn.org</p>	<p>Guidance and publications on numerous topics related to school health and the management of health emergencies in schools.</p>

SECTION II:

Steps in Developing a Crisis Plan

II. Steps in Developing a Crisis Plan

A. Establishing Policy and Leadership

1. Legal Requirements for Planning

Virginia law requires that every school develop a written “school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plan.” Specifically, § 22.1-279.8., *Code of Virginia*, sets forth the following:

Definition

School crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plan means “the essential procedures, operations, and assignments required to prevent, manage, and respond to a critical event or emergency, including natural disasters involving fire, flood, tornadoes, or other severe weather; loss or disruption of power, water, communications or shelter; bus or other accidents; medical emergencies, including cardiac arrest and other life-threatening medical emergencies; student or staff member deaths; explosions; bomb threats; gun, knife or other weapons threats; spills or exposures to hazardous substances; the presence of unauthorized persons or trespassers; the loss, disappearance or kidnapping of a student; hostage situations; violence on school property or at school activities; incidents involving acts of terrorism; and other incidents posing a serious threat of harm to students, personnel, or facilities.” (§ 22.1-279.8.A, *Code of Virginia*)

School Board Responsibilities

“Each school board shall ensure that every school that it supervises shall develop a written school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plan, consistent with the definition provided in this section.” (§ 22.1-279.8.D, *Code of Virginia*)

“Knowing how to respond quickly and efficiently in a crisis is critical to ensuring the safety of our schools and students. The midst of a crisis is not the time to start figuring out who ought to do what. At that moment, everyone involved – from top to bottom – should know the drill and know each other.”

- Margaret Spellings, U.S. Secretary of Education

“The local school board shall annually review the written school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans. The local school board shall have the authority to withhold or limit the review of any security plans and specific vulnerability assessment components as provided in subdivision 7 of § 2.2-3705.2., *Code of Virginia*.”

School Superintendent Responsibilities

“The local school division superintendent shall certify this review in writing to the Virginia Center on School Safety no later than August 31 of each year.” (§ 22.1-279.8.D, *Code of Virginia*)

State Responsibilities

“The Department of Education and the Virginia Center for School Safety shall provide technical assistance to the school divisions of the Commonwealth in the development of the school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans that describe the components of a medical emergency response plan developed in coordination with local emergency medical service providers, the training of school personnel and students to respond to a life-threatening emergency, and the equipment required for this emergency response.” (§ 22.1-279.8.D, *Code of Virginia*)

“Upon consultation with local school boards, division superintendents, the Virginia Center for School Safety, and the Coordinator of Emergency Management, the Board of Education shall develop, and may revise as it deems necessary, a model school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plan for the purpose of assisting the public schools in Virginia in developing viable, effective crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans. Such model shall set forth recommended effective procedures and means by which parents can contact the relevant school or school division regarding the location and safety of their school children and by which school officials may contact parents, with parental approval, during a critical event or emergency.” (§ 22.1-279.8.D, *Code of Virginia*)

Liability Issues

The legal obligation of school administrators to make crisis plans has been well documented. There is a growing trend to hold the third party (school) responsible for failing to take reasonable steps to prevent a crisis or to adequately manage a crisis situation which arises.

While schools cannot eliminate the risk of being sued, they can reduce that risk and/or limit their exposure for damages by developing comprehensive crisis plans which anticipate the potential for crises and develop reasonable procedures for appropriate responses based on "best practices."

In recent years, planning that involves public safety expertise and procedures that establish a coordinated, interagency response to critical incidents have taken on heightened importance. Written documentation of activities and consultation with the school board attorney are now routine elements of crisis response/critical incident management. Many states, including Virginia, have enacted legislation to address these issues, and are requiring schools to develop crisis management procedures, often as a component of school safety plans.

2. School Division Policy

School division policy establishes the foundation and framework for action. The chances of effectively managing a crisis are increased with a well-developed division-level policy that establishes a framework for individual school plans that are tailored to the conditions and resources of each school.

Benefits of Policies and Procedures for Crisis Management

- Policies and procedures for crisis management provide benefits for students, parents, and the school division.
- The procedures provide an organized, systematic method for helping students.
- Staff members know under what circumstances and how to refer a student for help.

- Crisis team members operate within specified guidelines to make collaborative decisions, sharing the responsibility of these often difficult and stressful situations.
- Parents and other members of the community are assured that the school division has taken action to be prepared in the event of a crisis situation.
- The school division benefits through increased legal protection. While no set of policies can prevent a lawsuit being filed, establishing reasonable policies and procedures based on “best practices” provides a margin of protection against liability.
- Interagency agreements have fostered stronger collaborative relationships and have led to improved communication with community public safety agencies.

Essential Elements of School Division Policy

In accordance with § 22.1-279.8.A, *Code of Virginia*, plans must contain essential procedures, operations, and assignments required to prevent, manage, and respond to a critical event or emergency, including:

- Natural disasters involving fire, flood, tornadoes, or other severe weather;
- Loss or disruption of power, water, communications or shelter;
- Bus or other accidents;
- Medical emergencies, including cardiac arrest and other life-threatening medical emergencies;
- Student or staff member deaths;
- Explosions;
- Bomb threats;
- Gun, knife or other weapons threats;
- Spills or exposures to hazardous substances;
- The presence of unauthorized persons or trespassers;
- The loss, disappearance or kidnapping of a student;
- Hostage situations;
- Violence on school property or at school activities;
- Incidents involving acts of terrorism; and
- Other incidents posing a serious threat of harm to students, personnel, or facilities.

School division policies typically include the following elements:

- a definition of “crisis;”
- a requirement that each school establish a crisis management team and development of a school site crisis management plan;
- specifications for membership of the crisis management team;
- specifications for issues to be addressed in each school’s crisis management plan, usually including designation of chain of command, development of protocols for management of specific types of crises, coordination of communications, provisions for support services, staff in-service training, and periodic review of the plan; and
- specifications for development of a critical incident management plan with appropriate community public safety and other agencies.

A sample policy statement from a Virginia school division is provided in Chapter IX Tools for Crisis Management and Emergency Response Planning.

3. Leadership Roles

a. Superintendent/Central Office Leadership

Policy provides the foundation and framework for crisis management. Leadership, however, is necessary to ensure effective implementation and maintenance of preparedness. Leadership at the central office staff level is critical to the successful management of school emergencies. School division staff support the implementation of school board policy in individual schools. When major school crises occur, the central office staff must be prepared to assist in major areas, allowing school staff to deal with the immediate needs of students, staff, and parents.

b. Principal/School Building Leadership

Leadership of the school principal is crucial for effective crisis management. As the highest level executive in the school, the principal bears responsibility for all school-based decisions and activities. Leadership involves making crisis management a priority and communicating about its importance —

"What is a priority to the principal becomes important to everyone at the school."

Preparing for Crisis Management Leadership: Steps for Principals

- Step 1. Review divisionwide policies related to crisis and emergency management, including any interagency agreements. Gain a clear understanding of the channels of communication, lines of authority, and roles and responsibilities of both school division and community agency personnel.
- Step 2. Establish a school crisis team and work with them to develop a school crisis plan within the framework of division policy and tailored to the school's unique needs.
- Step 3. Establish a clear chain of command within your school. Clearly designate who is in charge in case of an emergency when you are away from the school.
- Step 4. Make a point of meeting, in advance of an emergency community public safety personnel who will respond to an emergency at your school. Consult with them in developing your school's plan and maintain the collaborative relationships.
- Step 5. Become thoroughly familiar with the school building and grounds, including the mechanical infrastructure.
- Step 6. Ensure that all staff members understand the school's crisis management plan and particularly their specific responsibilities in the event of an emergency.
- Step 7. Prepare students to assume an appropriate role by enlisting their vigilance and conducting practice drills.
- Step 8. Communicate the school's crisis management plan to parents and the community at large.

B. Establishing Crisis Response Teams

The process of developing and maintaining an emergency management plan is complex; therefore, before a plan is developed, division crisis response teams and individual school crisis response teams should be assembled. These teams are composed of a variety of professionals with expertise in emergency management (e.g., police, fire and emergency medical services personnel) and include community partners (e.g., public and mental health professionals) and school-based staff (e.g., facilities and cafeteria managers, nurses, disability specialists, counselors, teachers and administrators). Partner agreements, or memoranda of understanding, should be created by the school and school division crisis response teams to clearly delineate team members' roles and responsibilities.

Crisis response teams are typically responsible for:

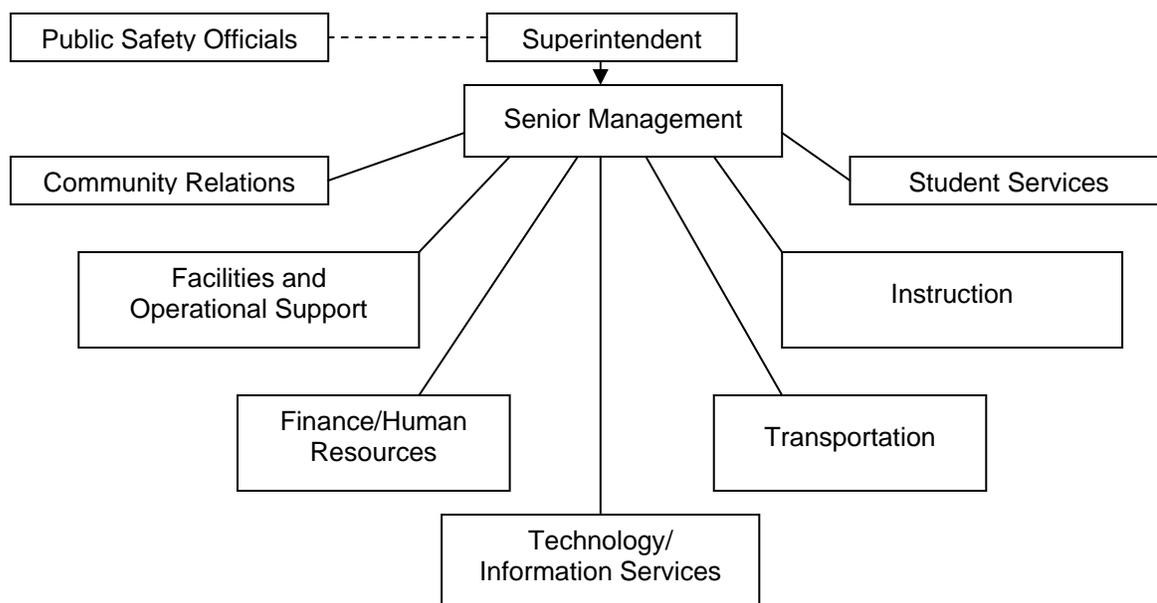
- Establishing relationships with community partners;
- Coordinating vulnerability assessments;
- Developing training activities and conducting exercises to support and improve the emergency management plan;
- Establishing and enforcing a school and school division's emergency management plans; and
- Guiding and supporting the development of individual schools' crisis response teams.

1. Example of a School Division Central Office Team

One example of areas of responsibility for school division central office crisis response teams is represented below in Figure 3:

Figure 3. School Division Central Office Crisis Planning and Response Team
School Division Central Office Crisis Planning and Response Team

Areas of response at the school division level may be conceptualized as represented below:



Roles and Responsibilities of a School Division Crisis Response Team

Possible central office functions listed below have been identified and may be considered in assigning central office staff roles during an emergency. Roles and responsibilities to be assigned as part of an Incident Command System (ICS) are set forth in Chapter V.

Senior Management Roles (Superintendent, Deputy and Assistant Superintendents)

- Direct all operations of the school division in the management of the emergency.
- Gather information from all aspects of the emergency for use in making appropriate decisions about the management of the emergency.
- Assess the immediate situation and assign tasks based on the overall needs for managing the emergency.
- Stay in contact with the leaders of the emergency service agencies and the law enforcement agencies working the emergency.
- Authorize the release of information to the public.
- Keep the School Board and other local officials informed of the status of the emergency.
- Receive state and local officials who come to help or gather information.
- Report immediately to the local hospital if students or adults are being sent to that hospital for treatment. If more than one hospital is admitting students or adults, coordinate the communication among those hospitals and the school division. Assign and direct other division staff to assist at those hospitals.
- Coordinate communication between the hospital and the division office.
- Meet and talk with the parents of students and spouses of adults who have been admitted to the hospital.
- Establish and maintain lines of communication between the division and the emergency site; for off-campus emergency, lines of communication must be established for the involved school, as well. Such lines of communication may also include couriers.
- Communicate with other schools in the division during the emergency period.
- Assign resources (persons and materials) to various sites for specific needs. This may include the assignment of school personnel from other school or community sites such as community emergency shelters.
- Authorize immediate purchase of outside services and materials needed for the management of emergency situations.

Student Services Roles

- Implement plan for crisis; authorize and coordinate back-up student support personnel from other schools to assist, as needed, at crisis site(s).
- Maintain active file of helping agencies within the community including the names of contact person(s).
- Create letters to notify parents of continuing care that is available to students; available care will include local and state agencies, as well as school-based care.
- Develop information sheet for parents, teachers, and others; information will include topics such as the impact of crises on students, signs of stress, and guidelines for dealing effectively with crisis-related stress.
- Assist with planning and conducting parent/community meetings for information dissemination and recovery activities.
- Maintain follow-up activities such as referrals for help outside the school services setting.
- Confer with full staff and faculty; assist in coordination of briefings for staff and faculty.

- Make recommendations regarding the restarting of school and schedule of activities for the day after the crisis.

Community Relations Roles

- Collect and disseminate information to the media. Be aware of deadlines, the need for information accuracy, and other issues related to the media and the performance of their jobs.
- Plan and coordinate press interviews to help the news media meet deadlines.
- Create and disseminate press releases.
- Respond to rumors through the dissemination of accurate information. Organize a network of key people within the community through which accurate information can be disseminated.
- Be aware of the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and provide all appropriate information based on those requirements.
- Plan and coordinate the use of the division's cable television channel for live and taped presentations. Press conferences can go out live; updates for the public can be taped and aired as needed.
- Coordinate information to be shared with school and division personnel during and after the crisis.
- Act as a liaison between the media and division personnel whose attention must be focused on the immediate problems of managing the crisis without constant interruption.
- Arrange interviews for the media with key school and division staff who are involved in the emergency or who act as spokespersons for the division.
- Establish and maintain a clearinghouse for calls and requests from schools, the community, parents, and the media and refer those to the appropriate person or place.

Facilities and Support Services Roles

- Coordinate with transportation coordinator as needed.
- Serve as a liaison between the emergency school site and the emergency support teams that may be needed.
- Coordinate and direct communication between the emergency site and county and state agencies.
- Obtain and direct the placement of generators when power must be restored for a temporary period.
- Coordinate and direct the acquisition of water when there is a disruption of water and sewer services.
- Coordinate and direct contact with emergency medical services, local police and sheriffs' departments, fire departments, and the state police.
- Coordinate and direct search-and-rescue operations when needed.
- Arrange for the delivery of outside services and materials needed for the management of the emergency.
- Plan and initiate arrangements for food for building personnel.

Transportation Roles

- Establish and maintain school division protocols for transportation-related emergencies.
- Provide divisionwide transportation for bus drivers.
- Establish and maintain plans for the emergency transport of students and school plans (a chemical spill for example).
- Coordinate transportation plans with State Police and other law enforcement personnel, as appropriate.

Technology/Information Services Roles

- Coordinate use of technology.
- Assist in establishment/maintenance of emergency communications network. Assist in obtaining needed student and staff information from the computer files.
- Prepare and maintain an emergency kit that contains floor plans, telephone line locations, computer locations, and other communications equipment.
- Establish and maintain computer communication with the central office and with other agencies capable of such communication.
- Establish and maintain, as needed, a stand-alone computer with student and staff database for use at the emergency site.
- As needed, report various sites involved in the communication system if there are problems in that system.

2. School-Level Crisis Management Teams

The school-level crisis management team (CMT) is led by the principal with an alternate designated to act in the principal’s absence. The membership of each school’s CMT should consist of an immediately accessible core group of school personnel who have the knowledge and skills to handle an emergency situation. Selecting a wide range of members for the CMT will ensure the various aspects of crisis planning can be accomplished. In addition to teachers, the team may include guidance counselor(s), the school nurse, school psychologist and/or school social worker, school secretary, and custodian/building engineer. School resource officers also often serve on school crisis response teams. When school resource officers are assigned to a school, they should be consulted in the development of the school's crisis management plan and involved in response to any crisis involving a violation of law or threat to public safety.

Effective Crisis Response Teams

Effective crisis response team members have . . .

- A broad perspective on life;
- Flexibility;
- Familiarity with the specific characteristics of your school, its student body and its community;
- Willingness to problem-solve cooperatively;
- An ability to anticipate multiple consequences;
- An ability to think clearly under stress; and
- Strong communication, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills.

Crisis Response Team Danger Signs

No plan	Denial	Secrets
Inflexible people	Outdated plan	“Hype”
No leader	Too many leaders	Gossip, rumors
Delay in initial report	Unmanaged Media	Turf battles
“Lone ranger”	Rushed response	Rescue fantasy

Crisis planning involves more than the emergency incident. Members of the CMT need to have the ability to identify alarming changes in a student’s behavior or recognize community events or incidents that could affect the school. Once these changes or events have been identified, the CMT must take action. This may mean arranging counseling for a student or scheduling a community or staff meeting, but in either case, the end result is addressing the needs of the school population.

The CMT should meet on a regular basis and discuss not only the crisis management plan

but also any areas of concern in the school. The CMT needs to become a formal part of each school. All members should receive information and training regularly.

The school level crisis response team typically has responsibility for the following:

- Establishing a written protocol for dealing with specific types of crises.
- Establishing a systematic approach for identifying, referring, and intervening with students identified as at-risk for suicide or posing a threat to others.
- Orienting staff to procedures and training to fulfill designated roles, including conducting table-top simulations and practice drills.
- Providing information to students, staff, and community on crisis management referral procedures.
- Providing assistance during a crisis in accordance with designated roles and providing follow-up activities.
- Conducting debriefing at the conclusion of each crisis episode to critique the effectiveness of the building's Crisis Management Plan.
- Conducting periodic reviews and updating of the Crisis Management Plan and conducting related updated staff training.

3. Student Roles in Crisis Management

Roles for students have only recently been recognized as an important aspect of crisis management. In the past, they have typically been viewed in a more passive role, simply expected to comply with adult directives. However, as students have demonstrated their abilities in school-based conflict mediation, peer helping, and crime prevention activities, their potential to assume a more active role has begun to be recognized. Certainly, the adults continue to bear the central responsibility for leadership in crisis planning and response and, in the case of a crisis event, for taking action to protect students. There are, however, at least three areas in which students may play important roles: 1) prevention, 2) response, and 3) recovery.

Prevention

Investigations following recent school shootings revealed that in all cases students had key pieces of information which may have assisted in the early detection and prevention of the incidents. Students need to be involved in bullying prevention efforts and to be educated in how to identify early warning signals and to appreciate the significance of what they may be observing.

Response

Students need orientation and practice in crisis response procedures such as evacuation and lockdown, including -- particularly with older students -- actions to be taken in the event of teacher incapacitation.



Teen CERT (Community Emergency Response Team)

The Teen Community Emergency Response Team (Teen CERT) Program educates students about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, Teen CERT members can assist others in their schools, neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. Teen CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

Information available at:

<http://teencert.org/>

Also from FEMA and the Virginia Department of Emergency Services.

Recovery

Student buy-in to recovery activities and development of positive adaptive responses are critical to regaining equilibrium. Students are strategically positioned to recognize distress in their peers and to refer them for services if the expectation for involvement is communicated and avenues for referral are established.

Examples of Student Roles and Responsibilities

The *Emergency Preparedness Plan for Utah Schools* identifies a variety of student roles and responsibilities in the event of crises. The *Plan* can be accessed at <http://des.utah.gov/pdf/safeschools/utedschoolplan.pdf/> and states:

- (1) All students shall:
 - (a) Cooperate during emergency drills and exercises.
 - (b) Learn to be responsible for themselves and others.
 - (c) Develop awareness of natural, technological, and security hazards.

- (2) Older Students shall:
 - (a) Work through student body organizations, clubs, and associations to support the school emergency program. With the approval of the principal this might include:
 - (i) Staging emergency awareness plays.
 - (ii) Taking group instruction in first aid.
 - (iii) Visiting emergency services facilities.
 - (b) Take an active role in school emergency response and be assigned a variety of tasks when properly trained. These might include:
 - (i) Caring for younger children.
 - (ii) Assisting disabled classmates.
 - (iii) Acting as messengers, guides, monitors, and patrols.
 - (iv) Providing first aid assistance.
 - (v) Performing clerical duties.
 - (vi) Operating amateur radios, school switchboard, or other communications equipment.



Resources for Children

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for Kids

FEMA has created a Web site on emergency preparedness specifically for children. The Web site, FEMA for Kids, teaches children how to prepare for disasters and prevent harm from disasters. Kids can play games, read stories and learn about what causes disasters.

Accessible at <http://www.fema.gov/kids/>

Disaster Services, Educator's Information

The American Red Cross provides additional curricular supports and materials for teachers, educators and presenters to help children and families learn how to stay safe and prevent or reduce the effects of disasters or other emergencies.

Accessible at <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/>

C. Developing a Multi-Hazard Emergency Management Plan

Steps in developing a multi-hazard emergency management plan described here are basic steps recommended by the federal ERCM Technical Assistance Center. More specific steps to be taken within the context of medical emergency planning are provided in Chapter IV. More specific steps to be taken within the context of critical incident planning are detailed in Chapter V.

Basic steps to ensure the development of comprehensive, multi-hazard emergency management plans are as follows:

Basic Step 1. Align Plans and Procedures

School and school division crisis response teams should collaborate with local, state, regional and federal agencies (before a crisis occurs) to integrate processes and determine what resources may be shared. As an incident escalates, well-aligned response procedures will facilitate a smooth transfer of command, ensure the effective activation of additional resources, and promote clear communication among responders, crisis response teams and members of the local community.

Basic Step 2. Conduct Assessments

School and school division crisis response teams should conduct vulnerability assessments to determine the strengths and weaknesses of: school buildings and environments; schools' social, emotional and cultural climates; community and staff resources; and the unique concerns of individuals with disabilities and special needs. Crisis response teams should also take into consideration the possible effects of natural, biological or manmade disasters on schools and the surrounding community.

Assessment data must be routinely gathered and analyzed by the team, with corrective actions put into place and resources stored for the future. When assessments are performed repeatedly, crisis response teams can better enhance their existing plans and protocols.

Basic Step 3. Establish and Institutionalize the Incident Command System (ICS)

As part of the preparedness phase, schools and school divisions should establish an Incident Command System (ICS). The ICS, housed within the Command and Management component of the NIMS, is the response infrastructure that facilitates effective and efficient incident management. It utilizes five functional areas—Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance-Administration—to manage all major incidents, integrate facilities and resource management, establish equipment standards and create a common incident management organization.

To establish an effective ICS in a school or school division, crisis response teams should:

- Identify key team roles and functions;
- Assess staff members' skills;
- Assign staff to each ICS area;
- Assign key individual roles and functions;
- Create lines of succession (backup) for all key positions; and

- Coordinate with community partners to identify roles and responsibilities.

The ICS should also include an experienced public information officer to be the primary liaison for relaying timely and accurate information to the public. (See Step 5 “Establish a Communications Plan” below for more information on the role of the public information officer.)

Basic Step 4. Develop Policies and Protocols

Crisis response teams should develop multi-hazard response policies and protocols in collaboration with community partners using the ICS and assessment data gathered in the prevention/mitigation phase. More specific steps in planning for critical incidents are provided in Chapter V.

Emergency management plans must include procedures for the three primary responses: evacuation, lockdown and shelter-in-place.

- An *evacuation* occurs when it is safer outside the school than it is inside the school.
- A *lockdown* takes place when there is an immediate threat of violence in a school or on school grounds.
- *Shelter-in-place* occurs when students and staff must remain in a school building for extended periods of time during an event such as a chemical spill or terrorist attack.

Emergency procedures must integrate the needs of the entire school community—faculty, staff, visitors, students and individuals with disabilities and special needs (such as limited English proficiency). These procedures must be put in writing, communicated to team members and practiced through drills and exercises.

Basic Step 5. Establish a Communications Plan

The delivery of timely and accurate information before, during and after an incident is a critical component of emergency management. More detailed information on communications is provided in Chapter VI.

Communication with crisis response team members, community partners, school and school division personnel, students, parents and the media is crucial. Each group needs information that is tailored to their needs, backgrounds and levels of understanding; therefore, open lines of communication should be established in advance. Prior planning builds trust in the school and school division and assures the public that the appropriate actions are being taken to ensure the safety and security of students and staff. In addition, emergencies may pose limitations on communication due to power outages, downed phone lines or an overwhelming number of cellular calls. It is recommended that schools and school divisions have alternative methods of communication that are not connected to a city or county’s main power source.

During an emergency, the **public information officer** is responsible for providing the public, the media and local, state and federal agencies with incident-related information. This individual relays timely, accurate and complete information about an incident’s location, status, cause and size, which must be approved by the ICS’ designated incident commander. Before a public information officer assumes his or her position, a communication plan should be developed in collaboration with the incident commander and emergency management team.

This plan should detail policies for relaying information to the public (including identifying a media staging area), using plain language and communicating to staff during an emergency.

Basic Step 6. Create a Student-Parent Reunification Plan

When a school's population has been evacuated to an alternate site, or if the safety of the neighboring community is threatened, school administrators or the crisis response team will implement a school's student-parent reunification plan for releasing students to their parents or guardians. This plan outlines a school's parental notification methods, such as the use of calling trees, local media channels or the activation of an automated alert system.

Schools and school divisions should disseminate these policies—in numerous languages if necessary—before an incident occurs through school Web pages, e-mail blasts, letters to parents and guardians and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings.

Basic Step 7. Stock Emergency Go-Kits and Supplies

Every school should store emergency supplies and “go-kits.” A go-kit is a self-contained, portable stockpile of emergency supplies. Some schools may choose to create three types of go-kits: one for administrators, one for classrooms, and one for medical emergencies.

Administrative go-kit supplies may include utility turn-off procedures, a calling tree, a whistle, the parent-student reunification plan and a first-aid kit.

Classroom go-kits may include a student attendance roster, a first-aid kit, age appropriate student activities and a vest or hat for teacher identification.

Medical emergency go-kits typically contain first-aid supplies and are specifically intended for use in school emergencies when buildings are evacuated or the school health office is displaced.

More detailed information on medical go-kits is provided in Chapter IV; detailed information on administrative and classroom go-kits is provided in Chapter V. Additional examples of go-kits may be found at the Department of Homeland Security Web site, www.ready.gov/

Go-kits are often stored in backpacks or duffle bags and placed in readily accessible and secure locations. A school's crisis response team should select supplies that address the needs of the school, as well as its population, climate, facilities and resources. Because emergency supplies are critical to a smooth response, a school's emergency management plan should reference both the supplies needed and the staff members responsible for stocking and replenishing items.

Basic Step 8. Provide Training to Faculty and Staff

Emergency management training should be developed based on a school and school division's prevention and preparedness efforts, prioritized threats and identified issues derived from assessments. Routine, multi-hazard training should be scheduled and noted in emergency management plans. The sessions should also be conducted in conjunction with community partners to capitalize on responders' expertise and ensure consistent learning. More detailed information on training is provided in Chapter VI, Section C.5.

General crisis training must be provided to all staff (i.e., administrative and custodial staff, teachers, nurses, bus drivers and substitutes) and students. When appropriate, parents and community partners should also receive this training. School staff and emergency management team leaders may receive additional in-depth training, including courses required for NIMS compliance through FEMA's Emergency Management Institute. Course information is available at <http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/>

Basic Step 9. Conduct Functional Exercises

Functional exercises are simulations of emergency situations and are integral to the development of an effective emergency management plan. When conducted in collaboration with first responders, the exercises provide opportunities to not only strengthen working relationships and put into practice the emergency management plan, but eliminate weaknesses in it. Exercises may range from basic fire and shelter-in-place drills to full scale community-wide drills that realistically portray a crisis and activate the ICS.

Maintaining Preparedness

Development of a crisis management plan is not a one-time task. Changes — in personnel, policies, resources, and conditions — occur and require plans to be updated and refined. At minimum, a school's crisis plan should be thoroughly and formally reviewed on an annual basis.

Checklist for Annual Review of School Crisis Plan

- Confirm membership of Crisis Response Team, filling vacancies that have occurred.
- Review assigned roles and responsibilities of team members and revise, as needed.
- Review overall Crisis Response Plan and update in light of changes in conditions and/or resources at the school.
- Review Critical Incident Management procedures and update in light of changes in conditions and/or resources at the school.
- Print updated crisis referral information in student handbook.
- Print updated crisis referral information in faculty handbook.
- Update faculty of any changes in Crisis Response Team membership and procedures including identification/intervention referral, for crisis response, critical incident response, and recovery.
- Include review of Crisis Management Plan and related procedures in new staff orientation.
- Hold an all-faculty in-service on Crisis Management Plan annually and training in related topics on a more regular basis.

D. Planning for Children with Special Needs and Disabilities

The following content is adapted from Integrating Students with Special Needs and Disabilities into Planning. ERCM Express, Vol 2, Issue 1, 2006. Emergency Response and Crisis Management Technical Assistance Center. Available online at <http://www.ercm.org>.

Planning for students in emergencies means planning for *all* students, including those with disabilities and special needs. Lessons learned from recent disasters have not only emphasized this point, but they have also illuminated the critical steps schools need to take to protect their campuses. Meeting the needs of students with disabilities and special needs in the event of an emergency does not have to be a daunting or a costly task. It simply requires administrators and officials to take into account the entire school community, from students and staff members to visitors and volunteers, and then take the appropriate actions to ensure the safety of all.

Plan for Special Needs Through All Four Phases

Providing for students with special needs throughout every phase of crisis management is necessary to protect them in an emergency. As school divisions' crisis management teams address the four stages of crisis planning (mitigation and prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery) they make decisions proactively, based on predictions about what crises can be prevented or avoided, the types of crises most likely to occur, and the implications of those crises. Divisions ought to make the same proactive decisions simultaneously for their students with special needs and disabilities, considering the implications for their full participation in the schoolwide safety plan and then determining how best to address each student's needs. The crisis team should also consider the variety of disabilities—including visual, hearing, mobility, cognitive, attentional and emotional—to adequately integrate these students and their vulnerabilities into all emergency preparedness planning.

Involve Specialists

A disability specialist can provide guidance on how to meet students' physical and emotional needs. Members of a school's multidisciplinary team make ideal candidates for a crisis team, not only because they are experts in disability issues, policies *and* legislation, but also because they are experts in dealing with their school's students with disabilities—their needs and the services with which they are provided. A school's multidisciplinary team often consists of division and school administrators, psychologists, special educators, social workers, counselors, school nurses, and general educators. Depending on the student population, the team may also include speech pathologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists and other school-based professionals who provide student-centered services. These specialists can inform a school's crisis team about the extra barriers to mobility and communication that students with special needs may encounter during a crisis. They can also detail how to effectively address specific disabilities and their corresponding characteristics and integrate proper responses into crisis planning activities. Once a school-based disability specialist is incorporated into a school's crisis team, the following steps should be implemented, thereby facilitating the creation of an effective and manageable plan that does not exclude or impede any student's safety.

1. Identify students' special needs.

The crisis team should collect and organize specific data about their students with disabilities, such as who has a disability, the nature of the disability, and the implications of that disability for safety planning. Most of the student's disability information is confidential and requires specific authorization for access. The team will want to seek consent and authorization for each member

prior to gathering and sharing any confidential student information that discloses someone's disability with unauthorized personnel.

Special events such as concerts, talent shows, school elections and graduation ceremonies often bring a variety of persons onto a school's campus. The crisis planning team should also prepare for the fact that visitors and volunteers may also require special consideration in the event of an emergency.

2. Maintain a confidential roster of students with special needs.

The crisis team should create a confidential roster to identify students who have disabilities and that also lists their teachers, classrooms and daily schedules, as well as their potential needs during an emergency. The roster may also include any relevant strategies that have enabled a particular student to participate successfully with his or her peers in general school activities. Because this roster contains confidential student information, it should be labeled as classified, with access limited only to authorized personnel. To ensure that this information is available in the event of an emergency, schools may want to store the list with administrative emergency gear.

3. Build on current accommodations, modifications and services.

To ensure success and safety, the crisis team should build on existing social and academic plans for students with disabilities. By law, schools must establish individualized education programs (IEPs) for each student with a disability to promote their successful inclusion in classroom and non-classroom settings. The IEP details the accommodations, modifications and services that the student uses, such as assigned seating, early dismissal from classes for timely transitions and large-print study materials. These accommodations are based on the student's strengths and needs and are selected for their capacity to promote that student's success.

MORE STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOLS

To further enhance the division's integration of students with disabilities into emergency response and crisis management planning, crisis teams should:

- Include short-term accommodations for students with temporary disabilities (such as a broken limb).
- Create a buddy system for students with special needs.
- Inform a student's peers of their special needs during an emergency, only to the extent necessary, being careful to respect and ensure confidentiality about the student and his or her disability.
- Invite local responders to establish a relationship with individual students with disabilities and their teachers. Ask them to conduct special sessions explaining how to support students and staff members with disabilities during an emergency.
- Make sure that if a student has a service animal (e.g., a seeing eye dog), the animal is familiar with as many members of the school staff as possible.

Teachers should be encouraged to discuss emergency procedures with parents as part of an IEP meeting or other review to ensure parental input. Parents, teachers, and school nurses should also be consulted during the crisis response planning process, as they have a deeper understanding of the special needs of each child. If the school safety plan establishes individualized procedures for a student that extend services already in place, the school is more likely to implement them successfully in the event of an emergency.

4. Teach students with disabilities crisis response strategies.

The crisis team should offer crisis response training to students with disabilities and to the adults responsible for their care. The adults and the students both need to:

- Understand the crisis response plan;
- Learn to communicate with first responders (in case of a separation from their caregivers);
- Be able to communicate specifics about their special needs; and
- Use any necessary tools such as personal response plans, evacuation equipment or visual aids.

In addition, realistic trainings, such as drills with first responders, should be given periodically, as they effectively help students understand what to expect in emergencies. They also provide opportunities for students and first responders to interact and become comfortable with one another.

5. Inform and train adults.

The crisis team should educate all stakeholders, including school personnel, first responders, students and their parents about the inclusion of students with disabilities in the school's crisis response plan. To promote the success of the plan, school staff should be trained on the plan's emergency response protocols—specifically their responsibilities in meeting the needs of the students with disabilities. Schools should also ensure that parents are informed about efforts to keep their child safe at school.

Collaboration and ongoing communication with first responders is essential and facilitates the safe integration of students with disabilities into all school activities and plans. School staffs should not only inform first responders of the students who have disabilities and the nature of their special needs, but they should also include first responders in many of the school's planning activities, exercises and drills. First responders will need to incorporate students with disabilities into their own agency's trainings, plans and exercises. Because they are experts in crises response, they are another resource that may inform the school's team of the most successful methods for supporting students with disabilities.



Additional information on Crisis Management Planning and Students/Staff with Disabilities and Special Needs

Integrating Students with Special Needs and Disabilities into Emergency Response and Crisis Management Planning. *ECRMExpress*, Volume 2, Issue 1, 2006. Available at <http://www.ecrm.org>.

Assisting People with Disabilities in a Disaster. *FEMA*. Available at <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/specialplans.shtm>

Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities

The Red Cross offers checklists, summaries and points of consideration for a variety of disabilities and disasters and makes powerful suggestions for the accommodations, modifications and services that students may need and that schools may easily incorporate into their crisis plans. Available at: <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/disability.html>

E. Training for Preparedness

Provide Training to Faculty and Staff

Emergency management training for school and school division staff helps to ensure that the emergency management plans are well understood. Effective training is:

- Based on the school division's prioritized needs, risks and vulnerabilities;
- Conducted with community partners;
- Based on a multi-hazard approach to emergency management;
- Scheduled routinely, at least once an academic year;
- Customized and presented to all stakeholders;
- Documented in school and school division records; and
- Provided to all staff, including front office staff, custodial staff, teachers, nurses, cafeteria workers, bus drivers and substitutes.

After the school and school division have conducted their training sessions, revisions to the plan and the training sessions should be made as needed.

Planning Steps for School Crisis Drills

1. Utilize a tabletop simulation where the crisis team is presented with five possible crisis situations and each team member records their hypothetical response.
2. Team members discuss their anticipated responses and select one scenario to simulate each semester with precautions taken to not unduly alarm staff and students.
3. It is important to inform the public of the need for crisis planning and the conduction of drills.
4. Avoid the use of dramatic props such as starter pistols and simulated blood.
5. Place a sign in the area where drills are to be conducted clearly designating that a drill is taking place and let all relevant agencies know in advance that it is a drill.
6. Practice drills that do involve moving staff and students to a safe location.
7. An objective staff member from another building of the central office should observe the drill and give feedback to the crisis team.
8. The crisis team should meet and review their activities with the emphasis placed on continual improvement.

Design and Conduct Functional Emergency Exercises

Functional emergency exercises are simulations of emergency situations and are integral to the development of an effective emergency management plan. Exercises may range from basic orientations and seminars with the division's crisis response team to tabletop exercises and full scale

communitywide drills that realistically portray a crisis and require the activation of an ICS. When conducted collaboratively with first responders, exercises provide a designated time to:

- Strengthen working relationships among community partners;
- Practice the school and school division's emergency management plans;
- Identify the areas in need of further development or revision;
- Conduct debriefings; and
- Develop after-action reports that detail what happened (i.e., what decisions were made, what worked and what did not, and what plan components need to be revised).



Additional information on Planning and Conducting Functional Exercises

Planning and Conducting a Functional Exercise. ECRM Helpful Hints for School Emergency Management, Volume 2, Issue 4, 2007. Available at <http://www.ecrm.org>.

Suicide-Related Scenarios are included in *Suicide Prevention Guidelines* (2003). Virginia Board of Education. Available at: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/Instruction/prevention.pdf>

The Virginia Educator's Guide for Planning and Conducting School Emergency Drills. Available at: www.dcjs.org/vcss/documents/educatorsGuideForDrills.pdf

Emergency Scenarios are included in *School Crisis Management Exercise Development Guide* (2001). Virginia Department of Emergency Services. Available at:

<http://www.vaemergency.com/prepare/schoolcrisisguide.pdf>

ERCM TA Center's, *Emergency Exercises* newsletter. Available at:

http://www.ercm.org/views/documents/Emergency_NewsletterV2I3.pdf

FEMA's *The Comprehensive Exercise Curriculum*. Available at: <http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb>

F. Publishing and Disseminating Emergency Management Plans

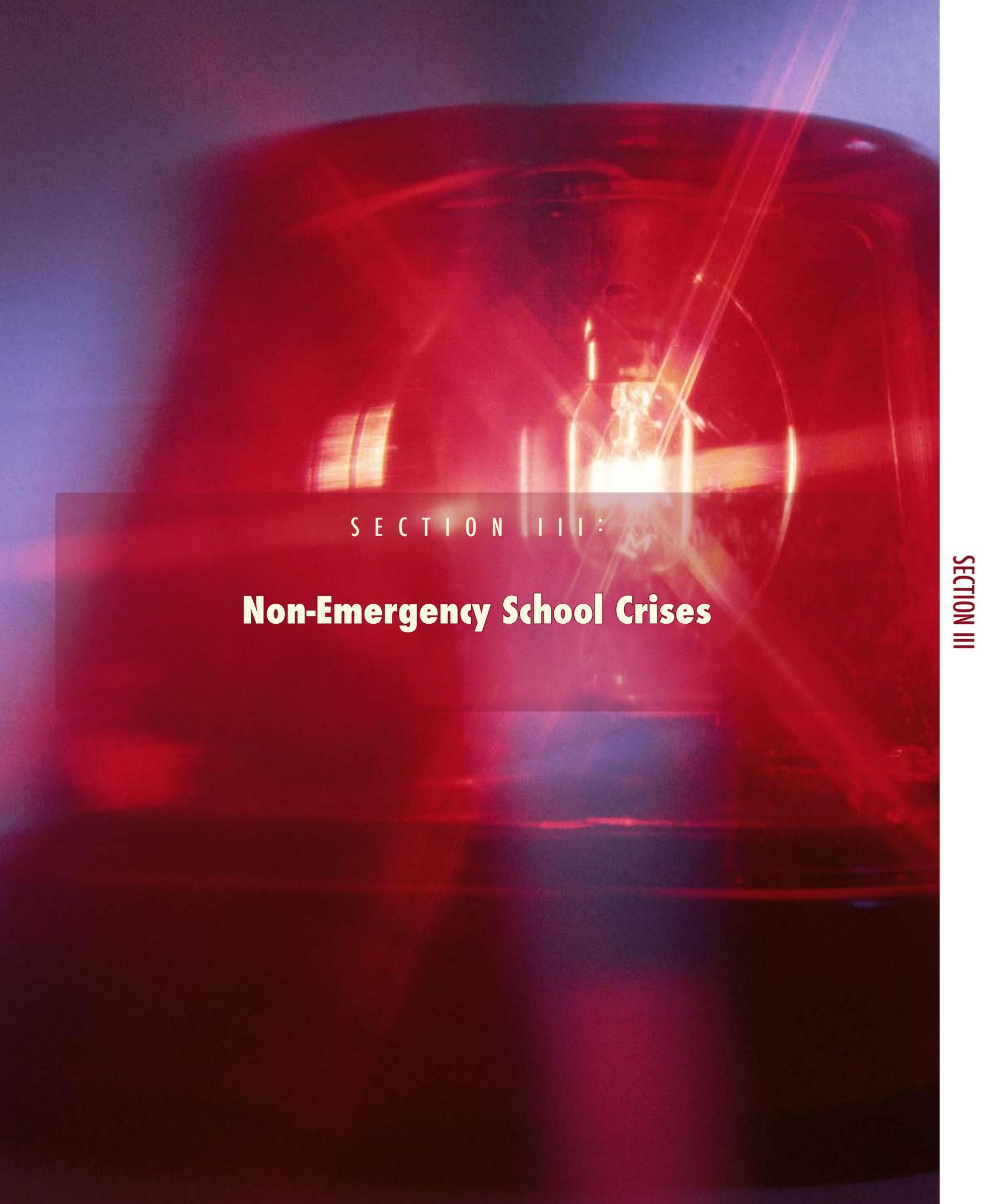
Once the emergency management plan has been developed, it is the school division's responsibility to disseminate the plan to the appropriate stakeholders. Prior to disseminating the plan, the division may want to consider:

- Determining the amount and type of information needed by each stakeholder;
- Using common language, clear instructions and useful formats such as posters, flipcharts and formal announcements;
- Providing information about the plan in multiple languages as needed; and
- Posting critical procedures prominently throughout the school in classrooms, offices, faculty meeting rooms, cafeterias, gymnasiums and auditoriums for students, staff and visitors.

Some divisions may opt to publish two versions of a school and school division's emergency management plans—a comprehensive version and a condensed version. The summarized version might include the basic procedures for a variety of target audiences (e.g., faculty, staff and parents) and could highlight procedures regarding evacuations, lockdowns, shelter-in-place responses and visitor policies. Everyone should understand that a comprehensive plan exists; however, it should also be explained that for security reasons, the details of that version might not be widely publicized.

Key division and community officials should determine the level of detail included in the abbreviated plans. When published, the summarized version should include user-friendly access, language and instructions.

Schools and school divisions may choose from a variety of methods to disseminate the procedures outlined in their emergency management plans, such as school Web sites, posters, flipcharts, formal announcements, in-service days and special classroom presentations and activities. General provisions and procedures should be visibly posted in classrooms, offices, meeting rooms, cafeterias and auditoriums. School staff members, students and parents should familiarize themselves with the plan they receive and ensure that they have a firm grasp of how they may work to enhance the safety and security of the entire community. Information about the school division's emergency management plan may also be disseminated by participating in local television and radio programs and articles contributed to local newspapers.



SECTION III:

Non-Emergency School Crises

III. Non-Emergency School Crises

Non-emergency school crises occur regularly. Procedures for non-emergency school crises help guide staff in responding effectively to the more frequently occurring crises such as the death or injury of a student or teacher by accident or illness, suicide, or perceived crises that involve no critical incident at school but have potential for disrupting the school environment. These procedures are intended to be time-limited, problem-focused interventions designed to determine the facts, disseminate accurate information, restore equilibrium, and support productive, appropriate responses. Non-emergency crisis response procedures help schools effectively complete the following important tasks:

- Gather accurate information about the event;
- Disseminate accurate information to staff, students, parents, and, if appropriate, the media;
- Intervene directly with students most likely to be affected;
- Increase the available supportive counseling for students and staff; and,
- Guide students and staff to engage in productive, appropriate responses.

A. Deaths or Serious Injury

1. Basic Procedures in the Event of Death or Serious Injury

The following procedures are appropriate in the event of deaths or serious injuries to members of the school community. A General Crisis Intervention Checklist is provided at the end of this section to help track the actions taken.

Immediately Following Notification of Crisis

The school administrator or designee should implement the following procedures when the school is notified of a death or serious injury:

Tell the person providing the information not to repeat it elsewhere in the school. Explain the school's need to verify the information and have any announcement of the event come from the designated school administrator. If there is concern regarding the likelihood of compliance with this request, it may be useful to keep the reporting person in the office (or have that person come into the office if he or she called in the information) until appropriate steps can be taken.

Tell office staff members NOT to repeat or give out any information within or outside school until specifically instructed to do so. Have them direct all inquires to the administrator or designee until told otherwise. In school using student office help, it may be useful to request that only adults answer the school telephone for the remainder of the day.

In case of reporting student death, verify the reported incident by calling the police liaison or coroner. **DO NOT DISTURB THE AFFECTED STUDENT'S FAMILY.**

The timing of the notification of a crisis may alter the order of the initial steps taken. For example, if the school is notified in the morning, all procedures should be implemented on that day with emergency faculty meetings scheduled for lunch and after school. If notification is received at night or

on the weekend, ask the person providing the information not to spread the information further until the situation is verified, and proceed with #3. Continue through the remaining general crisis intervention procedures, instructing office staff as appropriate (#2) the following school day.

Following Verification of Crisis

The following actions are listed in a priority order. In actuality, several things will happen simultaneously. It is critical, however, that #1-10 occur BEFORE THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT (#11) IS MADE.

Once verification of a crisis has occurred, the administrator and/or crisis response team designee(s) must attend to the following:

1. Notify the superintendent or other appropriate division administrator of the event. Have that person notify the media liaison if necessary.
2. Convene the Crisis Response Team. To not unnecessarily alarm others, use the coded message established for these situations (e.g., “CRT members, please report to room 5,” or “a CRT meeting will convene in room 5 in 10 minutes.”).
3. Have an administrative assistant or other designee notify the school’s social worker, psychologist, school nurse, and/or counselors. If the affected student was in a special education or other special program, notify the appropriate program coordinator.
4. Assign Crisis Response Team members in the building to locate, gather, and inform closest friends of the deceased/injured and provide support. Pull this group together before the general announcement is made. If significant others are absent or out of the building, assure that a knowledgeable, supportive adult gives the news to them.
5. Prepare a formal statement for initial announcement to the entire school. Include minimum details and note that additional information will be forthcoming. Also prepare statements for telephone inquiries.
6. Decide on a time for an emergency staff meeting and announce it over the public address system. Invite designated outside professionals to join the meeting to help staff members process their own reactions to the situation. A format for the staff meeting is at the end of these procedures.
7. Identify students, staff, and parents likely to be most affected by the news (e.g., due to their relationship to the deceased/injured, recent or anticipated family losses, personal history with similar crisis, recent confrontations with the affected student). These persons are targeted for additional support.
8. Determine if additional division/community resources are needed to respond or to “stand by.”
9. Assign team members in the building to:
 - Provide grief support for students in designated building areas. Try to have more than one area available for this purpose. Have the adults on duty in these areas keep lists of students they see. Make sure the parents/guardians of these students are notified regarding the impact of the event on their children.
 - Review and distribute guidelines to help teachers with classroom discussion.

- Stand in for any substitute teacher in the building or for any staff member unable or unwilling to deal with the situation during the announcement and subsequent discussion.
 - Coordinate and greet all auxiliary support services staff members and take them to their assigned locations. Provide a sign-in/out sheet for them.
 - Distribute the developed list of community resources to all classes.
10. Assign a counselor, psychologist, social worker, or other designated staff member to follow a deceased student's class schedule for the remainder of the day if that will be helpful to teachers in those classes. Station staff/student support members as planned prior to making the announcement. Assign an additional school nurse to assist with increased clinic visits.
11. Announce the crisis, preferably by delivering a typed statement to every classroom, or, if time is too limited, over the public address system. Include locations of in-building support.

Once the announcement is made, assigned staff members will perform the following tasks:

- Monitor grounds for students leaving the building without permission. Redirect them to support services. If unable to intercept, notify a family member expressing the school's concern.
- Notify parents of students closest to the deceased/injured and ask them to pick up their children at the end of the school day. Implement the evacuation plan previously developed to plan for expected masses of parents who will pick up their children.
- Notify bus drivers, especially those who drive the buses usually traveled in by the injured or deceased student, or who are experiencing the most severe shock.
- Notify feeder schools regarding siblings or other students predicted to be strongly affected.
- Provide support to faculty and other staff members in the lounge. Provide private support to individual staff members identified in #7.
- Collect deceased student's belongings from his/her locker or other sites at the end of the day.
- Officially withdraw a deceased student from the school attendance rolls.

The Staff Meeting

The school administrator and designated staff or community members must do the following at the first staff meeting during a school crisis:

- Pass around a photograph of the deceased/injured student to familiarize staff with the student.
- Review the facts of the crisis and dispel rumors.
- Help staff members process their responses to the situation.
- Describe the feelings that students may experience and suggest how teachers might handle specific situations.

- Provide guidelines for helping students who are upset.

Encourage teachers to allow for expressions of grief, anger, etc., in the homeroom or class in which the announcement is received or in other classes throughout the day. Emphasize the acceptability/normalcy of a range of expressions. The guiding principle is to return to the normal routine as soon as possible within each class and within the school. The structure of routine provides security and comfort to all members of the school community.

Encourage staff to dispel rumors whenever possible and discourage any “glorification” of the event (especially in suicidal death).

Request staff to meet 30 minutes early the next morning to review procedures and debrief. If the crisis occurs on a Friday, call the meeting for the following Monday morning.

GENERAL NON-EMERGENCY CRISIS RESPONSE CHECKLIST

- Direct staff and others not to repeat information until verification is obtained.
- Notify superintendent.
- Convene Crisis Response Team and assign duties.
- Notify building support staff, such as counselors, psychologist, and social workers.
- Inform closest friends of the affected student and provide support.
- Prepare formal statement or announcement.
- Announce time and place of emergency staff meeting.
- Identify other/additional students, staff, and parents likely to be most affected by news.
- Assess need for additional community resources.
- Assign trained staff or community professionals to:
 - Provide grief support to students;
 - Review and distribute guidelines for classroom discussion to teachers;
 - Stand in for absent/affected/substitute teacher; and
 - Distribute lists of community resources.
- Make official announcement.
- Hold emergency staff meeting.
- As needed, assign team members and other staff to monitor grounds, notify parents, support staff, and feeder schools; provide support to staff; collect student belongings and withdraw student from school rolls.

2. Crises Requiring Limited School Involvement

Crises Requiring Limited School Involvement

In certain crisis situations, a schoolwide response would be excessive and unnecessarily impact students. In other instances, law enforcement investigation procedures may limit the school's ability to respond to the incident.

When suicide risk is present, or when attempted suicide has occurred, a limited response by trained school staff and/or the crisis response team should be all that is necessary to contain potential panic and reduce further risks. While these situations do not, of themselves, constitute a schoolwide crisis, inappropriate responses to these events can escalate to such proportions. In the case of crimes such as rape or sexual assault, a limited school-based response may be all that is needed in light of the law enforcement investigation and privacy issues.

Crises Occurring During Summer or Other School Breaks

If a school administrator or other crisis response team member is notified of a crisis during the summer (or when affected students are off-track if they attend year-round schools), the response usually will be one of limited school involvement. In that case, the following steps should be taken:

Institute the phone tree to disseminate information to Crisis Response Team members and request a meeting of all available members.

Identify close friends/staff most likely to be affected by the crisis. Keep the list and recheck it when school reconvenes.

Notify staff or families of students identified in #2 and recommend community resources for support.

Notify general faculty/staff by letter or telephone with appropriate information.

Schedule faculty meeting for an update the week before students return to school.

Be alert for repercussions among students and staff. When school reconvenes, check core group of friends and other at-risk students and staff, and institute appropriate support mechanisms and referral procedures.

CRISIS RESPONSE DURING SCHOOL BREAKS CHECKLIST

Crises that occur during school breaks or summer require fewer responses from the school. Use the following checklist to ensure no steps are forgotten.

- Institute the phone tree to inform Crisis Response Team members.
- Identify and make a list of students and staff members most likely to be affected.
- Notify staff members or families of students identified and recommend community resource people who can provide support.
- Notify remaining staff with appropriate information by letter or telephone.
- Schedule faculty meeting for an update before affected students return to school.
- When school reconvenes, monitor students and staff members previously identified.
- Make appropriate referrals for students or staff members who need additional help.

Keeping a Log

Recordkeeping during a crisis may appear to be of secondary importance. It is not. Having a record of information received, decisions made, and steps taken is important both during and after the crisis.

During the crisis the log serves as a tool to share information among individuals or teams. As a crisis continues, staff members are likely to come and go; the log provides information critical to the smooth transfer to relief staff.

During the crisis, the writer is forced to analyze what has occurred and to think more clearly. Such writing and clarifying issues assists in formulating and evaluating responses to crises.

After the crisis, particularly if liability issues arise, having a log is critically important in placing a given action in its context, providing explanations, and justifying decisions. Additional, a log is a useful tool for both post-incident debriefing and training.

A sample Non-Emergency Crisis Activities Log is included in Chapter IX.

Follow-up to Crisis Situations

The following information may be useful in the days and weeks following a crisis. Longer term follow-up procedures are also listed.

Day Two

- Gather faculty members and update them on any additional information/procedures. Allow staff opportunity to discuss feelings and reactions.
- In case of death, provide funeral/visitation information if affected family has given permission.
- Identify students in need of follow-up support and, in accordance with the school's crisis response plan, assign staff members to monitor vulnerable students.
- Coordinate any ongoing counseling support for students on campus; announce ongoing support for students with place, time, and staff facilitator; and,
- Notify parents of affected students regarding community resources available to students and their families.

Immediately Following Resolution of the Crisis

- Convene crisis response team for debriefing as soon as possible:
 - Discuss successes and problems and things to do differently next time.
 - Amend crisis response procedures as necessary.

Long-term Follow-up and Evaluation

- Provide list of suggested readings to teachers, parents, and students.
- Write thank-you notes to out-of-building division and community resource people who provided (or are still providing) support during the crisis.
- Be alert on crisis anniversaries and holidays. Often students will experience "anniversary" grief reaction the following month or year on the date of the crisis, or when similar crises occur that remind them of the original crisis. Holidays, too, often are difficult for students who have experienced loss.

B. Suicides

A school's general response to a suicide does not differ markedly from a response to any sudden death crisis, and the Procedures for General Crisis Intervention can appropriately be implemented. However, some issues exclusive to suicide require specific attention.

School administrators must allow students to grieve the loss of a peer without glorifying the method of death. Over emphasis of a suicide may be interpreted by vulnerable students as a glamorization of the suicidal act, which can assign legendary or idolized status to taking one's own life. Those who desire recognition may be encouraged to emulate the victim's behaviors.

Virginia Suicide Prevention Guidelines

A key resource to schools in responding to crises involving suicide, attempted suicide, and risk of suicide is *Virginia Suicide Prevention Guidelines*, Revised 2003, from the Virginia Board of Education. The *Guidelines* contain general guidance on suicide prevention and include Appendices on prevention strategies, warning signs, responses to students expressing suicidal intentions, characteristics to identify potentially suicidal students, and criteria to assess the suicide risk of students.



Virginia Suicide Prevention Guidelines, Revised 2003
Virginia Board of Education.

Guidelines may be accessed at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/Instruction/Prevention.pdf>

Suicide Dos and Don'ts

The following "**DOs**" and "**DON'Ts**" will help school staff limit glamorization of suicide:

- Do verify the facts, and treat the death as a suicide.
- Do acknowledge the suicide as a tragic loss of life.
- Do provide support for students profoundly affected by the death.
- Do emphasize that no one is to blame for the suicide.
- Do not dismiss school or encourage funeral attendance during school hours.
- Do consider establishing up a fund for contributions to a local suicide prevention hotline or crisis center or to a national suicide prevention organization.

- Do not organize school assemblies to honor the deceased student or dedicate the yearbook or yearbook pages, newspaper articles, proms, athletic events, or advertisements to the deceased individual.
- Do not pay tribute to a suicidal act by planting trees, hanging engraved plaques, or holding other memorial activities.

A suicide in the school community can heighten the likelihood, in the subsequent weeks, of “copycat” suicide attempts and threats among those especially vulnerable to the effects of a suicide. To prevent further tragedies, students considered to be especially susceptible to depression/suicide must be carefully monitored and appropriate action taken if they are identified as high risk. These efforts require a limited, rather than schoolwide, response.

Suicide in Virginia: Did You Know?

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people aged 10-24 in Virginia and is the third leading cause of death in that age group nationally.
- On average, two Virginia youths die each week from suicide. From 1999 to 2004, almost 100 youths committed suicide each year.
- In 2004, there were 97 youth suicides in Virginia, for a rate of 6.2 per 100,000 young Virginians.
- These deaths amounted to over 5,300 years of potential life lost in a single year because of suicide.
- Between 1999 and 2004, on average, there were about 950 hospital discharges each year from self-inflicted injuries.
- There were 1,284 self-inflicted injury hospitalizations for 10-24 year olds in 2004 for a rate of 81.7 per 100,000.
- The average length of hospital stay in 2004 was 3 days and the median charge for an episode of care was \$5,288.
- Medical costs resulting from hospitalizations in Virginia due to self-inflicted injuries total over \$40 million per year.

Virginia Department of Health, Division of Injury and Violence Prevention, 2007

Suicide Attempts

When a school becomes aware that a student or staff member attempted suicide, the school must protect that person's right to privacy. Should a parent or other family member notify the school about a student's suicide attempt, the family should be referred to appropriate community agencies for support services. Staff response should be focused on quelling the spread of rumors and minimizing the fears of fellow students and staff. As opposed to convening a Crisis Response Team meeting and alerting the student body, any services provided to the person who attempted suicide must be kept confidential and coordinated with outside service providers, such as a suicide crisis counselor or hospital emergency team.

A suicide attempt becomes a crisis to be managed by school staff only when one or more of the following conditions exist:

- Rumors and myths are widespread and damaging.
- Students witness police action or emergency services response.
- A group of the attempted survivor's friends are profoundly affected by the suicide attempt.

When one or more of the above conditions exists, the following should be implemented:

- Tell the person providing the information about the suicide attempt not to repeat it elsewhere in the school.
- If school office staff members heard the report, tell them NOT to repeat or give out any information within or outside school unless they are specifically told to do so.
- Have the Crisis Response Team member closest to the survivor talk to the most profoundly affected friends and determine the type support they need.
- Provide space in the school for the identified peers to receive support services. Provide necessary passes to release these students from class to receive services.

SAMPLE SUICIDE ATTEMPT CHECKLIST

School involvement regarding the incident is due to:

- a. Rumors and myths that are widespread and damaging;
 - b. Law enforcement action/emergency services witnessed by students; or
 - c. Survivor's friends requesting intervention.
- Information providers/recipients enjoined not to repeat information elsewhere.
 - Steps taken to protect the survivor's right to privacy.
 - Action taken to quell rumors.
 - Crisis Response Team member closest to the survivor met with friends to determine support needed.
 - Space provided onsite for identified peers to receive support services.
 - School reentry procedures followed.
 - All records related to the incident and services provided stored in confidential file.

School Reentry for a Student Who Has Attempted Suicide

Efforts to respond to suicide attempts and other traumas should be focused on making the student's return to school a comfortable one. Because families exposed to a suicide attempt experience considerable guilt and fear, they are more likely to disclose that a daughter or son has made an attempt if they know the school has a helpful, non-threatening manner of dealing with suicide.

Because a student who attempted suicide often is at greater risk for a suicide in the months following the crisis, it is extremely important to closely monitor his or her reentry into school and to maintain close contact with parents and mental health professionals working with that student.

Assuming the student will be absent from one to four weeks after a suicide attempt and possibly hospitalized in a treatment facility, schools should follow these steps:

- Obtain a written release of information form signed by the parents. This makes it possible for confidential information to be shared between school personnel and treatment providers.
- Ask the returning student if he/she has special requests about what is said and done by the school.
- Inform the student's teachers regarding the number of probable days of absence.
- Instruct teachers to provide the students with assignments to be completed, if appropriate.
- Maintain contact with the student to keep him/her informed of the latest developments in the school, if appropriate. If the student has a previous, positive relationship with a trusted staff member, provide support to that staff member in maintaining ongoing contact with the student.
- Seek recommendations for aftercare from the student's therapist. If the student has been hospitalized, a Crisis Response Team member should attend the discharge meeting at the hospital.

The Crisis Response Team member should convey relevant non-confidential information to appropriate school staff regarding the aftercare plan.

Once the student returns to school, a Crisis Response Team member should maintain regular contact with him/her.

The school should maintain contact with the parents to provide progress reports and other appropriate information, and be kept informed of any changes in the aftercare plan.

Suicidal Risk

Students at risk for suicide are increasingly common. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, for every high school of 2000 or more students, there will be at least one successful suicide and thirty to fifty attempts each year. Because suicide rarely happens without some warning to someone, staff and faculty need to take all comments about suicidal thoughts seriously, especially if details of a suicide plan are shared. It has been demonstrated that young people are often unlikely to share thoughts and feelings about suicide with adults; therefore school-based suicide prevention efforts should also focus on encouraging students to inform trusted adults when they hear other young people talk about suicide. See *Virginia Suicide Prevention Guidelines*, Revised 2003, for general guidance on suicide prevention and specific criteria to assess the suicide risk of students.

When a student is considered to be at risk for suicide, a parent or guardian must be contacted and involved from the onset. Any time the risk of suicide exists, the situation must be managed by an appropriately trained Crisis Response Team member or other trained division personnel, such as a school psychologist, counselor, or social worker. Under no circumstances should an untrained person attempt to assess the severity of suicidal risk; all assessment of threats, attempts, or other risk factors must be left to the appropriate professionals. Many school professionals in Virginia have been trained in recognizing suicidal risk by the Virginia Department of Health, including many school nurses.

In cases of suicidal risk, the school should maintain a confidential record of actions taken. This will help assure that appropriate assessment, monitoring, and support are provided to the designated student and, should she or he commit a suicide later, such records will document the school's efforts to

intervene and protect the student. Any assessment of suicidal risk should be undertaken by a qualified professional.

Suicide Clusters

The Centers for Disease Control define a suicide cluster as a group of suicides or suicide attempts, or both, that occur closer together in time and space than would normally be expected in a given community. Many think that clusters occur through a process of “contagion” in which suicides that occur later in the cluster were influenced by the earlier suicides.

Some groups of suicides may occur at approximately the same time simply by chance. However, even these pseudo-clusters can create a crisis atmosphere in the communities in which they occur and cause intense concern on the part of parents, students, school officials and others. (See “Perceived Crisis” in this Chapter).

School Strategies for Preventing "Contagion" After a Suicide

Pay close attention to those most affected by the suicide: those closest to the victim or who may have witnessed the suicide scene, students at high risk, and those who have been suicidal in the past.

- Offer additional supportive services and provide opportunities for those affected to talk.
- Make sure everyone is alert to any talk of suicide and takes any threat seriously.
- Make sure all staff members know who to immediately contact if they become aware of a risk of suicide.
- Encourage students to tell any adult in the school if they are concerned about another student.
- Track and make contact on a daily basis with students at risk.
- Communicate with parents about their need to be sensitive to what their children may be experiencing and to communicate with their children.

Media Coverage and Suicide "Contagion"

Media coverage of suicides has been demonstrated to contribute to suicide "contagion." The American Association of Suicidology (AAS) has prepared guidelines for media in their coverage of suicide; these guidelines have been endorsed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). These guidelines may be accessed at www.suicidology.org/mediaguidelines.htm/

Aspects of news coverage that can promote suicide contagion include the following:

- Presenting simplistic explanations for suicide.
- Engaging in repetitive, ongoing, or excessive reporting of suicide in the news.
- Providing sensational coverage of suicide.
- Reporting "how-to" description of suicide.
- Presenting suicide as a tool for accomplishing certain ends.
- Glorifying suicide or persons who commit suicide.
- Focusing on the suicide completer's positive characteristics.



Additional information on Suicide Prevention and Response

Key Resources

Virginia Department of Health, Division of Injury and Violence Prevention, Suicide Prevention Program.

VDH analyzes and reports on suicide data, engages in collaborative statewide prevention planning, and coordinates public awareness activities and statewide training on suicide prevention and intervention, including identification of persons at-risk of suicide, screening, counseling and referral. Types of training VDH has offered include:

- Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
- SOS: Signs of Suicide

Additional information available at: <http://www.vahealth.org/civp/preventsuicideva/index.asp>

Key Publications

Suicide Prevention Resource Center, *Virginia Suicide Prevention Fact Sheet, 1999-2003*. Available at: <http://www.vahealth.org/civp/preventsuicideva/Virginia%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

National Adolescent Health Information Center, *2006 Fact Sheet on Suicide: Adolescents and Young Adults*. Available at:

<http://www.vahealth.org/civp/preventsuicideva/NAHIC%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

C. Perceived Crises

Events outside school can create conditions within the school that, if not properly managed, can become a crisis.

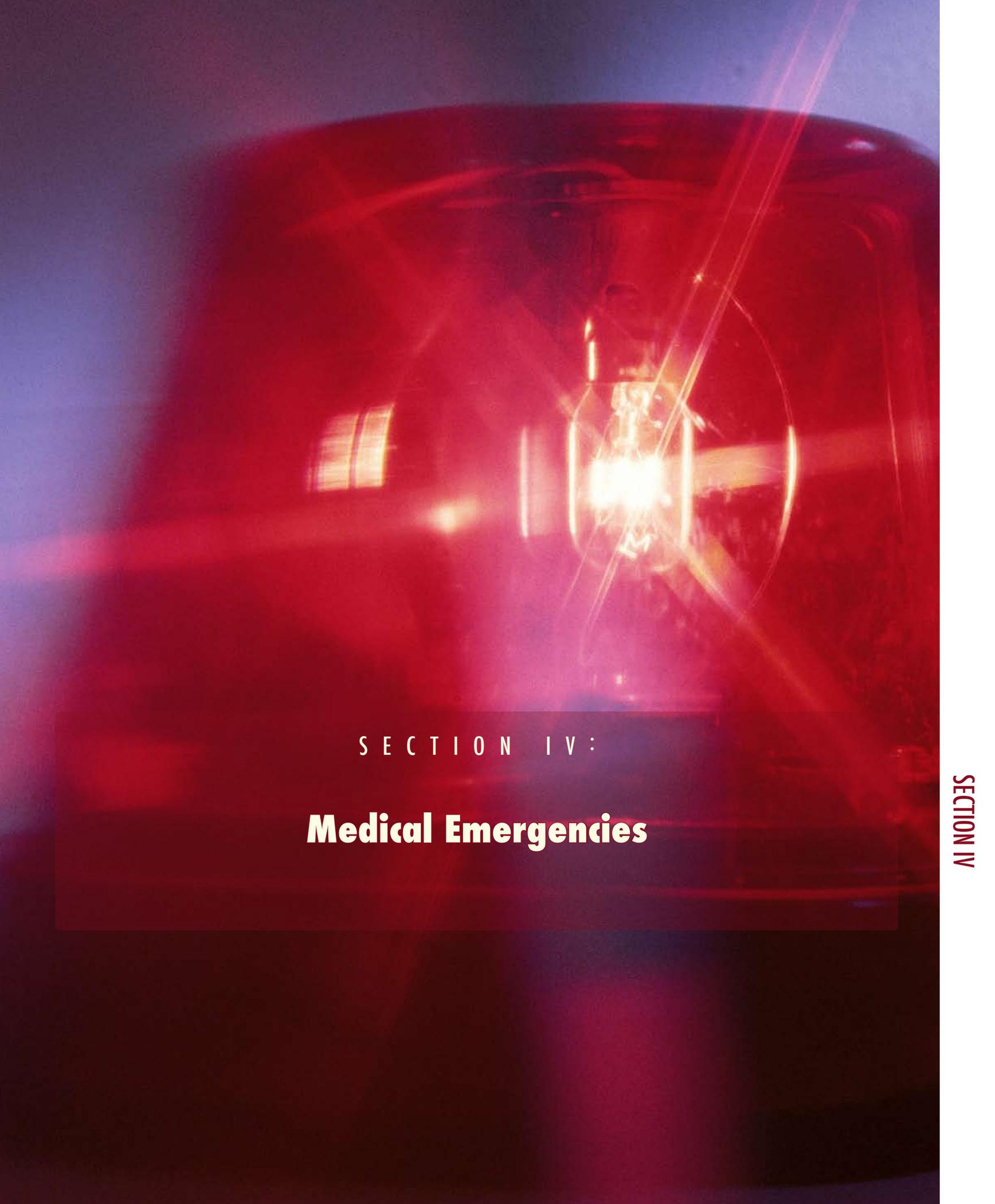
Perceived crises are conditions or situations, often community-based, that are perceived as potentially affecting a large number of people. Examples of perceived crisis include racial incidents, gang or school rivalry situations, and perceived unsafe conditions such as rumors of food poisoning or contagious diseases. It is the task of those in charge to defuse any irrational response.

Preparedness:

- Identify situations in advance that may be perceived crises.
- Establish open lines of communication with students and staff.
- Develop a procedure for dealing with the public and the media.

Response:

- Gather detailed and accurate information about the perceived crisis.
- Don't panic. Project a sense of calm and control.
- For any potential criminal activity, immediately contact law enforcement authorities.
- For any health condition, immediately contact the appropriate health authorities.
- If necessary, call a team meeting to assess the situation and make decisions on what actions to take.



SECTION IV:

Medical Emergencies

Rumor Control

A common reaction to fear is to generate rumors or stories to fill in information that is not available. Making an uninformed declaration about information can be empowering for frightened individuals. Crises are fertile ground for rumors, and rumors are unfortunately self-perpetuating.

Clear and frequent communication is critical. Crisis communicators should be involved, visible, and convey leadership. Survivors, victims' families, and local citizens will look to the school for leadership. Its presence will help calm fears and rumor mongering. Consider the following steps:

1. Designate someone who would act as a single point of contact for controlling rumors. Keep lines of communication open; a feeling that secrets are being kept can increase the sense of crisis.
2. Provide appropriate faculty, staff and those individuals or groups affected by the situation with specific information.
3. Have trained individuals available to speak with small groups of students/staff.
4. Take all actions that you have determined necessary to prevent a more serious situation from developing.

IV. Medical Emergencies

A. School Medical Emergency Response Planning

Life-threatening emergencies can occur at school at any time and may involve students, staff members, parents, or other citizens visiting the school or attending events at the school. Medical emergencies may arise from pre-existing health problems (e.g., asthma, diabetes, allergies, and seizures), accidents, or acts of violence. A School Medical Emergency Response Plan (MERP), tailored to the school's unique needs and resources, should be developed as part of the school division's crisis plan. The MERP should be designed to address emergency needs not only during the school day but also after school hours when students, faculty and visitors are participating in activities. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that schools develop policies, procedures and guidelines for events that require non-urgent, urgent, or emergency health care at school.

1. School Medical Emergency Response Team

The American Academy of Pediatrics *Guidelines for Emergency Medical Care in Schools* recommends that plans be developed by school administrators in collaboration with the school nurse and school physician. Most school divisions do not employ a school physician; however, these services can be secured through contract with a pediatrician on the local school health advisory board or other community physician knowledgeable about child and adolescent health and school issues. The AAP recommends that the "school nurse in each building should be the key person to implement the emergency plan because the nurse is most familiar with the student's health problems and community resources" (AAP 2006, p. 435).

The school medical emergency response team should also include other school staff members (e.g., teachers, secretaries, coaches, custodians) and community health providers (e.g., EMS, public health, and local hospital representatives) as well as parents and students. EMS and local hospital representatives can assist the school in understanding the resources available in the immediate community. These representatives can also benefit from understanding the resources and needs of the school, especially the needs of students and staff with complex medical conditions.

School Nurses . . .

- can provide a unique perspective when involved in the development, implementation, evaluation and revision of school emergency plans.
- have specific knowledge regarding children with special health care needs.
- are able to identify potential risks and assess the effectiveness of emergency trainings and practice activities.
- are uniquely situated to recognize patterns indicating an impending or actual disaster (e.g., influenza or food poisoning).
- as licensed health care professionals, respond to all serious adverse events that threaten the health, safety, or well-being of a school population.

2. Students with Special Health Care Needs

Children and adolescents with special health care needs require a type and level of health services not typically required by other children. Students with special health care needs include those with chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional conditions or at risk for developing those conditions (NASN, 2005). These students may require an Individualized Education Program (IEP), an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP), and/or an Emergency Care Plan (ECP) to meet their health needs.

Individualized Health Care Plans (IHCP)

Guidelines for Specialized Health Care and Procedures (Revised, 2004), a resource of the Virginia Department of Health and the Virginia Department of Education, contains valuable information on developing Individualized Health Care Plans (IHCPs) for students. The Guide can be accessed at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Health/home.html/>

Emergency Care Plans (ECP)

Emergency Care Plans (ECPs) may be needed for children with health conditions, physical disabilities or communication challenges.

Health Conditions

Some students may have special conditions that put them at risk for life-threatening emergencies:

- Seizures.
- Diabetes.
- Asthma or other breathing difficulties.
- Life-threatening or severe allergic reactions.
- Technology-dependent or medically fragile conditions.

The school nurse, along with the student's parent or legal guardian and physician, should develop individual emergency care plans for these students when they are enrolled. These emergency care plans should be made available to appropriate staff at all times.

Physical Disabilities

Other students may have special emergency needs due to their physical disabilities. For example, students who are:

- In wheelchairs.
- Temporarily on crutches/walking casts.
- Unable or have difficulty walking up or down stairs.

These students will need special arrangements in the event of a schoolwide emergency (e.g., fire, tornado or evacuation). A plan should be developed and a responsible person should be designated to assist these students to safety. All staff should be aware of this plan.

Communications Challenges

Other students may have sensory impairments or have difficulty understanding special instructions during an emergency. For example, students who have:

- Vision impairments.
- Hearing impairments.
- Processing disorders.
- Limited English proficiency.
- Behavior or developmental disorders.
- Emotional or mental health issues.

These students may need special communication considerations in the event of a schoolwide emergency. All staff should be aware of plans to communicate information to these students.

Emergency Information Form for Children

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and the AAP have created an *Emergency Information Form for Children (EIF) with Special Needs*. The form, shown on the next page, can be downloaded from <http://www.aap.org>. The form provides standardized information that can be used to prepare the caregivers and health care system for emergencies of children with special health care needs. The EIF can help ensure a child's complicated medical history is concisely summarized and available when needed most - when the child has an emergency health problem when neither parent nor physician are immediately available.

Figure 4. Emergency Information Form for Children with Special Needs

Emergency Information Form for Children With Special Needs	
 <p>American College of Emergency Physicians</p>	 <p>American Academy of Pediatrics</p>
Date form Initials Completed By Whom Initials	Revised Revised

Last Name _____

Name:	Birth date:	Nickname:
Home Address:	Home/Work Phone:	
Parent/Guardian:	Emergency Contact Names & Relationship:	
Signature/Consent*:		
Primary Language:	Phone Number(s):	
Physicians:		
Primary care physician:	Emergency Phone:	
	Fax:	
Current Specialty physician:	Emergency Phone:	
Specialty:	Fax:	
Anticipated Primary ED:	Pharmacy:	
Anticipated Tertiary Care Center:		
Diagnoses/Past Procedures/Physical Exam:		
1. _____	Baseline physical findings:	_____
_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____

3. _____	Baseline vital signs:	_____
_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____

Synopsis:	Baseline neurological status:	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

* Consent for release of this form to health care providers

Summarized in this section are five basic steps in preparing for medical emergencies: 1) assess needs; 2) equip school; 3) establish protocols; 4) train staff; and 5) document and evaluate response.

ME Step 1. Assess Needs

a. Assess Safety and Security Conditions

Assessments of safety and security are part of the prevention/mitigation phase of crisis planning and typically involve fire, public safety, and/or risk management professionals. A walk-through of the school facilities can identify potential hazards and vulnerabilities. Examples of areas that need to be assessed include the following:

Playground safety: How well designed for safety? Equipment safe?

Classroom safety: Sinks with running water in the science laboratories? Electrical outlets and heating vents free from obstruction? Unsafe desks? Loose carpet?

Pedestrian safety: Areas protected from bus and auto traffic?

Fire and burn safety: Smoke detectors installed and maintained where required? Are there policies for smoke detector maintenance? Are labs and shops equipped to prevent or deal with burns?

School bus safety: Are safe places designated for pick-up and drop-off?

Sports safety: Playing fields are equipped with safe playing surfaces? Distance from the playing fields to the school building? Adequate access provided for emergency vehicles/personnel?

Violence prevention: Adequate lighting and security provided? Faculty members or other responsible adults present during class breaks and lunch?

b. Identify and Plan for Students with Special Health Needs

Identification of students with potential for a medical emergency is an essential first step in medical emergency planning. All students, especially those with chronic health conditions and disabilities, should have a completed Emergency Health Information form on file at school. Establish Emergency Care Plans for students who need them. The local fire/emergency rescue department should be notified of any student, faculty or staff dependent on mechanical ventilation or other electrical equipment in case of power outage.

c. Identify and Plan for Staff with Special Health Needs

Faculty and staff with medical conditions should provide the school nurse with information and emergency phone numbers. Consider faculty and staff needs in overall crisis planning, particularly related to evacuation.

d. Review Communications Capability

Effective response to medical emergencies relies on an effective rapid communication system. Features of an effective communications system are as follows:

- The ability for school staff to call EMS from all buildings and practice fields. They may involve using cell phones, walkie-talkies, alarms or an intercom system to establish contact with a central school location responsible for calling EMS.

- Protocols to identify when EMS and other emergency contact people should be called. There should be no delay in calling EMS for any emergency. School staff should be trained in protocols for when to call EMS.
- Telephone numbers of and how to access the health office, principal, and specific emergency services (police, fire, EMS, Poison Control) posted in every room and near the telephone or intercom.
- A list of important contact people and phone numbers with a protocol to indicate when each person should be called.

ME Step 2. Equip Schools

The local school division is responsible for providing adequate first-aid supplies and equipment for all age groups. Equipment such as first-aid, CPR barrier devices, and AED should be carefully selected based on the types of emergencies that could occur at school. First-aid kits and resuscitation equipment should be located in a central, highly visible, and accessible location near a telephone. All faculty and staff should know the location and type of equipment available and how to use them. Notify the 9-1-1 centers of the emergency equipment available at school and the location and have EMS conduct onsite "pre-incident" visit to identify problems, such as restrictive passages in parking lots, buildings or campus areas that could be inaccessible to ambulance and crew.

School Nurse Office Equipment

The following equipment should be considered for the school nurse office:

- Clock with a second hand.
- Blood pressure cuff—adult and pediatric sizes.
- Stethoscope.
- Otoscope and Ophthalmoscope with batteries.
- Penlight, flashlight with batteries.
- Wheel chair, stretcher.
- Backboard.
- Telephone with outside line.
- Refrigerator and sink with hot and cold water.
- Emesis and wash basin.
- Gooseneck lamp and magnifying glass.
- Portable first-aid kit.

First Aid Kits

Portable first-aid kits should be available for field trips and in special hazard areas where emergencies are more likely to occur. (e.g., laboratories, athletic field, cafeteria, auditorium, gymnasiums). A protocol for updating and monitoring the kit should be developed. The following supplies should be considered for portable first-aid kits:

- Ace bandages – assorted widths.
- Adhesive bandages – assorted sizes.
- Adhesive tape rolls – assorted sizes, also non allergic.
- Alcohol.
- Antiseptic solution or first-aid cream.
- Bandage scissors.
- Blankets.
- Cervical collars – several sizes.
- Cold packs.
- Cotton balls.
- Cotton tipped applicators.
- CPR Masks – adult and pediatric sizes.
- Disposable gowns.
- Disinfectant solution, EPA approved.
- Eye flushing bottles and solution (normal saline).
- Eye pads.

- Forms - emergency logs, emergency cards, medical forms, accident reports.
- Gauze pads – sterile and non-sterile assorted sizes.
- Gloves – latex and non-latex.
- Goggles.
- Hand lotion, petroleum jelly.
- Liquid soap, antibacterial solution.
- Medicine cups, drinking cups.
- Paper towels, facial tissue.
- Ring cutter.
- Rolled gauze bandage - assorted sizes.
- Sanitary napkins, surgi-pads.
- Splinting materials.
- Tongue depressors.
- Thermometers.
- Triangle bandages and safety pins.
- Tweezers.

Emergency “Go Kits”

Medical emergency go-kits are specifically intended for use in school emergencies when buildings are evacuated or the school health office is displaced. A protocol for updating and monitoring the kit should be developed. A basic emergency and first aid supply list should include the following:

<u>General Emergency</u>	<u>First Aid</u>
Matches	Assorted band aids
Pillows	Oval eye patches
Disposable bottled water	Tongue depressors
Batteries for flashlights	Sterile water (for
Radio (battery operated)	burns)
Duct tape	Instant ice packs
Large plastic trash bags	Hypo-allergenic
	tape
	Scissors
	Tweezers
	Gauze rolls
	Sterile pads (all
	sizes)
	Ace bandages
	Sewing needles and
	thread Safety pins
	of various sizes
	Waterless anti-
	bacterial soap
	Steri-strips (butterfly
	closures)
	Disposable gloves
	Eye protection masks
	First aid handbook
	Insulin and syringes
	Source of sugar for
	diabetic
	students/staff
	Sanitary napkins
	Cotton tip applicators
	Finger splints
	Cardboard splints

Automatic Electronic Defibrillator (AED)

Automatic Electronic Defibrillators (AEDs) are devices that help to restore a normal heart rhythm by delivering an electric shock to the heart after detecting a life-threatening irregular rhythm. AEDs are not substitutes for CPR, but are designed to increase the effectiveness of basic life support when integrated into the CPR cycle.

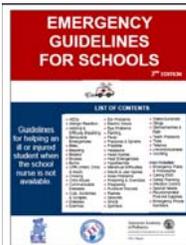
Additional information about AEDs in schools is provided in section D of this chapter.

ME Step 3. Establish Protocols

Key resources for developing medical emergency protocols are the American Academy of Pediatrics *Emergency Guidelines for Schools*, 3rd Edition and the *Virginia First Aid Guide for Schools*.

The AAP *Emergency Guidelines for Schools* contains useful information on the following topics:

Allergic reaction	Ear problems	Poisoning and overdose
Asthma and difficulty breathing	Electric shock	Pregnancy
Behavioral emergencies	Eye problems	Puncture wounds
Bites	Fainting	Rashes
Bleeding	Fever	Seizures
Blisters	Fractures and sprains	Shock
Bruises	Frostbite	Splinters
Burns	Gunshots	Stabs
CPR	Headache	Stings
Choking	Head Injuries	Stomachaches and pain
Child abuse	Heat emergencies	Teeth Problems
Communicable diseases	Hypothermia	Ticks
Cuts, scratches, and scrapes	Infection control	Tetanus
Diabetes	Menstrual difficulties	Unconsciousness
Diarrhea	Mouth and jaw injuries	Vomiting
	Nose Problems	



**Emergency Guidelines for Schools, 2007, 3rd Edition
American Academy of Pediatrics**

Access at:

<http://www.schoolhealth.org/content/Emergency%20Guidelines%20for%20Schools%20-2007.pdf>

The *Virginia First Aid Guide for School Emergencies* contains protocol-related information on the following emergencies:

ABDOMINAL INJURY	Spider	Second degree thermal/heat
General Wounds	Tick	Third degree thermal/heat
Protruding Wounds	BLEEDING	CHEST PAIN
ABDOMINAL PAIN	Internal	General
Severe/ with or without vomiting	Severe bleeding	Cardiac Arrest
ALLERGIC REACTION	BLISTERS	
Anaphylactic	BROKEN BONES	
Swelling	Casts	
Wheezing	Dislocation	
AMPUTATION	Closed fracture	
ASTHMA	Open fracture	
BEE/WASP STINGS	BRUISES	
BITES	BURNS	
Animal	Chemical	
Human	Electrical	
	First degree thermal/heat	

DENTAL PROBLEMS	HYPERVENTILATION
Broken braces and wires	MOUTH/JAW INJURIES
Broken/displaced tooth	NOSE
Knocked out/ permanent	Nose Bleeds
Toothache	Foreign Objects
Wedged objects between teeth	SEIZURE
DIABETES	SHOCK
Hyperglycemia	SPINAL INJURY
Hypoglycemia (conscious)	SPLINTERS
Hypoglycemia (unconscious)	SPRAINS/STRAINS
EAR	VOMITING
Bug/insect in ear	WOUNDS
Foreign object	Deep/extensive lacerations
ELECTRICAL SHOCK	Puncture
EYES	POISONINGS
Chemical burns	INGESTED/SWALLOWED
Discharge	INHALATION OF GAS
Foreign object	VAPORS
EYE INJURIES	OCULAR (EYE)
Bruises/blows	EXPOSURE
Penetrating	SKIN EXPOSURE
FAINTING	
FEVER	CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL,
FINGER INJURIES	RADIOLOGIC, NUCLEAR,
General	OR EXPLOSIVE EVENTS
FROSTBITE	EMERGENCY CARE
GENITAL INJURY	PROCEDURES
Scrotal or penile	CPR
Vaginal	Adult or Child CPR (8 and older)
HEADACHE	Child CPR (1-8)
HEAD INJURY	Infant CPR (under 1)
HEAT EMERGENCIES	CHOKING
Heat cramps	Conscious Child or Adult
Heat exhaustion	Unconscious Child or Adult
Heat stroke	Conscious Infant
	Unconscious Infant



Virginia First Aid Guide for School Emergencies
Virginia Department of Health

Access at:
<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Health/FirstAidGuide.pdf>

More detailed information on basic medical emergency protocols is provided in section C of this chapter.

ME Step 4. Train Staff

Training in Basic First Aid

Section 22.1-274.E. *Code of Virginia*, requires that two people be certified/trained every two years in first-aid and CPR for each school building. At least two members of the school staff, and preferably more, should be identified and educated to handle emergencies according to established policies. The AAP recommends training in basic life support, first aid, and the recognition and treatment of anaphylaxis. All school nurses should be trained in basic life support, first aid, the use of metered-dose inhalers and nebulizers and appropriate treatment for anaphylactic reaction.

Teachers and staff trained in first-aid should be able to and equipped to handle the following until EMS arrives:

- Severe breathing, asthma, choking, and anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction)
- Chest pain and heart attack
- Diabetes and low blood sugar
- Stroke
- Seizure
- Shock
- Bleeding
- Head and spine injury
- Broken bones
- Burns
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA)
- Temperature-related emergencies (heatstroke and hypothermia)
- Poisoning

Treatment protocols for specific injuries and illnesses, as well as instructions on how to activate the emergency plan should be posted in each room in the school.

Training in Blood-Borne Pathogens

Section 22.1-271.3.C., *Code of Virginia*, requires that “every school board shall ensure that all school personnel having direct contact with students receive appropriate training in the etiology, prevention, transmission modes, and effects of blood-borne pathogens, specifically, hepatitis B and human immunodeficiency viruses or any other infections that are the subject of regulations promulgated by the Safety and Health Codes Board of the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Program within the Department of Labor and Industry.”

Response Practice

School emergency preparedness can be enhanced by practice drills coordinated with emergency management agencies and local public safety agencies. Drills should be a learning experience and convey the importance of each person’s role in activating and implementing an effective medical emergency response. Practice the response sequence at the beginning of the school year and periodically throughout the year, evaluate and modify as needed.

Additional information on conducting drills and functional assessments is included in Chapter II.

ME Step 5. Document and Evaluate Response

Documenting Events

Forms should be developed and available to document the details of every emergency event.

Following every reportable school-related incident or emergency, it is essential to document the events. It is important information in the settlement of insurance claims, to protect school personnel against charges of negligence, and in planning prevention programs.

What constitutes a reportable incident should be defined in advance at the school division level. It is appropriate to develop an emergency incident form to include the following:

- Name, address, telephone number and date of birth of the patient
- Parent/guardian or contact person's name, address and telephone number
- Date, time and place of injury or illness (which classroom)
- Brief description of injury/illness
- Activity or circumstances at time of injury/illness
- Person in charge when injury/illness happened
- A list of witnesses
- Type of treatment given at the school
- Record of transport
- Name, address and telephone number of the receiving hospital or physician
- Additional treatment given at the hospital or by the primary care physician (if known)
- Record of parents/guardian notification and time
- Name of person who prepared and filed the report and the date
- Name of corroborating individuals (students, teachers)

The report will be completed within 24 hours by the school nurse or in her absence someone who has been designated and filed with appropriate offices within the school division.

An example of a student injury report form in the AAP *Emergency Guidelines for Schools*, 3rd Edition, is provided below in Figure 5. The form can be downloaded from <http://www.schoolhealth.org/content/Emergency%20Guidelines%20for%20Schools%202-2007.pdf>:

Figure 5. Example of a Student Injury Report

Ohio Department of Health
Student Injury Report Form

Student Information

Name _____
Date of Birth _____
Grade _____

Date of Incident _____
Time of Incident _____
Male Female

Parent/Guardian Information

Name(s) _____
Address _____
Phone # Work _____

Phone # _____

School Information

School _____
Principal _____
District _____

Phone # _____

Phone # _____

Location of Incident (check appropriate box):

- Athletic Field
- Cafeteria
- Classroom
- Gymnasium
- Hallway
- Bus
- Stairway
- Restroom

Playground
No equipment involved
Equipment involved (describe)

Parking Lot
Vocation/Shop Lab
Other (explain):

When Did the Incident Occur (check appropriate box):

- Recess
- Lunch
- P. E. Class
- In Class (not P. E.)
- Class Change

- Athletic Practice/Session:
- Athletic Team Competition
- Intramural Competition
- Before School
- After School

- Field Trip
- Unknown
- Other

Surface (check all that apply):

- Asphalt
- Carpet
- Concrete
- Dirt
- Gravel
- Ice/Snow

- Lawn/Grass
- Mat(s)
- Sand

- Wood Chips/Mulch
- Tile
- Synthetic Surface

- Gymnasium Floor
- Other (specify)

- Head
- Eye
- Ear
- Nose
- Mouth/Lips
- Tooth/Teeth
- Jaw
- Chin
- Neck/Throat
- Collarbone
- Shoulder
- Upper Arm
- Elbow
- Forearm
- Wrist
- Hand
- Finger
- Fingernail
- Chest/Ribs
- Back
- Abdomen
- Groin
- Genitals
- Pelvis/Hip
- Leg
- Knee
- Ankle
- Foot
- Toe

- Abrasion/
- Scrape
- Bite
- Bump/Swelling
- Bruise
- Burn/Scald
- Cut/Laceration
- Dislocation
- Fracture
- Pain/
- Tenderness
- Fracture
- Sprain
- Other

Contributing Factors (check all that apply):

- Animal Bite
- Overextension/Twisted
- Contact with Hot or Toxic Substance
- Collision with Object
- Foreign Body/Object
- Drug, Alcohol or Other Substance Involved
- Collision with Person
- Hit with Thrown Object
- Weapon
- Compression/Pinch
- Tripped/Slipped
- Specify _____
- Fall
- Struck by Object (bat, swing, etc.)
- Unknown
- Fighting
- Struck by Auto, Bike, etc.
- Other _____

Description of the Incident:

Witnesses to the Incident:

Staff involved: Teacher Nurse Principal Assistant Staff Custodian Bus Driver
Secretary Cafeteria Other
(specify) _____

Incident Response (check all that apply):

- First Aid
Time _____ By Whom _____
- Parent/Guardian Notified
Time _____ By Whom _____
- Unable to Contact Parent/Guardian
Time _____ By Whom _____
- Parents Deemed No Medical Action Necessary
- Returned to Class
- Sent/Taken Home
Days of School Missed _____
- Assessment/Follow-up by School Nurse
Action Taken _____
- Called 9-1-1
- Taken to Health Care Provider/Clinic/Hospital/Urgent Care
Diagnosis _____
Days of School Missed _____
- Hospitalized
Diagnosis _____
Days of School Missed _____
- Restricted School Activity
Explain _____
Length of Time Restricted _____
Days of School Missed _____
- Other _____

Describe care provided to the student:

Additional Comments:

Signature of Staff Member Completing Form _____ Date/time _____
Nurse's Signature _____ Date/time _____
Principal's Signature _____ Date/time _____

Evaluating Responses

A post-incident evaluation can help identify strengths and challenges of the response and inform modifications to strengthen the crisis response plan. Key questions are:

First Aid Evaluation

1. Was appropriate help requested?
2. When EMS was called, was adequate information relayed, including location, type of emergency, number of injuries, types of injuries, and specific directions to site?
3. Did school staff remain on the line until EMS hung up?
4. Were there adequate medical responders and medical providers/hospitals?
5. Was the area secured and scene safety provided?
6. Was there easy accessibility to victims?
7. Was the division office notified to access needed divisionwide resources?
8. Was the head nurse or health services supervisor notified to send extra health services staff to the site, if needed?
9. Was there a team approach with school staff and EMS? Were they prepared ahead of time to work together?
10. Was school staff able to relinquish authority to EMS during the emergency?
11. How did communication among EMS, police, and school staff work?
12. Did triaging occur accurately and efficiently?
13. Were the appropriate staff notified immediately, including EMS, principal, custodian, school nurse, division office, and counselors?
14. Was there a school crisis plan in place? Was staff aware of the plan and trained to implement it? Were available EMS resources considered in the plan?
15. Was the area available for administering first aid care adequate?
16. Were protocols adequate?
17. Were the needs of students with health concerns addressed? Was the list of current health concerns up-to-date and complete? Was emergency and parent contact information up-to-date?
18. Was staff aware of special needs students, such as diabetics? Was there an adequate food supply for diabetic students?
19. Were medications, such as those for asthma, seizures, ADHD, heart problems, diabetes, available? Were they administered as directed?
20. Was there access to emergency plans for students/staff with special needs?
21. Was the crisis plan adequate for students/staff with special health needs?
22. Were there enough trained staff to provide first aid support? Was staff willing to take directions?
23. Was the school prepared for treatment at more than one site?
24. Were staff injuries and illnesses identified?
25. Were parents notified? Was the system for notification adequate?
26. Were students transported appropriately? Were there adequate resources for transportation to medical facilities?

Documentation Evaluation

1. If triage categories were used, were records kept of the numbers of patients in each triage category?
2. Are medical treatment victim logs accurate?
3. Did documentation accompany each victim? Will this provide the continuity of care intended?
4. Were health referrals sent with students and staff? When they return to school, did their health

- care provider complete referrals?
5. Was a record kept of which health care facilities victims were transported by ambulance?
 6. In reviewing accident/incident reports, are they thorough and accurate? Do they describe the care given and is follow-up action taken?

C. Protocols

General Emergency Guidelines

The *Virginia First Aid Guide for School Emergencies* includes the following general emergency guidelines:

1. Remain calm and communicate a calm, supportive attitude to the ill or injured individual.
2. Never leave an ill or injured individual unattended. Have someone else call 9-1-1 and the parent.
3. **Do not** move an injured individual or allow the person to walk (bring help and supplies to the individual). Other school staff or responsible adults should be enlisted to help clear the area of students who may congregate following an injury or other emergency situation.
4. If trained and if necessary, institute CPR.
5. Have 9-1-1 called immediately for:
 - Anaphylactic reaction
 - Amputation
 - Bleeding (severe)
 - Breathing difficulty (persistent)
 - Broken bone
 - Burns (chemical, electrical, third degree)
 - Chest pain (severe)
 - Choking
 - Electrical shock
 - Frostbite
 - Head, neck, or back injury (severe)
 - Heat stroke
 - Poisoning
 - Seizure (if no history of seizures)
 - Shock
 - Unconsciousness
 - Wound (deep/extensive)
6. **Do not** use treatment methods beyond your skill level or your scope of practice. When in doubt, call 9-1-1. All persons working with students are encouraged to obtain training in CPR/First Aid through an authorized community agency.

Emergency Call Protocol

School policy should clearly designate who is authorized to call 9-1-1 and under what circumstances. The following is an example of a protocol for calling EMS:

If it is determined an injury or sudden illness is serious:

1. CALL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL IMMEDIATELY. Preferably two adults should be sent to call EMS, one adult should obtain a copy of the student emergency information card. Once EMS has been contacted, one adult with the student emergency information card should return to the emergency scene, the second person will remain to make calls to parents and other necessary telephone calls regarding the emergency.

Information to be given to EMS should include:

- Your name
- Your location and address
- Where in the facility emergency located
- The telephone number from which you are calling
- The nature of the basic injury or illness (what happened)
- What is presently being done for the injured/ill student
- Age of the patient and any allergies
- EMS may give you pre-arrival instructions
- Stay on the phone, the CALLER SHOULD ALWAYS HANG UP LAST
- CALL THE STUDENT'S PARENTS AND EXPLAIN THE SITUATION AS THOROUGHLY AND QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. If unable to locate the parents, call the emergency contact for the parent indicated on the student emergency card
- Call a school administrator and explain the situation to them.

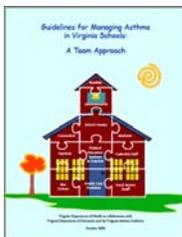
Condition-Specific Protocols

It is likely that every child with a serious/life-threatening condition will have an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) that includes protocols for managing a medical emergency that may occur. Beyond the child-specific protocols, schools need to establish medical emergency protocols for a broad range of conditions. At minimum, medical emergency protocols should be developed for allergic reaction/anaphylaxis, asthma, cardiac arrest, diabetic shock, heat stroke, poisoning, and seizures.

Key resources for developing medical emergency protocols for specific medical emergencies are the *AAP Emergency Guidelines for Schools*, 3rd Edition and the *Virginia First Aid Guide for Schools* described in section B.3. above.

In addition to these two key resources, there are specific guidelines for the management of asthma and of diabetes in Virginia schools.

Asthma



Guidelines for Managing Asthma in Virginia Schools: A Team Approach, Oct. 2003, Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Department of Education, and the Virginia Asthma Coalition

Access at:

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Health/ManagingAsthmaGuidelines.pdf>

Section 22.1-274.2 of the *Code of Virginia*, requires local school boards to develop and implement policies to permit a student with asthma to possess and self-administer inhaled asthma medications or auto-injectable epinephrine, or both, during the school day, on school property, or at school-sponsored events.

A sample policy statement related to use of auto-injectors and inhalers are provided below.

SAMPLE POLICIES FOR AUTO-INJECTORS AND INHALERS

- 1) Emergency Injections: epinephrine auto-injectors prescribed for students with identified allergies:
 - a) When a licensed medical professional believes that epinephrine to treat an allergic reaction is necessary during school hours, it will be administered in SCHOOL by (staff person or persons according to SCHOOL POLICY). These persons are taught by the school public health nurse to administer the injection, following established training guidelines
 - b) Only premeasured doses of epinephrine (Epi-Pen or Epi-Pen Jr.) may be given. The injection will be given immediately after report of exposure to the allergen or at the prescribed student's request due to onset of allergic reaction. Type of exposure (e.g., ingestion, skin contact, inhaled) as well as specific allergen must be indicated on the licensed medical professional's order. Three persons in the school shall be trained in the procedure. These trained persons shall be regular members of the school staff, to ensure the presence of at least one of the three during school hours. The persons trained in this procedure must be able to access the student within TWO (2) MINUTES OF ONSET OF SYMPTOMS or notification.

SAMPLE POLICIES FOR AUTO-INJECTORS AND INHALERS (Continued)

- c) In situations when students are approved by the principal to carry their own epinephrine, the three trained persons in addition to the school nurse must be instructed in the administration procedure in the event that the student is unable to self-administer. A second dose, to be used for back up, should be kept in the clinic and/or other approved locations in case the student's medication is not available.
- d) The parent or guardian and licensed medical professional, as indicated, must complete the appropriate authorization form.
- e) The school shall contact EMS IMMEDIATELY (if available, send another staff person to dial 911) and the parent or guardian when a student has been given epinephrine.
- f) Inhalers:
 - 1) With a diagnosis of asthma, and orders from a licensed medical professional, a student may be permitted by the principal to carry and use an inhaler for asthmatic conditions.
 - 2) At least three school employees shall be taught to assist in the administration of the inhaler.
 - 3) A second inhaler, to be used as a back-up, may be kept in the clinic or other school-approved location accessible by the student with appropriate staff supervision as required.

Diabetes

A key resource in developing diabetes-related medical emergency protocols is the **Manual for Training Public School Employees in the Administration of Insulin and Glucagon**, a resource of the Virginia Department of Education, that can be accessed at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Health/insulin-glucagon.pdf>

The *Code of Virginia* (Section 22.1-274) requires that if one or more students are diagnosed with diabetes, at least one or two school employees (depending on the size of the school) must be trained to administer insulin and glucagon. The medical provider and parent must give written consent for any employee who is not a registered nurse, nurse practitioner, physician, or physician assistant to assist with the administration of insulin or glucagon. If a registered nurse, nurse practitioner, physician, or physician assistant is present, no other school employee may administer insulin or glucagon. All school staff members, including bus drivers, who have responsibility for students with diabetes should receive training that provides a basic understanding of the disease and the students' needs, how to identify medical emergencies, and whom to contact in case of an emergency. Students also need a transportation plan.

The National Diabetes Education Program recommends developing a plan with three components: (1) the Diabetes Medical Management Plan (DMMP), which contains the prescribed diabetes health care regimen, (2) a Quick Reference Emergency Plan describing how to recognize hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia and what to do as soon as signs of these conditions are observed, and (3) an education plan explaining what accommodations, education aids, and services are needed. A sample Quick Reference Emergency Plan is provided in Figure 6 below:

Figure 6. Quick Reference Emergency Plan for a Student with Diabetes

Quick Reference Emergency Plan for a Student with Diabetes

Hyperglycemia (High Blood Sugar)

Photo

Student's Name _____

Grade/Teacher _____
Emergency Contact Information: _____

Mother/Guardian			Father/Guardian		
Home phone	Work phone	Cell	Home phone	Work phone	Cell

School Nurse/Trained Diabetes Personnel	Contact Number(s)
---	-------------------

Causes of Hyperglycemia

- Too much food
- Too little insulin
- Decreased activity
- Illness
- Infection
- Stress

Onset

- Over time—several hours or days

↓

Symptoms

Mild

- Thirst
- Frequent urination
- Fatigue/sleepiness
- Increased hunger
- Blurred vision
- Weight loss
- Stomach pains
- Flushing of skin
- Lack of concentration
- Sweet, fruity breath
- Other: _____

Circle student's usual symptoms.

Moderate

- Mild symptoms plus:
- Dry mouth
- Nausea
- Stomach cramps
- Vomiting
- Other: _____

Circle student's usual symptoms.

Severe

- Mild and moderate symptoms plus:
- Labored breathing
- Very weak
- Confused
- Unconscious

Circle student's usual symptoms.

↓

Actions Needed

- Allow free use of the bathroom.
- Encourage student to drink water or sugar-free drinks.
- Contact the school nurse or trained diabetes personnel to check urine or administer insulin, per student's Diabetes Medical Management Plan.
- If student is nauseous, vomiting, or lethargic, ___ call the parents/guardian or ___ call for medical assistance if parent cannot be reached.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, National Diabetes Education Program. (June 2003). *Helping the Student with Diabetes Succeed: A Guide for School Personnel*. NIH Publication No. 03-5217, pages 53, 54.

Source: *Manual for Training of Public School Employees in the Administration of Insulin and Glucagon*, Office of Special Education and Student Services, Virginia Department of Education. Available online at: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Health/insulin-glucagon.pdf>

C. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Automatic Electronic Defibrillator Programs

According to the American Heart Association (AHA), components of a school medical emergency response plan include:

- Effective and efficient communications
- Coordinated and practiced response plan
- Risk reduction
- Training and equipment for first aid and CPR
- Implementation of a lay rescuer AED program in schools with established need

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

The AHA issued new CPR guidelines for laypersons in 2005. The full guidelines as published in the AHA Journal, can be downloaded at: http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/vol112/24_suppl/

The AHA and other organizations such as the American Red Cross offer CPR training classes. In order to perform CPR safely and effectively, skills should be practiced in the presence of a trained instructor. It is a recommendation of these guidelines that anyone in a position to care for students should be properly trained in CPR.

The AHA also offers a *Handbook of Emergency Cardiovascular Care* with material in a quick reference format.



AHA Handbook of Emergency Cardiovascular Care

This edition of the ECC Handbook provides readers with the latest consensus recommendations from the 2005 International Consensus Conference on Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care Science. Material in the handbook was selected for its relevance to patient care and its application to a quick reference format.

Online ordering information is available at:
<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=303667>

Current first aid, choking and CPR manuals and wall chart(s) should also be available. The American Academy of Pediatrics offers the Pediatric First Aid for Caregivers and Teachers edFACTS) Resource Manual and 3-in-1 First Aid, Choking, CPR Chart for sale at <http://www.aap.org>.

Barrier Devices

Barrier devices, to prevent the spread of infections from one person to another, can be used when performing rescue breathing. Several different types (e.g., face shields, pocket masks) exist. It is important to learn and practice using these devices in the presence of a trained CPR



instructor before attempting to use them in an emergency situation. Rescue breathing technique may be affected by these devices.

Specific procedures, shown below in Figure 7, are also included in the *Virginia First Aid Guide for School Emergencies*.

CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR)

FOR CHILDREN OVER 8 YEARS OF AGE & ADULTS

CPR is to be used when a person is unresponsive or when breathing or heart beat stops.

1. Tap or gently shake the shoulder. Shout "Are you OK?" If person is unresponsive, shout for help and send someone to **call EMS AND get your school's AED if available.**
2. Turn the person onto his/her back as a unit by supporting head and neck. If head or neck injury is suspected, **DO NOT BEND OR TURN NECK.**
3. Lift chin up and out with one hand while pushing down on the forehead with the other to open the **AIRWAY.**
4. Check for normal **BREATHING.** With your ear close to person's mouth, **LOOK** at the chest for movement, **LISTEN** for sounds of breathing and **FEEL** for breath on your cheek. Gaspings in adults should be treated as *no breathing*.
5. If you witnessed the collapse, first set up the AED and connect the pads according to the manufacturer's instructions. Incorporate use into CPR cycles according to instructions and training method. For an unwitnessed collapse, perform CPR for 2 minutes and then use AED.
6. If victim is not breathing, take a normal breath, seal your lips tightly around his/her mouth; pinch nose shut. While keeping airway open, give 1 breath over 1 second and watch for chest to rise.

↔

IF CHEST RISES WITH RESCUE BREATH (AIR GOES IN):

7. Give a second rescue breath lasting 1 second until chest rises.
8. Place heel of one hand on top of the center of breastbone. Place heel of other hand on top of the first. Interlock fingers. (Do **NOT** place your hands over the very bottom of the breastbone.)
9. Position self vertically above victim's chest and with straight arms, **compress chest hard and fast about 1½ to 2 inches 30 times in a row with both hands.** Allow the chest to return to normal position between each compression. *Lift fingers when compressing to avoid pressure on ribs.* Limit interruptions in chest compressions.
10. Give 2 normal breaths, each lasting 1 second. Each breath should make the chest rise.
11. **REPEAT CYCLES OF 30 COMPRESSIONS TO 2 BREATHS AT A RATE OF 100 COMPRESSIONS PER MINUTE UNTIL VICTIM RESPONDS OR HELP ARRIVES.**
12. Call EMS after 2 minutes (5 cycles of 30 compressions to 2 rescue breaths) if not already called.

IF CHEST DOES NOT RISE WITH RESCUE BREATH (AIR DOES NOT GO IN):

7. Re-tilt head back. Try to give 2 breaths again.

IF CHEST RISES WITH RESCUE BREATH, FOLLOW LEFT COLUMN.

IF CHEST STILL DOES NOT RISE:

8. Place heel of one hand on top of the center of breastbone. Place heel of other hand on top of the first. Interlock fingers. (Do **NOT** place your hands over the very bottom of the breastbone.)
9. Position self vertically above person's chest and with straight arms, compress chest 30 times with both hands about 1½ to 2 inches. Lift fingers to avoid pressure on ribs.
10. Look in the mouth. If foreign object is seen, remove it. Do not perform a blind finger sweep or lift the jaw or tongue.
11. **REPEAT STEPS 8-9 UNTIL BREATHS GO IN, PERSON STARTS TO BREATHE EFFECTIVELY ON OWN OR HELP ARRIVES.**

Picture reproduced with permission.
Textbook of Pediatric Basic Life Support, 2004
Copyright: American Heart Association.

Figure 7. Example of CPR Instruction Chart

Source: AAP *Emergency Guidelines for Schools*, 3rd Edition.

Automatic Electronic Defibrillator (AED) Programs

If it is determined that a lay rescuer AED program is needed, it should be included in the school medical emergency response plan.

The AHA, the AAP and other national organizations including Associations of School Nurses (NASN) and Athletic Trainers' (NAAT) have developed a scientific statement detailing how schools should prepare to manage life-threatening medical emergencies in the first minutes before the arrival of EMS personnel. The statement describes the components of an emergency response plan, the training of school personnel and students to respond to a life-threatening emergency, and the equipment required for this emergency response.

Figure 8. Example of AED Guidelines Chart

AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AEDS)

FOR CHILDREN OVER 1 YEAR OF AGE & ADULTS



CPR and AEDs are to be used when a person is unresponsive or when breathing or heart beat stops.

If your school has an AED, this guideline will refresh information provided in training courses as to incorporating AED use into CPR cycles.

1. Tap or gently shake the shoulder. Shout, "Are you OK?" If person is unresponsive, shout for help and **send someone to CALL EMS and get your school's AED if available.**
2. Follow primary steps for CPR (see "CPR" for appropriate age group – infant, 1-8 years, over 8 years and adults).
3. If available, set up the AED according to the manufacturer's instructions. Turn on the AED and follow the verbal instructions provided. Incorporate AED into CPR cycles according to instructions and training method.



IF CARDIAC ARREST OR COLLAPSE WAS WITNESSED:

4. Use the AED first.
5. Prepare AED to check heart rhythm and deliver 1 shock as necessary.
6. Begin 30 CPR chest compressions followed by 2 normal rescue breaths. See age-appropriate CPR guideline.
7. Complete 5 cycles of CPR (30 chest compressions to 2 breaths at a rate of 100 compressions per minute).
8. Prompt another AED rhythm check.
9. Rhythm checks should be performed after every 2 minutes (about 5 cycles) of CPR.



IF CARDIAC ARREST OR COLLAPSE WAS NOT WITNESSED:

4. Start CPR first. See age appropriate CPR guideline. Continue for 5 cycles or about 2 minutes of 30 chest compressions to 2 breaths at a rate of 100 compressions per minute.
5. Prepare the AED to check the heart rhythm and deliver a shock as needed.
6. REPEAT CYCLES OF 2 MINUTES OF CPR TO 1 AED RHYTHM CHECK UNTIL VICTIM RESPONDS OR HELP ARRIVES.

Source: AAP *Emergency Guidelines for Schools*, 3rd Edition.

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AED programs should have the following components:

- Medical/healthcare provider oversight;
- Appropriate training of anticipated rescuers in CPR and use of the AED;
- Coordination with the EMS system;
- Appropriate device maintenance; and
- Ongoing quality improvement program

School protocols should be written and posted in appropriate areas for use of AED. Administrators, teachers, and staff should practice and evaluate response to sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) using the AED.

A useful resource for schools considering implementing an AED program is the *Automatic External Defibrillation Implementation Guide*. The Guide offers a checklist to guide schools through the decision making process involved with establishing an AED program.



Automatic External Defibrillation Implementation Guide
American Heart Association

Access at: <http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/110262192170770-2272%20AED%20ImplementGuide.pdf>

AED protocol, flow chart, and report forms from Spotsylvania County Public Schools, Virginia, are provided on the following pages.

SAMPLE: AED RESPONSE PROTOCOL AND FLOW CHART

The following HEARTSTART AED response protocol is for use in Spotsylvania County Schools. The Spotsylvania County Schools Director of Health Services approves it for use. The protocol will be reviewed on an annual basis and replaced by a revised protocol as necessary. See the following AED Response Protocol Flow Chart.

Conduct an initial assessment:

- Assess for scene safety; use universal precautions.
- Assess patient for unresponsiveness.
- If unresponsive, activate EMS and in-house emergency plan. Call 9-1-1 or designated number: _____ . **Call for AED.**

Assess breathing

- Open airway.
- Look, listen and feel for breathing.
- If breathing is absent, deliver two rescue breaths.

Assess circulation

- If signs of circulation are absent, provide CPR. Continue CPR until AED arrives.

Begin AED treatment

- As soon as the AED is available, turn on the AED and follow the prompts.
- Shave chest with disposable razor if indicated. Discard razor in a safe manner. Wipe chest if it is wet.
- Apply defibrillation pads. Look at the icons on the AED pads and place the pads as shown in the illustrations. Ensure pads are making good contact with the patient's chest. Do not place the pads over the nipple, medication patches, or visible implanted devices.
- Deliver a shock to the patient when advised by the AED, after first clearing the patient area.
- When advised by the AED, initiate CPR starting with compressions.
- Continue to perform CPR until otherwise prompted by the AED or EMS personnel.
- Continue to follow the HEARTSTART AED prompts until EMS arrives.

When EMS arrives

Responders working on the victim should document and communicate important information to the EMS provider, such as:

- Victim's name
- Known medical problems, allergies or medical history
- Time the victim was found
- Initial and current condition of the victim
- Information from the HEARTSTART AED's screen:

- Number of shocks delivered
- Length of time defibrillator has been used

Assist as requested by EMS providers.

Post-Use Procedure

- The employee: notify early defibrillation program Director of Health Services/AED Coordinator.
- Check the AED and replace any used supplies as soon as possible following the event so that the AED may be returned to service. Perform the after-patient-use maintenance on the AED.
- Director of Health Services/AED Coordinator: conduct employee incident debriefing, as needed.
- Director of Health Services/AED Coordinator: complete the incident follow-up report.

Maintenance after Each Patient Use

- Inspect the exterior and connector for dirt or contamination.
- Check supplies, accessories and spares for expiration dates and damage.
- Check operation of the HeartStart AED by removing and reinstalling the battery and running a battery insertion test.

Director Health Services (signature): _____

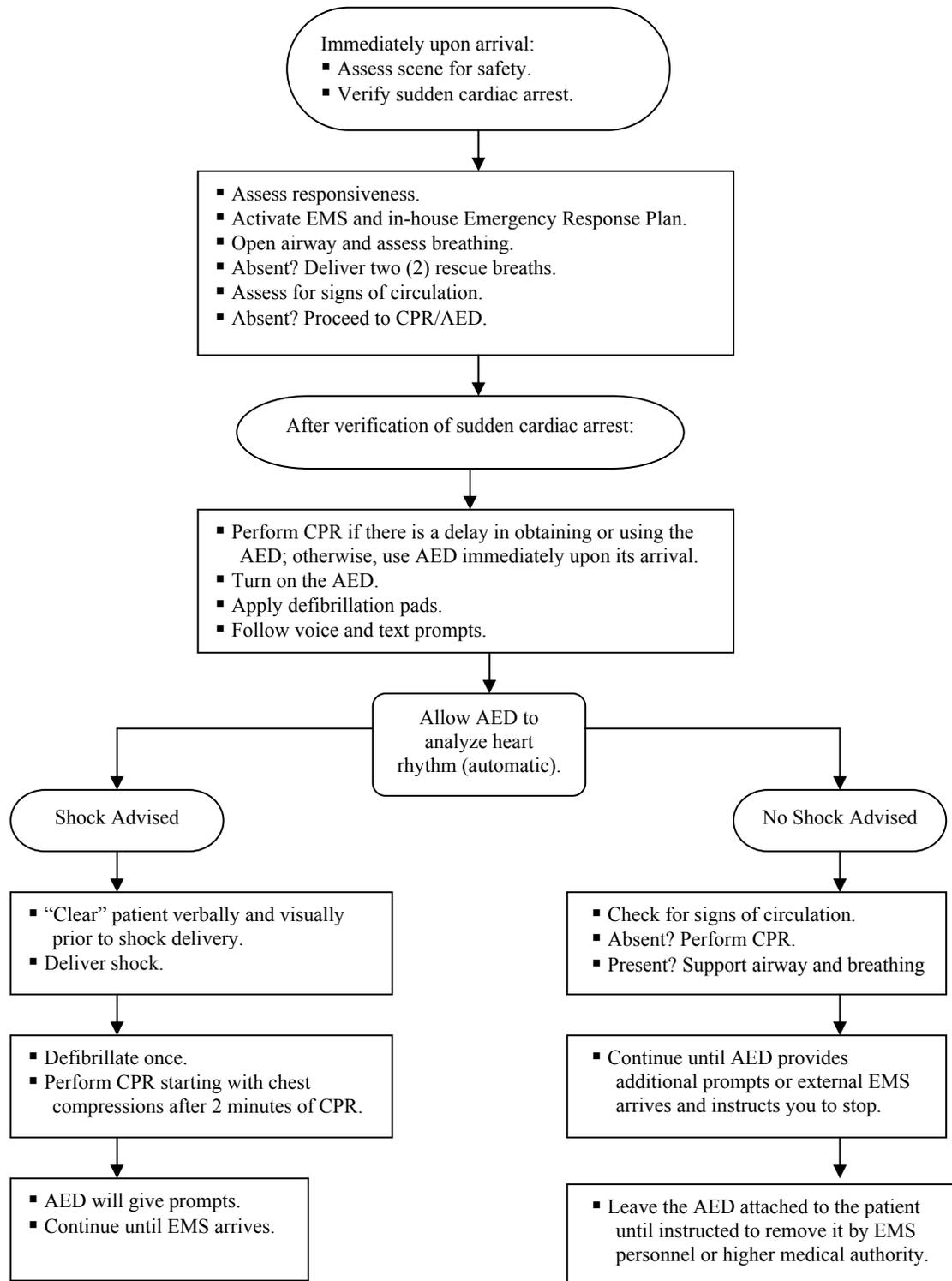
Date: _____

Other (signature): _____

Date: _____

Source: Spotsylvania County Public Schools, Virginia

SAMPLE: HEARTSTART AED RESPONSE PROTOCOL FLOW CHART



Based on procedure from Spotsylvania County Public Schools, Virginia

SAMPLE: AED Incident Report

Incident Details

Incident ID: _____ Incident Date: _____

Incident Time: _____

Shocks Delivered: _____ Device ID: _____

Device Type: _____

Patient Detail

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Middle Initial: _____

DOB: _____ Age: _____

Gender: _____ Race: _____

Patient ID: _____

Additional Information

AED Operator: _____

Comments: _____

Report Completed by: _____ Date: _____

NOTE: Use back of this sheet for additional comments.

Routing:

- Director Health Services/AED Coordinator
- Other

Source: Spotsylvania County Public Schools, Virginia

Key Resources for Medical Emergencies

Listed below are key resources for use in planning for medical emergencies in schools.



Virginia First Aid Guide for School Emergencies

Virginia Department of Health

Access at:

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Health/FirstAidGuide.pdf>



Emergency Guidelines for Schools, 2007, 3rd Edition

American Academy of Pediatrics

Access at:

<http://www.schoolhealth.org/content/Emergency%20Guidelines%20for%20Schools%202007.pdf>

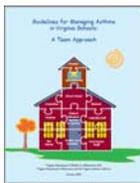


Guidelines for Specialized Health Care Procedures, Revised 2004

Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Department of Education

Access at:

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Health/home.html>



Guidelines for Managing Asthma in Virginia Schools: A Team Approach, Oct. 2003

Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Department of Education, and the Virginia Asthma Coalition

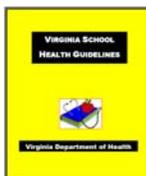
Access at:

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Health/ManagingAsthmaGuidelines.pdf>



Manual for Training Public School Employees in the Administration of Insulin and Glucagon. Virginia Department of Education, 1999.

Access at: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Health/insulin-glucagon.pdf>



Virginia School Health Guidelines

Virginia Department of Health

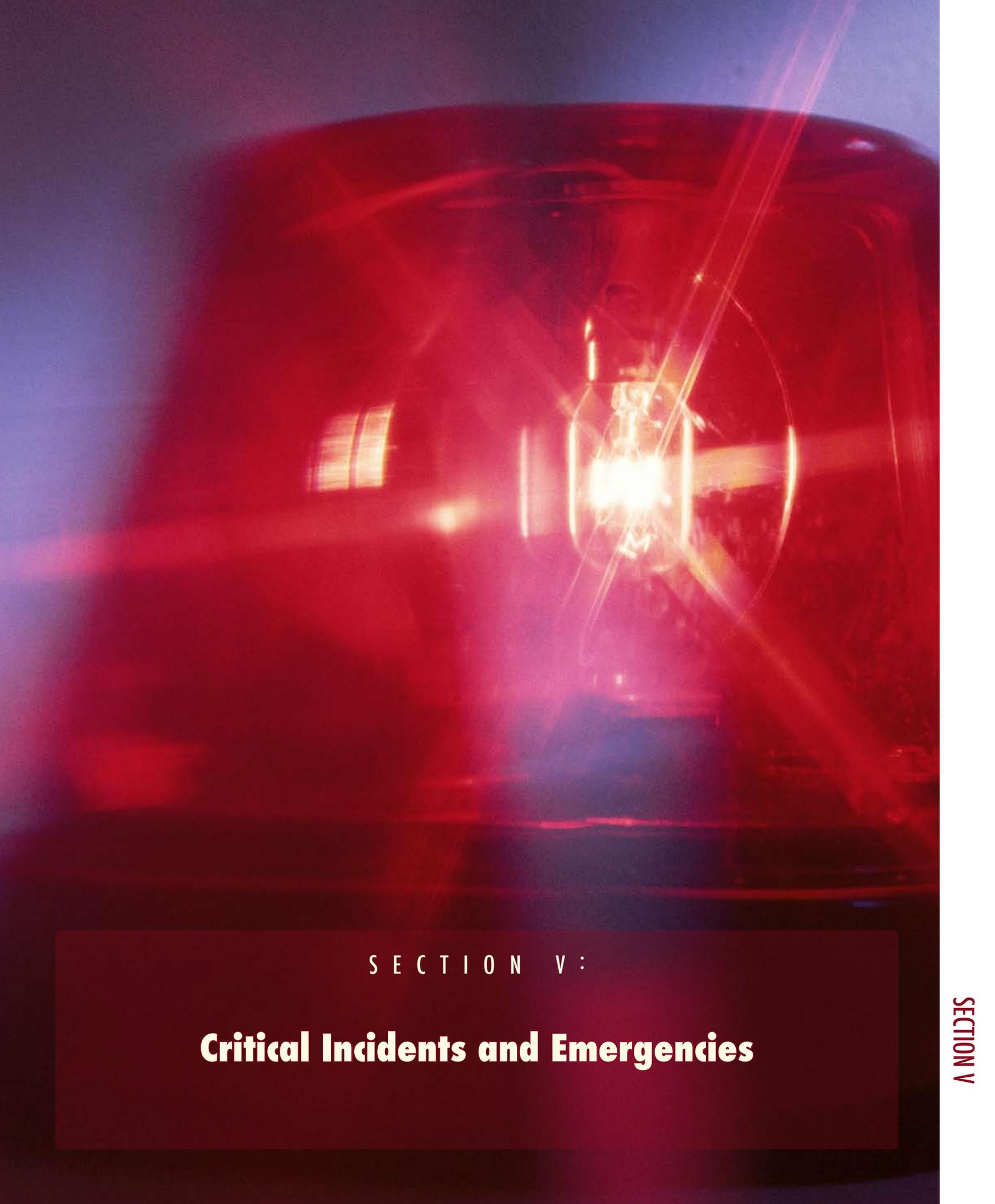
Access at: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/>



Automatic External Defibrillation Implementation Guide

American Heart Association

Access at: <http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/110262192170770-2272%20AED%20ImplementGuide.pdf>



SECTION V :

Critical Incidents and Emergencies

V. Critical Incidents and Emergencies

This Chapter discusses the four key phases of emergency management: 1) prevention/mitigation; 2) preparedness; 3) response; and 4) recovery, focusing on critical incidents on school grounds and affecting schools. The Chapter concludes with information on threat assessment, an important element of prevention/mitigation, and on lessons learned from school shootings.

A. Overview of Planning Process and Products

1. Phases of Planning

The U.S. Department of Education strongly advises schools to create comprehensive, multi-hazard emergency management plans that focus on four phases of emergency management – 1) prevention/mitigation, 2) preparedness, 3) response, and 4) recovery. In this chapter, each of these phases will be described with examples. This Chapter will offer more specific information on how the phases can be applied to specific critical incidents and emergencies.

2. Key Products from the Planning Process

The school critical incident and emergency planning process should result in several tangible products including “Quick Reference Guides,” response boxes and go-kits, family reunification plans, and a compilation of school site information for use by emergency responders. Each of these products are briefly described here; more detailed information is provided in the Preparedness section of this chapter.

Teacher Quick Reference Guides

Teachers and other staff members, including cafeteria workers, bus drivers, and custodians, need a “quick reference” tool containing school-specific information such as evacuation locations and procedures for lockdowns and responding to specific types of incidents or emergencies. Many school divisions develop guides that are spiral-bound with plastic inserts that allow staff to quickly locate and flip to the procedures needed. Chapter VII contains “quick reference” steps for key emergency responses.

Crisis Boxes

Crisis boxes are designed to give school administrators immediate access to information essential for effective management of a critical incident. More detailed information on crisis box items is provided in Section C.4. of this Chapter. Crisis boxes typically contain such items as:

- Incident Command System (ICS) key responders’ phone numbers.
- Student attendance rosters.
- Student disposition forms and emergency data cards.
- List of students with special needs.
- Teacher/employee roster.
- Staff roster.
- Keys.
- Aerial photos of campus.
- Maps of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Campus layout.

- Evacuation sites.
- Designated command post and staging areas.
- Fire alarm turn-off procedures.
- Sprinkler systems turn-off procedures.
- Utility shutoff valves.
- Gas line and utility line layout.

School Nurse/First Aid “Go-Bags”

The school nurse/first aid “go-bag” allows the school nurse to continue to provide basic health care even when a school (and nurse’s office) must be evacuated. Information on school nurse/first aid “go-bags” is provided in Chapter IV.

Teacher “Go-Bags”

Teacher “go-bags” can take the form of backpacks, tote bags, or even five gallon buckets that contain items likely to be needed in the event of a critical incident or emergency, particularly when a school must be evacuated. Information on administrative and classroom “go-bags” is provided in section C.4. of this Chapter. “Go-bags” typically contain such items as:

- Current class roster.
- Copy of emergency procedures.
- First aid supplies.
- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- Activities for students.
- Paper and pens.
- Clipboard.

Family Reunification Plans

Family reunification plans are part of school evacuation plans. Evacuation kits include student rosters and emergency notification/contact cards. A reunification kit includes drafts of notices that can be sent to local media outlets with information necessary to let families know both that an evacuation has occurred, what action is being taken, and where they can locate their children. Protocols for communicating with local media are worked out in advance of a crisis.

School Site Information

When a crisis occurs, emergency responders will immediately need a great deal of information about the school campus. They will need to know the members of your crisis response team, how various sites can be accessed, and the location of utility shutoff valves. Many schools share this information with local police and rescue agencies during the crisis planning process. Some schools give these agencies copies of floor plans that indicate shutoff information. Some school divisions compile site information for all schools on a CD-ROM and distribute copies to responders; other schools post this information on a secure Web site that responders can access from laptops at the scene. New technology allows responders to view aerial photographs of the school and surrounding community and to take virtual tours of the school grounds and interior rooms.

B. Prevention/Mitigation

1. Overview of Prevention/Mitigation

The *prevention-mitigation phase* is designed to assess and address the safety, security and integrity of school buildings, learning environments and students and staff. *Prevention* is the action or actions

taken by schools and school divisions to decrease the likelihood that an emergency will occur.

Mitigation is the action or actions taken to eliminate or reduce risks, damages, injuries or deaths that may occur during an emergency, such as a natural disaster or chemical spill.

Examples of prevention activities that may be incorporated into a school's emergency management plan may include:

- Establishing communication procedures for staff, parents, students and the media;
- Enforcing policies related to food preparation, mail handling, building access and student accountability; and
- Conducting comprehensive, strength-based vulnerability assessments—of school buildings and grounds, school cultures and climates, staff skills, and community resources—to help crisis response teams identify, analyze and profile hazards and develop appropriate policies and procedures.

Mitigation activities may include:

- Fencing hazardous areas;
- Anchoring outdoor equipment that could become flying projectiles in high winds; and
- Bolting bookshelves to walls and securing loose wires.

2. Assessing Risks and Vulnerabilities

Schools need to take an all-hazards approach when assessing risks and vulnerabilities and should examine each of the following:

Existing assessments and related data -

- City or county vulnerability assessments and hazard profile.
- Facility assessments, e.g., Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Culture and climate assessments including school crime and violence incident data, school climate surveys, and student surveys.

Environmental factors -

School-based

- Negative school climate perceptions.
- Obstructed pathways, unsafe playground equipment.

Divisionwide

- Unclear or outdated school policies and procedures

Surrounding neighborhood.

- High crime rates.
- Next to an intersection with heavy truck traffic.

Greater community

- Nearby nuclear power plant, located on a fault line.

Hazards -

- *Natural* – Earthquakes, tornadoes, floods.
- *Technological* – Power outages, nearby nuclear plant.
- *Infrastructure* – Roads and bridges, utilities.
- *Nonstructural* – Portable room dividers, bookshelves, suspended ceilings and light fixtures.

- *Man-made* – Hazardous materials release, terrorism.
- *Biological* – Pandemic influenza, contaminated food.
- *Physical wellbeing* – Broken bones, suicide.
- *Student culture and climate* – Bullying, drugs, violent behavior.

Profiling Identified Hazards

When developing a hazard profile, schools should consider questions, such as:

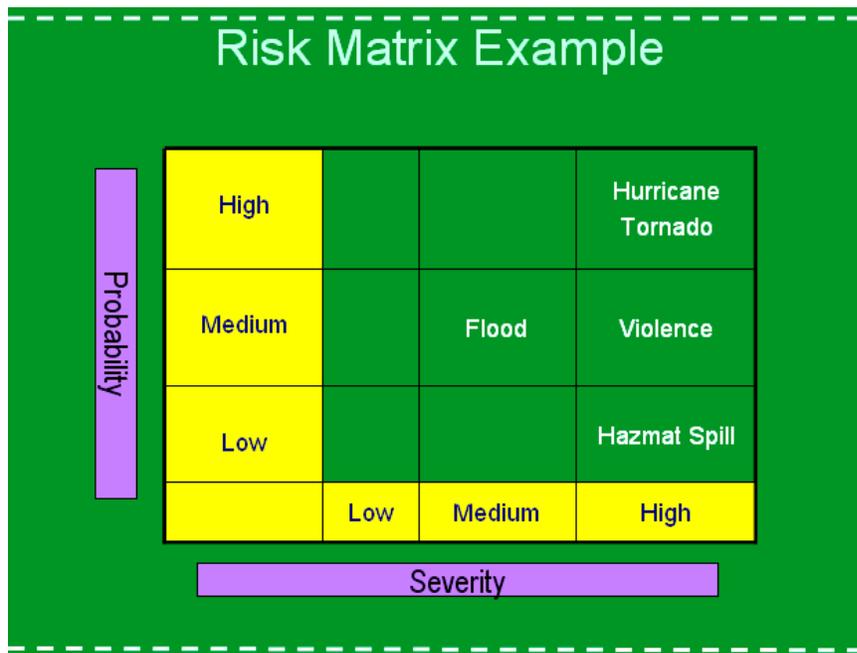
- *Frequency of occurrence* – How often is it likely to occur?
- *Magnitude and potential intensity* – How bad can it get?
- *Location* – Where is it likely to strike?
- *Probable geographical extent* – How large an area will be affected?
- *Duration* – How long could it last?
- *Seasonal pattern* – What time of year it is more likely to occur?
- *Speed of onset* – How fast will it occur?
- *Availability of warnings* – How much warning time is there? Does a warning system exist?

Vulnerability is the susceptibility of life, property or environment.

Risk is the probability of suffering loss or injury from the impact of a hazard.

The relationship of vulnerability and risk can be graphically represented using a risk analysis matrix. An example of a risk matrix is shown below in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Example of Risk Matrix



Scale of Probability of Selected Events



HIGH

Violence in schools or community (assaults or robberies)

Student and/or staff deaths.

Suicides.

Accidents (students hit by cars, bus accidents or car accidents)

Infectious disease outbreaks.

Major natural disasters (tornado, earthquake, wildfire or hurricane)

School shootings.

Terrorist events (i.e., 9/11)

LOW

3. Assessing Technology/Communications Capabilities

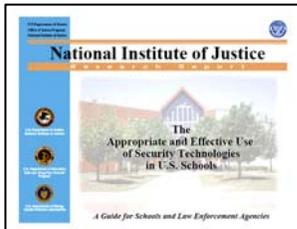
An important element of the prevention/mitigation phase of crisis planning is assessing technology/communications capabilities of schools. The central purpose of this assessment is for use in establishing communication procedures for staff, parents, students and the media. However, because recent advances in technology have dramatically changed communications capabilities within schools, an assessment of technologies available and how to use them in a crisis have become a critical element of prevention/mitigation. Chapter VI focuses exclusively on communication with particular emphasis on the content of messages for specific audiences.

Added to the more traditional modes of communication within schools (e.g., intercom, telephone, alarm systems, bull-horns, two-way radios, and fax machines), are newer technologies such as:

- E-mail alerts.
- Cell phones and text messaging.
- Web site postings.

- Microwave transmitters that feed both visual and aural information, video, and data.
- Remotely controlled video cameras.
- Sound sensors and intrusion detection devices with various signals.
- Early warning devices for signaling malfunctions.
- Compartmentalized, limited access keys and locks (for isolating threats).

One resource helpful to schools in assessing their use of certain technologies is the following U.S. Department of Justice publication:



**The Appropriate and Effective Use of Security Technologies in U.S. Schools
A Guide for Schools and Law Enforcement Agencies**

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs

This resource contains guidance for schools and law enforcement agencies in deciding whether and how to use video cameras, metal detectors, and entry control technologies. Available online at <http://www.ncjrs.gov/school/178265.pdf>

C. Preparedness

1. Overview of Preparedness

The *preparedness phase* readies schools and school divisions to respond in a rapid, coordinated and effective manner to an emergency.

Examples of preparedness activities that may be incorporated into a school's emergency management plan include:

- Identifying weaknesses in the current emergency management plan;
- Interpreting the data collected from the vulnerability assessments conducted during the prevention-mitigation phase;
- Developing or updating appropriate processes and procedures (based on the identification of weaknesses as well as the data from the vulnerability assessments) to ensure the safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors;
- Creating and strengthening relationships with community partners, including members of law enforcement, fire safety, local government, public health and mental health agencies and the media;
- Delegating roles and responsibilities, including levels of authority;
- Establishing an Incident Command System (ICS);
- Implementing functional training exercises for faculty and staff with first responders;
- Implementing evacuation, lock-down and shelter-in-place drills; and
- Coordinating emergency management plans with those of state and local agencies to avoid unnecessary duplication.

2. Establishing an Incident Command System (ICS)

The following information on creating a school Incident Command System (ICS) is adapted from Crisis Management Workbook, Office of Security and Risk Management Services, Fairfax County Public Schools. Available online at <http://www.fcps.edu/fts/safety-security/publications/cmw.pdf>

Implementing a school ICS will allow school personnel to know their area of responsibility during a crisis and to plan and practice the management of their specific role. To create a school ICS, members of a school crisis management team can be assigned management roles in carrying out the numerous tasks needed to successfully plan for and handle crises that occur. An advantage of this type of delegation is that it limits the number of functions under any one manager, allowing each person to focus on just one or two aspects of the incident. These managers then provide information to the incident supervisor (principal) and help that person make informed decisions. Using this type of organizational system during a critical incident creates clear communication channels that will help limit the chaos and uncertainty associated with emergency incidents.

Permanently assigning specific areas of responsibility to members of the crisis management team provides each member with the opportunity to specialize in the management of his or her area. Plans can be made, policy established, and training conducted well in advance of any emergency incident. This type of forward thinking will be needed during a critical incident and is a key component to a school being properly prepared.

All components of the ICS may not be needed to handle every incident; however, using portions of the ICS structure will help the principal deal with school-related events quickly and effectively.

The first step is to identify special traits and abilities members of the crisis management team have and matching those members to the role assignments contained in this section. Because no two schools are the same, the ICS flow chart will need to be tailored to fit each school. Some positions may not be needed, while additional roles maybe required. Use this role list and flow chart as a guide. Remember to include backups for each assignment. This may require some people being assigned more than one task. When more than one role is assigned, make sure the tasks are similar --such as off-site evacuation and student accountability or off-site bus area.

The ICS can also address the uncertainty of exactly who will be in the building during an emergency. When assigning the management of critical roles in the ICS, name two or three substitutes to assure coverage at all times. This may require some individuals to be responsible for more than one task, but only if the primary manager were out of the building. While the ICS identifies roles for the members of the crisis management team, all school faculty members should have an organized reporting system that lists their specific functions during an emergency. Teachers with students in class will have specific functions, as will teachers not assigned a class when an emergency occurs. Most emergency responders use some form of ICS to manage emergency events. Because of this, a school with assigned roles for administrators and teachers will be able to work more efficiently with the responding fire or police agency. These agencies will be able to quickly identify a liaison school employee who will quickly answer questions about the incident and school operations.

The specific roles and responsibilities of members of a school crisis management team should be consistent with the school's Incident Command System (ICS). Typically, each member of the school's crisis management team should be assigned an incident manager role set forth in the ICS.

School ICS Roles: Examples

Incident Supervisor

This person should normally be the principal or an assistant principal of the school. The incident supervisor is the overall leader during an emergency incident. The incident supervisor makes decisions based on the information and suggestions being provided from other members of the crisis team. This role may be combined with a liaison role but should not be combined with any other active role during a critical incident.

Student Accounting

This team member is responsible for ensuring all teachers have an accurate accounting of students and for coordinating efforts in accounting for missing or extra students. Much of this role involves planning for an incident and communicating with the faculty on the importance of removing rosters during an emergency so student accountability can take place.

Off-Site Bus Staging Area

Some emergency incidents may require moving the student population off school grounds. Depending on the time of day and severity of the incident, students may need to be dismissed from this off-site location. The school staff member responsible for organizing this operation should coordinate the arrival of buses and the loading of students onto the proper bus with the transportation section. This process may become more complicated with the arrival of parents seeking to pick up their children. This task can be simplified with advanced planning to include updated bus rosters and planned bus routes into the staging area.

Police and Fire Liaison

When the local police and fire departments respond to a school incident, they will immediately require contact with a school official. This official must be able to provide information not only about what has taken place, but also about the plans the school has implemented to ensure the safety of the students. Contact between the school operations and those of the police/fire operations must be maintained throughout the incident. During some incidents, the incident supervisor can accomplish this liaison assignment; however, a large incident should have someone whose sole duty is to act as a liaison.

Parent Reunion Organizer and Liaison

When an incident occurs at a school, the parents of the children will contact the school. Parent contact should be expected and planned for by giving specific directions to the parents as they arrive in the area. A central location must be established where the parents can wait to be reunited with their child and obtain information about the event. A well-informed member of the crisis team should be at this location and coordinate the activities at this site. This person should coordinate with the media liaison for information that can be released to the parents. The parent reunion organizer should also communicate with the evacuation, student accounting, and bus staging personnel to facilitate children coming to the reunion location to join their parents. The reunion location has the potential to become very chaotic during a school incident, but with proper planning the activities can be established quickly and remain organized.

Information and Media Representative

Like parents, the local media will respond to events that occur at schools. Representatives from community relations will respond to the school during a major incident; however, school personnel should establish a media staging area and to assist in providing information for public release. This person can also draft the parent letter that should go home with each student explaining what took place at the school. The media representative should seek specialized training in this area and understand the roles of the various county agencies in dealing with the media. One of the main duties of this person will be to make sure the media does not gain access to students or faculty during the incident. This person will also serve as the staff liaison by providing information to staff members about the incident.

Communication and Recorder

The person assigned the responsibility of communication and recording should make sure the various school offices receive notification and updates about the event and that any needed resources are requested. When an event first occurs, the communications person should confirm that 9-1-1 has been called or place the call. During the event, this person should keep a detailed record of the events, decisions, and actions including annotation of time. This record will help ensure all critical tasks have been completed and allow the incident supervisor to track all activities. This written record will also help the police or fire department reconstruct the events during the subsequent investigation.

School Site Security

This role has been developed for incidents that occur around the school building but do not directly involve school personnel. A violent crime or other situation near a school may require that the school staff take steps to quickly secure the school from outside intruders. This will involve developing specific assignments for school personnel during such an emergency and creating a check system to make sure the school is secure. This person would then act as a liaison with the agency handling the incident. The person assigned this role can also be assigned another role if an evacuation is necessary.

Staff Assignments

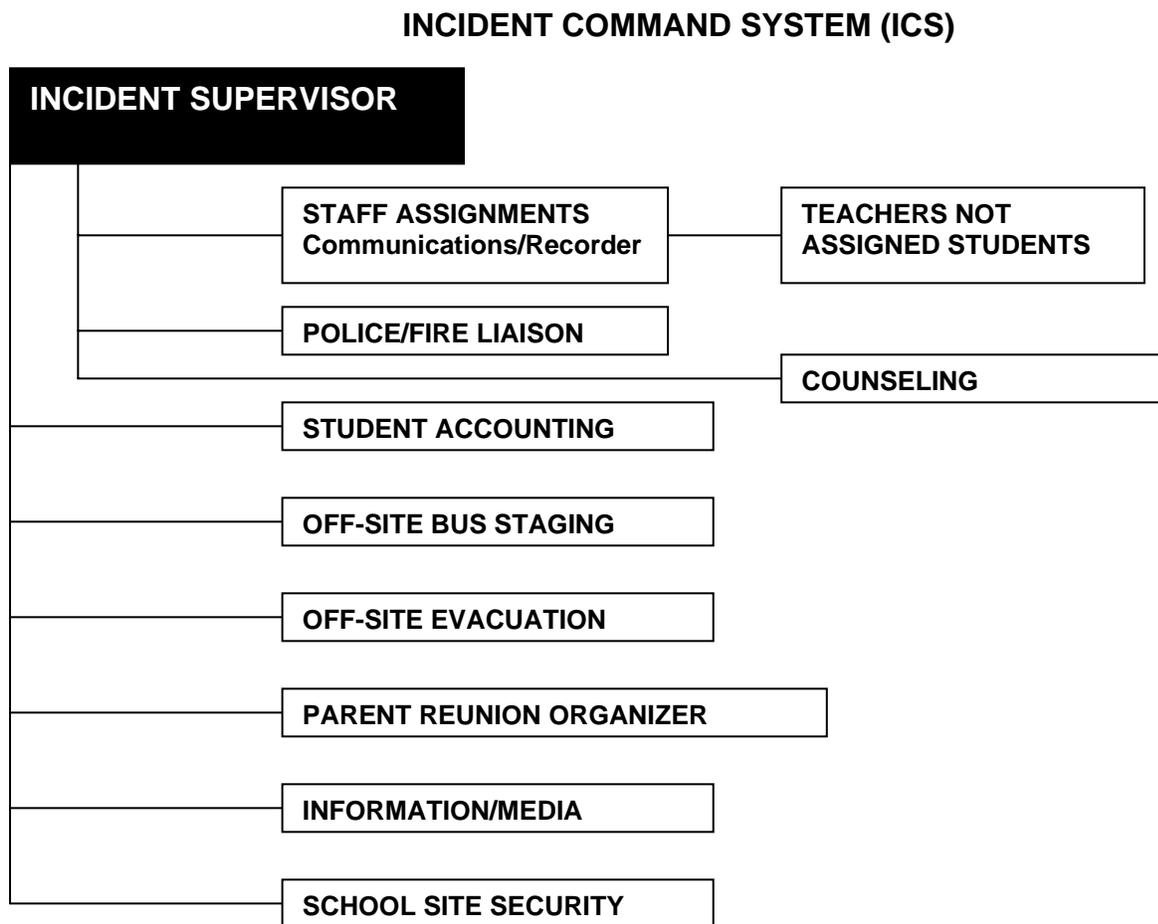
The role of this position is to use available personnel to assist with carrying out the core functions associated with an incident. Any teacher not assigned students during an incident and any school personnel arriving at the incident should report directly to this person. Working closely with the incident supervisor, this person will direct staff to the areas that need assistance. Those responsible for organizing the various areas will coordinate with this person in requesting manpower during the incident. This person will keep a roster of assignments and manpower needs and make requests to administrative offices when needed.

Counseling

The need for a proactive counseling program cannot be overlooked. Many dangerous situations can be avoided by early intervention of trained professionals. Available resources should be identified and used on a regular basis when the first sign of depression, anger, or other alarming changes in a student is observed. During a crisis, the CMT member responsible for counseling must quickly organize a counseling program to help students, parents, faculty, and the community heal from the incident. Counselors at the effected school may handle some incidents, while other incidents could easily require the cooperation of many services. Identifying resources within the school system, county, and community should be planned and well organized before a crisis occurs.

An example of a school ICS is provided below in Figure 10.

Figure 10. Example of School Incident Command System



3. Developing Procedures and Protocols

Developing division-specific and school-specific procedures and protocols is a critical element of critical incident and emergency response planning. In accordance with § 22.1-279.8.A, *Code of Virginia*, plans in Virginia are required to contain essential procedures, operations, and assignments required to prevent, manage, and respond to a critical event or emergency, including

- Natural disasters involving fire, flood, tornadoes, or other severe weather;
- Loss or disruption of power, water, communications or shelter;

- Bus or other accidents;
- Medical emergencies, including cardiac arrest and other life-threatening medical emergencies;
- Student or staff member deaths;
- Explosions;
- Bomb threats;
- Gun, knife or other weapons threats;
- Spills or exposures to hazardous substances;
- The presence of unauthorized persons or trespassers;
- The loss, disappearance or kidnapping of a student;
- Hostage situations;
- Violence on school property or at school activities;
- Incidents involving acts of terrorism; and
- Other incidents posing a serious threat of harm to students, personnel, or facilities.

Additional procedures and protocols should be developed in accordance with findings of the risk and vulnerability assessment. Conditions in various regions of the U.S. have led schools in California to establish detailed procedures and protocols for response in the event of earthquakes. Schools in the “tornado alley” place much emphasis on response to tornadoes. Schools in Florida have developed extensive procedures and protocols for responding to and recovery from hurricanes. Schools in New England, where weather can change rapidly, have procedures and protocols governing release or sheltering of students when ice and snow storms occur.

4. Preparing Crisis Bags and “Go-Kits”

Every school should equip and store emergency supplies and “go-kits.” Go-kits include emergency supplies that can be easily accessed and transported in the event of an evacuation or other emergency. Contents of go-kits are generally outlined in a school’s emergency management plan. Typical go-kits are:

- Stored in backpacks or duffle bags and placed in readily accessible and secure locations;
- Equipped with supplies that address the needs of the specific school, its population, climate, facilities and resources; and
- Include a first-aid kit, emergency procedures and student attendance rosters.

One example of administration and classroom “go-kit” lists is shown below in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Examples of “Go-Kit” Contents

ADMINISTRATION “GO-KIT” SUPPLIES	CLASSROOM “GO-KIT” SUPPLIES
<p>Clipboard with lists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with special needs and descriptions of needs (i.e., medical issues, prescription medications, dietary needs), marked confidential • School personnel • School emergency procedures • Key contact information for the district crisis team • Parent-student reunification plan • Whistle • Hat or brightly colored vest for visibility and leadership identification • Battery-operated flashlight and batteries. • Utility turn-off procedures • Emergency communication device • First-aid kit with instructions 	<p>Clipboard with lists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classroom students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with special needs and descriptions of needs (i.e., medical issues, prescription medicines, dietary needs), marked confidential • Classroom personnel • School emergency procedures • Whistle • Hat or vest for teacher identification • First-aid kit with instructions • Pens and paper • Age-appropriate student activities (such as playing cards, checkers or inflatable ball)

Source: The Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) Technical Assistance (TA) Center. Web site: <http://www.ercm.org>



Additional information on Emergency Supplies and “Go-Kits”

The American Red Cross’s Recommended Emergency Supplies for Schools

The American Red Cross is a response organization offering care and assistance to victims of disasters, as well as resources for prevention, mitigation and preparedness. The American Red Cross offers specific planning resources for schools that address multi-hazard emergency management, including disaster-specific resources for droughts, earthquakes, fires, floods, heat waves, hurricanes, mudslides, terrorism, thunderstorms, tornadoes, tsunamis, volcanoes, wild fires, winter storms, etc. “Recommended Emergency Supplies for Schools” provides recommendations on how to, and where to, store emergency supplies and how much to stockpile. It also includes recommended supply lists for individual kits, individual classrooms, and an entire school. The Web site offers a tool for customizing checklists.

Accessible at <http://www.redcross.org/disaster/masters/supply.html>

Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) Technical Assistance (TA) Center’s Emergency Supplies and Go-Kits for Schools

The ERCM TA Center has created two fact sheets for planning, creating and maintaining school emergency supplies and Go-kits. The guides list considerations and resources based on the specific needs of administrators, classrooms, and individual students and staff.

Accessible at <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=resources&a=10#goKits>

Components of the Crisis Response Box

The most comprehensive guide to preparing a crisis response box has been prepared by the Attorney General and Superintendent of Public Instruction of California. *Crisis Response Box: Partnering for Safe Schools*, updated in 2007, contains guidance on aligning school and public safety efforts and establishing a school ICS. According to this publication, the Emergency Kit contains supplies, materials, and information that assist both the school and law enforcement in responding to critical incidents. The school should maintain two identical Emergency Kits in separate locations so that if one is not accessible that another is available for use. Both kits should be maintained so that they contain up-to-date information about the school campus and students. The kits should contain the following items:

Aerial Photos of Campus

An aerial perspective of the campus and the surrounding area is very helpful to all agencies involved in a critical incident, including police, fire and paramedic personnel. Your local municipality may be able to provide you with an aerial photo of your school and surrounding campus.

Map

Crisis response planners need to review the traffic patterns and intersections that will be affected in a major crisis. Through this process, you can identify locations where parents or guardians can retrieve their children after an incident and determine traffic safety issues your school and law enforcement will have to consider when directing youth to safe areas. Keep as many as 20 copies of the map available, preferably laminated, for emergency personnel. Establish an emergency traffic plan capable of protecting emergency response routes and accommodating traffic and parking needs for parents, students and the media. The map should illustrate these planned routes as well as:

- The streets surrounding the school.
- Intersections near the school.
- Vacant lots near the school.
- Location of major utilities.

Campus Layout

It is important to maintain current, accurate blueprints, classroom layouts and floor plans of the building and grounds, including information about main leads for water, gas, electricity, cable, telephone, alarm and sprinkler systems, hazardous materials location, elevators and entrances. This information is extremely helpful, especially during a “shelter-in-place” situation when students are safely locked in a classroom. Information should be available on the layout of the building, including room numbers and whether or not there is a phone, cable television, e-mail, computers or cell phones in the classroom. On the campus layout diagram, it is also helpful to highlight areas that could pose a possible threat, e.g., the chemistry laboratory, biology laboratory or any welding and wood shop areas that could also become a haven for weapons. It is also helpful to show the location of the fire alarm turn-off, sprinkler system turn-off, utility shut-off valves, cable television shut-off and first aid supply boxes. These items can be color-coded on the campus layout.

Blueprint of School Buildings

Architectural blueprints of the school building(s) are important to a SWAT team, and provide additional -- and more detailed -- information than the simple classroom layout diagram. This information may be critical, especially in the event of a bomb threat. The plant manager for the school site should be the custodian for the blueprints. Grounds and maintenance staff of the school should be familiar with these blueprints and their location.

Teacher/Employee Roster

A teacher/employee roster should go into the Crisis Response Box. If you can enter teachers' names on the classroom layout diagram, all the better. If not, be sure to match up each teachers' name with his or her classroom and identify whether or not each teacher has a cell or land phone. This roster should identify any teacher/employee with special medical needs (e.g., diabetes) who will require medications during a prolonged period and those with a disability who may require assistance in an evacuation. Someone in the front office should be assigned to pick up the visitor/volunteer/substitute teacher list in the event of a critical incident.

Keys

The Crisis Response Box should also contain a master key and an extra set of keys for those rooms for which a master key cannot be used. The keys must be clearly tagged. Consider placing the keys in a locked container within the box to assure added security in case the box should end up in the wrong hands. Some schools have found it advantageous to keep the master key in a Knox Box (rapid entry system) outside of the school. This is a secured metal box that can easily be accessed by a code or a key without having to enter the building. This can prove especially helpful when it is not safe to enter the school. Further information on a Knox Box can be obtained from the local fire department.

Fire Alarm Turn-off Procedures

One of the lessons learned from Columbine was to make it easier to turn off the alarm. The loud alarm made it very difficult for responders to hear directions. It took considerable time before someone who knew how to turn it off was able to do so. School officials learned that you can't assume that the person who knows how to turn off the alarm will be logistically able to do so. If that person is inside the building, he or she might not be able to get to the shut-off valve; if that person is outside, it is possible that he or she might not be able to safely re-enter the school. As a result, a number of people need to know how to shut off the alarm. Providing such information on where shut-off valves are located in the building and the procedures for shut-off in the box could prove vital. In addition, though somewhat costly, some schools have installed a secure alarm shut-off system outside the school that can control the fire alarm and sprinklers.

Sprinkler System Turn-off Procedures

Sprinkler systems may go on during an emergency. During the incident at Columbine, no one was readily available who knew how to immediately turn off the sprinkler system. As a result, hallways quickly filled with water, making it difficult to escape. In some places, the water reached dangerous levels in proximity to the electrical outlets -- water reaching such outlets could have caused many more injuries and possibly additional deaths. At least two people need to be trained and assigned responsibility for turning off the sprinkler system. As backup, the Crisis Response Box needs to provide information on where shut-off valves are located in the building and the necessary procedures for shut-off.

Utility Shut-off Valves

Shut-off and access points of all utilities -- gas, electric and water -- need to be clearly identified and their locations listed so they can be quickly shut off in a crisis. If there is not a fire, the water should be shut off immediately to prevent flooding from the sprinkler system. Unless open electric or gas lines pose an immediate threat to life, the decision on whether to shut off these lines should be made by the Incident Command Officer.

Gas Line and Utility Line Layout

Include a diagram that shows where gas and other utility lines are located throughout the campus.

Cable Television Satellite Feed Shut-off

If your school has a satellite feed for a cable television system, you should also provide directions on how to shut down that feed. Several of the police officers involved in nationally televised shootings recommend that the cable television feed be shut off so that the perpetrators on the inside will not be able to view the whereabouts of the SWAT team by turning into live coverage of the scene on the outside. On the other hand, in a natural disaster, the television system can be helpful (if working) to provide those who are sheltered-in-place with up-to-date information.

Student Photos

Photos can help in the essential task of identifying students injured, missing or killed. In addition, in those instances where the perpetrators' identities are known while the crisis is still in progress, photos can be of great assistance to law enforcement and SWAT teams who must enter the building and make split-second decisions amidst a sea of student faces. If you do not have access to copies of student photo IDs, the most recent school yearbook (along with the additional photos of the newest incoming class) will suffice. Be sure to include photos of teachers and staff, as well. You might want to consider asking vendors who take pictures for your school to digitalize them and make them available on a CD, which you can then include in the box. Many law enforcement agencies bring laptops to the crime scene and can thereby gain instant access to such photos, print them out, make copies and distribute them to other officers.

Incident Command System (ICS) Key Responders' Phone Numbers

Names and phone numbers for all team participants involved in coordinating with your local emergency response system should be in the box. These people would include the coordinators for the Incident Command System (ICS), Public Information, First Aid, Traffic Safety, Student Assembly and Release and Grounds and Maintenance. Also, include the names and phone numbers of other key staff members, such as the Food, Water and Supplies Coordinator; the bilingual translator (if appropriate for your school); and any other numbers for potential positions you have identified. Be sure to place these phone numbers on several cards so that more than one person can begin calling them.

Designated Command Post and Staging Areas

Police chiefs involved in several of the recent school shootings recommend that schools and law enforcement plan for three distinct staging areas, in addition to the Command Post for the Incident Command Officer. Among other things, separate staging areas will prevent the press from converging upon parents or parents from converging upon police. The areas should be:

A Staging Area for law enforcement and emergency personnel;

A Media Staging Area away from the school, at a location that can accommodate a large number of vehicles; and a Parent Center, located away from the Command Post, where parents can retrieve their children.

Maps of all command posts, listing each corresponding main phone number, should be included in the Crisis Response Box. Be aware that these command posts may change based upon the circumstances. It is also recommended that the command posts have telecommunications capability wherever possible.

Emergency Resource List

A list of individuals and organizations who assist in an emergency should be prepared on a separate sheet of paper and placed in the box so that the person assigned can immediately begin to make phone calls to those on the list. The local emergency management agency can recommend agencies you should call during an emergency. Please note that any volunteers you enlist for a critical incident response should be pre-screened and that the volunteers on your list must receive training, prior to becoming a responsible member of your emergency response team. Some agency phone numbers to have on hand include:

- American Red Cross.
- Clergy, including Law Enforcement.
- Counselors (A cadre of trained crisis intervention counselors should be identified to provide mental health “first aid” during and following the crisis.)
- Commonwealth Attorneys Victim/Witness Assistance Center.
- Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) (local office).
- Local emergency radio channels.
- National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA).
- Parent representative(s) (The parent representatives should be trained to help fellow parents receive information, answer questions and maintain calm at the Parent Center. Fellow parents can be an excellent source of support.)

Evacuation Sites

Maps with evacuation and alternate evacuation routes should be stored in the Crisis Response Box and should also be posted on classroom doors. It is where students will likely be headed (following the route) in order to identify them, or, if they are missing, to determine where along the route they might be found. Be aware, however, that during a shooting spree the best-laid plans for evacuation are also under siege. All classrooms at Columbine, for example, had evacuation plans, but with two students shooting throughout the entire school, evacuating the building was itself a dangerous venture. In the Jonesboro, Arkansas incident, two boys opened fire after students evacuated the building during a false fire alarm. Other factors may affect an Incident Command Officer to alter the usual evacuation route. In a chemical spill, for instance, how the winds are blowing will determine where to evacuate. Thus, it is important to have at least two predetermined evacuation sites identified.

Student Disposition Forms and Emergency Data Cards

Imagine hundreds of parents descending upon your school to retrieve their children while you are trying to account for each student’s whereabouts. You will need forms to keep track of who has been released and to whom: parents, relatives, emergency personnel or the hospital. It is suggested that a set of release forms (enough to cover the entire school census) be stored in the Crisis Response Box and be given to the Student Assembly, Shelter and Release Coordinator of the ICS team.

Additionally, if possible, it is helpful to have a set of the student emergency data cards placed in the box. Having all the data stored on a disk is the most convenient way of containing the information. Optimally, the cards and disks should be updated every three months to remain current as possible. Emergency information can also be stored, updated and retrieved electronically either from the school office or a remote site, such as the office.

Student Attendance Roster

One of the most difficult challenges anyone will face in such a crisis is accounting for all students. Teachers should have readily accessible, when on duty, a listing of all pupils in their charge. Teachers should also be instructed to take their classroom attendance list with them during an evacuation. A system should be developed to retrieve these lists from teachers when it is safe and feasible. Someone should be assigned to place that day’s attendance roster into the box each morning. This information is shared with the Search and Rescue Coordinator who, in turn, coordinates with the Student Assembly, Shelter and Release Coordinator and the School Incident Command Coordinator.

Inventory of Staff Resources

Survey certificated and classified staff to build an inventory of special skills and training they possess. Document the findings and place the list in the box under the ICS heading. For instance, experience can include prior medical and triage experience, bilingual capabilities, grief counseling background, search

and rescue training, hostage negotiations, first aid/CPR certification and volunteer firefighter or reserve police officer/deputy. These skills could prove to be very helpful in a critical incident.

List of Students With Special Needs

A list should also be included in the box that identifies those students who need special assistance (e.g., blind and deaf students and those who need wheelchairs, crutches and braces) and/or with special medical needs (e.g., diabetes) that will require medications during a prolonged period and those with a disability that will require assistance in an evacuation.

First Aid Supplies Location

Sets of first aid supplies should be located throughout the campus. Storage locations should be included in the box. Include the locations on one of the building layout maps in the box.

Emergency First Aid Supplies

Though the following list of supplies are not contained in the box, the FBI Academy recommends that schools be aware of information from the Lessons Learned Summit regarding first aid supplies. In the Jonesboro, Arkansas shooting, large bins of first aid supplies were readily accessible on the school grounds and are credited with saving two children's lives and preventing others from going into shock. These supplies were situated in and out of the school building in anticipation of an earthquake because the school property is located on a fault line. The accessibility of these supplies proved to be lifesaving. It will not do anyone any good if these supplies are locked away deep within the confines of the school. Some schools have stationed first aid boxes in every classroom with basic emergency aid instructions to treat various injuries. Although not designed for first aid purposes, duct tape is very useful and versatile and should be available in every classroom. Whichever methods will work best for the school, it is advisable to make sure that ample supplies are readily accessible throughout the complex and that all teachers are aware of their location. More detailed information on preparing for medical emergencies is provided in Chapter IV.

Planning for Off-Campus Activities

Off-campus activities, including field trips, are routine and important parts of the educational experience. Procedure and practices which are helpful in the event of an accident or other emergency include the following:

- Use name tags / personal identification – note that these need to be worn on blouses or shirts rather than outer garments such as sweaters and coats which may be removed on long bus trips. Write-bracelets might be considered, particularly for younger children.
- A route map and itinerary should be left at the school.
- A roster of riders in each vehicle should be left at the school before departure - Students, staff, and chaperones should travel to and return from the activity site in the same vehicle.
- Determine who has cell phones. It is desirable for someone in each vehicle to have a phone.

Bus Emergency Kit

- Cell phone or other emergency communications equipment.
- Rider roster (students, staff, chaperones).
- Signs to display bus numbers.

- Route maps.
- Area maps.
- Pencils.
- Paper.
- Stick-on name tags.
- First aid kit.
- Emergency telephone numbers list:
 - Division office (including pager numbers, if applicable).
 - Emergency medical services.
 - Law enforcement (State Police).
 - Local hospital.

5. Training

The following content on types of emergency exercises is adapted from *Emergency Exercises: An Effective Way to Validate School Safety Plans*. ERCM Express, Vol 2, Issue 3, 2006. Emergency Response and Crisis Management Technical Assistance Center. Available online at <http://www.ercm.org>.

School divisions conduct five main types of emergency exercises for emergency response training and practice. Divisions should start with simple exercises (orientations) and work their way toward the most complex (full-scale).

Orientations are introductions to a school's or division's crisis or emergency management program. The purpose of an orientation is to familiarize participants with roles, responsibilities, plans, procedures and equipment. Orientations can also resolve questions of coordination and assignment of responsibilities. The inclusion of first responders and school staff facilitates the development of an effective plan.

Drills test a specific operation or function of the emergency plan. The goal of a drill is to practice aspects of the response plan and prepare teams and participants for more extensive exercises in the future. Schools generally conduct evacuation, shelter-in-place or lockdown drills with students and staff to demonstrate the steps they should take in an emergency. The procedures as well as the responsibilities of all involved (i.e., students, teachers, staff and emergency personnel) are addressed. These exercises may include local public safety agencies.

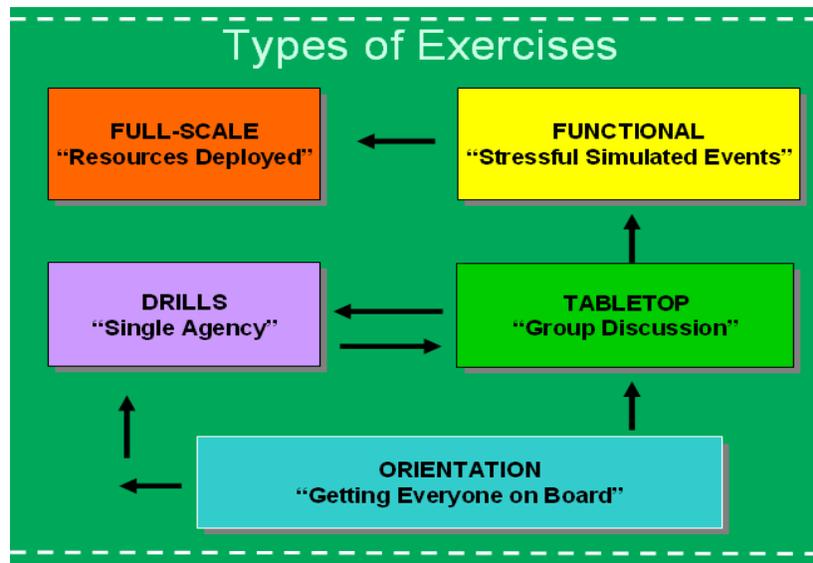
Tabletop exercises analyze an emergency event in an informal, stress-free environment. They provide participants with an emergency scenario to analyze and increase their awareness of the roles and responsibilities of individuals who need to respond, stabilize, terminate and help others recover from emergencies. They are designed to prompt a constructive discussion about existing emergency response plans as participants identify, investigate and resolve issues.

Functional exercises test one or more functions of a school's emergency response plan during an interactive, time-pressured, simulated event. Functional exercises can be conducted in a school division's emergency operations center. Participants are given directions by controllers and simulators via telephones, radios and televisions, and they must respond appropriately to the incidents that arise. Evaluators candidly critique the exercise and the team's performance.

Full-scale exercises evaluate the operational capability of emergency management systems in a highly stressful environment that simulates actual conditions. Full-scale exercises test and evaluate most functions of the emergency response-operational plan, including the mobilization of emergency personnel, equipment and resources.

To design and conduct full-scale exercises, divisions collaborate with local public safety agencies. Administrators choose a scenario that is most likely to occur in the community and thereby involve all community stakeholders. Facilitators conduct a post-incident critique and develop an after-action report to identify issues for correction.

Figure 12. Types of Training Exercises.



Benefits of Emergency Exercises

Emergency exercises validate existing emergency plans, programs, policies, roles and responsibilities, as well as the training curriculum, by:

- Testing the capabilities of the team;
- Providing a gap analysis to identify deficiencies and problems in the current program;
- Familiarizing participants with plans and procedures through low-stress activities;
- Preparing the team to coordinate with local, state and federal agencies;
- Enhancing collaboration between school divisions and public information officers (PIOs); and
- Increasing the confidence of the team while strengthening its ability to respond effectively to an emergency.

An Effective Post-Exercise Evaluation. . .

- Immediately follows the exercise;
- Includes everyone;
- Engages the director of the exercise;
- Assigns a secretary;
- Includes a discussion of positive and negative outcomes;
- Allows time for participants to discuss their observations;
- Assesses whether the exercise’s goals and objectives were achieved; and
- Creates an after-action report with steps for improvement.

Emergency exercises are also cost-effective and brief, often completed in less than one hour. Some schools find it helpful to conduct exercises, such as tabletop drills, during staff meetings. By focusing on different types of hazards, and reinforcing the school’s policies and procedures, school staff continuously improve their ability to respond to any type of emergency.

D. Response

1. Overview of Response

When emergencies arise, schools and school divisions must quickly implement the policies and procedures developed in the prevention-mitigation and preparedness phases to effectively manage the crisis and protect the school community. Throughout the ***response phase***, efforts focus on deescalating the emergency and taking accelerated steps toward recovery.

Examples of response activities include:

- Delegating responsibilities;
- Deploying resources;
- Activating the communication, accountability and decision making procedures outlined in the predetermined emergency management plan;
- Documenting all actions, decisions and events (e.g., what happened, what worked and what did not work);
- Holding debriefing meetings; and
- Reviewing after-action reports to determine recovery activities and necessary revisions to the emergency management plan based on lessons learned.

Overview of Responses to Critical Incidents

<i>Response</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Evacuation	An evacuation is a critical incident response that involves the controlled movement of students from the campus to a pre-specified safe location, either to a remote area of the campus or to an off-campus location.
Lockdown	A lockdown is a critical incident response that secures students and staff, usually in classrooms, to prevent access or harm to the occupants of the lockdown locations. This may also involve quickly moving students and staff from unsecured locations to secure locations.
Shelter-in-Place	A procedure that may be used in the case of chemical, biological, or radiological agent releases.
Lockout	A lockout is a critical incident response that secures the school campus to prevent unauthorized entry to all school facilities. Limited movement around the school campus may be permitted, depending on the circumstances of the incident.
Drop, Cover, and Hold	This procedure is followed when an explosion or other danger is imminent, evacuation is not feasible, and the stability of the building is threatened.

Overview of Responses to Critical Incidents

Response

Definition

2. Primary Responses

During an emergency, there are five primary responses:

1. Evacuation.
2. Lock-down.
3. Shelter-in-place.
4. Lockout.
5. Drop, cover, and hold.

Each response type should be viewed along a continuum.

Evacuation

Evacuation is to be used when locations outside the school are safer than inside the school:

- Have more than one evacuation route that does not interfere with public safety vehicles and/or fire hydrants.
- Provide every teacher and staff member a readily available emergency “go-kit.”
- Provide administrators an office “go-kit” that includes a staff and student class roster, daily visitors log, student check-in/out log, school floor plans, keys, and important phone numbers.
- Ensure that someone (e.g., nurse, secretary) has emergency medical supplies, emergency medical forms, medications, and medication log.
- Determine how teachers will account for students.

Lock-down

Lockdown is used when there is an immediate threat of violence in, or immediately around, the school:

- All persons should immediately seek shelter in a secure location in the school.
- Staff and students should be behind closed locked doors and not be visible from windows or doors.
- Follow division predetermined policy about closing blinds and turning off lights.
- Call 9-1-1 and remain locked down in place until police arrive and declare the scene all clear.
- Caution is advised in attempting to lock doors because of potential risk to the persons locking doors and the possibility of locking out responding police.

Special lock-down considerations include:

- Class transition times.
- Lunch periods.
- Outdoors activities (physical education classes, etc.)
- Messages to students and staff (plain language vs. codes, use of placards).

- Blinds open/blinds closed, lights on/lights off.
- Messages to parents.

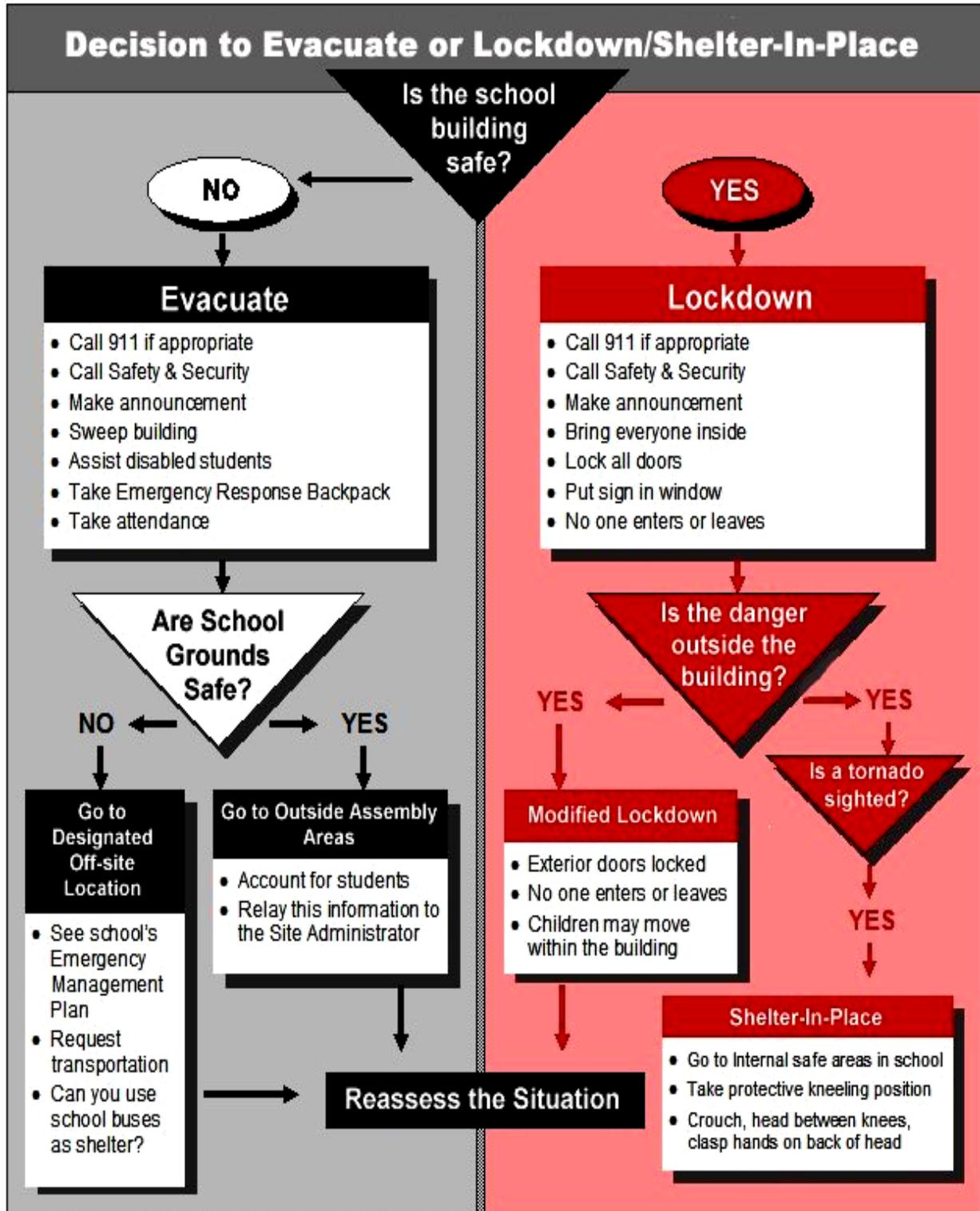
Shelter-in-Place

Shelter-in-place is used when students and staff must remain indoors during a period of time for events such as chemical, biological, and radiological incidents or terrorist attack:

- Close all windows and turn off all heating and air conditioning systems to keep dangerous air out of school.
- Create a schedule for learning, recreational activities, eating, and sleeping.
- Ensure that the necessary supplies are available for students and staff throughout the shelter-in-place period.

An Evacuate or lockdown/shelter-in-place decision chart is shown below in Figure 14.

Figure 14. Evacuate or Lockdown/Shelter-in-Place Decision Chart.



Lockout

A lockdown is a critical incident response that secures the school campus to prevent unauthorized entry to all school facilities. Limited movement around the school campus may be permitted, depending on the circumstances of the incident.

Drop, Cover, and Hold

This procedure is followed when an explosion or other danger is imminent, evacuation is not feasible, and the stability of the building is threatened.

3. After-Exercise Reports

After-exercise reports have a threefold purpose. They provide an opportunity for everyone involved in an exercise to:

- 1) Identify areas in the current emergency management plan that are in need of improvement;
- 2) Make recommendations to improve it; and
- 3) Capture key lessons learned.

After-exercise reports are an integral part of the emergency preparedness planning continuum and support effective crisis response. The debriefings that precede the reports help schools and school divisions analyze how school personnel and first responders function during an exercise or actual emergency. The lessons learned can be used to proactively develop and enhance emergency management plans and procedures that will ensure the safety of the entire school community.

After-exercise reviews and reports are critical for capturing key lessons learned and recommendations for improvements. They help identify “what worked” and gaps and weaknesses in emergency management plans and responses.

Briefings should be conducted at two levels:

- Internal—division level
- External—community level

Briefings should take place shortly after an emergency response situation. Participants should include school staff, first responders, and other key stakeholders.

Components of Exercise-Action Reports

- 1) Exercise overview.
- 2) Exercise goals and objectives.
- 3) Analysis of outcomes.
- 4) Analysis of capacity to perform critical tasks.
- 5) Summary.
- 6) Recommendations.
- 7) Specific improvements for each partner (i.e., schools, emergency responders).



Additional Information on After-Action Reporting

After-Action Reports: Capturing Lessons Learned and Identifying Areas for Improvement,
Lessons Learned from School Crisis and Emergencies, Vol 2., Issue 1, 2007.

Available online at: <http://www.ercm.org>

E. Recovery

1. Overview of Recovery

The **recovery phase** quickly restores educational and business operations in schools and school divisions following an incident. Recovery is an ongoing process that includes not only the mental, emotional and physical healing process of students, faculty and staff, but a school's physical (buildings and grounds), fiscal (daily business operations) and academic (a return to classroom learning) recuperation. Strong partnerships with members of the law enforcement and public and mental health communities are essential for effective recovery efforts. Examples of recovery activities include:

- Outlining service delivery systems;
- Providing mental health services or offering referral services;
- Developing letter templates for emergencies;
- Predetermining strategies for accepting donations following a death or an incident;
- Establishing a policy for standing or temporary memorials and ensuring that it is consistent for all events;
- Ensuring that a process is in place for soliciting and receiving parental consent for such activities as providing medical treatment or receiving counseling services;
- Establishing a process for screening and registering volunteers; and
- Developing and practicing a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) at the school and school division levels.

The Recovery phase is designed to assist students, staff, and their families in the healing process and to restore educational operations in schools. Recovery efforts require leadership support. Recovery is an ongoing process and the type and breadth of activities will vary in relation to the size and scope of the crisis event. Strong community partnerships are critical.

2. Four Components of Recovery

Recovery involves four components that must be taken into account:

- 1) Physical/structural recovery.
- 2) Business recovery.
- 3) Restoration of academic learning.
- 4) Psychological/emotional recovery.

Physical/Structural Recovery

The purpose of physical/structural recovery is to restore facilities necessary to enable educational operations.

Key Steps to Take During Recovery Phase:

- Ensure human safety at educational sites.
- Assess physical/structural component (e.g., damage assessment response team).
- Assess transportation and food services.
- Determine availability of equipment and supplies (e.g., books).
- Debrief and incorporate lessons learned around physical assets and vulnerabilities into emergency management planning.

How Can Schools Prepare for Physical Recovery Efforts in Advance?

- Recognize that steps taken in the prevention-mitigation phases can lesson the need for physical recovery in some areas.
- Be familiar with potential funding sources after disasters.
- Be aware of what documentation would be needed to secure reimbursement for damage from major incidents.
- Pre-determine strategies/policies for receiving donations following various types of incidents.
- Consider the structures and departments that will be involved in physical recovery.
- Coordinate with relevant division departments to discuss recovery plans (e.g., safety and security, facility management, risk management, budget office, transportation, food services or technology services).
- Create Damage Assessment Response Teams to conduct physical assessments following major events.

Business Recovery

The purpose of business recovery is to restore critical business functions within the school/division as soon as possible. Two types of plans are key:

- **Business Continuity Plan (BCP)**—Plans that identify systems needed to operate; and, incorporate mitigation efforts so that operations can be sustained following an emergency.
- **Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP)**—COOP planning ensures that the capability exists to continue essential functions across a wide range of hazards.

Key Steps to Take During Business Recovery:

- Restore division administrative functions.
- Ensure staff members are supported.
- Set-up automatic payment system.
- Institute a system to register out of division students, and to register students in new schools.

How Can Schools Prepare for Business Recovery Efforts in Advance?

- Identify, in advance, who has responsibility for closing schools, or sending students/staff to alternate locations in the event of an emergency.
- Identify who is responsible for restoring which business functions for schools/divisions.
- Identify succession plans for each major administrative function.
- Ensure systems are in place for rapid contract execution of BCP in the event of an emergency.
- Practice activation of the BCP or COOP to test for gaps that need to be addressed in planning.
- Consider options for continuing educational operations to minimize disruption to student learning.

Restoration of Academic Learning

The purpose of restoration of academic learning is to facilitate students' return to learning; restore structure and routine.

Key Steps to Ensuring Academic Recovery:

- Quick decision making regarding changes to school/academic routines.
- Brief administrators and staff on situation(s).
- Communicate with parents/guardians on events and next steps.

Why Is Academics Considered in the Recovery Phase?

Youth exposed to repeated violence and trauma have been shown to have:

- Lower grade point averages.
- Decreased reading ability.
- More reported absences from school.
- Increased expulsions and suspensions.
- Decreased rates of high school graduation.

Restoring, or maintaining, a routine is helpful for students throughout the recovery process.

How Can Schools Prepare for Academic Recovery Efforts in Advance?

Determine, in advance, who has the ability to decide when schools will close and when they will resume following closure (linked to Business Recovery).

- In most cases, this decision will be made at the local level with input from appropriate State representatives.
- Key questions to be considered include:
 - Can the school remain open safely?
 - Can the school routine be maintained? Modified?
 - Are academic materials needed/available if school closes?
- Decisions about length of closure will vary depending on the scope of the incident.

Psychological/Emotional Recovery

The purpose of psychological/emotional recovery is to promote coping and resiliency for

students, staff, and their families following an emergency.

Key Steps to Promoting Psychological/Emotional Recovery:

- Recognize that the type and breadth of an incident impacts Psychological/Emotional Recovery.
- Consider needs and services available for both short- and long-term Psychological/Emotional Recovery.
- Work with internal and external partners who can support Psychological/Emotional Recovery and provide needed services.

Factors That Increase the Likelihood of Trauma

- Incidents within closely knit communities;
- Incidents with multiple eye witnesses;
- Special significance of victims;
- Community exposure to carnage or misery;
- Incidents that call for numerous rescue workers; and,
- Incidents that attract a great deal of media attention

- National Organization for Victim Assistance

Why is Psychological/Emotional Recovery Important in the Short-Term and Long-Term?

Traumatic stress is an acute distress response that is experienced after exposure to a catastrophic event. Traumatic stress occurs because the event poses a serious threat to:

- The individual's life or physical integrity.
- The life of a family member or close friend.
- One's surrounding environment.

Individuals who have witnessed injury or death are also at risk to develop a trauma stress response. There will be a small percentage of those impacted by serious events who will have longer term reactions.

How Can Schools Support Psychological/Emotional Recovery in the Short-Term?

- Identify circles of impact and provide triage:
 - Triage is the process of identifying the immediate needs of students and staff, and ensuring referral to appropriate services.
 - Provide psycho-education for families, students, and staff.
- Consider psychological first aid.
- Consider utilization of services for staff through division Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).
- Leverage professional association resources available for teacher support.
- Be aware of impacts of possible trauma history.
- Promote coping and resiliency for students and staff and to assist with the healing process.
- Make individual and group counseling available during the first week after an event.
- Offer intervention strategies and models as needed:
- Trauma and grief focused school-based mental health programs include:
 - Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS).
 - Short-term individual, group, and family interventions.

How Can Schools Support Psychological/Emotional Recovery in the Long-Term?

- Conduct ongoing assessment/monitoring of mental health of students and staff.
- Monitor attendance, grades, and counselor's visits.

- Provide care for caregivers (compassion fatigue).
- Incorporate lessons learned from each event into future planning efforts.
- Remember to reinforce ongoing prevention programs.
- Be aware of 'key dates,' such as trials, anniversaries, and holidays.
- Incorporate prevention programming into division programs.

How Can Schools Prepare for Psychological/ Emotional Recovery in Advance?

Identify both internal and external partners.

- Consider local mental health agencies who may be able to assist.
- Develop a structure for support.
- Be aware of issues around “outside” vs. “inside” help.

Before an event occurs, schools should:

- Consider expertise for providing mental health services at the:
 - School level.
 - Division level.
 - Community level.
- Outline partnership agreements with relevant local partners.
- Identify a school/division employee to coordinate partnerships with the community—a liaison officer.
- Develop a process for screening and registering volunteers.
- Assemble and train Crisis Recovery Teams:
 - Division teams.
 - School-based teams.
- Develop template letters (that can be tailored) for alerting parents, families, guardians, students, and staff to emergencies.
- Pre-determine strategies for accepting contributions/donations following a death/incident.
- Outline strategies for dealing with “empty chairs.”
- Consider a division policy for memorials (be consistent across events).
- Ensure a process is in place for parental consent for receipt of mental health services should they be needed.

To ensure that schools are prepared to deal with the Psychological/ Emotional Component of Recovery, schools should proactively:

- Identify and train appropriate staff to provide developmentally and culturally appropriate mental health services.
- Train mental health staff on specific interventions.
- Provide basic training on available resources and common reactions to trauma for all staff (including administrators).
- Provide specific information to all staff regarding the school’s referral system (e.g., inform teachers about who students can go to for support, and the referral systems available).
- Train teachers/staff on early warning signs and on how to work with parents/guardians.

3. Key Issues for the Recovery Phase

Issue #1: Opening or closing schools after a traumatic event

- Policy options should be considered and outlined in advance.
- Considerations:

- How long should the school be closed?
- How can parents/guardians weigh in on decisions about school closures?
- Who has the ultimate decision-making power regarding school closure?
- How will the community be notified?
- Ultimate question—Will the children be better off in school, or out of school?

Issue #2: Memorials after a student or staff death

- Policies should be considered and outlined in advance.
- Considerations:
 - Memorials can be controversial.
 - Questions may arise about how/if policies should vary depending on the type of death.
 - Memorials in schools should not add to the suicide “contagion effect.”
 - A date for removing memorial items.
 - How memorials might reinforce ongoing prevention programming (i.e., scholarship funds).

Managing Memorials and Funeral Services

School memorials or memory activities serve an important function in the grief process for students and staff. A memorial promotes the healing process by providing an opportunity for students to join together and participate in a ritual. The memorial may take many forms, from a simple tree planting to a more traditional "service." In addition, a school memorial brings closure to a period of grieving and serves as a clear statement that it is time to move on with regular school activities. Memorials should be planned carefully considering the following guidelines:

Memorial Services

Keep the memorial **short**. Fifteen to twenty minutes for elementary students; thirty to forty minutes for secondary.

Involve students in the planning of the memorial, particularly those who were close to the deceased.

Don't concede responsibility and control for developing the service to outside interests, particularly political positions or elected leaders who are not familiar with the families and the school community. It is appropriate and valuable to have elected leaders participate in services, but their offices should not dictate speakers and/or program details.

Include music, particularly student performances. Also, play soothing music as people enter to set the mood and maintain calm.

Preview the service with students beforehand. This is not a normal assembly, so prepare students as to what will happen and how they should behave. Remove anyone from the service who is acting inappropriately.

Have several brief speakers. If students have written poems or other tributes, students themselves or staff can read samples. Readings should be practiced several times.

Invite family members. However, recognize that they may choose not to attend.

Involve all students as much as possible. To the extent that is appropriate for their age, have each class make a poster or banner that they will bring to the memorial and hang on the wall.

Use symbols of life and hope. Balloons or candles can be used effectively to promote positive, uplifting messages that acknowledge the sadness yet are hopeful for the future. (Check fire codes before using candles indoors).

Give students guidance on words and/or actions that provide comfort and how to approach a grieving friend or parent.

Provide quiet activity for students who do not attend or dismiss them.

Have students return to their classrooms for a short time after the service. This allows them the opportunity to talk with one another and/or talk with a counselor. "Safe rooms" work well for students who are experiencing more significant signs of grief.

Plan the memorial to occur within a week of the death if possible.

Media Coverage of Memorial Services and Special Events

In order to allow students, staff, and parents privacy in their grief and the opportunity to focus on the service without fear of media intrusion, parameters for coverage should be set. Strategies that should be considered are as follows:

Arrange pool coverage - This allows select media outlets (usually one from each medium - TV, radio, and print) to cover the service from a designated location. Such locations are selected to provide maximum privacy and typically are at the back of the room and away from entrances and exits.

Identify members of the media at events - Communications staff should pre-approve and credential all media staff allowed to enter the service. The credential should include a press ribbon or colored badge. Once positioned in the cordoned area, media may not leave the location until approved by the communications staff.

Set guidelines for coverage - Set clear guidelines on the taking of photographs, if allowed at all. In addition, media should not be allowed to approach any attendee for an interview.

Issue #3: How to handle key dates

- Policies should be considered and outlined in advance.
- Considerations:
 - Be cognizant of anniversary dates but do not dramatize them.
 - Watch for reactions around holidays, anniversaries, and/or trial dates.
 - Prepare a constructive message for anniversaries.
 - Make sure educators watch for risk behaviors.

Anniversaries and Other Dates

Anniversaries and important benchmark dates (first day back to school, first day of a new school year, graduation, first-year anniversary, and trial dates) should not be ignored but they should also not be given exaggerated attention. Be especially aware of how similar events in other locations may trigger renewed

feelings or latent reactions to the tragedy. Anniversary dates, media coverage, the filing of lawsuits, or similar events in other places can "retraumatize" a community, contributing to feelings of depression and inadequacy.

On anniversaries it is important to establish clear parameters for media coverage. Allow no pictures of grieving students; if necessary, rope off and identify one area for conducting voluntary interviews. Increase security inside and outside the building and consider asking parents to act as volunteer escorts for students and staff if there is a large media presence. The focus is on increasing comfort and security and preserving the school routine. Have a fast, responsive referral system in place for those who need counseling and make passes readily available to students. Commemorative activities which some communities have conducted have included unveiling a memorial garden and having a moment of silence throughout the school.

4. Key Roles and Tasks in the Crisis Recovery Phase

Source: The following information on roles and tasks during the recovery phase was adapted from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. See http://www.nctsn.org/nctsn/nav.do?pid=hom_main

Restoring Stability

Recovery is the ongoing process of restoring the social and emotional equilibrium of the school community by promoting positive coping skills and resilience in students and adults. The rate of recovery will vary from person to person, depending upon factors such as age, gender, degree of direct exposure to violence, death or injury of a friend or family member, previous traumatic life experiences, and pre-existing history of anxiety and depression.

The good news is that most students and staff do recover with the support and assistance of caring educators and mental health professionals. The process of recovery is aided when students and staff can anticipate the stages of recovery and prepare for the normal changes in behavior, thinking, emotion, and spirit that occur over time.

Maintaining Routines

In all phases of recovery, schools provide the greatest degree of support when their routines and social activities are maintained. The routine and activities provide natural places where experiences can be shared and preserves the sense of belonging and solidarity so crucial to students and staff after a crisis.

Using Community Support

Community groups can contribute to school based recovery programs by supporting students who are motivated to find long-term community solutions to the current and pre-existing problems of community violence. The involvement of law enforcement, emergency service personnel, faith-based organizations, community service organizations, and others during the long-term phase of recovery helps to rebuild a safer community that will promote individual well-being.

Consensus Recommendations

Experts in the field of trauma recovery offer the following recommendations:

- Trauma recovery services should be available to students, staff, and families after a school-related violent event.

- Teachers, while serving a crucial, front line role, should not be required to provide counseling services.
- Community agencies should work in partnership with school administrators and staff.
- Mental health services should be available for those in need through all phases of recovery.
- All stakeholders should be involved in planning for and responding to a school-related violent event.

Responding to a School Crisis

The immediate goals of school staff after a crisis are to reestablish a sense of safety and restore the learning environment at the school. The first step is to ensure that the building and grounds of the school are secure and well monitored so that students and staff can regain a sense of trust and safety.

To achieve these goals, each member of the school community must work both individually and as a member of a team to take the steps needed to restore balance to the school environment. Positive working relationships among school staff not only achieve the goal of recovery from a school crisis, but the staff's actions provide positive role models for students and life-long lessons about how to conduct oneself during times of adversity. Key school and community recovery tasks are summarized below in Table 3.

Table 3. Key School and Community Recovery Tasks

School and Community Roles and Key Tasks During Recovery

<i>Roles</i>	<i>Key Tasks</i>
Superintendent - Working at the highest levels of leadership in schools and community mental health agencies, the superintendent of schools and the director of public mental health services (at the county or other regional level) play essential roles in establishing the overarching collaborative-organization agreements that permit and encourage collaborative mental health services in schools. These agreements provide important institutional sanction and the recognition that students and staff may need assistance after a school crisis.	In a crisis, the superintendent must be visible to the public, providing accurate information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The incident or event▪ The steps taken to secure the safety of students and staff▪ The support being provided by the division to the school▪ The assistance being provided to the division by community law enforcement, emergency services, and community health and mental health agencies

School and Community Roles and Key Tasks During Recovery

Roles

Division Crisis Team - The division crisis team is activated when the school principal determines that the crisis demands resources beyond the scope of the school-site crisis team.

The staff on the division crisis team should be identified at the beginning of each academic year and should represent the most skilled, trained, and experienced health and mental health crisis recovery personnel available to the school division. Team members' tasks are designed to:

- Support the principal and the school-site crisis team.
- Bring calm to the school campus.
- Coordinate the community health and mental health personnel who serve the school's staff and students.
- Act as a liaison with the superintendent's office and other central office personnel.
- Provide up-to-date information and identify additional services that the school may need from the division.

Principal - The principal is the instructional and operational leader of the school and gives final approval for all personnel and programs implemented on the school campus. She or he sets the tone for recovery, conveying concern and support for all recovery efforts, actively encouraging students and staff to make use of additional school-based services, and ensuring that students and staff seeking services are not stigmatized.

Key Tasks

- Identify an in-house mental health program coordinator/director or point person who can provide leadership and technical expertise.
- Delegate authority to a school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker to assist with the organization, implementation, coordination, and maintenance of the intermediate and long-term mental health services in the school.
- Review existing responsibilities of Health and Human Services personnel at school.
- Adjust job roles and responsibilities as

Key Tasks

Division Crisis Team Leader Tasks

- Request additional community support when needed.
- Keep central office informed.
- Work with the assistant principal to assess the extent of the crisis's physical and emotional impact on the school.
- Serve as logistics coordinator and deploy division crisis team members to rooms designated for media, counseling, and parent meetings.

Student Services Coordinator Tasks

- Assign additional counselors, school social workers and school psychologists, as needed, to provide additional individual and group counseling and psychological first aid to students and staff.

School Nurse Coordinator

- Assign additional school nurse staff, as needed to help monitor staff health problems and somatic complaints initiated by the crisis.

- Authorize recovery awareness training for teachers, Health and Human Services personnel, nurses, school staff, and community mental health personnel.
- Convene school and community meetings to review interventions and gather information from the immediate period of crisis response.
- Meet regularly with all mental health personnel to check needs of students and staff.
- Meet with parents and community for regular information updates.
- Provide staff with regular updates on procedures for assessing and referring students for additional support or treatment.
- Meet with division-level personnel to review the regular services grant from Project SERV and to identify any other potential funding services.
- Provide a written report to division administration.
- Identify the intermediate and long-term

School and Community Roles and Key Tasks During Recovery

Roles

needed to meet the needs of students and staff.

- Assign staff to review school records (academic records, attendance records, and health records) to help identify at-risk students who may need further mental health assistance.
- Assess if students' family members are facing new challenges as a result of the traumatic event, keeping in mind that information about treatment is confidential.

School Mental Health Provider - The school counselor, school psychologist, and school social worker are the in-house mental health professionals of the school. One of these individuals may be identified as the leader of the crisis team and may subsequently coordinate or direct the school-based mental health recovery program to meet intermediate and long-term mental health needs of students and staff. She or he may identify additional mental health resources in the community and negotiate and oversee the overall mental health recovery program and the role of community providers in the school. He or she sets the tone for recovery, conveying concern and support for all recovery efforts and actively reducing or eliminating stigma for students who seek additional psycho-education services about the effects of traumatic stress, loss, and grief. These mental health providers engage in active outreach to students and staff.

Teacher - The teacher is the instructional leader of the classroom. He or she sets the tone for recovery, conveying concern and support for all recovery efforts, with an eye to reducing or eliminating stigma for students who seek additional services and care. The teacher gives consent for students to be excused from class for mental health services and refers students to school mental health professionals. As the person who interacts with the most students on a daily basis, the teacher is also in an important position

Key Tasks

recovery needs as expressed by staff, students, parents, community, and division administration.

- Make logistical arrangements for a comfortable, quiet location on or off campus where school and community mental health professionals can provide mental health recovery services for students.
- Prepare positive messages for the media that include reassurances that students and staff are cared for and that services are available on campus and/or in the community.
- Reinforce to families that the best place for students following a crisis is at school, where they can participate in supportive and stabilizing school and social routines.
- Provide support, technical assistance, and advice to the principal.
- Provide support, consultation, training, and technical assistance, as needed, to school staff.
- Provide mental health recovery information and support to parents.
- Promote staff self-care and teach adults stress-reduction techniques.
- Maintain close contact and open communication with students, staff, and parents.
- Work closely with the principal to develop and maintain the onsite mental health program.
- When authorized, serve as a liaison with community-based agencies and monitor the work of community mental health professionals providing services to students on campus.
- Re-establish classroom routine and maintain the teaching and learning environment of the classroom.
- Help identify changes in student behavior that may indicate problems with health or mental health.
- Help identify changes in life circumstances (family moving to a new home, job loss in the family, etc.) that are "secondary adversities"

School and Community Roles and Key Tasks During Recovery

Roles

to advocate for services and effective schoolwide responses to crises.

The classroom teacher is in a unique position to contribute to or complement student recovery following traumatic events at school. The impact of the events is likely to play out in the classroom. Student behaviors may change, and these behaviors are sometimes best acknowledged and addressed in the classroom when a teacher has an understanding of how the crisis can affect student's behaviors.

For example, a number of students may be anxious and, in turn, become less cooperative or less active in classroom discussions. There may be angry outbursts or questions about safety. In each case, teachers should become knowledgeable about how to respond.

School Nurse - The school nurse is the school-based professional who accesses health and medical services for students. His or her role is to support the long-term recovery of students and staff by providing information and consultation about the effects that psychological trauma and depression may have on health. She or he is a member of the crisis team along with the school counselor, school psychologist, and school social worker, assisting with the identification of students who are at risk for long-term mental health challenges because of the traumatic event. The school nurse helps set the tone for recovery, actively reducing or eliminating stigma for students who seek additional health and mental health services and care through screening, health education, and outreach services.

Community Mental Health Professionals - The community mental health professional serves as a supplemental mental health service

Key Tasks

resulting from the traumatic event or that may place an additional burden on the student as he or she comes to grip with the event.

- Keep open communication with students, staff, and administration.
- Convey an open invitation for students to talk about how they are doing.
- Expect regular updates from the administration describing school services.
- Insist on question and answer time during staff meetings.

Training in the intermediate and long-term recovery processes from crises will help teachers better understand the behavior of students. Intermediate and long-term mental health challenges may be unlike those of the immediate aftermath of a disaster or crisis. Staff development for teachers should include the following components:

- Honing observational skills
- Understanding symptoms
- Destigmatizing mental health referrals
- Recognizing students' sensitivity to changes
- Making student referrals
- Supporting and encouraging student self-care and stress reduction
- Oversee the health and well-being of students.
- Assist in identifying children and staff who may need additional mental health services and support, especially students and personnel who present with somatic complaints.
- Provide training, when appropriate, to students and personnel about the interplay of health and mental health factors.
- Monitor the health of high-risk students.
- Coordinate health and mental health referrals from staff.
- Identify and establish contact with child trauma, referral and treatment agencies specific to the needs of the school in crisis.

School and Community Roles and Key Tasks During Recovery

Roles

provider and consultant to the school. His or her role is to support, not supplant, the mental health services that are provided by the school counselor, school psychologist, and school social worker. She or he helps set the tone for recovery, conveying concern and support for all recovery efforts, with an eye to reducing or eliminating stigma for students who seek additional services and care. The community mental health professional also helps the school site administrator recognize and plan for intermediate and long-term services for staff and may play a primary role in responding to unforeseen crises that arise during successive phases of recovery.

Key Tasks

- Provide support, consultation, and training recommendations to school staff focused on topics such as student self-care and stress-reduction techniques.
- Provide the school principal with a monthly mental health service report.

Selecting the Most Effective Community Mental Health Providers

The most effective mental health providers are those who are carefully screened for experience and training in child trauma treatment. This experience may include special certification for working with students, licensure in a related area, or evidence of special child trauma treatment coursework.



Additional Recovery Resources

Center for Trauma, Response and Preparedness (CTRP) Educational Materials

The Center for Trauma, Response and Preparedness (CTRP) is a University of Connecticut and Yale University Center of Excellence. The Center was established late in 2001 through the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The CTRP presents a Web page titled “Educational Materials,” which offers an array of resources for educators to address the mental health needs of students proactively. It provides resources for including mental health in the school emergency plan and other preparedness resources. The Center also offers a wealth of school-based resources addressing emergency intervention and response.

Accessible at http://www.ctrp.org/resources_educators.htm

Listen, Protect, and Connect – Model and Teach: Psychological First Aid for Children

This guide provides information for teachers to help students recover emotionally and academically following a school emergency or crisis situation. The guide includes the five steps of psychological first aid: 1) listen; 2) protect; 3) connect; 4) model; and 5) teach. It also offers helpful questions to guide teachers as they provide support to students.

Publication information: M. Schreiber, R. Gurwitch, & M. Wong. (2006).

Accessible at http://www.ready.gov/kids/downloads/PFA_SchoolCrisis.pdf

F. Threat Assessment

Establishing Policy and Procedure

According to the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), threat assessment “includes strategies to determine the credibility and seriousness of a threat and the likelihood that it will be carried

out. It also provides a means of identifying appropriate interventions to prevent school violence.” In *Threat Assessment at School: A Primer for Educators*, available online at http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/threatassess.pdf/, the NASP recommends establishing a divisionwide policy and procedure and offers the following guidance:

Operating on the premise that any threat or concern is serious, it is important to have a specific and well-articulated policy for how to respond to allegations of actual or potential violence. The policy should include clarification of the role of educators in relation to the role of law enforcement, identify the threat assessment team, and specify the team’s training requirements. Specific procedures should include protocols for evaluating and interviewing the potential offender, notifying and working with parents, interviewing other students and staff, establishing the threshold of concern for initiating a threat assessment, determining the level of intervention, bringing in additional professionals (e.g., mental health, social service, law enforcement), providing follow-up observation and services, and responding to media. The specific elements of a threat assessment protocol may include:

- A general operating premise that any threat or concern is serious.
- Recognition that all threats are to be immediately reported to the appropriate personnel.
- Agreement that the information source(s) will remain anonymous to the greatest extent possible.
- Follow-up activities that occur after the threat assessment (both when the threat is credible and when it is determined not to be credible).
- Coordination with the school’s legal counsel, local law enforcement, and mental health resources.

According to *Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates*. (May 2002), a publication of the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education (available online at http://www.secretservice.gov/ntac/ssi_guide.pdf), a threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. A threat can be spoken, written, or symbolic -- for example, motioning with one's hands as though shooting at another person.

Threats are made for a variety of reasons. A threat may be a warning signal, a reaction to fear of punishment or some other anxiety, or a demand for attention. It may be intended to taunt; to intimidate; to assert power or control; to punish; to manipulate or coerce; to frighten; to terrorize; to compel someone to do something; to strike back for an injury, injustice or slight; to disrupt someone's or some institution's life; to test authority, or to protect oneself. The emotions that underlie a threat can be love; hate; fear; rage; or desire for attention, revenge, excitement, or recognition.

Threats can be classed in four categories: direct, indirect, veiled, or conditional.

- A **direct threat** identifies a specific act against a specific target and is delivered in a straightforward, clear, and explicit manner: "I am going to place a bomb in the school's gym."
- An **indirect threat** tends to be vague, unclear, and ambiguous. The plan, the intended victim, the motivation, and other aspects of the threat are masked or equivocal: "If I wanted to, I could kill everyone at this school!" While violence is implied, the threat is phrased tentatively -- "If I wanted to" -- and suggests that a violent act COULD occur, not that it WILL occur.

- A **veiled threat** is one that strongly implies but does not explicitly threaten violence. "We would be better off without you around anymore" clearly hints at a possible violent act, but leaves it to the potential victim to interpret the message and give a definite meaning to the threat.
- A **conditional threat** is the type of threat often seen in extortion cases. It warns that a violent act will happen unless certain demands or terms are met: "If you don't pay me one million dollars, I will place a bomb in the school."

Specific, plausible details are a critical factor in evaluating a threat. Details can include the identity of the victim or victims; the reason for making the threat; the means, weapon, and method by which it is to be carried out; the date, time, and place where the threatened act will occur; and concrete information about plans or preparations that have already been made. Specific details can indicate that substantial thought, planning, and preparatory steps have already been taken, suggesting a higher risk that the threatener will follow through on his threat. Similarly, a lack of detail suggests the threatener may not have thought through all of the contingencies, has not actually taken steps to carry out the threat, and may not seriously intend violence but is "blowing off steam" over some frustration or seeking to frighten or intimidate a particular victim or disrupt a school's events or routine. The emotional content of a threat can be an important clue to the threatener's mental state.

Levels of Risk

The U.S. Secret Services has identified the following levels of risk:

Low Level of Threat: A threat which poses a minimal risk to the victim and public safety.

- Threat is vague and indirect.
- Information contained within the threat is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail.
- Threat lacks realism.
- Content of the threat suggests person is unlikely to carry it out.

Medium Level of Threat: A threat which could be carried out, although it may not appear entirely realistic.

- Threat is more direct and more concrete than a low level threat.
- Wording in the threat suggests that the threatener has given some thought to how the act will be carried out.
- There may be a general indication of a possible place and time (though these signs still fall well short of a detailed plan).
- There is no strong indication that the threatener has taken preparatory steps, although there may be some veiled reference or ambiguous or inconclusive evidence pointing to that possibility -- an allusion to a book or movie that shows the planning of a violent act, or a vague, general statement about the availability of weapons.
- There may be a specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty: "I'm serious!" or "I really mean this!"

High Level of Threat: A threat that appears to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others.

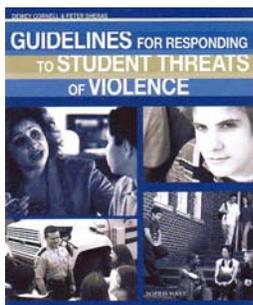
- Threat is direct, specific and plausible.
- Threat suggests concrete steps have been taken toward carrying it out, for example, statements indicating that the threatener has acquired or practiced with a weapon or has had the victim under surveillance.

- Example: "At eight o'clock tomorrow morning, I intend to shoot the principal. That's when he is in the office by himself. I have a 9mm. Believe me, I know what I am doing. I am sick and tired of the way he runs this school." This threat is direct, specific as to the victim, motivation, weapon, place, and time, and indicates that the threatener knows his target's schedule and has made preparations to act on the threat.

Related Threat Assessment Training and Resources

Training in use of threat assessment procedures is available from the Youth Violence Project at the University of Virginia. Additional information is available on the Project Web site at <http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu/>). The Project has developed *Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence*, a research-based manual explaining how school teams can evaluate and resolve potentially dangerous situations in schools. The manual is available from Sopris West, <http://www.sopriswest.com/>.

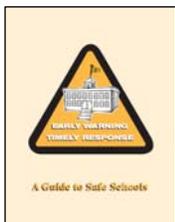
Key Resources for Threat Assessment



Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence

Developed by the Youth Violence Project at the University of Virginia, this research-based manual explains how school teams can evaluate and resolve potentially dangerous situations in schools. The manual is available from Sopris West, <http://www.sopriswest.com/>.

Training in use of the threat assessment procedures is available from the Youth Violence Project. Additional information available at: <http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu/>



Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools (August 1998) Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice

Offers research-based practices to assist schools in identifying warning signs early and develop prevention, intervention, and crisis response plans. Includes sections on characteristics of a school that is safe and responsive to all children, early warning signs, getting help for troubled children, and developing prevention and crises plans.

Available at: <http://cecp.air.org/guide/guide.pdf>



Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates (May 2002) U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education

Sets forth a process for identifying, assessing, and managing students who may pose a threat of targeted violence in schools. Based on an in-depth study of 37 school shootings and other school-based attacks that took place between 1974 and 2000.

Available at: http://www.secretservice.gov/ntac/ssi_guide.pdf



Threat Assessment at School: A Primer for Educators (2004). National Association of School Psychologists.

Brief primer contains basic information on school violence and potentially violent offenders, developing threat assessment protocols for schools, conducting threat assessment interventions, providing supportive interventions, and related resources.

Available online at http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/threatassess.pdf/

Action to Prevent Critical Incidents

Pre-incident identification/intervention procedures provide a systematic process for identifying, assessing, and intervening with students who may be suicidal or constitute a potential threat to others.

These procedures are designed to prevent or reduce risk to the health, safety, and welfare of students and staff.

Attending to the “Small Stuff”

A proactive approach to school safety begins by targeting “put-downs,” “trash talk,” and bullying.

Although high-profile issues and incidents such as shootings, drugs, weapons, and gangs receive the most media attention, experience has taught that attention to the “small stuff” yields the greatest dividends in improving school climate and preventing more serious incidents.

It is strongly recommended that schools develop policies and programs which specifically prohibit/discourage “put-downs,” insults, bullying, and other forms of intimidation. By addressing these frequently overlooked and underestimated forms of disruptive behavior, schools may prevent escalation to assaults and shootings.

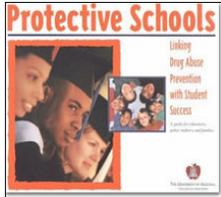
Breaking the “Code of Silence”

Investigations of recent school shootings and of hate crime incidents have revealed that indicators of serious problems were present and were either ignored or minimized so that their significance was not recognized. Breaking the “code of silence” requires the following:

Education to increase awareness of early warning signs of trouble. Increasing awareness involves educational activities with students, staff, and parents to teach them how to identify early warning signals and to appreciate the significance of what they may be observing.

Establishing highly accessible mechanisms for reporting concerns to ensure a timely risk assessment and appropriate interventions. This often involves establishing policies which require immediate reporting of concerns, then having a risk assessment process in place.

Key Resources for Prevention / Early Intervention



Protective Schools: Linking Drug Abuse Prevention with Student Success by Kris Bosworth, University of Arizona

The handbook identifies 10 characteristics of protective schools and shows how effective prevention is a pervasive feature of a healthy school climate and effective schools. Available at: <http://www.drugstats.org/features/protectiveschools.cfm>.

Help is Down the Hall: A Handbook on Student Assistance. (Jan. 2007) SAMHSA.

Handbook prepared by the National Association for Children of Alcoholics under contract for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA). Student Assistants Programs (SAPs) strategies and programs create the infrastructure for sustaining strong prevention and early intervention across the school system, decreasing behavioral, disciplinary and academic stresses that are disruptive and costly to schools and communities.

Available at: <http://www.nacoa.org/pdfs/SAP%20HANDBOOK.pdf>

G. School Shootings: Lessons Learned

School shootings are extremely rare. However, shootings that have occurred have taught valuable lessons about response and recovery. The following guidelines for immediate response, securing the scene, issues on the first day back, and “copycats” are from the FBI publication *The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment* (2000), available online at <http://www.fbi.gov/publications/school/school2.pdf>

Immediate Response

Immediately call 9-1-1 and notify the school resource officer, if one assigned to the school; relay additional information on the location of the perpetrator and number of victims as it becomes available.

Determine if the perpetrator is still on premises.

Institute lockdown and/or evacuation procedures.

Attempt to determine the number of victims and identify witnesses.

Implement necessary first aid procedures through trained staff, school nurse, nurse's aide, physical education department, and/or athletic trainer. Direct rescue personnel to injured and give any required assistance. Designate staff member to accompany victim(s) in ambulance.

Securing and Restoring the Crime Scene

Immediately following the incident, law enforcement officials will assume responsibility for the scene. However, before they arrive, it is important that anything that might be considered physical evidence be preserved "as is." Do not allow anyone to pick up items such as the weapon, ammunition casings, or items belonging to the perpetrator. When law enforcement officials take over, be prepared to assist them in keeping students, staff, and any other onlookers out of the area of the crime scene. Be aware that investigation of the crime scene can take from one to several days.

When law enforcement investigators have completed their work and released the area for clean-up, the worst damage should be cleaned, the area generally straightened, and gather victims' possessions. Experience with school shootings has taught that it is better to not immediately remove all signs of the incident such as patching bullet holes because students, parents, and others in the community will want to see the scene in the days immediately following the incident and such evidence helps people understand what happened. According to the National Education Association's Crisis Communications Guide and Toolkit, "There is a strong and significant psychological connection to death sites that needs to run its full course and should never be ignored or discounted."

The First Day Back at School

The first day back at school following a crisis is a very important benchmark in the healing process. Re-entry into the school structure and routine represents progressing into a "new normal." However, because emotions are close to the surface and triggers that spark disturbing memories are often unpredictable, the thought of going back to school can be daunting. Careful preparation in paving the way to the first day back is critical.

Careful attention should be paid to the needs of all members of the school community. Immediate needs on the first day back often include:

- Managing the media,
- Providing meaningful expressions to mark the occasion,
- Ensuring safety and security,
- Activating a responsive referral system for students and staff who need additional support, and
- Allowing opportunity for classroom discussion of what has occurred before transitioning into the school routine and returning to established curriculum.

All staff should meet prior to school to review the day's schedule and procedures. "Safe rooms" should be made available for students and staff who may need to seek quiet or guidance. High risk students should not be released to empty homes during or after school. Students should be encouraged to be aware of one another and to walk a student to an adult if they need help.

“Copycats”

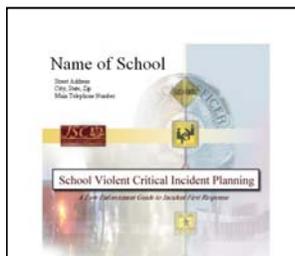
Threats to safety of any kind should first be immediately reported to school administration and law enforcement. It should be made clear that making threats is against the law and carries severe consequences. Threats should not be taken lightly but should provoke the full force of law with vigorous efforts to track down the source.

Depending on the nature of threats and the level of alarm in the community, the school may wish to send notes or otherwise communicate with parents stressing the action being taken in the wake of threats, such as daily searches, limited access to the school, and increased police patrols. All members of the school community should be enlisted in efforts to identify perpetrators.

An important strategy in reducing "copycat" behavior is working with the media in an effort to not glamorize perpetrator or threatmakers' actions. Some school divisions have found it helpful to communicate with editors and news directors about the risks associated with certain types of coverage. Management often recognizes the threatmakers' attempts to manipulate the media and choose not to print or air specifics of the threat.

Key Resources for School Safety and Critical Incident Response Planning

Crisis planning is an important element of school safety. Shown below are key resources for school safety and critical incident response planning.



School Critical Incident Planning Generator (SCIP-G)

A key resource in school critical incident planning, the SCIP-G is a software tool that provides step-by-step guidance in creating a plan using the most widely accepted law enforcement practices and procedures as a foundation.

The SCIP-G is available free of charge from the Rural Law Enforcement Technology Center at

<http://www.nlectc.org/ruletc/multimedia.html> or
Call (866) 787-2553.



A Critical Incident: What To Do in the First 20 Minutes; School Crime Operations Package (School COP) Version 1.1, May 2001

This CD-ROM contains:

A Critical Incident: What to Do in the First 20 Minutes—a 25-minute video produced by the North Carolina Office of the Attorney General and Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Center for the Prevention of School Violence.

The *School Crime Operations Package (School COP)*—a software application for entering, analyzing, and mapping incidents that occur in and around schools.



School Bus Security: A 21st Century Approach

A 15-minute DVD produced by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).



**The Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Collaboration Toolkit:
How to Build, Fix and Sustain Productive Partnerships**

The U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) produces a variety of resources that support school and community policing and prevention efforts. The free toolkit that addresses the challenges, provides tips and strategies, and accompanying models for success.

Accessible at <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/ric/ResourceMain.aspx?RID=236>

SECTION VI:

Communications



VI. Communications

Communication is a critical element of crisis management. School staff members and students must be told what is happening and what to do. Parents of students and families of staff members must be informed about the situation, including the status of their child or family member. Timely contact with law enforcement and other emergency services is necessary for effective response. School board members must be kept informed and updated information must be transmitted to central office and to other affected schools. The communication must be accurate and kept updated. Additionally, groups which are a part of the school community (PTA or advisory councils) and can assist with getting accurate information into the community are important. This chapter focuses on communication — the basics, within the school and school division, among responders, with parents and the community, and with media.

A. Communications Basics

When a non-emergency school crisis event occurs, the key communication tasks involve:

- Notifying faculty and staff of known facts of the event and what first steps they are to take;
- Keeping faculty and staff informed as additional information becomes available and response plans evolve;
- Engaging appropriate community resources to assist in restoring equilibrium and recovery;
- Providing students with accurate information, countering rumors and misinformation;
- Providing parents with accurate information about the event, the school's response, and suggestions and resources for appropriate response; and
- Providing media with accurate information about the event and the school's response, as appropriate.

When an emergency event occurs, key communication tasks may become far more complex. In major crisis events a wide range of communications tasks must be undertaken, beginning with the 9-1-1 call. For effective emergency response, in advance of that call, emergency responders need schools to have shared information about their facilities, their resources and vulnerabilities, their communications systems, and their basic emergency procedures and protocols.

1. Establish Communications Plans

Open lines of communication among crisis response team members, community partners, staff, students, division personnel, parents and the media before, during and after an incident are critical for effective emergency management. Therefore, an effective emergency management plan should incorporate a detailed communications plan for the division and each school. The communications plan must:

- Create, in advance, policies and plans for communicating emergency information with the public;
- Develop procedures for maintaining communication among administrators, staff and students, as well as between community partners, parents and the media;

- Establish alternative communication devices and methods not connected to the main power source in case of power outages, downed phone lines or an overwhelming number of cellular calls; and
- Identify a public information officer (PIO) who will serve as the primary spokesperson to the media and the public during a crisis.

2. Review Communications Capacity of School and School Division

Technology is revolutionizing communications. Assessing school crisis communications needs, identifying available technology, and matching appropriate high- and low-technology applications to needs has become a critical component of emergency planning.

3. Develop Communications Templates

The following information is adapted from the National Education Association *Crisis Communications Guide and Toolkit* (<http://www.nea.org/crisis>).

Many communications materials can be prepared before a crisis event occurs, as part of the preparedness phase of planning. Templates can be completed with school- and school division-specific information and incident specifics can be filled in as needed. These items should be saved in crisis response computer folders on the shared network. A list of media-related templates is included in Section E of this Chapter.

Draft Web page for communications during a crisis. The Internet can be a powerful tool for sharing facts and information. From posting a daily fact sheet or up-to-date frequently asked questions (FAQ) document to putting up lists of contact and support numbers to giving survivors a place to post their thoughts and feelings, a Web page can be a critical part of a school's information dissemination and support functions in a crisis.

Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) document. The purpose of a FAQ document is to prepare answers to the most commonly asked questions that are accurate and up-to-date. The document should be updated multiple times a day, as more questions arise, and should be posted on the Web site and made available for volunteers to distribute and fax on request.

Death or serious injury staff notification. Used in the event of the death or serious injury of a member of the school community and distributed to staff, the memo communicates verified facts about the event and related information such as funeral arrangements, and provides guidance on notifying students and handling their reactions.

Suicide staff notification. Used in the event of a confirmed suicide of a member of the school community and distributed to school staff, the memo communicates verified facts and related information and provides guidance in notifying students and handling their reactions.

Fact Sheets and Guidelines

Fact sheets and guidelines are stand-alone pieces that are ready to be copied and do not necessarily need to be customized. Fact sheets on reactions to trauma/disaster, guidelines for activities following a crisis, and information on grief and suicide are included in the Supplementary Materials section at the end of this publication.

Additional fact sheets and guidelines on crisis-related topics from the National Education Association and from the National Association of School Psychologists are listed below:

Available Fact Sheets and Guidelines

National Education Association

The National Education Association has developed the *Crisis Communications Guide and Toolkit*, available at: <http://www.nea.org/crisis> and containing:

- Fact sheet for teens on reaction to stress
- Fact sheet for parents and staff on post-traumatic stress disorder
- Fact sheet for parents on media interviews for children

National Association of School Psychologists

All the informational resources listed below are available from the National Association of School Psychologist at: <http://www.nasponline.org/resources/index.aspx>

School Safety/Violence Prevention

- Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers
- Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers - Korean
- Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers - Spanish

Suicide

- Preventing Youth Suicide - Tips for Parents and Educators
- Save a Friend: Tips for Teens to Prevent Suicide

Crisis Response Resources

- Coping With Crisis: Tips for Parents and Educators
- Coping with Crisis--Helping Children With Special Needs
- Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Events: Tips for Parents and Teachers
- Dealing with a Death in School
- Helping Children Cope With Crisis: Care for Caregivers
- Memorials/Activities/Rituals Following Traumatic Events - Suggestions for Schools

Media and Crisis

- Responsible Media Coverage of Crisis Events Impacting Children
- How to Handle The Media During A Crisis

Trauma

- Children's Response to Trauma
- How Children Cope With Trauma and Ongoing Threat: The BASIC Ph Model
- Identifying Seriously Traumatized Children - Tips for Parents and Educators
- Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Events: Tips for Parents and Teachers

Natural Disasters

- Responding to Natural Disasters - Helping Children and Families: Information for School Crisis Teams
- Helping Children After a Natural Disaster: Information for Parents and Teachers
- Helping Children After a Wildfire: Tips for Parents and Teachers - PDF
- New Schools for Students With Disabilities: Tips for Families Who Have Been Relocated
- Relocated Students With Special Needs: Recommendations for Receiving Schools
- Hurricane Experiences Provide Lessons for the Future

War/Terrorism Materials

- Children and Fear of War and Terrorism - Tips for Parents and Teachers
- Coping in Unsettling Times - Tips for Students
- Helping Children Cope in Unsettling Times
- Helping Children Cope With Loss, Death, and Grief
- Parents Called to Active Duty: Helping Children Cope

Examples of School Crisis Team Communication Tasks

Crisis team communications tasks identified in the National Education Association *Crisis Communications Guide and Toolkit* (<http://www.nea.org/crisis>) are described below. Note that all the functions may be carried out by a single individual, particularly in smaller school divisions.

Spokesperson - Serves as the official source of all official school division information. This person addresses reporters at all scheduled press briefings; provides all official comments for press attribution; manages strategic message development; and counsels top administrators.

Media Coordinator - Manages media queries, including prioritizing requests according to deadlines, type of request, and whether or not it is from a local or national outlet. Local should get first priority as they are often part of the school community and will be covering the event long after the national media leave. This person identifies opportunities to promote the school message and anticipates the direction media queries will take so the division can prepare and respond.

Information-Communications Coordinator - Manages information flow. This person seeks out and organizes information updates, such as the time and place for community meetings, hotline phone numbers, instructions for donations, and press briefing schedules and channels it to internal and external audiences. Internal channels include division staff e-mail groups, listservers, blast faxes, and school voice-mail. External channels include the media, parents, and the broader public. This person also develops and maintains the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document - a recording of questions fielded by phone bank volunteers and their answers. He or she also maintains the master schedule - a document containing all scheduled meetings and events for the day. The schedule is usually blown up to poster size and placed prominently for phone bank volunteers to reference. The information-communications coordinator also updates and compiles the daily fact sheet - a listing of all significant messages for the day and the source of information on a broad array of topics and provides signoff for distribution.

Media Monitor and Research Director - Monitors media coverage and seeks to correct inaccuracies. The media monitor provides summaries of coverage for all outlets for the spokesperson. The media monitor and research director is also responsible for maintaining research files.

Clerical and Systems Operations Coordinator - Oversees all distribution systems, including e-mail and fax for external and internal audiences. This person establishes a routine procedure for ensuring appropriate proofreading, signoff and quick delivery of information products. He or she is responsible for systems operation including programming fax machines, assigning and coordinating copy jobs, and distributing fact sheets to media and other external and internal audiences.

Liaison to Law Enforcement Agencies' Public Information Officers - Ensures that law enforcement representatives receive all communication products produced by the division office and attends briefings for updated information on anticipated press briefings and announcements. He or she provides regular updates and reports for spokespersons. The information obtained from law enforcement may influence school division communication and message development.

Liaison to Victims' Families and Counseling Units - Ensures that victims' advocates and victims' families receive all communication products from the school division communications office. He or she also obtains information on the concerns and needs of the victims and provides regular updates and reports to the spokesperson. The information obtained from the victims' liaison plays a major role in shaping the division's communication direction and message development.

Computer Systems, Web Page Technician - Oversees maintenance and operation of the communication operation's computer network; backs up files at the end of the day; and posts all new and approved communication products for the Web page. He or she creates an avenue for answering e-mail queries and facilitates bulletin boards or chat rooms.

Volunteer Coordinator - Oversees all volunteer activity, including recruiting, training and scheduling volunteers to staff media query phone bank, coordinate special events, undertake writing projects, and act as a media escort. He or she prepares briefing folders for new volunteers, including daily fact sheets, key messages, telephone numbers, and Web site addresses.

Liaison to Elected Officials and Manager of Special Events - Ensures that elected officials and community group leaders are informed of all division communication activity. Also coordinates elected officials' roles in memorial services, creating memorials, and other special events and provides a communication channel between elected leaders and division administration. This liaison is sensitive to the perceptions and reality of action that could potentially be considered political and advocates on behalf of school community needs.

Donations Coordinator - Implements systems to collect and distribute donations and works with the information coordinator to communicate needs and educate the public about how donations are being used. This is usually someone with business and political connections who can quickly marshal resources, such as storage space or equipment.

Communications Challenges and Suggested Responses

Outlined below in Table 4 are day-by-day communications challenges and suggested responses.

Table 4. Communications Challenges and Suggested Responses

<i>Challenge</i>	<i>Response</i>
Day One	
<u>Rumor Control</u> A common reaction to fear is to generate rumors or stories to fill in information that is not available. Making an uninformed declaration about information can be empowering for frightened individuals. Crises are fertile ground for rumors, and rumors are unfortunately self-perpetuating.	Clear and frequent communication. Crisis communicators should be involved, visible, and convey leadership. Survivors, victims' families, and local citizens will look to the school for leadership. Its presence will help calm fears and rumor mongering.
<u>Phone Line Jams</u> Natural disasters and major newsmaking events can create massive phone traffic, jamming cellular connections.	Use combination two-way radio/cell phones and, if possible, keep one line open to the division office. If a connection is made, don't hang up, just put the phone down for use later.
<u>Media Intrusion</u> School crises can create a crush of media, often making it hard to distinguish parents and students from journalists. Helicopters and cameras stationed outside the school provide live coverage that can put many lives at risk.	Determine and maintain a perimeter around the school that media may not cross. Ask for law enforcement help in policing violators. Violators may later be denied access to official school or law enforcement briefings.

Challenge	Response
<p><u>Scattering of Schools and School Staff</u> Acting on instinct, staff and students facing danger flee the building, often not knowing where they are running. This makes it difficult to ensure that students are moving toward safety, not danger, and makes it difficult to account for students and staff. Parents who come to school often cannot find their children and panic ensues. Natural disasters can disperse children, families, and entire communities. Recent disasters have spawned effective people (and even pet) locator systems that often involve Internet communication.</p>	<p>Establish pre-identified locations (reunion areas) that students and staff should retreat to in the event of an emergency. Ensure that a procedure has been established for releasing students to parent or guardian care; the procedure should be able to account for when and into whose custody the child was released. Provide information about dispersed colleagues and students.</p>
<p><u>Media Mistakes</u> Fact verification. In the absence of information and the pressure of live coverage, verification of facts is often sacrificed for good pictures and sound.</p>	<p>Establish trust before the crisis strikes. Provide as much information as you can as quickly as you can without speculating or releasing unverified information. Even if all you can say are a few sketchy sentences, you can communicate your concern and compassion and the action being taken to investigate. Advise media of the potential destructiveness of being wrong.</p>
Day Two	
<p><u>Potential for Eroded Credibility</u> When bad things happen, past behavior is used to predict future actions. When past behaviors are considered good and helpful, the current and future behaviors don't match those expectations, there is a loss of credibility.</p>	<p>Implement trust-building, fear-reducing, credibility-fixing behaviors. Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advance information. • Ask for input from all, even perceived opponents. • Listen carefully. • Demonstrate you've heard, adjust action. • Stay in touch. • Speak in plain language. • Bring victims/involuntary participants into the decision making process.
<p><u>Constant Need for Information</u> The need for a constant streaming of information to the community is enormous. Questions and anxieties can escalate.</p>	<p>Organize separate all-school staff and all-community meetings to provide information and opportunity to express concerns. Immediately implement information channels that are accessible to all members of the community and media -- an interactive Web site for questions and answers, a crisis response hotline, and a regularly updated fact sheet.</p>
<p><u>Panic and Alienation</u> Normal routines and support systems are suspended and survivors can feel very alone and panicked.</p>	<p>Drop-in centers should be made available in several locations throughout the community for parents, students, teachers and others to receive information, counseling, and contact with other grieving members of the school and community.</p>
<p><u>Media Feeding Frenzies</u> Reporters are scrambling for pictures of students, interviews with school staff and students, and sometimes implement specious means of gaining access to schools and hospitals.</p>	<p>Implement a system for coordinating and responding to media and set parameters for coverage.</p>
Day Three and Beyond	
<p><u>Community Feelings - Bitterness and Blame</u> Victims and victims' families and the school community may feel bitter and may take action that</p>	<p>Care must be taken to sustain open, responsive communication lines with all facets of the school community, particularly the victims and their families.</p>

<i>Challenge</i>	<i>Response</i>
causes divisiveness. There may also be a tendency to place blame or emphasize simplistic solutions to violence or community crisis.	Liaisons to victims should make frequent contact with the families and be responsive to their concerns and needs. In addition, affirming community-wide activities should be scheduled to allow citizens to contribute to memorials and expressions of compassion.
<u>Victims' Feelings - Anxiety, Frustration, Anger</u> Victims (of varying degrees) declare their needs are not being met or considered and resist solutions.	Promote the understanding that victims have a special mentality and their perception and behavior is altered in ways that are fundamentally predictable. Victims designate themselves and determine when they are no longer victims.
<u>Anxiety and Media Interest in Return to School</u> Anxieties escalate around returning to school. There is a heightened media interest in covering the first day back.	Establish drop-in support groups within school during lunch hour and before and after school. Carefully plan re-entry and make adequate counseling support available. Communicate well first day plans and set limits with the media.

Dealing with Rumors

Establishing reliable communications networks is critical for dealing effectively with a potentially detrimental phenomenon always present in crises: rumors.

People are going to talk about an emergency and, when accurate information is not available, rumors begin. Without facts, people begin to speculate and the speculations soon come to be thought of as “facts.” Left unchecked, rumors can become more difficult to deal with than the crisis event. They may create a negative perception of the school’s ability to manage an emergency or, even worse, a belief that the school cannot provide for the safety and well-being of the children. The most effective strategy for combating rumors is to provide facts as soon as possible. Some strategies which may be helpful include the following:

Identify and notify internal groups including administrators, teachers, students, custodians, secretaries, teaching assistants, cafeteria workers, and bus drivers. These people are primary sources of information and are likely to be contacted in their neighborhoods, at grocery stores, etc. It is critical that they have accurate information because what they know (or don’t know and are speculating about) will be passed on. A faculty/staff meeting should be held before staff members are allowed to go home so that what is (and is not) known can be clearly communicated.

Clerical staff who answer the telephone at the school and at the central office must know which information can be shared and which information cannot be shared. They must be kept informed of inaccurate information which is circulating so they can help “correct” misinformation. Designating a few persons to answer calls helps control the circulating of misinformation.

Use of key communicators in the community will also combat rumors. A telephone tree or a briefing held especially for identified community representatives directly associated with the school will help spread accurate information.

The media can also help control rumors; ask them to provide frequent updates to the public, particularly providing accurate information where rumors need to be dispelled. After the immediate crisis has passed, public meetings may be helpful. It provides an opportunity for people to ask questions and to receive

accurate information. A follow-up public meeting may also be helpful in restoring the community's confidence in the school's ability to manage crises and to provide a safe environment.

B. Communications within the School and School Division

Basic Staff Notification and Updates

When a school crisis has occurred notifying faculty and staff of an event or crisis and keeping them informed as additional information becomes available and as plans for management of the situation evolve is critical. Some practices which school administrators have found to be helpful include the following:

The Telephone Tree

A telephone tree is a simple, widely used system for notifying staff of a crisis event when they are not at school. A very carefully crafted statement, specifying what is and is not yet known, should be drafted before the telephone tree is activated.

Once it is verified that a crisis exists, the building administrator or designee sets the phone tree in motion. When a crisis occurs during weekends, vacation periods, or when a large number of staff is away from school, it will be necessary to transmit information via a phone tree. At other times, when crises occur when school is in session, only the people outside the school building need to be contacted via telephone.

The crisis response telephone tree should include all staff -- including cooks, bus drivers, custodians, and other support staff -- and should be reviewed each year with all staff.

Making the Calls

Begin with a statement such as, "I'm sorry to have to call with bad news. . ." or "due to the impending storm . . ."

Ask the person to get paper and pencil to write specifics if they will be calling another person.

Give facts about the event, identifying critical information needs: what happened, who is okay and who is hurt; action to be taken to respond, and how to help and how to get help.

Notify them of upcoming all-staff meeting and note that further details will be available at the meeting.

Remind them not to speculate in their phone tree calls -- that they should just pass on essential information.

The Morning Faculty Meeting

An early, brief faculty meeting provides the opportunity to give accurate, updated information about the crisis event/situation itself and to review with staff procedures for the day, including the availability of intervention resources.

The End-of-Day One Faculty Meeting

A brief end-of-day one meeting provides the opportunity to review day one, update information, and plan for day two. Misinformation or rumors can be addressed before staff members go home or into the community where they are likely to be asked about the situation.

Emergency Communications

At minimum, a plan must be in place for alerting students and staff of the following:

- Need for evacuation or lockdown;
- Need to implement tornado or other severe weather procedures;
- Need to implement procedures for chemical spill or gas leak; and
- Threat in particular location, allowing lockdown or evacuation away from the threat.

Methods may involve the more traditional modes such as alarm systems, intercoms, and two-way radios or newer technologies such as text messaging and e-mail alerts may also be used.

C. Communications with Responders

First Steps in Communication with Responders

Communications with emergency responders needs to begin in the prevention/mitigation and preparedness phases of crisis planning.

Responders are more effective when they:

- Are familiar with the school facility,
- Are familiar with school resources and vulnerabilities,
- Have had input into school crisis procedures and protocols, and
- Have established collaborative relationships with key school personnel.

Specific communications tasks that are recommended include the following:

During prevention/mitigation phase

- Involve law enforcement, fire, and EMS in school vulnerability assessments.
- Align school crisis plans with broader community emergency response plans.

During preparedness phase

- Provide emergency response agencies with facilities diagrams and site maps.
- Inform EMS of the presence of students/staff with special health conditions (especially those who are ventilator dependent or mobility impaired).
- Inform responders of school resources for medical emergencies such as AEDs.
- In collaboration with emergency responders, establish clear criteria and protocols for 9-1-1 calls.

Communications Challenges are Common

“An estimated 39 percent of districts with emergency plans experience challenges in communicating and coordinating with local first responders. Specifically, these school districts experience a lack of partnerships with all or specific first responders, limited time or funding to collaborate with first responders on plans for emergencies, or a lack of interoperability between the equipment used by the school district and equipment used by first responders.”

Emergency Management: Most School Districts Have Developed Emergency Management Plans, but Would Benefit from Additional Federal Guidance. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d07609.pdf>
(United States Government Accountability Office, Washington, DC , June 2007)

- In collaboration with emergency responders, establish clear procedures for activating an Incident Command System (ICS).

Interoperability

Interoperability refers to the ability of two or more systems or components to exchange information and to use the information that has been exchanged.

Communication among emergency responders has been shown to be a challenge in numerous crises, leading to confused and ineffective responses. In recent years, most notably after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on New York City, much attention has been given to the issue of interoperability.

Within the context of school emergency planning, an important task is ensuring communication equipment interoperability with those of first responders. School and school division crisis and emergency response plans should, at minimum, clearly identify channels and methods of communications to be used in an emergency.



Interoperability in Virginia

Virginia's Interoperability Web site:
<http://www.interoperability.publicsafety.virginia.gov/>

Virginia's Interoperability Strategic Plan:
<http://www.interoperability.publicsafety.virginia.gov/>

The Commonwealth of Virginia is establishing statewide interoperability having developed a strategic plan for statewide interoperable communications, a governance structure to coordinate interoperability, a demonstration grant program and review panel, training opportunities, a Web site, and a Listserv for public safety professionals. Assistance has also been provided to localities in securing federal interoperability grants.

Common Language

As part of its interoperability efforts, Virginia has adopted a common language protocol to improve interoperability during multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional events. The Common Language Protocol enables public safety officers to use plain English for day-to-day radio communications. The Protocol improves interoperability during multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional events while also addressing law enforcement agencies' concerns about responder safety.

D. Communications with Parents

Communications with Parents and the Community At Large

A very important aspect of managing crises is dealing effectively with parent reactions.

Communication with parents and the community is best begun before a crisis occurs. Some useful strategies include the following:

- Educate parents about the school crisis plan, its objectives, and the need for it. Such information can be included in the school handout or other informational materials prepared for parents, at parent orientations, or at other informational meetings.
- Develop a relationship with parents so that they trust and feel comfortable calling school personnel in the event of crisis.

Develop materials that may be needed including:

Draft formats of letters to parents informing them of what happened, how the school and school division are handling the situation, and information on possible reactions of their child and suggested ways to talk with them.

Develop a list of community resources that may be helpful to parents.

Identify parents who are willing to volunteer in case of an emergency, include them in preparation efforts, and include them in training.

Parent Information Needs

In the event of an emergency parents have very specific information needs.

First, parents want to know their child is safe; then, parents want to know the details of the emergency situation, to know how it was handled, and to know that their children will be safe in the future. The first reactions are likely to involve fear. Upon learning of an incident at the school, parents are likely to descend upon the school in search of their child or to telephone, frantically seeking information. Establishing a system for responding quickly to parent needs for information is an important part of pre-planning. Anger is another common reaction of parents, particularly in the case of senseless acts of violence. In the event of a crisis or disaster:

- Tell parents exactly what is known to have happened. Do not embellish or speculate.
- Implement the plan to manage phone calls and parents who arrive at school.

Schedule and attend an open question-and-answer meeting for parents as soon after the incident as possible. The meeting is an opportunity for school officials to listen and respond to parent concerns (which is helpful in combating rumors and other misinformation) and to work on restoring parental trust in the school. In the event of an incident which involved damage or destruction, an open house for parents and other members of the community to see the school restored to its “normal” state helps everyone get beyond the crisis.

Create a Student-Parent Reunification Plan and Communication Methods

When students and staff have been evacuated to an alternate site, school administrators or the crisis response team will implement a school’s student-parent reunification plan for releasing students to their parents and guardians. A strong reunification plan will:

- Designate reunification sites and outline the procedures for releasing students;

- Maintain updated student emergency information that details students' special needs and any medical or custody issues, and incorporate guidelines for storing the information in a secure location accessible to authorized personnel;
- Outline parental notification methods such as the use of calling trees, local media channels or an automated alert system; and
- Disseminate information about the reunification plan throughout the school year using school Web pages, e-mail blasts, letters to parents and guardians and PTA meetings so that when an emergency does occur, parents and guardians will know what is expected of them as well as how and where to access pertinent information.

E. Communications with Media

Develop Communications Templates for Media

As noted above, many communications materials can be prepared before a crisis event occurs as part of the preparedness phase of planning and then completed with event-specific information. Described below are media-related items included in the NEA's *Crisis Communications Guide and Toolkit*, (Online at <http://www.nea.org/crisis/>):

School information sheet. The purpose of the school information sheet is to provide general background information about a school and/or a division. This information is often already prepared for school Web sites or brochures. In the event of a crisis, it can provide basic information to reporters who may be new to covering the school, preventing mistakes and extra phone calls.

Press statement shell. The purpose of the initial press statement is to answer the basic questions: who, what, where, when. This statement should also provide whatever guidance is possible at this point, express the association and administration's concern, and detail how further information will be disseminated. If possible, the statement should give phone numbers or contacts for more information or assistance.

Daily update fact sheet shell. The purpose of the daily update fact sheet is to provide information on a regular schedule during a crisis. It can be distributed via fax to a preprogrammed list of staff contacts and media recipients; it can also be posted on the Web site daily. The information should be factual and current. The fact sheet should be distributed at the same time every day and may be distributed more than once a day if new information surfaces. The fact sheet should always indicate when and how readers can get more information.

Media interview/information request form. The purpose of a media interview/information request form is to ensure that volunteers and others answering the phones collect the necessary information from media calling to get information or request interviews. It is usually helpful to create a two-sided form, with interview requests on one side and informational requests on the other. It is also important to create a system for managing the forms—for instance, requiring volunteers to give the original to the media coordinator and make a copy for a master request file.

Memos to Press Outlining Parameters for Pool Coverage of Funerals and Memorials and the First Day Back at School. The purpose of the memo to press outlining parameters for coverage of

funerals and memorials is to provide guidance to the press on rules of coverage. This is a very important memo to send prior to the first funeral or memorial service.

Memo to Press Outlining Parameters for Coverage of the First Day Back at School. The purpose of the memo to press outlining parameters for coverage of the first day back at school is to provide guidance to the press on rules of coverage. This is a very important memo to send prior to the first day back at school to clarify expectations of media who want to cover activities.

General Guidelines for Communications with Media

Media policy varies from one school system to another. Contact is generally channeled through one person. Most news people are sensitive, open to suggestions and interested in doing a reputable job. When dealing with the media, the following suggestions will promote clear communications:

Deal up-front with reporters. Be honest, forthright and establish good communication with the media before problems or a crisis occurs.

Do not try to stonewall the media or keep them from doing their job.

The school should decide what to say, define the ground rules, issue a statement and answer questions within the limits of confidentiality.

Identify a single information source.

Advise school staff of media procedures.

Advise students of the media policy. Let them know that they do not have to talk, that they can say no.

If the crisis is a death, consult with the deceased student/staff member's family before making any statement. Explain school system policy and assure them that confidential information is being protected.

During A Crisis:

Attempt to define the type and extent of the crisis as soon as possible.

Inform employees what is happening as soon as possible.

Designate a central source, such as the crisis communications center, to coordinate information gathering and dissemination.

Instruct all employees to refer all information and questions to communications centers.

Remind employees that only designated spokesmen are authorized to talk with news media.

Take initiative with news media and let them know what is or is not known about the situation.

When communicating, remember to maintain a unified position and uniform message; keep messages concise, clear, and consistent; keep spokesman and alternates briefed.

Contact the top administrator or designee to inform him of the current situation, emerging developments, and to clear statements.

Delay releasing information until facts are verified and the school's position about the crisis is clear.

Read all releases from previously prepared and approved statements to avoid danger of ad-libbing.

Assign sufficient staff to handle phones and seek additional information.

Keep a log of all incoming and outgoing calls and personal contacts.

Relieve key people from their normal duties so they may focus on the crisis.

Express appreciation to all persons who helped handle the crisis.

Prepare a general announcement to be given by the principal or designee. A straightforward sympathetic announcement of loss with a simple statement of condolence is recommended. Also, a statement that more information will be forthcoming, when verified, can be reassuring to students and staff.

Communicating with the Media in Times of Crisis

The primary goal should be to keep the public informed about the crisis while maintaining the privacy of students and ensuring as little interruption of the educational process as possible.

As soon as possible, prepare a written statement that gives the basic facts clearly and concisely. Try to anticipate questions that will be asked and prepare answers; these typically involve: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Have the draft statement reviewed by colleagues before the statement is released. Having a written statement helps to ensure that the information being released is accurate and consistent.

If news media personnel arrive on campus while students are in class, guide their activities so they will not disrupt the educational process. Media personnel should not be permitted to enter classrooms.

Don't presume to tell a reporter what is or isn't newsworthy. That decision is made by the reporters and their editors. And never -- absolutely never -- lie to a reporter. Tell the bad news quickly. It may be the only chance to set the record straight. Establish the division as the best source for information about the crisis. Protecting and enhancing the division's credibility is important.

Talk conversationally. Answer each question and then be silent. Be consistent with your statements. Don't embellish them and don't respond to media pressure to chat about an incident. If you are standing for the interview, don't back up, even though the microphone seems to be close at hand. Suggest that everyone sit down if you need "space."

Guard your students against such intrusions if grief is involved in the response. (However, if the media wants student or community viewpoint, it may be well to arrange for them to talk to the PTA president.)

Don't assume that information presented in an informal way is "off the record."

Reporters are under constant deadlines, but no deadline is so important that it's worth making an inaccurate statement. If a reporter says he/she has deadline problems, ask how long you have to get the information, and then try to obtain it within that amount of time.

It is best not to answer a query with "No comment." Instead, say, "I can't share that information with you right now, but I will call you as soon as I can release it. (And do call them). Or say, "I don't know the answer, but I should have it in an hour. Please call me. If you can't reveal information at all, tell the reporters why. Examples: Relatives of an injured student haven't been notified yet or revealing the identity of a witness would jeopardize an investigation.

After you provide the written statement to the media or answer subsequent questions, keep a media log of who you speak to and what you give them, whether it is the basic statement or a subsequent update. This allows you to track which medium and reporter received what information.

You may ask a reporter to see the story or your quotations before the article runs. If major story details are inaccurate in a newspaper story, you can ask for a correction. You may also call TV or radio reporters to tell them about inaccuracies.

The school division information officer will assist division and building administrators in handling interviews with news media and coordinate the flow of information. The information officer should be kept updated on any emergency.

Media DOs and DON'Ts

Do:

- Emphasize your good record.
- Be accurate and cooperate as best you can.
- Be prepared for and prepare in advance a response to questions which might violate confidentiality or hinder the police investigation.
- Insist that reporters respect the privacy rights of your students and staff.
- Speak to reporters in plain English -- not "educationese."
- Say so when you don't know the answer, then offer to find out and call the reporter back.

Don't:

- Don't try to keep the media out or "kill" a story.
- Don't say "no comment."
- Don't ad-lib.
- Don't speak "off the record."
- Don't speculate.
- Don't try to cover-up or blame anyone for anything.
- Don't repeat negative/misleading words.
- Don't play favorites among media.

Setting Limits with Media

In a school crisis, media should NOT --

- Be in the school building itself, particularly roaming the halls and/or the scene of a critical incident.
- Film deceased or injured students or staff.
- Film the family members of deceased or injured students or staff.
- Release the names of victims or perpetrators until after family notification.
- Obtain photographs of victims without explicit family permission.
- Intimidate students or staff with intrusive questions about the facts of the incident or their feelings about the event.
- Attend post-incident meetings intended to assist the school / community recover from trauma.

Strategies for Setting Limits

- Limit access to the school campus. Do not hesitate to use security personnel or, if necessary, the police.
- Direct media to an alternate location away from the school where media briefings and press conferences can be held.
- Deny admission to the press conference to any reporter who violates limits.
- Make sure teachers and parents emphasize with students that they are not required to talk with the media and assist them in preparing statements such as "Do not take my picture," "I have nothing to say," or "Please leave me alone."
- Do not permit media to attend any family or community meetings held after the event.

Victims Need to Know . . .

Even in a crisis situation, let victims know about their specific rights with respect to the media. Let victims know the following:

1. They do not have to talk to, pose for pictures or provide photographs to the media.
2. They can choose the time and the place for an interview -- it does not have to be immediate or at the media's convenience.
3. They can refuse to answer a question even if they already agreed to discuss the topic.
4. They have the right to ask to review a story before it goes to press or on the news although most media during a crisis situation may work on too tight a deadline for this.

In addition, quickly teach victims the difference between:

- a. "On the record" -- when everything they say is subject to publication;
- b. "Off the record" -- when nothing they say should be subject to publication, although unscrupulous reporters may publish it with impunity; or
- c. "For background only" -- where the information may be used without attribution to the victim. Emphasize that victims should make sure which rules they are being interviewed under prior to answering any questions.
- d. Techniques to shield their faces with coats, arms or whatever it takes to prevent the media from filming them.

F. Sample Communications Templates

SAMPLE FORMAT FOR PARENT COMMUNICATION RE: EMERGENCY PICK-UP

Parent Procedures for Picking up Children in an Emergency

In a letter or as part of the school parent handbook, the school should inform parents, in writing, about the proper procedures to follow in picking up a child/children in an emergency situation requiring a shut-down or evacuation of the school. It is assumed that bus transportation will be provided; however, many parents will want to pick up their children and the provisions listed below apply to such situations.

Among the types of information that might be contained in the letter are:

Emphasize that school is one of the safest places that students may be located during most crises or natural disasters.

Assurance that emergency procedures have been established. Include a general description of the procedures.

Assurance that students will be kept at school until the crisis is determined to be over. For example, a chemical spill may delay student release when there is risk of exposure.

Notification that under certain circumstances students may be evacuated to another site. An explanation of how parents will be notified or ways that they will be able to find out where their child is.

A request to NOT telephone the school and tie-up the few telephone lines that will be needed for emergency use. (Where capabilities exist, status reports might be posted on the school or school division Web site).

Notification that students will be released to parents who come to get them and a reminder of procedures for release to other authorized parties.

SAMPLE SCHOOL COMMUNICATION: INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF A CRISIS EVENT

TO:
FROM:

“We have just been advised of a tragedy involving a member(s) of our school. I am sad to announce that _____ has died/has been in a serious accident. As soon as we have more information, we will pass it on to you. People will be available in the building to help those of you who need extra support in dealing with this situation. Your teachers will advise you of the location and times available for this support.”

“As soon as we know the family’s/families’ wishes regarding _____ we will share that information with you. We ask that all students remain in their classrooms and adhere to their regular schedules.”

SAMPLE SCHOOL COMMUNICATION: ANNOUNCEMENT OF A STUDENT SUICIDE

To be read to the students by the classroom teacher.

TO: School Faculty
FROM: Principal
SUBJECT: (Crisis)
DATE:

I regret to inform you about sad news. John Doe committed suicide early Saturday morning. As a faculty we extend our sympathy to John's family and friends.

Please let your teachers know if you would like to talk to a counselor or other staff member.

Funeral services for John will be held in _____ and there will not be a memorial service in this area. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to (name and address).

SAMPLE PARENT COMMUNICATION: STUDENT DEATH

Unexpected student death – elementary

(adapted from letter developed by Chesapeake City Public Schools, Virginia)

Dear Parents,

Yesterday, we learned that one of our first graders, _____, died while in the hospital. _____ had a medical procedure over the past weekend. Complications set in after his parents took him home and he was taken back to the hospital where he died yesterday afternoon.

Today, at school, each teacher read a short message about _____ to his/her class. We discussed what happened and how _____ died. Our guidance counselor and our school psychologist were available throughout the day to talk with any student that may have had a particularly difficult time dealing with the news.

Any death is difficult for children to understand. _____'s death is particularly difficult due to his young age and its unexpectedness. We recommend that you take some time to discuss _____'s death with your child. We suggest allowing your child to talk about how he/she feels and any fears or concerns he/she may have as a result of hearing this news. We are enclosing a list of suggestions to help you talk with your child about _____'s death and/or the death of any loved one.

If you feel that your child would benefit from talking with our guidance counselor or our school psychologist, please call us at the school and share your concerns.

Sincerely,
School Principal

SAMPLE PARENT COMMUNICATION: BUS ACCIDENT

(adapted from letters developed by Chesapeake City and Hanover County Public Schools, Virginia)

Dear Parents,

This morning, prior to school, there was an accident involving a school bus and an automobile. There were known injuries to the passengers of the car. The children on Bus # _____ witnessed the aftermath of the accident, but were not involved in it.

The children from the bus involved in the accident were taken to the library by the guidance counselors and administration. The children were asked if they were injured in any way and their parents were then contacted. Your child, because of being on Bus # _____ may show delayed reaction to the accident. Please be alert over the next several days to symptoms of delayed reaction, including:

- A desire to be alone, unusually quiet.
- Loss of appetite.
- Problems with sleeping, nightmares.
- Difficulty with concentration.
- Crying.
- Angry outburst, short temper.
- Headaches, upset stomach.

If your child exhibits any physical complaints, please contact (principal's name) to fill out an accident report. The school will offer support services for students needing help dealing with the accident. We will also provide counseling services to parents in helping their children to cope. Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns. (Give school phone number.)

Sincerely,
Principal of School

SAMPLE NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS REGARDING SCHOOL EVACUATION

Date Released:
Time Released:
Released by:

Because of the incident at (School Name Here), the students, faculty and staff have been evacuated to an alternate location as a preliminary measure.

(School Name Here) has been relocated to (New Location Name Here).

(Repeat this information for as many schools as may be involved.)

Parents are instructed to pick up their children at the alternate location. Do not attempt to pick up children at their regular school. Please meet your child at the alternate location. All other schools and school facilities are unaffected. Parents and citizens are urged not to interfere in the operation of those schools by calling on the telephone or by personal visits. Your cooperation in this matter is expected and appreciated.

SAMPLE NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS REGARDING SCHOOL LOCKDOWN

All school personnel have been trained in lockdown procedures. They will be doing their best to ensure that all students are being held in a safe location on campus. Our goal is safe care, custody, and accountability of children.

SECTION VII:

New Challenges in Crises Planning

In a lockdown, we will not be able to answer incoming phone calls or make outside calls. Within minutes we will be assisted by police, who will secure the neighboring streets and the building perimeter. No one, including parents, will be allowed near the school during a lockdown.

Students will be kept inside locked classrooms. No one will be allowed to leave the classrooms/secure areas on campus until the lockdown is lifted. All students and faculty/staff will remain in the lockdown mode until the police department lifts the lockdown. When the lockdown is lifted, parents may come to school to pick up their children.

VII. New Challenges in Crises Planning

A. Terrorism

General Information

The terrorist attacks in September 2001 have brought to light the need for school crisis management plans to include strategies to protect students and staff in the event of subsequent attacks. Two key variables in responding to a terrorist attack are the nature of the terrorist threat and how much warning time that is available. In all cases of terrorist threat school officials should establish and maintain close communication with local public safety officials.

Types of Terrorist Attacks

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) categorizes terrorism in the United States as one of two types—domestic terrorism or international terrorism.

Domestic Terrorism: Involves groups or individuals whose terrorist activities are directed at elements of our government or population without foreign direction.

International Terrorism: Involves groups or individuals whose terrorist activities are foreign-based and/or directed by countries or groups outside the United States or whose activities transcend national boundaries.

Schools clearly fit the definition of a “soft target” . . . An attack on our educational system would have a devastating emotional and economic effect on America. And it is not unforeseeable except to those who do not wish to acknowledge and deal with it for political and image reasons.

- Kenneth Trump, President, National Safety and Security Service in testimony before Homeland Security Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, May 17, 2007

Weapons of Mass Destruction

According to the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) likely to be used by terrorists fall into four categories: 1) conventional, 2) chemical, 3) biological, and 4) nuclear. Some preliminary considerations are set forth below:

Conventional Weapons

Conventional weapons include bombs and other explosive devices. The goal is to place students and staff in a protected space and/or to increase the distance from the blast area. Possibilities include:

- Move to basement rooms, if possible.
- Move to interior hallways, away from windows, closing doors to exterior rooms.
- Students/staff assume “duck and cover” position.
- Shut off gas utilities.

If school buildings themselves are targeted, evacuation to other schools or community spaces such as community centers or churches should be considered.

Release students to their parents / other authorized persons in accordance with emergency release procedures.

Chemical Weapons:

Chemical agents are poisonous gases, liquids or solids that have toxic effects on people, animals or plants. Most chemical agents cause serious injuries or death.

The goal is to limit exposure to contaminated air.

In the absence of gas masks which are not available in sufficient quantity and present other practical problems, get all students into buildings, close all windows and doors, and shut off heat, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

Ground level spaces are preferable to basement areas because vapors may settle and become trapped in basements.

Decisions to evacuate should be based on reliable information from public safety officials about the location of the chemical release and the direction and speed of winds carrying the agent toward or away from the school.

If students are released to parents, procedures to minimize the penetration of airborne substances must be employed.

Biological Weapons:

Biological agents are organisms or toxins that have illness-producing effects on people, livestock and crops. They can be dispersed as aerosols or airborne particles.

Biological weapons present a particular challenge because symptoms may not present for days or weeks following exposure. Schools must rely on medical expertise in the development of procedures for responding to biological attack. Consider the following:

- If an attack is identified while it is occurring, schools should get students into buildings, close all doors and windows, and shut down HVAC systems. Just as with chemical weapons, the goal is to prevent or reduce exposure to the substance.
- Release students to their parents / other authorized persons in accordance with emergency release procedures.
- Because many biological weapons are contagious, school will likely be closed after an attack, pending clearance by medical authorities.

Nuclear Weapons

Just as with conventional weapons, the goal is to place students and staff in a protected space and / or to increase the distance from the blast area. Such weapons present a threat of not only blast effect but also exposure to radiation. Possibilities include:

- Move to basement rooms, if possible.
- Move to interior hallways, away from windows, closing doors to exterior rooms.
- Students/staff assume “duck and cover” position.

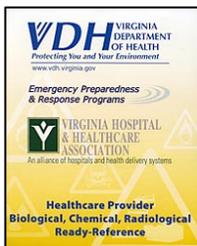
Shut off gas utilities.

Release students to their parents / other authorized persons in accordance with emergency release procedures.

Key Information Resources

Ready-Reference on Biological, Chemical and Radiological Release

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) has prepared the *Healthcare Provider Biological, Chemical, Radiological Ready-Reference* containing useful information for healthcare providers to respond to release of chemical, biological, or radiological agents that can cause illness or death. Included are an overview for healthcare providers, fact sheets, information on reportable diseases, and reporting and managing mass fatality events. The publication can be requested from VDH at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/EPR/ReadyReference/OrderReadyReference.asp/>



Healthcare Provider Biological, Chemical, Radiological Ready-Reference

A reference created by the Virginia Department of Health contains useful information for healthcare providers to respond to release of chemical, biological, or radiological agents that can cause illness or death. Included are an overview for healthcare providers, fact sheets, information on reportable diseases, and reporting and managing mass fatality events.

Request the guide online from the VDH at:

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/EPR/ReadyReference/OrderReadyReference.asp>



Examples of Diseases and Exposures Potentially Associated with Terrorism. Virginia Department of Health.

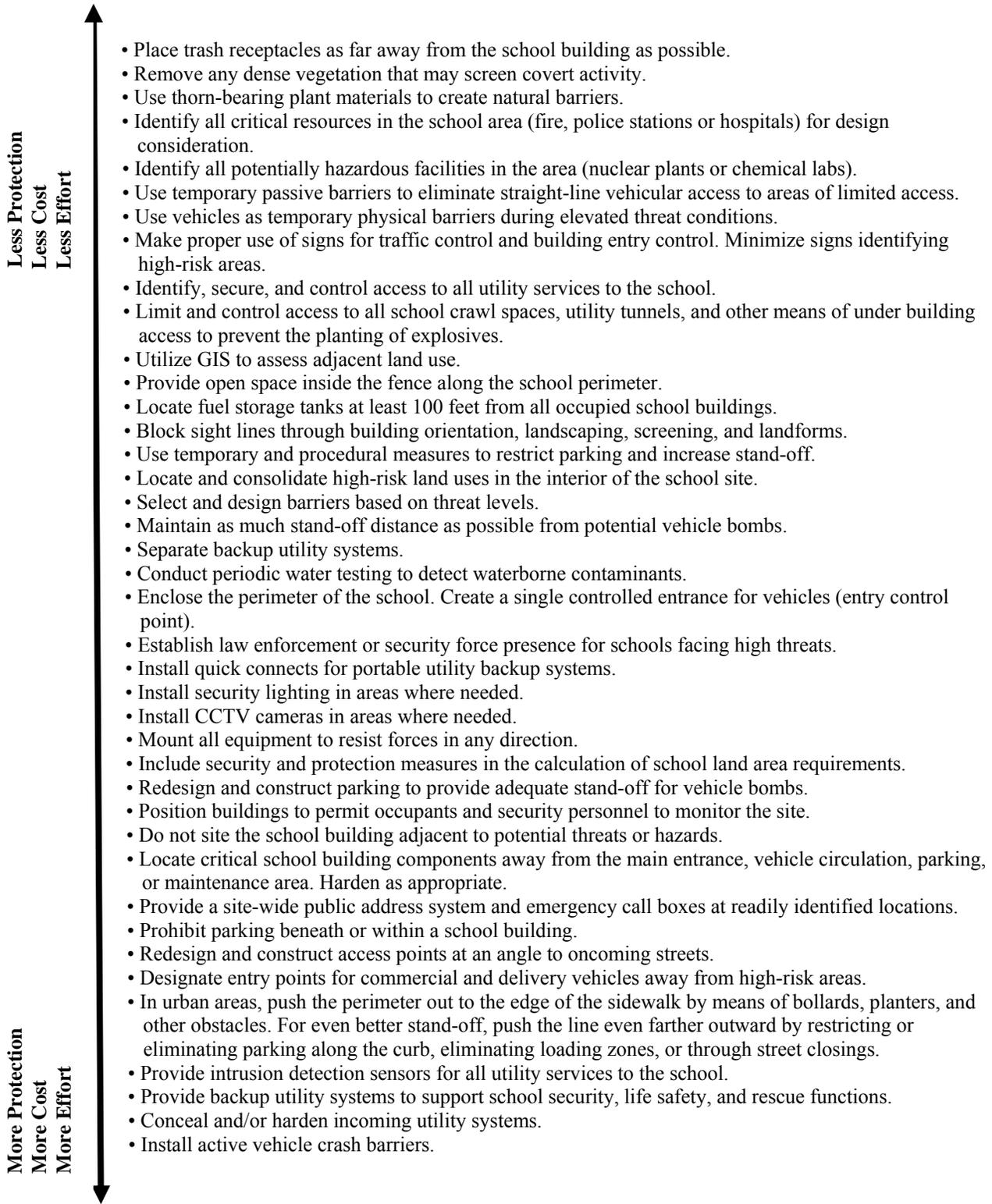
A wallet card providing basic information to help citizens learn how they can protect themselves during a public health emergency. It includes a section for families to fill in health and emergency information.

Available online at:

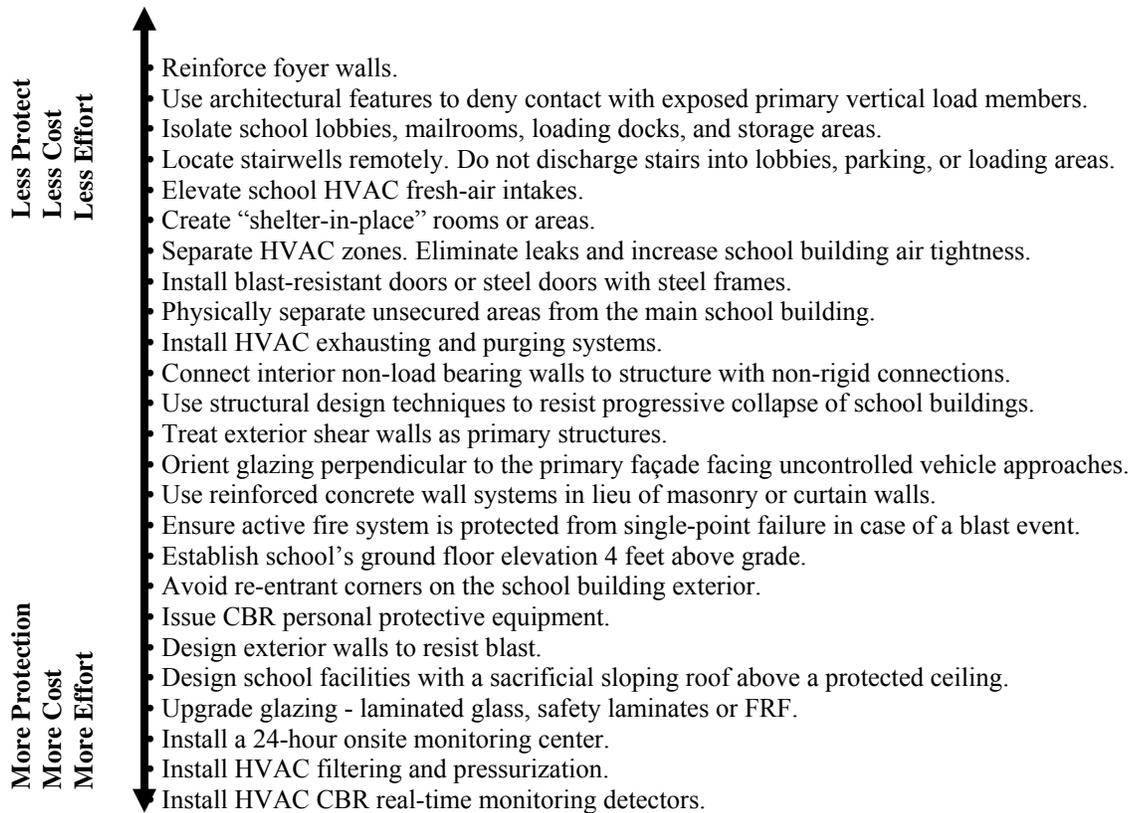
<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/news/PressReleases/PDFs/2004/041204Zcard.pdf>

School Design Primer

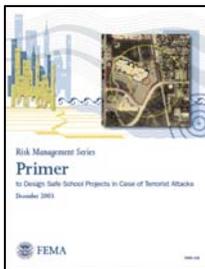
The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) has prepared a comprehensive *Primer to Design Safe Schools Projects in Case of Terrorist Attacks*. The 305-page publication focuses largely on physical and structural aspects of preventing or mitigating damages from a direct terrorist attack. Shown on the following pages are numerous strategies discussed in the publication, organized on a continuum ranging from strategies providing less to more protection, cost, and effort.



Continued on next page



Source: *Primer to Design Safe School Projects in Case of Terrorist Attacks*. FEMA.



Primer to Design Safe School Projects in Case of Terrorist Attacks

A guide to provide community and school administrators with the basic principles and techniques to design a school safe from terrorist attacks. Includes a building vulnerability checklist that includes questions and guidance related to site, architecture, structural systems, building envelope, utility, mechanical, plumbing, gas, electrical, fire alarm, communications/IT, and security systems.

Download from FEMA at:

<http://www.fema.gov/pdf/plan/prevent/rms/428/fema428.pdf>



Additional Resources

Guidance for Filtration and Air-Cleaning Systems to Protect Building Environments from Airborne Chemical, Biological or Radiological Attacks, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

A guide schools may use to reinstate and maintain healthy filtration and air-cleaning systems. The guide will help schools to ensure a healthy ventilation system before and after disasters.

Accessible at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2003-136/>

Uncommon Sense, Uncommon Courage: How the New York City School, System, Its Teachers, Leadership, and Students Responded To the Terror of September 11

The report discusses what actually took place during the terror attacks of 9/11, in an in-depth report presented by the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. *Uncommon Sense, Uncommon Courage* describes how school and emergency personnel successfully evacuated 9,000 students from eight schools, ensuring that every child returned home safely and was reunited with loved ones. The report covers actions taken and lessons learned on a variety of topics, with a focus on response and recovery. It is the result of interviews during an 18-month period, beginning shortly after the attacks. Emergency responders, public health officials, the New York City School Board, educators and administrators all contributed to the report.

Accessible at http://www.ncdp.mailman.columbia.edu/files/9_11reportASSESSMENT.pdf

Guide for Responding to Mental Health Issues Arising from Trauma

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) has developed the *Guide for Intermediate and Long-Term Mental Health Services after School-Related Violent Events*. This document provides guidelines for school staff and community mental health personnel to establish and maintain immediate, intermediate, and longer-term mental health recovery services necessary to restore the social and emotional equilibrium and well-being of students and staff after violent events. The publication can be accessed at: <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/NMH03-0151/>

SAMHSA also has a series of informational items on *Coping with Traumatic Events* available at <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/TraumaticEvents/tips.asp/>

Tips for Parents

[Parent Guidelines for Talking with Young Children about War and Terrorism](#) urges parents to give children more attention and patience. Realize that changes in how they behave may be signs that young children are concerned and need extra time, conversation and love.

[Talking with School-Age Children about War and Terrorism](#) suggests that before talking with children, parents take time to think about the issue themselves and consider what it means to their family.

[Parent Guidelines for Talking with Teenagers about War and Terrorism](#) informs parents that teenagers may want to discuss issues more than once or may have different sets of questions for them at different

times. Be open, available and positive in order to create an environment that supports communication among all members of the family.

Tips for Teachers

[Tips for Supporting children during Times of War: A Guide for Teachers](#) suggests ways that teachers can support the mental health of their students during traumatic times.

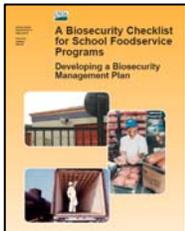
[Questions to Help Children Talk About a Disaster](#) provides examples of "open-ended" questions to encourage children to talk about their feelings and experiences following a disaster.

[Tips for Talking to Children After a Disaster: A Guide for Parents and Teachers](#) explains how preschool age, early childhood, and adolescent children may respond to terrorist events. The link is intended for parents and teachers to be informed, recognize problems, and respond appropriately to the needs of children.

Food Security Resources

Comprehensive emergency plans include *food safety* and *food defense* management. Effective food safety planning protects against *unintentional* contamination as a result of inappropriate handling, storage or delivery of food or water, or situations that are beyond the control of the school, such as electrical outages that may lead to spoiled food or the loss of a clean water supply. Effective food defense planning, on the other hand, protects against intentional contamination of the introduction of chemical or biological hazards into food, water or facilities by individuals seeking to harm students or staff.

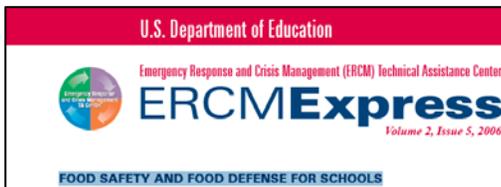
Key Resources on Biosecurity



School Food Biosecurity Guidelines. US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service.

Guidelines include suggestions on how to form a school foodservice biosecurity management team, how to identify and respond to intentional foodborne disease outbreaks, use a checklist to prioritize suggestions for strengthening biosecurity inside and outside the primary foodservice area, and create a school foodservice biosecurity management plan.

Available online at: <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/biosecurity.pdf>



Food Safety and Food Defense for Schools. ERCM Express, Vol. 2., No. 5 (2006).

Includes information on assessing food service hazards, implementing strategies to enhance food defense, and incorporating strategies into a school's emergency plan.

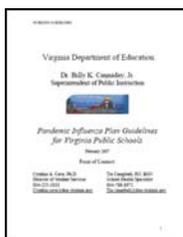
Available online at <http://www.ercm.org>

B. Pandemic Flu

Key Resource for Pandemic Planning

The Virginia Department of Education has developed *Pandemic Influenza Plan Guidelines for Virginia Public Schools* as a resource for local school administrators and staff in developing pandemic influenza plans for their respective school divisions. The *Guidelines* document has been designed as a fluid document being updated on an ongoing basis in accordance with best-available information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The most current version should be used as a primary planning resource and accessed at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/studentsrvcs/panflu.pdf/>

Key Resources for Responding to Pandemic Flu

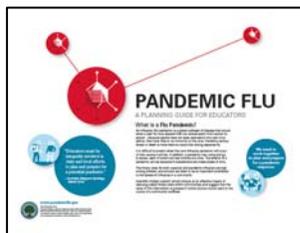


Pandemic Influenza Plan Guidelines for Virginia Public Schools
(Working Guidelines - February 2007) Virginia Department of Education.

Guidelines are designed to assist local school administrators in developing pandemic influenza plans. Guidance includes specific considerations for each phase of the pandemic regarding access control; surveillance and screening; infection control and precautions; communication methods for staff, parents, and community; vaccine delivery; and administration of antiviral medication.

Available online at:

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/studentsrvcs/panflu.pdf>

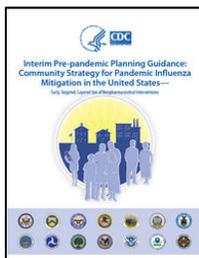


Pandemic Flu: A Planning Guide for Educators

The Guide identifies issues to consider when planning for seasonal flu, a mild or moderate pandemic flu, or a severe pandemic. It tells what a "flu pandemic" is, how influenza spreads, and what can be done to limit the spread of the flu.

Available online at:

<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/pandemic/planning-guide/planning-guide.pdf>



Community Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Mitigation

CDC guidelines on actions, designed primarily to reduce contact between people, that community government and health officials can take to try to limit the spread of infection should a pandemic flu develop. Appendices 5, 6, and 7 contain information for childcare programs, elementary schools, and colleges and universities.

Available online at:

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/commitigation.html>

The following are excerpts from *Pandemic Influenza Plan Guidelines for Virginia Public Schools* (Working Guidelines, February 2007). Available at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/studentsrvcs/panflu.pdf/>

School Division Preparation and Planning for an Outbreak

In planning for a pandemic, the first steps for a school division are to evaluate its current emergency management crisis plan and to ensure that a school division crisis team is in place. A checklist from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is included in **Appendix A**. The CDC School District (K-12) Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist provides a framework to begin an internal assessment. The school division should:

- Identify members of the crisis team, including, but not limited to: community stakeholders, local businesses, local emergency response agencies, public health, mental health, faith-based organizations, parents, school administration, registered school nurse, school psychologist, school counselor, teachers, students, information and communication technology, food services, transportation, and environmental/facility services.
- Appoint a pandemic influenza plan coordinator and co-coordinator.
- School divisions will maintain a crisis response team to address the emotional needs of students, faculty and staff in the event of a pandemic threat or actual event that causes serious illness or death.
- Make the practice of reviewing and updating crisis plans a priority in each school.
- Partner closely with the local health director to establish communication procedures for surveillance of disease.
- Require school administrators to become knowledgeable of the Virginia Department of Health Pandemic Influenza Web site: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/PandemicFlu>.
- Establish a chain of command and alternates, to include: an appropriate organization chart for the school division, clearly defined responsibilities, specific flow of power, and communication networks and methods.

School divisions' human resource or personnel departments should develop a Pandemic Illness Personnel Policy to address the following issues as they pertain to a period of pandemic in the community:

- Sick leave.
- Salary and benefits.
- Staff absenteeism/shortages.
- Payroll issues during prolonged closures.
- Telecommuting.

School divisions' instruction or curriculum departments should determine and plan ways to maintain continuity of student learning in periods of school closure or during prolonged student absences. Consider students who do not have access to the Internet or have computers.

Pandemic Influenza Crisis Team Responsibilities

- Develop the preparedness and pandemic response plan using the World Health Organization (WHO) phases.
- Identify school authorities responsible for activating the pandemic influenza plan.
- Consider and provide sufficient and accessible infection prevention supplies:
 - Soap, alcohol-based hand hygiene products, masks, tissues and appropriate receptacles.
- Consider provision of sufficient school operation supplies (food, cleaning supplies, paper supplies) during a pandemic when schools are open.

- Develop a process with the local public health director to report a substantial increase in absenteeism among students and faculty.
- Develop an Incident Command System within each school to manage the pandemic influenza plan, including senior administration, health services, communications, safety, engineering, and security.
- Identify methods to reduce the spread of the virus.
- Plan for the care of students who are ill and determine when ill students may return to school.
- Plan for continuity of operations and identify essential services.
- Communicate the plan to division administrative staff, school staff, parents/guardians, students, and the community.
- Provide information to families for development of individual family plans.
- Plan for the delivery of educational services in the event that a significant number of staff become ill.
- Plan for the orderly closure of school operations, ongoing instruction, and eventual school reopening.
- Coordinate school closure with surrounding school divisions.
- Plan for the care of international students in Virginia's schools.
- Plan for the use of school facilities by community partners during the pandemic if the schools are closed.
- Plan the communication process for sharing information strategies, and decisions with local agencies and local government.
- Test the plan.

School Building Administration Responsibilities

When the division pandemic influenza/crisis plan has been updated or developed, it must be communicated to:

- School administration and staff.
- Parents.
- Students.
- Local agencies.
- School community.

Communication to Employees

- Review the school crisis plan, including the pandemic influenza plan, with all building employees.
- In advance, provide up-to-date and reliable pandemic influenza information.
- Communicate and educate faculty/staff on the basic ways to stay healthy and reduce chances of contracting influenza.
- Share communication methods and processes.
- Establish building procedures for providing information to the public and news media.
- Test the building plan.

Communication to Student/Parents/Guardians

- Provide information about the division/school's pandemic preparedness and response plan.
- Provide rapid and accurate communications.

- Disseminate information to parents about the potential impact of a pandemic on school functioning such as arranging for childcare and continuity of instruction should schools be closed.
- Provide parents tips for planning for a pandemic.
- Provide a checklist as appropriate. See www.pandemicflu.gov/
- Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate communications, taking care to meet the needs of all students/families with special needs.

Pandemic Influenza Outbreak Response

Information regarding the occurrence of a pandemic in a community will be provided by the state and local health departments and others designated by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Virginia's response to a pandemic will be guided by the World Health Organization (WHO) phase declaration. This response will include specific considerations during each phase of the pandemic regarding surveillance, vaccine delivery, administration of antiviral medication, and communications. Local school divisions must take action at each phase, particularly with respect to school-based containment measures. The following provides recommendations for activities in response to WHO phases.

Interpandemic Period

When cases of an Epidemic Respiratory Infection are occurring in countries other than the United States, but have yet to be reported domestically or in neighboring countries, it is recommended that the local school division take these actions:

Access Control

- Develop a policy that enables school administrators to control access to the buildings.
- Each school should have a plan to lock down certain entrances and exits and to monitor others, if necessary.
- Identify a main entrance and an indoor screening area where students and staff will be screened prior to moving to classrooms or other areas of the building for each school.
- Develop a plan to close down or curtail bus transportation when necessary.

Surveillance, Screening and Triage

During all stages of a pandemic flu outbreak, it will be essential to monitor and document the number of students and faculty who are absent and meet the definition of influenza-like illness. Keeping track of these numbers will help school and health officials determine when and whether to close schools, whether the epidemic is increasing in scope and whether to declare an epidemic, making schools eligible to apply for reimbursement of ADA funds during increased absenteeism.

- Building-level school health services personnel (registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, nursing assistants, or principal's designee) will develop a plan to screen all students and staff. Younger children may be observed by health services personnel for cough. Older children may be asked the following question: "Do you have a new cough that has developed over the last 10 days?"
- School health services personnel will provide staff and students who have a new cough with tissues. Surgical masks are not appropriate for all situations, but for specific health care settings (school health office).

- School health services personnel will document screening data and review each week for analysis of trends.
- The school nurse will evaluate individuals who have a new cough or fever (temperature ≥ 100.4) and place all individuals who have fever and a new cough on droplet precautions, pending further evaluation.
- Students who have been identified as ill will be placed in an identified isolation room for sick children until picked up by parents.
- Local school division health services staff have the authority to restrict individuals (staff and students) who have fever and a new cough from work, class, or any other group gathering. They also have the authority to send any student or staff home that they suspect may have a communicable disease that puts others in the school at risk. The legal authority is found in the *Code of Virginia* §22.1-272, Contagious and infectious diseases, and is accessible online at: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+22.1-272>.
- Absenteeism will be monitored for any trends. School health staff will work with school administrators, social workers and attendance clerks to monitor absentee trends. Significant trends will be reported to the School Nurse Coordinator or School Health Contract Person, who will inform the Superintendent and the local health department.
- Infection control posters will be placed at all school entrances and common areas to encourage all persons entering the school buildings to self-screen. Posters are available for downloading on the Virginia Department of Health Web site: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/PandemicFlu/Schools.asp>.
 - Poster information will include health tips for protection against the spread of the flu and other germs and viruses.
- The School Health Services Nurse Coordinator will monitor national, regional, and local data related to epidemic respiratory infections. Information will be posted on the Virginia Department of Health's Pandemic Flu Web site at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/PandemicFlu>.

Infection control/Precautions

- All staff, students, and visitors will use droplet precautions (private room and surgical mask within 3 feet of ill person) for all contact with any individual who has a new cough and fever, until a diagnosis of a non-contagious respiratory illness, or an infection requiring a higher level of precautions is made.
- If students, staff or visitors present with symptoms while at school, they should be provided a mask while awaiting transportation away from the facility.
- School staff will ask persons who have a new cough to wear a surgical mask or use tissues to cover their mouth and nose when coughing, and to use proper hand hygiene during the time they need to be in the school building (Note: wearing a surgical mask is not a guarantee of protection in a general setting).
- Wash hands thoroughly and often: use soap and water and wash for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers when hand washing is not possible. It is advised that all classrooms have alcohol-based hand sanitizers available for use by students and staff.
- Schools will advise all persons, including staff, students, and visitors, who have fever and cough to defer attending or visiting the school until their illness has resolved.
- If an isolation room is in use, a precaution sign will be placed on the door.
- Schools will maintain adequate supplies of surgical masks, waterless hand rub, surface cleaners and disinfectants, and tissues throughout public areas, classrooms, and meeting rooms and in the school health offices. All surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected with an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered household disinfectant labeled for activity against bacteria and viruses, an EPA-registered hospital disinfectant, or EPA-registered chlorine bleach/hypochlorite solution. Labeled instructions should always be followed when using any of

these disinfectants. The Maintenance Facilities Department of each school division will provide this disinfectant to the schools in an appropriately labeled container.

- Maintain appropriate inventories of supplies.
- Protocols for waste disposal must be developed.
- Schools will display hand-washing posters and cover your cough posters in high-traffic areas and classrooms. Posters available at: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/PandemicFlu/Schools.asp>.
- Provide frequent training for school staff in procedures and protocols.

Communication/Education

School divisions will develop an effective and sustainable plan for communication and promotion of messages relating to epidemic respiratory infections to internal and external audiences.

- Infection control measures will be reviewed with staff, annually, as well as strategies for communicating information to health services providers in the event of an epidemic respiratory infection.
- Translation services for languages in the represented student population will be provided.
- A variety of media may be used to communicate with the school community including: newsletters, take-home flyers, messages on school menus, Web sites, school TV channels, county TV channels, and phone hotlines. (Samples are provided in Appendix A of the *Guidelines*.)

Additional Preparedness Activities

The following recommendations are for **regular** influenza season. Routine vaccination against seasonal influenza establishes good health practices and may boost the immune system during a pandemic flu outbreak. There will be a separate vaccination campaign that may take place during a pandemic.

- School divisions will encourage influenza vaccination during the influenza season to reduce morbidity from seasonal influenza transmission in school staff.
- All eligible staff will be offered the opportunity to receive influenza vaccine. School divisions can collaborate with local health departments for this service. School nurses in collaboration with local health departments can hold vaccination clinics on designated days.
- School divisions can provide staff with information for local clinics providing the influenza vaccine.
- Educational and promotional materials can be provided to school staff to promote availability and desirability of influenza vaccine for all ages.
- The school division Emergency Planning Team and School Nurse Coordinator will monitor communications from public health officials to review changes in recommendations about screening criteria and will communicate changes to school nurses and administrators by e-mail or telephone.

Pandemic Alert Period

In the event that a case of pandemic influenza affects a community member or a close contact of a community member of your school division, activities will be modified to reflect increased risk of exposure and disease spread within the school community. The following recommendations should be addressed in the event that a case of pandemic influenza is suspected, or has been confirmed, but there is no documented community spread of the disease.

Activities are cumulative through the phases, and therefore, those activities from the Interpandemic Period should be carried over to this phase and supplement the recommendations below.

Access Control

- Review the need to restrict the use of school facilities and group activities within school buildings. This decision will be made by the School Division Superintendent in consultation with the local Health Department Director.
- Implement applicable portions of the access control plan created in the Interpandemic Period.

Surveillance, Screening and Triage

- Infection control signs will be posted at all entrances, and in all common areas (in dormitories, libraries, gymnasiums, auditoriums, cafeterias, classrooms, restrooms).
- Persons who self-identify with cough, fever or flu symptoms will be instructed to don surgical masks and should go to the school health office for clinical evaluation.
- Health services personnel who suspect, after initial clinical evaluation, that a person may have an epidemic respiratory infection, will immediately contact the School Nurse Coordinator or Health Services Contact Person and the local health department.
- Staff and students who have had contact with suspected patients must register with health services and be screened daily for fever or respiratory symptoms.
- Surveillance will increase for individuals and groups as indicated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the local health department. Staff and students will be screened by use of questionnaires and physical assessment.

Infection Control/Precautions

- Airborne, droplet, and contact precautions are required for all contact with any person who has screened as a possible influenza case, until an alternate diagnosis is made.
- Droplet precautions will be required for any person who has a new cough and fever (100.4 or higher), but no risk factors for pandemic influenza, until a diagnosis of a non-contagious respiratory illness, or an infection requiring a higher level of precautions, is made. School Health Services personnel have the authority to exclude any individual with a new cough and fever until a diagnosis of non-contagious respiratory illness is made.

Communication/Education

- Communicate, to the community, the criteria for school closure or curtailed operations.
- Provide timely and accurate information to parents.
- Post designated staff members at high-traffic areas, onsite, to answer questions and direct persons to the school health office for evaluation, as needed.
- Local school divisions, in collaboration with the local health department, will keep the community informed and provide education about disease prevention and symptom surveillance through activities outlined in the interpandemic period.

Additional Preparedness Activities

- The local school division emergency pandemic team will meet daily to review the situation and school system strategies. They will evaluate the effectiveness of implemented activities and make recommendations for change, as indicated.

Pandemic Period

When there is evidence of institutional transmission of pandemic influenza or if there is widespread human-to-human transmission in the local community, the school division will enter the highest level of alert, with restrictions on access to the facilities and buildings.

At this level the school divisions will consider implementing the following actions:

Access Control

- All entrances to the schools will be locked except for the main entrance.
- Entry into schools will be restricted to the following people:
 1. Staff and students.
 2. Parents/guardians of students.
 3. Authorized emergency response personnel.
- Cafeteria activities may be suspended or modified.
 1. A plan should be developed for delivering meals to students if the cafeteria or group-style dining is closed.
 2. Delivery of box or bag meals to the classrooms with the assistance of school staff may be necessary.
- There may be some degree of suspension of activities, including sporting events, arts performances, and classes as determined by the local school division superintendent in consultation with the local health department director.
- Gatherings of groups larger than normal class size may be limited during the school day (e.g., assemblies, recess).
- Student spacing may be necessary. This refers to placing distance between individuals to reduce the spread of the virus between people. Education regarding student spacing should be provided to all staff, students and parents.
- An appropriate room for isolation should have been designated and will be utilized at this time. Access to this room should be strictly limited and monitored.
- Bus transportation for students, on and off campus, may be consolidated or suspended. In some instances, staggered bus routes should be considered to decrease the number of students on each bus.
- Bus drivers should be trained and authorized to use a screening process and infection control procedures. They should have the authority to deny boarding of sick students or to have students sit in a designated area on the bus and wear a mask.
- A bus may be designated to transport sick students home.
- Parents should be made aware of the policies for transporting students.
- The decision to close a school division may be made as a means to prevent further spread of an epidemic, or in response to high student and/or staff absenteeism by the superintendent in consultation with the local emergency pandemic team and/or the local health department director.
- The decision to close a school must always be communicated to the parents and community in a timely manner.

Surveillance, Screening and Triage

- Students and staff who have a fever and cough will be asked to stay home. Absences should be reported to the school attendance office.
- Those allowed into the school building will be screened for fever or cough and have their temperatures taken. Each person cleared to enter the building will be given something to indicate that they are free to enter the building (e.g., a sticker, a card, a stamp on their hand).
- Students who are identified as having fever or cough will be instructed to don a surgical mask, use waterless hand rub, and go to a designated isolation area to be picked up by a parent/guardian.
- Adults and students accompanied by an adult may be excluded from entry into the school and instructed to call their health care providers for advice and evaluation.
- In a state-operated residential school, after clinical evaluation, a student who has fever or cough may be allowed to remain at the school with precautions unless the student requires further medical evaluation. The superintendent, in consultation with the local health director, will develop the policy.
- The name and phone number/address of all persons seen with fever and new cough will be recorded and reported daily to the local school division school nurse coordinator or school nurse supervisor. This information will be shared with the local health department.
- If a person warrants medical evaluation, health services staff should alert the appropriate medical resource that a suspect case needs evaluation so that the referral center can make arrangements for infection control precautions.

Infection Control/Precautions

- Adequate supplies of personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer and tissues will be maintained throughout each school in the division. The local school purchasing department will ensure the maintenance of stock.
- Students and staff who have had contact with suspected patients should be screened daily for fever or respiratory symptoms by school health staff.
- Wash hands often. Hand washing is the best protection against infection.
- Cover your cough. Use the “elbow salute” for coughs and sneezes.
- During seasonal influenza, get the flu shot. This is not protection from avian influenza but keeps individuals and the population in optimum health and therefore better able to resist an infection like avian flu.
- Employees and students who have flu or flu-like symptoms should not come to school.
- In a school residential setting, students with fever and cough should be isolated from other students including exclusion from all events (sports, classes, group meals) until a diagnosis is confirmed. If the student shares a room with other students, arrangements should be made for the student to be given a private room (for example, to remain in health services in a private patient room or in an empty dorm room). Arrangements should be made to provide the students with necessary items, including meals, water, and items for hygiene.
- Student spacing strategies may be employed to decrease contact with students who may be infected but not exhibiting symptoms.
 1. It is recommended that students’ desks be spaced three (3) feet apart.
 2. Discourage prolonged congregation in hall ways and lunch rooms.
 3. Stagger school schedules.
 4. Stagger bus routes, so there are fewer people on each bus.
 5. Limit group activities and interaction between classes.
 6. Cancel gym class, choir or other school activities that place individuals in close proximity.

- Alter school cleaning routines by maintenance staff.
 1. Disinfect shared work areas, counters, restrooms, door knobs and stair railings more frequently during the influenza pandemic.
 2. The school health office and holding areas for ill children should be cleaned at least twice each day.
 3. Air conditioning system filters should be cleaned and changed frequently.
 4. Telephones should not be shared.
 5. Specialized cleaning solutions are not essential. Standard cleaning products are adequate (including soap and water) and can disinfect surfaces. The frequency of cleaning is most important.
 6. During the day, where operationally possible, increase ventilation to the facility to decrease spread of disease. Following each school day, the school should be thoroughly ventilated and cleaned: opening all doors and windows or turning the air conditioning/heating systems up.

Communication/Education

- Updates will be provided by the school division emergency pandemic team to the community, parents, students and staff on a daily basis or more often, as needed, on the progress of the pandemic and its effects.
- If schools are closed, parents and students will be advised as to how classroom assignments are to be continued, completed and submitted for grading.
- If schools are closed, parents and students will be notified about reopening procedures.
- In the event of prolonged school closure or repeated school closures, parents and students will be notified about any changes that will occur in grading policies, testing and graduation requirements, in a timely manner.
- Upon reopening, the emergency pandemic team will ensure debriefing of administration, staff, parents and students. Every effort should be made to have additional mental health resources available for the successful transition of students and staff back into the school setting and a normal routine.
- Upon reopening, the school division should remain on heightened alert, replenish an adequate supply of all needed materials and be prepared for additional waves of disease.

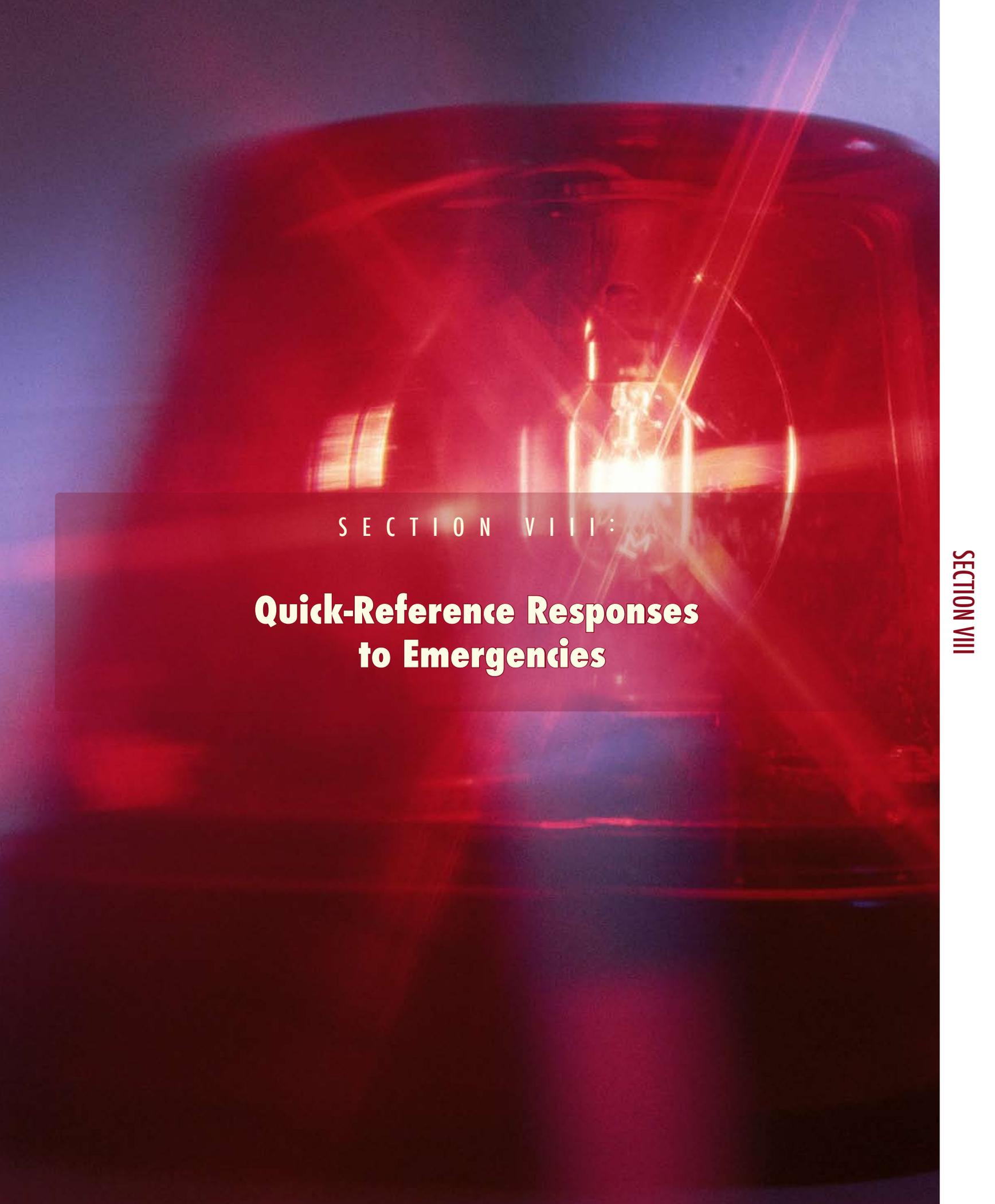
Conclusion

Pandemic influenza could have a devastating effect on the citizens of the Commonwealth. If a pandemic were to occur, we should expect tremendous disruption to our daily activities, the procurement of supplies, and to business and government operations. The work force could be greatly reduced. Planning for a pandemic, in advance of the actual event, will assist in fostering heightened awareness, personal preparation, and the ability to maintain as near-normal functioning as possible.

Each school division should develop their own respective plan, based upon local school policy. The emergency pandemic team should be composed of members that represent all aspects of the local community. The plan should be communicated to all stakeholders and practiced in order to identify areas of weakness needing further study and improvement.

The Virginia *Guidelines* also contain the following sample forms for use in communicating with parents and staff:

- Pandemic Influenza: Health Tips
- Sample Letter: Prevention and Information
- Sample Letter: First Bird Case
- Sample Letter: Initial Pandemic Flu Outbreak
- Sample Letter: Expanded Outbreak
- Sample Letter: School Closure
- Sample Letter: School Re-opens
- VDOE Tips for Parents
- CDC Pandemic Flu Planning: Checklist for Individuals and Families
- CDC Child Care and Preschool Pandemic Information Planning Checklist
- CDC School District (K-12) Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist



SECTION VIII:

**Quick-Reference Responses
to Emergencies**

VIII. Quick-Reference Responses to Emergencies

Crisis management plans are best developed in light of conditions and resources of particular school divisions and individual schools. What is important in crisis management is that preparation occurs and that the plan “works” for a particular school or school division.

Provided in this chapter are sample procedures for responding to a variety of emergencies. Consistent with the purpose of this *Resource Guide*, the sample procedures are offered for review and consideration and are not intended to be prescriptive.

This chapter begins with a section on Basic Response Procedures that might be used across multiple types of emergencies. Subsequent sample procedures are organized into four categories and listed alphabetically by type of emergency within each of the four categories. Numerous sample procedures included here were excerpted or adapted from the crisis plans of Virginia school divisions.

Overview of Content

A. Basic Response Procedures

- Evacuation Procedures
- Lockdown Procedures
- Shelter-in-Place Procedures

B. Events Affecting Schools

- Accidents
- Deaths
- Perceived Crises

C. Critical Incidents At or Affecting Schools

- Bio-Hazard Threats
- Bomb
- Bomb Threat
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- Disaster Planning
- Disaster Preventing Dismissal
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D. Medical/Health Emergencies

- General Health Emergency Procedures
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E. Weather Emergencies/Disasters

- Developing a Severe Weather
Emergency Plan for Your School
- Earthquake
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A. Basic Response Procedures

EVACUATION

SAMPLE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Note: Evacuation routes may be specified according to the type of emergency. They may need to be changed for safety reasons.

- Bombs: Building administrator notifies staff of evacuation route dictated by known or suspected location of a device.
- Fire: Follow primary routes unless blocked by smoke or fire. Know the alternate route.
- Chemical spill: Total avoidance of hazardous materials is necessary as fumes can overcome people in seconds. Plan route accordingly.

In the event that conditions in the school or community necessitate a school evacuation, the following steps are to be taken:

Principal

Notify appropriate central office contacts:

(Central Office will notify local radio and television stations.)

Notify transportation contact with the number of students and staff requiring evacuation and the number having special needs (e.g., wheelchair lifts).

Direct clerical staff to take schools' master enrollment lists.

A print copy is preferable; however, if there is insufficient time to generate the print copy, take the electronic copy on a disk or transmit the file to an alternate location where it can be printed for use at the evacuation site. Taking a laptop computer to the evacuation site may be a workable alternative. Make these plans in advance.

Notify school nurse/clinic attendant to prepare medications and appropriate student lists to be transported to the evacuation site. Nurse/clinic attendant also brings First Aid or "Go-Kit."

Notify all personnel to leave the building and to secure the building. Persons should be designated to quickly "sweep" the building, checking bathrooms, locker rooms, and other areas in addition to classrooms.

Classroom Teachers

Plan to evacuate with your students and ride the bus.

Take classroom "go-kit" and a copy of the class enrollment list.

Take roll or otherwise account for all students on buses and at the schools at which they are being housed temporarily.

Ensure that requirements of any special needs students are met.

Be aware that all staff members will remain on duty until dismissed by the principal/designee.

Host School Site

The first choice for shelter during a school evacuation would be another school. Next choices would be a community recreation facility or church. The host school principal should take the following steps:

Notify all staff members of the situation.

- Designate space for evacuees. Access to bathroom facilities and to water are immediate considerations.
- Assign personnel to greet arriving buses and community evacuees and direct them to pre-identified space.
- Notify school nurse and anticipate any medical emergencies. Having an emergency medical team / rescue squad on stand-by might be considered.
- Activate crisis response team to anticipate and attend to any emotional trauma.

In collaboration with the evacuee principal and other officials,

- Notify parents/guardians by phone if possible. Host school will provide communications resources and assist evacuee school staff in required notifications of parent, day care facilities that pick up at the schools, and other necessary notifications.
- Designate the location and procedure for release of students to parents who may come to the school.
- Anticipate any need to feed evacuees and make contact with food services.
- Take action to control media access and work with school division media liaison.

SAMPLE NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS REGARDING SCHOOL EVACUATION

Date Released:

Time Released:

Released by:

Because of the incident at (School Name Here), the students, faculty and staff have been evacuated to an alternate location as a preliminary measure.

(School Name Here) has been relocated to (New Location Name Here).

(Repeat this information for as many schools as may be involved.)

Parents are instructed to pick up their children at the alternate location. Do not attempt to pick up children at their regular school. Please meet your child at the alternate location. All other schools and school facilities are unaffected. Parents and citizens are urged not to interfere in the operation of those schools by calling on the telephone or by personal visits. Your cooperation in this matter is expected and appreciated.

LOCKDOWN

SAMPLE LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE #1

In cases of an emergency requiring lockdown, the following procedure will be followed by staff and students.

Principal or his designee will announce over the public address system that a lockdown is in effect.

One of the secretaries will be directed to call 9-1-1 and notify the police of the emergency and the need for immediate police assistance.

The following announcement will be made:

A. Class in Session (no lunches in progress)

Students and Staff, it is necessary at this time to begin a schoolwide lockdown. All students are to remain in class. Students in the hall report immediately back to your room. Teachers lock your classroom door. No one is to leave the classroom until an all clear announcement is made by an administrator. Ignore a fire alarm. If we need to evacuate the building, an announcement will be made.

B. Class Change in Progress

Students and Staff, it is necessary at this time to begin a schoolwide lockdown. All students and teachers report immediately to your next class. Teachers, be at your classroom door and lock it as soon as the students have arrived. Ignore a fire alarm. If we need to evacuate the building, an announcement will be made.

C. During Lunch Bells

Students and Staff, it is necessary at this time to begin a schoolwide lockdown. Students in the cafeteria are to report immediately to the (gym or auditorium -- whichever is appropriate). Teachers lock your classroom doors. Students outside of their classroom at this time are to report back to your class immediately. No one is to leave their classroom or designated area until an all clear announcement is made by an administrator. Ignore a fire alarm. If we need to evacuate the building, an announcement will be made.

During the lockdown announcement, the administrator and head custodian will lock the exit doors to prevent entry into the building.

D. Teachers are to do the following:

- Lock your door.
- Tell the students that we have an emergency and you don't know what it is.
- Get the students to go to an area of the room that is away from the door and away from any windows.
- Have students stay there until an announcement is made. Members of the crisis team will come to your room and update you.

Communications among administrators will be by two-way radio to assess situation and plan next course of action.

The school nurse and attendance clerk will report immediately to the main office during lockdown announcement.

Security Monitors will report to the nearest classroom and maintain radio contact with administrators.

(Sources: Great Bridge High School, Chesapeake City Public Schools, VA and Staunton City Public Schools, VA)

Use of Color-Coded Cards

Under lockdown, conditions in a specific classroom can be communicated using color-coded cards. A card, either posted in the window or slipped under the door, can alert emergency responders to the status of students in individual classrooms:

Green card	No injuries
Yellow card	Injuries have occurred but are relatively minor; assistance can be delayed.
Red card	Injuries have occurred. Medical assistance is needed immediately.

SAMPLE NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS REGARDING LOCKDOWNS

Dear Parents:

All school personnel have been trained in lockdown procedures. They will be doing their best to ensure that all students are being held in a safe location on campus. Our goal is safe care, custody, and accountability of children.

In a lockdown we will not be able to answer incoming phone calls or make outside calls. Within minutes we will be assisted by police, who will secure the neighboring streets and the building perimeter. No one, including parents, will be allowed near the school during a lockdown.

Students will be kept inside locked classrooms with the blinds drawn. No one will be allowed to leave the classrooms/secure areas on campus until the lockdown is lifted. All students and faculty/staff will remain in the lockdown mode until the police department lifts the lockdown.

When the lockdown is lifted, parents may come to school to pick up their children.

SAMPLE LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES #2

One means of securing the school is to implement lockdown procedures.

These procedures may be called for in the following instances:

1. Lockdown with warning – The threat is outside of the school building. The school may have been notified of a potential threat outside of the building.
2. Lockdown with intruder – The threat/intruder is inside the building.

Lockdown with warning procedures

- Building administrator will order and announce “lockdown with warning” procedures. Repeat announcement several times. Be direct. Code words lead to confusion.
- Bring people inside.
- Lock exterior doors.
- Clear hallways, restrooms and other rooms that cannot be secured.
- Pull shades. Keep students away from windows.
- Control all movement, but continue classes. Disable bells. Move on announcement only.
- Building administrator will announce “all clear.”

Lockdown with intruder procedures (these actions happen rapidly)

- Building administrator will order and announce “lockdown with intruder.” Repeat announcement several times. Be direct. Code words lead to confusion.
- Immediately direct all students, staff and visitors into nearest classroom or secured space. Classes that are outside of the building SHOULD NOT enter the building. Move outside classes to primary evacuation site.
- Lock classroom doors.
- DO NOT lock exterior doors.
- Move people away from windows and doors. Turn off lights.
- DO NOT respond to anyone at the door until “all clear” is announced.
- Keep out of sight.
- Building administrator will announce “all clear.”

Some other threats may override lockdown, i.e., confirmed fire, intruder in classroom, etc. Consider making an action plan for people in large common areas, i.e., cafeteria, gymnasium.

Lockdown may be initiated in non-threatening circumstances to keep people away from areas where there may be a medical emergency or disturbance.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE

SAMPLE SHELTER-IN-PLACE PROCEDURES

Sheltering in place provides refuge for students, staff and the public inside the school building during an emergency. Shelters are located in areas of the building that maximize the safety of inhabitants.

Sheltering in place is used when evacuation would put people at risk (i.e., tornado, environmental hazard, blocked evacuation route).

Shelter areas may change depending on the emergency.

- Identify safe areas in each school building.
- Building administrator announces that students and staff must go to shelter areas.
- Bring all persons inside building(s).
- Teachers take class rosters.
- Close all exterior doors and windows, if appropriate.
- Turn off ventilation leading outdoors, if appropriate.
- Teachers account for all students after arriving in shelter area.
- All persons remain in shelter areas until a building administrator or emergency responder declares that it is safe to leave.

If all evacuation routes are blocked:

- Stay in room and close door.
- Keep air as clean as possible.
 - o Seal door.
 - o Open or close windows as appropriate.
 - o Limit movement and talking in room.
- Communicate your situation to administration or emergency officials by whatever means possible.

B. Non-Emergency Events Affecting Schools

DEATHS

Death Of A Student Or Staff Member

GENERAL NON-EMERGENCY CRISIS RESPONSE CHECKLIST

- Direct staff and others not to repeat information until verification is obtained.
- Notify superintendent.
- Convene Crisis Response Team and assign duties.
- Notify building support staff, such as counselors, school nurse, psychologist, and social workers.
- Inform closest friends of the affected student and provide support.
- Prepare formal statement or announcement.
- Announce time and place of emergency staff meeting.
- Identify other/additional students, staff, and parents likely to be most affected by news.

- Assess need for additional community resources.
- Assign trained staff or community professionals to:
 - Provide grief support to students;
 - Review and distribute guidelines for classroom discussion to teachers;
 - Stand in for absent/affected/substitute teacher; and
 - Distribute lists of community resources.
- Make official announcement.
- Hold emergency staff meeting.
- As needed, assign team members and other staff to monitor grounds, notify parents, support staff, and feeder schools; provide support to staff; collect student belongings and withdraw student from school rolls.

PERCEIVED CRISES

Perceived crises are conditions or situations, often community-based, that are perceived as potentially affecting a large number of people. Examples of perceived crisis include racial events, school rivalry situations, events in which a group feels left out or not represented, introduction of new school procedures without adequate warning, real or perceived unsafe conditions such as toxic fumes or food poisoning, gang-related activities, or exposure to infectious diseases or other contagious conditions. It is the task of those in charge to defuse any irrational response.

Prevention/Mitigation

- Identify situations in advance that may be perceived crises.
- Establish open lines of communication with students and staff.
- Develop a procedure for dealing with the public and the media.

Response

- For any health condition, immediately contact the appropriate health authorities.
- Don't panic. Project a sense of calm and control.
- Gather detailed and accurate information about the perceived crisis.
- If necessary, call a team meeting to assess the situation and make decisions on what actions to take.
- Provide appropriate faculty, staff and those individuals or groups affected by the situation with specific information.
- Designate someone who would act as a single point of contact for controlling rumors. Keep lines of communication open; a feeling that secrets are being kept can increase the sense of crisis.
- Have trained individuals available to speak with small groups of students/staff.
- Take all actions that you have determined necessary to prevent a more serious situation from developing.

Recovery

- Conduct stabilizing activities as soon as possible to project an atmosphere of normal conditions.

- Conduct follow-up and assessment activities with team members and other staff.

SUICIDES

SAMPLE SUICIDE PROCEDURES

A school's general response to a suicide does not differ markedly from a response to any sudden death crisis, and the SAMPLE DEATH PROCEDURES can appropriately be implemented. However, some issues exclusive to suicide require specific attention.

- Direct staff and others not to repeat information until verification is obtained.
- Notify superintendent.
- Convene Crisis Response Team and assign duties.
- Notify building support staff, such as counselors, psychologist, and social workers.
- Inform closest friends of the affected student and provide support.
- Prepare formal statement or announcement.
- Announce time and place of emergency staff meeting.
- Identify other/additional students, staff, and parents likely to be most affected by news.
- Assess need for additional community resources.
- Assign trained staff or community professionals to:
 - Provide grief support to students;
 - Review and distribute guidelines for classroom discussion to teachers;
 - Stand in for absent/affected/substitute teacher; and
 - Distribute lists of community resources.
- Make official announcement.
- Hold emergency staff meeting.
- As needed, assign team members and other staff to monitor grounds, notify parents, support staff, and feeder schools; provide support to staff; collect student belongings and withdraw student from school rolls.

Avoid glamorizing the act.

- Do verify the facts, and treat the death as a suicide.
- Do acknowledge the suicide as a tragic loss of life.
- Do provide support for students profoundly affected by the death.
- Do emphasize that no one is to blame for the suicide.
- Do not dismiss school or encourage funeral attendance during school hours.
- Do consider establishing a fund for contributions to a local suicide prevention hotline or crisis center or to a national suicide prevention organization.
- Do not organize school assemblies to honor the deceased student or dedicate the yearbook or yearbook pages, newspaper articles, proms, athletic events, or advertisements to the deceased individual.
- Do not pay tribute to a suicidal act by planting trees, hanging engraved plaques, or holding other memorial activities.

C. Medical/Health Emergencies

Medical Emergencies - When to Call 9-1-1

Adapted from Virginia First Aid Guide for School Emergencies
<http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/Health/home.html>

Have 9-1-1 called immediately for:

- Anaphylactic reaction (severe allergic reaction)
- An Amputation
- Bleeding (severe)
- Breathing difficulty (persistent)
- Broken bone
- Burns (chemical, electrical, third degree)
- Chest pain (severe)
- Choking
- Drowning, whether resuscitated or not
- Electrical shock
- Frostbite
- Head injury with loss of consciousness or other symptoms of concussion
- Neck, or back injury with suspected spinal cord damage
- Heat stroke
- Paralysis of any type
- Poisoning
- Seizure (if no history of seizures or trauma-related)
- Shock
- Traumatic injury
- Unconsciousness
- Wound (deep/extensive)

Never leave an ill or injured individual unattended. Have someone else call 9-1-1 and then attempt to reach parents or guardians. **Do not wait** for the parent's permission before you call 9-1-1; if it is truly a medical emergency, call immediately. The parent cannot instruct you to refrain from calling 9-1-1. Religious, ethnic or cultural reasons are not sufficient to remove the responsibility from the division for not providing prompt, appropriate medical aid.

When in doubt, call 9-1-1. Err on the side of caution. The school division does not incur liability by calling 9-1-1. However, the school division can incur significant liability by failing to call 9-1-1. Concern over who pays ambulance and emergency room bills is not important at the time of the crisis.

Do not move an injured individual or allow the person to walk (bring help and supplies to the individual). Other school staff or responsible adults should be enlisted to help clear the area of students who may congregate following an injury or other emergency situation.

Note: Section 22.1-274.E. *Code of Virginia*, requires that two people be certified/trained every two years in first-aid and CPR for each school building. At least two members of the school staff, and preferably more, should be identified and educated to handle emergencies according to established policies.

NOTE: All Quick Reference Procedures on medical emergencies are from the American Academy of Pediatrics *Emergency Guidelines for Schools*, 3rd Edition, available online at:
<http://www.schoolhealth.org/content/Emergency%20Guidelines%20for%20Schools%202-2007.pdf>

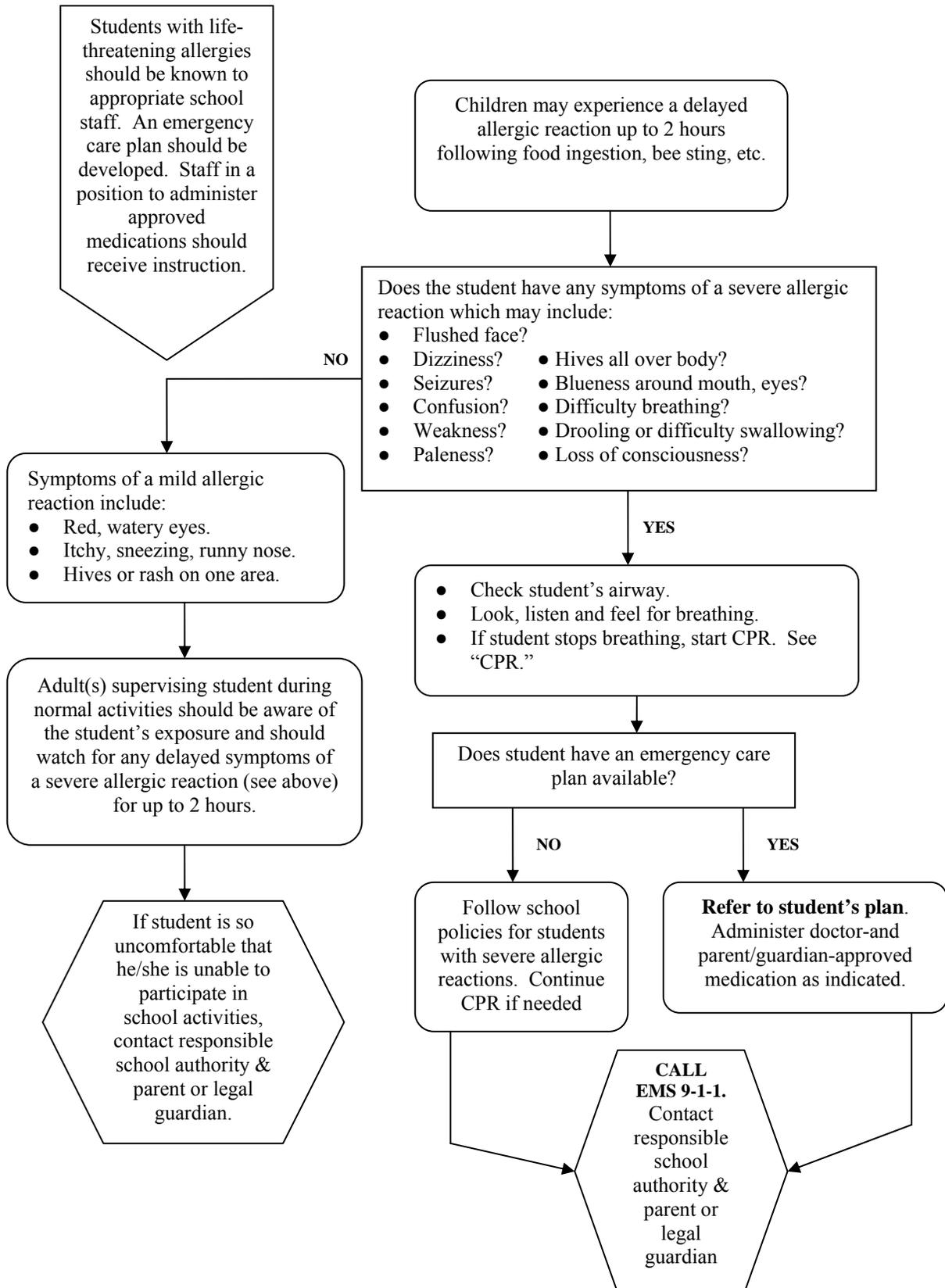
GENERAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR INJURY OR ILLNESS**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
FOR INJURY OR ILLNESS**

1. Remain calm and assess the situation. Be sure the situation is safe for you to approach. The following dangers will require caution: live electrical wires, gas leaks, building damage, fire or smoke, traffic or violence.
2. A responsible adult should stay at the scene and give help until the person designated to handle emergencies arrives.
3. Send word to the person designated to handle emergencies. This person will take charge of the emergency and render any further first aid needed.
4. Do NOT give medications unless there has been prior approval by the student's parent or legal guardian and doctor according to local school board policy.
5. Do NOT move a severely injured or ill student unless absolutely necessary for immediate safety. If moving is necessary, follow guidelines in NECK AND BACK PAIN section.
6. The responsible school authority or a designated employee should notify the parent/legal guardian of the emergency as soon as possible to determine the appropriate course of action.
7. If the parent/legal guardian cannot be reached, notify an emergency contact or the parent/legal guardian substitute and call either the physician or the designated hospital on the Emergency Medical Authorization form, so they will know to expect the ill or injured student. Arrange for transportation of the student by Emergency Medical Services (EMS), if necessary.
8. A responsible individual should stay with the injured student.
9. Fill out a report for all injuries requiring above procedures as required by local school policies. The Ohio Department of Health has created a *Student Injury Report Form* that may be photocopied and used as needed. A copy of the form with instructions follows.

Post-Crisis Intervention Following Serious Injury or Death

- Discuss with counseling staff or critical incident stress management team.
- Determine level of intervention for staff and students.
- Designate private rooms for private counseling/defusing.
- Escort affected students, siblings and close friends and other high stressed individuals to counselors/critical incident stress management team.
- Assess stress level of staff. Recommend counseling to all staff.
- Follow-up with students and staff who receive counseling.
- Designate staff person(s) to attend funeral.
- Allow for changes in normal routines or schedules to address injury or death.

ALLERGIC REACTION

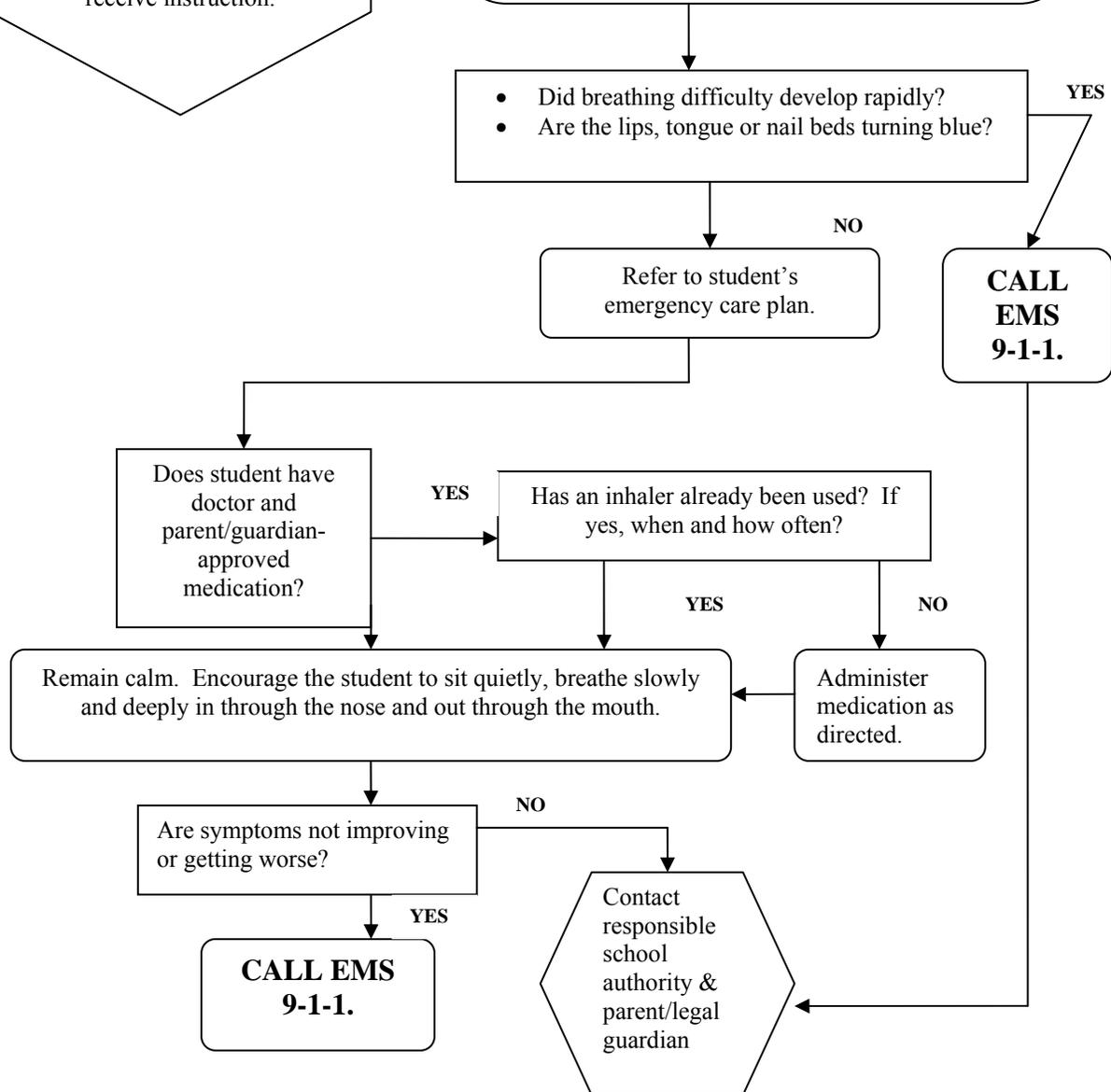


ASTHMA

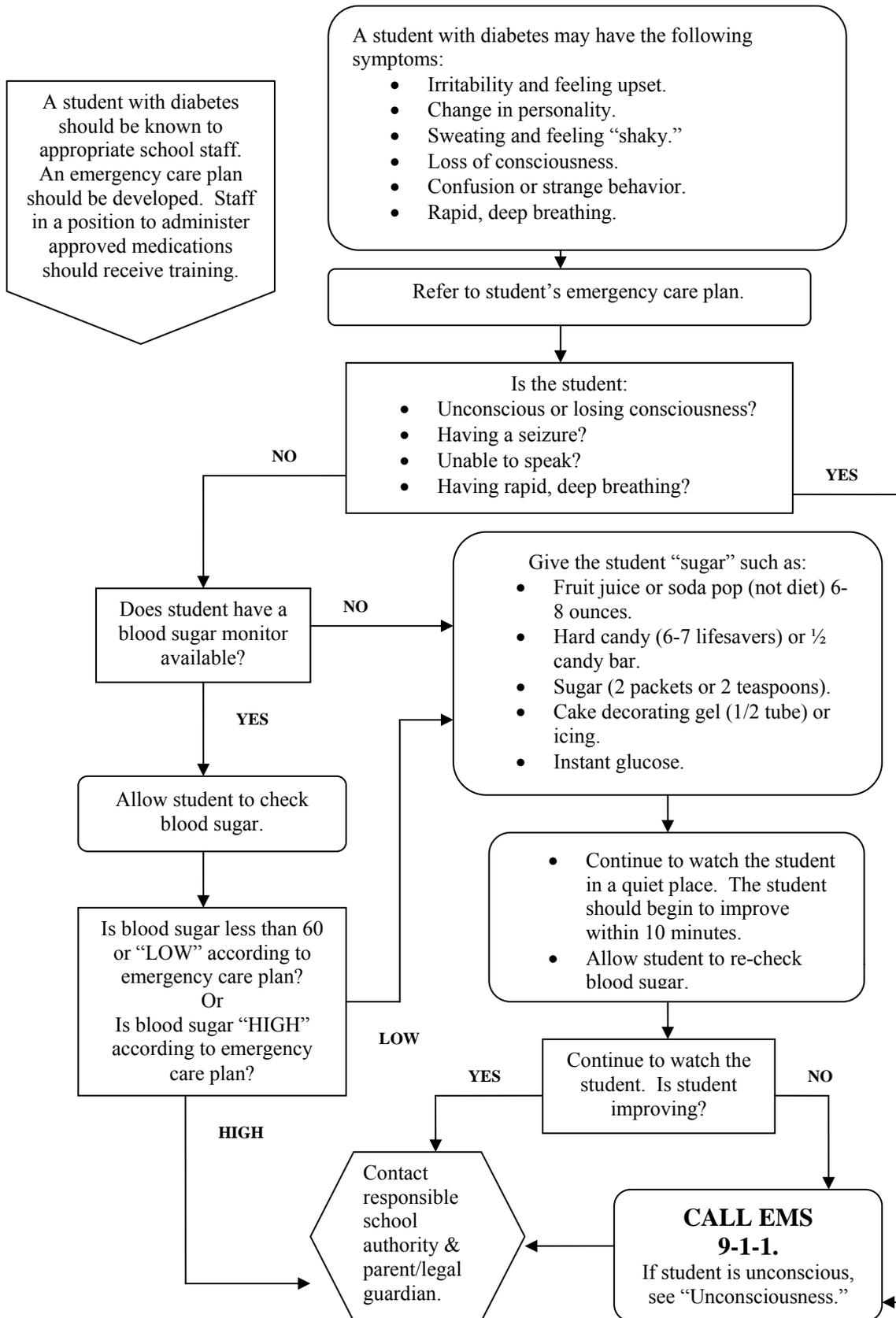
Students with a history of breathing difficulties including asthma wheezing should be known to appropriate school staff. A care plan which includes an emergency action plan should be developed. ORC 22.1-274.2 allows students to possess and use an asthma inhaler in the school. Staff must try to remain calm despite the student's anxiety. Staff in a position to administer approved medications should receive instruction.

A student with asthma/wheezing may have breathing difficulties which may include:

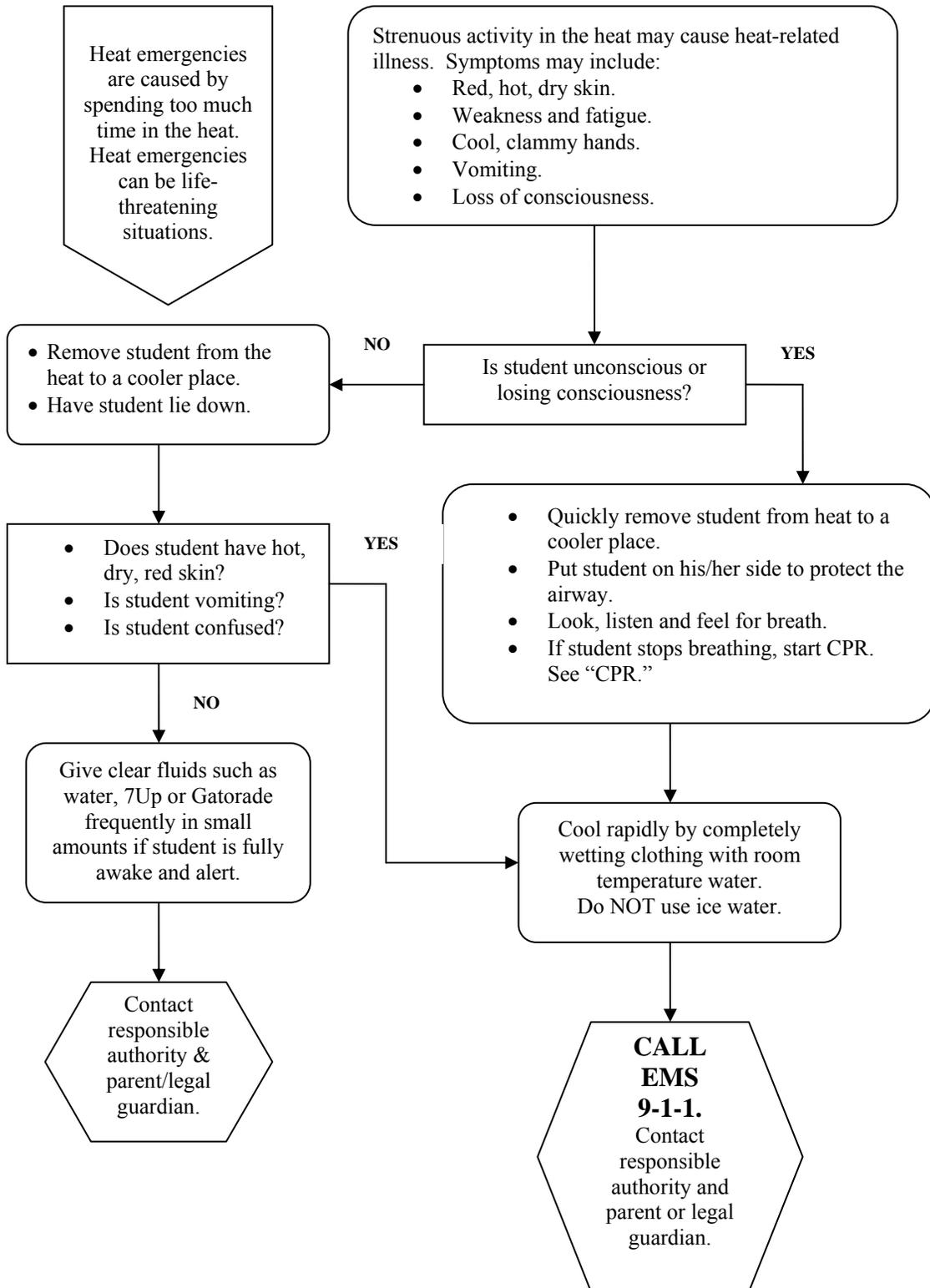
- Uncomfortable coughing.
- Wheezing – a high-pitched sound during breathing out.
- Rapid breathing.
- Flaring (widening) of nostrils.
- Feeling of tightness in the chest.
- Not able to speak in full sentences.
- Increased use of stomach and chest muscles during breathing.



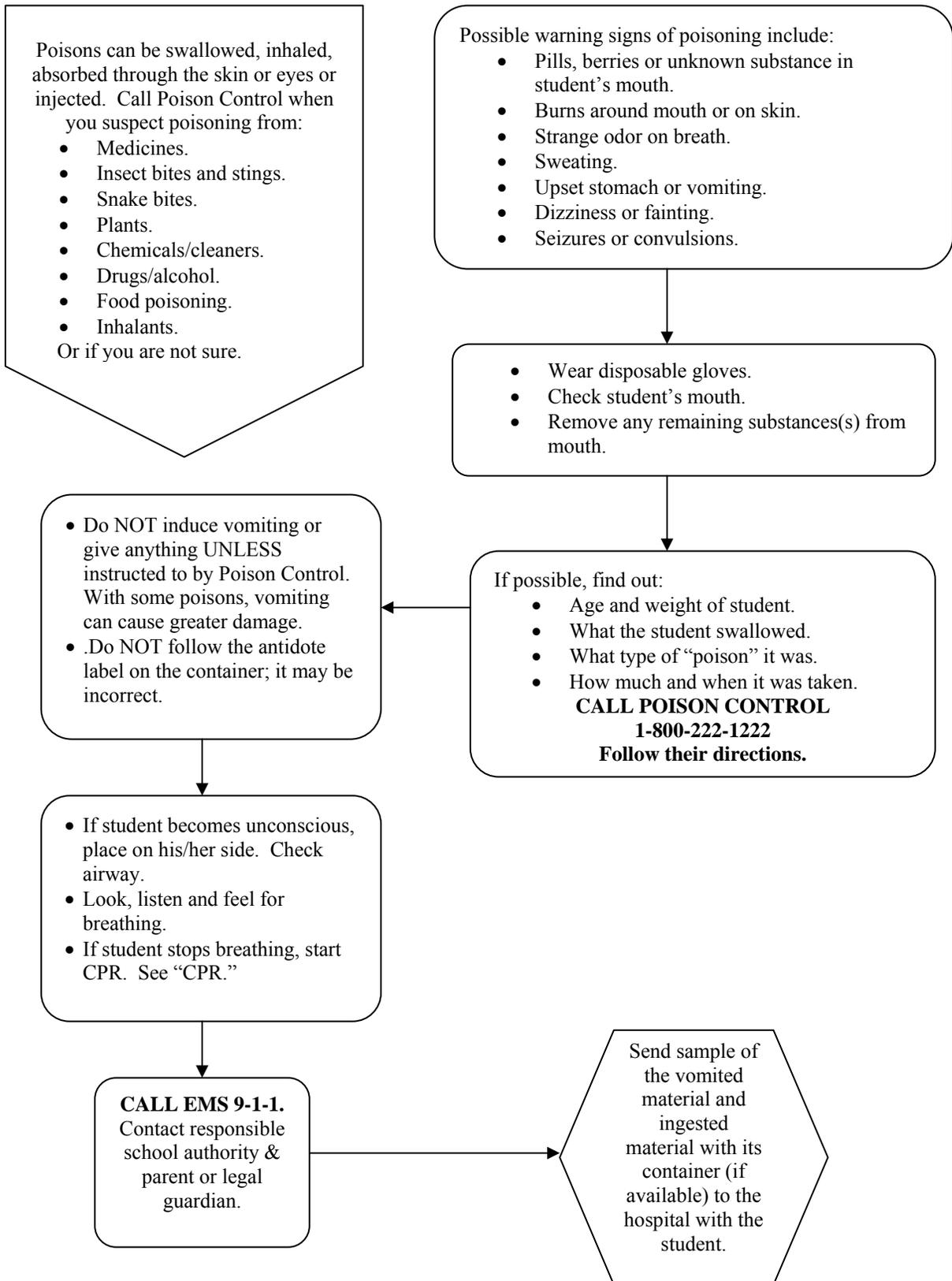
DIABETES



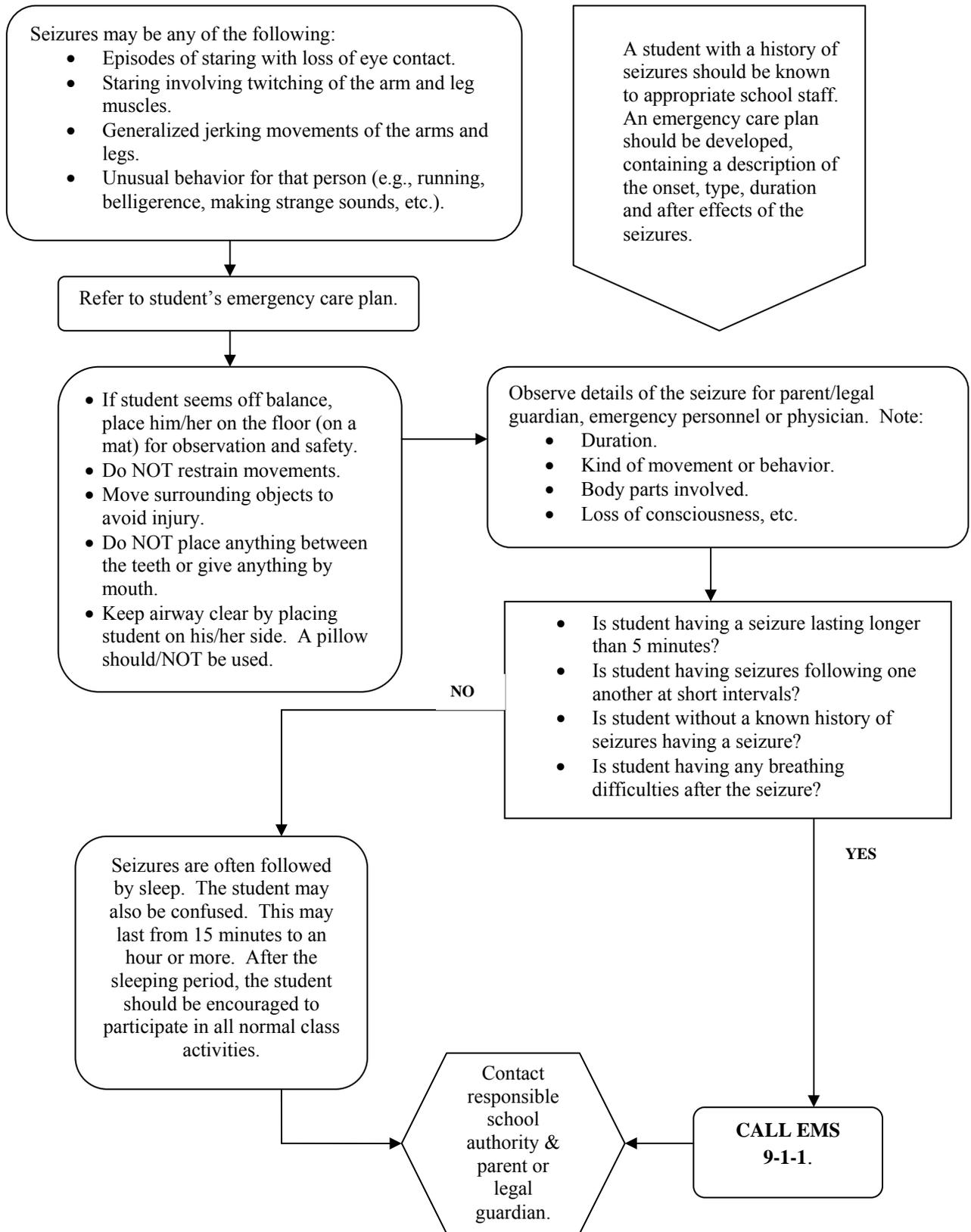
HEAT STROKE / HEAT EXHAUSTION



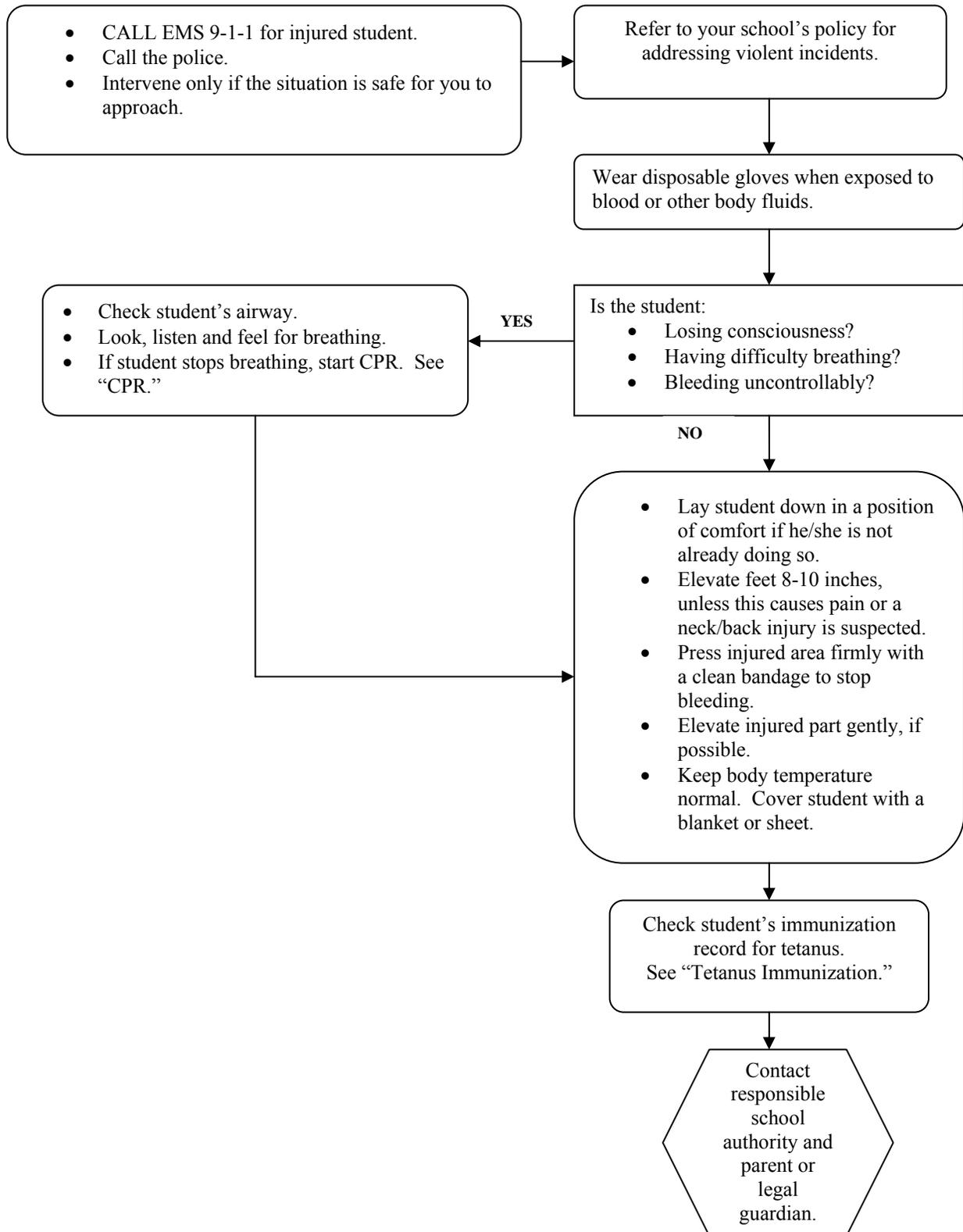
POISONING AND OVERDOSE



SEIZURE



STABBING AND GUNSHOT INJURIES



D. Critical Incidents At or Affecting Schools

BIO-HAZARD THREATS

SAMPLE PROCEDURES FOR BIO-HAZARD THREATS

Follow procedures established by local emergency responders (fire department, police or state emergency management officials).

Implement the following procedures if schools receive any kind of bio-hazard threat (including anthrax and chemical agents) or if schools have a bio-hazard emergency.

Should you receive such a threat or have an actual bio-hazard emergency, immediately call 9-1-1 or report the threat; call the appropriate contact person in the school division.

The persons immediately exposed to the potential agent **MUST** remain where they are. They should try to avoid inhaling or touching the substance.

Try to contain the substance in the package in which it came. Don't attempt to clean any spilled contents. Cover the spilled contents and the package or letter with anything handy—trash can, cardboard box or paper.

Proceed with lock-down procedures. Use a code and explain that information will be forthcoming. Try to dispel alarm and panic by keeping information basic. All staff/students should remain in their respective areas until notified otherwise.

Do not evacuate students outside or send them home until the emergency responders have done their investigation.

If it is necessary to move or evacuate students and staff to a different location, the hazardous material (HAZMAT) team or other emergency responder will provide instructions to administrators as to how it will be done. If students and staff are moved/evacuated, remind staff to take their grade books, purses, and seating charts.

Custodial/maintenance staff must shut down the heating and air handling units in the affected area.

Keep the faculty, staff and students as informed as necessary. Work with emergency personnel who will provide the necessary and accurate information.

Debrief students and staff after the incident.

SAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING SUSPICIOUS OR THREATENING LETTERS OR PACKAGES

Do not open any letter or package until you have inspected it thoroughly. According to the Postal Service, some typical characteristics that ought to trigger suspicion include letters or parcels that:

- Have any powdery substance on the outside.

- Are unexpected or from someone unfamiliar.
- Have excessive postage, handwritten or poorly typed address, incorrect titles or titles with no name, or misspellings of common words.
- Are addressed to someone no longer with the organization or are otherwise outdated.
- Have no return address, or have one that can't be verified as legitimate.
- Are of unusual weight, given their size, or are lopsided or oddly shaped.
- Have an unusual amount of tape.
- Are marked with restrictive endorsements, such as "Personal" or "Confidential".
- Have strange odors or stains.

Contact the principal or supervisor who will call the appropriate public safety officials and describe the situation. The school division central office is to be notified also.

If a suspicious or threatening letter is received, the Postal Service advises:

- Handle with care. Don't shake or bump the package.
- Don't open, smell, touch or taste the letter or package or its contents.
- Isolate the suspicious item.

Anyone in the immediate vicinity of the letter must remain in the area. Take steps to admit no additional persons to the area. The room and adjoining rooms should be secured.

The custodian / maintenance staff will shut off the HVAC system.

Depending on the advice of public safety officials, the building may need to be evacuated and/or quarantined.

The Postal Service also recommends that if a letter/parcel is opened and/or a biological or chemical threat is identified:

- Isolate it — Don't handle it.
- Evacuate the immediate area.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
- Call 9-1-1 (for police and fire department HAZMAT response)
- Contact postal inspectors.

BOMB

SAMPLE BOMB PROCEDURES

Device Found

1. Isolate the area.
2. Handling of any suspected explosive device must be left to experts.
3. Evacuate the building. Evacuate by room, starting with rooms nearest the device.

Evacuation Procedures

1. Use of fire drill procedures to evacuate a school immediately upon receipt of a bomb threat can be dangerous if an actual explosive device is involved and, unknowingly, students are evacuated past its location.
2. If evacuation is needed, use personal contact. Evacuation must be as fast as possible.
3. Members of the Bomb Threat Team may be used to direct evacuation away from possible bomb area.

Bomb Threat Team. This is a predetermined group of staff members assigned the task of aiding in a search and possible building evacuation.

BOMB THREAT

SAMPLE BOMB THREAT PROCEDURES

Bomb Threat/Telephone Threats

The building director must evaluate the seriousness of bomb threats or other disruptive types of demonstrations using input from all sources; then, the director acts in such a manner that reflects the best safety interests of those under his/her charge. Bomb and other threats may be originated in writing, in person, over the telephone or related through a second source.

Basic Documentation - The individual taking the call should:

- Keep the caller on the line as long as possible.
- Notify principal/building director.
- Write down all the information obtained in the exact words.

Use the record sheet immediately following these instruction pages; place copies of the bomb threat sheet at switchboard and other appropriate phone locations.

Bomb Threat Report Form

Questions to Ask:

1. When is the bomb going to explode?
2. Where is it right now?
3. What does it look like?
4. What kind of bomb is it?
5. What will cause it to explode?
6. Did you place the bomb?
7. Why?
8. What is your address?
9. What is your name?

If voice is familiar, who did it sound like?

Threat Language

- _____ Well spoken (educated)
- _____ Foul
- _____ Irrational
- _____ Taped
- _____ Incoherent
- _____ Message read by threat maker:

Exact wording of threat:

Time: _____

Date: ___/___/___

Sex of caller: _____

Culture: _____

Age: _____

Length of call: _____

Number at which call was received: _____

Remarks: _____

Background Sounds

- Street
- Animal Noises
- PA System
- Static
- Voices
- Music
- Motor
- House Noises
- Local
- Office Machinery
- Booth
- Long Distance
- Other _____

Caller's Voice

- Calm
- Angry
- Slow
- Rapid
- Soft
- Loud
- Laughter
- Normal
- Distinct
- Slurred
- Whispered
- Cracking Voice
- Nasal
- Stutter
- Raspy
- Deep
- Ragged
- Clearing Throat
- Crying
- Disguised
- Accent
- Familiar
- Deep Breathing
- Other _____

Bomb Threat Essentials and Considerations

Bomb threats are a significant problem to schools throughout the United States. Although more than 90% of bomb threats turn out to be pranks, school divisions must take each threat seriously because of the real potential for death and serious injury.

In locations where bomb threats occur frequently, school officials should work with telephone companies to install technology that can facilitate attempts to trace threatening calls. In addition, since hoax calls are often perpetrated by students who are absent from school, the day's absentee list should be examined carefully for potential sources of such calls.

Essentials

All threats are taken seriously.

The school division has procedures in place to deal with bomb threats:

- a. A checklist to guide the action of the individual who receives a threat over the telephone;
- b. Notification procedures (including law enforcement);
- c. Search procedures;
- d. Procedures for safely evacuating the building(s) as appropriate; and,
- e. Procedures for securing the crime scene.

Evacuation: Pros and Cons

There is no black and white line for determining when to evacuate the school; evacuation may not be the most appropriate strategy.

When students see an immediate evacuation each time a bomb threat is received, they quickly learn that the best way to get out of class is to call in a bomb threat.

All bomb threats must be taken seriously and carefully analyzed. Factors to consider include:

- a. Have there been national bomb incidents lately?
- b. Have there been other hoaxes lately?
- c. Has a hostile student been suspended recently?
- d. Are there exams scheduled for today?
- e. Is there any unexplained student unrest?
- f. Are there any rumors circulating about a student threatening to harm others?
- g. How much information did the caller provide? How specific is the information? (In general, you can get more specific information out of a caller when it is not a hoax).
- h. How serious was the caller's voice?
- i. Are there any missing chemicals?
- j. Have there been any recent break-ins?
- k. Did the caller give repeated warnings? (This seriously escalates the degree of danger.)
- l. Are there surveillance video tapes to check?

Action Alternatives

- Conduct a low profile search of the exterior grounds and public areas of the building.
- Conduct a comprehensive search having all staff search their work area, in addition to the grounds and public areas.
- Search with partial evacuation.

- Evacuate after searching.
- Evacuate immediately after clearing exit routes and assembly areas.

When conducting a search:

- No two-way radios or cell phones should be used.
- Searches should be systematic; conducted in levels:
 - First, search the floor and area up to waist high;
 - Second, search waist high to chin high; and
 - Third, search chin high to the ceiling.

Suspicious objects should not be touched. Law enforcement should be notified.

Strategies to Discourage Bomb Threats

- Do not release students but relocate them onto buses or into other facilities while the search is conducted.
- Require lost time to be made up on weekends or at the end of the school year.



Additional Information on Bombs and Bomb Threats

National School Safety Center (NSSC) School Crisis, Prevention and Response—Bomb Threat, Bomb Threat with Suspicious Package, and Actual Bomb Explosion. Access at <http://www.schoolsafety.us/search.php?mode=search&page=3>

Bomb Threats and Physical Security Planning, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Department of the Treasury. Access at <http://www.jya.com/bomb.htm>

Managing Bomb Threats for School Administrators by Marie Courtney. Access on the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress Web site at <http://www.aaets.org/arts/art99.htm>.

An Interactive CD-ROM for school administrators about bomb threat assessment from the U.S. Department of Education and the ATF. Check <http://www.threatplan.org/>

BUS/AUTO ACCIDENT ON TRIPS AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL DIVISION

SAMPLE PROCEDURES FOR BUS/AUTO ACCIDENT AWAY FROM SCHOOL DIVISION

Precautionary Measures Before Leaving Division

- School buses, by law, are required to carry first aid kits. Check to see if it is in place.
- Take along a first aid kit on all field trips in all automobiles.
- Take along a list of students in attendance. Include for each a home telephone number, names of parents, parents' work telephone, home address, and any health or medical information.

- Take along a list of emergency phone numbers (listed below).
- Take along a list of chaperones and teachers who are in attendance on the trip, their home addresses and home phone numbers, name and work telephone of spouse or nearest relative and medical and health information on each.
- Follow School Board policy and administrative regulations on field trips.

In the Event of an Accident

- Remain calm.
- If threat of fire exists, move children to safe place.
- Call emergency vehicles/services: police, fire, ambulance, highway patrol for locality and begin administration of first aid.
- Call principal of school.
- Notify Director of Administration and Support (list numbers).
- Notify Director of Community Relations (who will notify the Superintendent).
- Notify Director of Environmental Health and Safety Office.
- Do not issue statements to the press. Refer press to the civil authorities in charge or to the Community Relations Director.

CHEMICAL SPILL

SAMPLE PROCEDURES FOR CHEMICAL SPILL

(Inside the building)

- Evacuate the area immediately.
- Check the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)* to determine the urgency of the situation.
- Notify the building principal/supervisor/director as soon as possible.
- The building principal/supervisor/director will call the fire department if deemed necessary for consultation.
- Notify the Managing Director, Department of Facilities.

*Lab file, principal's office, or custodian office

(Outside the building)

- Ensure that all students are in the building and that they remain there.
- Shut off all outside air ventilators.

If you are not alerted to the situation by division personnel, phone

- Environmental Health and Safety.
- Director of Facilities of Services.
- Keep telephone lines clear for emergency calls only.
- Release students to parents or designee only.



Mercury Spills

Public Health Instructions for Mercury Spills

Contains a list of Do's and Don'ts of public health instructions for school officials regarding Mercury spills. The instructions were compiled by the Kentucky Center for School Safety, Kentucky Department for Public Health, Kentucky Department for Education, Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection, Kentucky Department for Military Affairs-Emergency Management and the Kentucky Poison Control Center.

Access at: <http://www.kysafeschools.org/articles/?article=61>

DISASTER

SAMPLE PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF DESTRUCTION OF PART OF/WHOLE SCHOOL BUILDING (e.g., tornado, plane crash, bomb)

Checklist

- Call 9-1-1.
- Obtain information on extent of damage.
- Evacuate using fire alarm or move students to safe areas in building.
- Assign one adult to supervise others in attending to injured.
- Assign staff member to assist rescue personnel.
- Call Superintendent's Office and School Resource Officer.
- Arrange for dismissal of students.
- Handle all distribution of information to public through Public Information Office.
- Call emergency staff meeting.

Specifics

1. Call 9-1-1 for immediate help.
2. Damage: Inspect extent of damage and injuries.
3. Evacuation:
 - If there is no danger outside the building, use fire alarm to evacuate building.
 - Safe Areas: Identify areas away from problem area and route to be taken by classes in going to safe areas. Designate which classes/groups of students should go to which area.
4. Attend to Injured:
 - Assign free adults to attend to injured, with one adult designated as "in charge".
5. Meet Rescue Personnel:

- Have staff members direct rescue personnel to problem area and assist in providing access as needed by rescue personnel.
Make Head Custodian available to assist rescue personnel.
6. Superintendent: Notify of plan being implemented.
 7. Dismissal:
Arrange for dismissal with Superintendent's Office and Transportation. Elementary schools may have to follow emergency closing procedures for students and should inform Extended Day personnel of plans for dismissal. Public Information Office should be notified of emergency closing so that radio and TV stations can be contacted.
 8. Information:
 - Consider briefly summarizing the situation for all students and adults prior to dismissal, by P.A. or preferably by informing teachers and having them explain to students.
 - If time permits, prepare a written memo to parents detailing the situation and how it was handled, including plan for follow-up, to be sent home with students or distributed the following day.
 - Call an emergency staff meeting after students leave to explain the situation and any plans for follow-up.
 - Involve Public Information in all information being prepared and distributed and refer media and other calls from the general public to that office.
 9. Call an emergency staff meeting.

DISASTER PREVENTING DISMISSAL

SAMPLE PROCEDURE IN DISASTER PREVENTING DISMISSAL OF SCHOOL (e.g., hurricane, tornado, sniper, plane crash)

Checklist

- Call 9-1-1.
- Identify safe areas in building and direct staff to escort students to identified areas.
- When situation is "clear," return students to class.
- Arrange for dismissal if appropriate by calling Superintendent and Transportation.
- Prepare memo/letters to inform staff and parents.
- Distribute information to public via Public Information Office.
- Call emergency staff meeting.

Specifics

1. Information may be received from a variety of sources:
 - Telephone call.
 - Superintendent's Office.
 - Radio or television.
 - Visual observation.Ascertain specifics such as extent of immediate danger, possible length of time danger may exist.
2. Safe areas - Consider large areas at the interior of the building away from numerous windows and outside walls which have a reliable source of lighting. Designate which classes/groups of students should go to which area. Evacuate trailers to main building or safe area.

3. Move students - Use the P.A., if working, or a system of notes sent by messengers, to inform teachers and other adults of the situation and where to bring students.
4. Superintendent - Notify of plan being implemented; call police and maintain contact as necessary.
5. All "clear" - Monitor situation to ascertain when danger is removed; direct teachers and other adults to escort students back to class when situation is clear.
6. If crisis interferes with normal dismissal, arrange with Transportation and Superintendent's Office to dismiss students following normal procedures. Elementary schools will want to inform Extended Day personnel in advance of dismissal.
7. Information
 - Consider briefly summarizing the danger and its resolution for all students prior to dismissal by P.A. or preferably by informing teachers and having them explain to students.
 - Consider preparing a written memo to parents detailing the situation and how it was handled to be sent home with students or distributing it the following day.
 - Prepare written memo to staff summarizing the situation and how it was handled.
8. Handle all distribution of information through the Public Information Office.
9. Call emergency staff meeting.

EXPLOSION/THREAT OF EXPLOSION

There are three possible scenarios involving the explosion/threat of explosion.

Determine which scenario applies and implement the appropriate response procedures described below.

Scenario 1: Explosion on school property.

Scenario 2: Credible threat of an explosion on school property.

Scenario 3: Explosion or threat of an explosion in a surrounding area.

SCENARIO 1: EXPLOSION ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

1. Upon explosion all persons should DUCK, COVER AND HOLD.
2. The Principal will consider the possibility of another imminent explosion and take appropriate action.
3. After the blast, the Principal will initiate appropriate Immediate Response Actions, which may include SHELTER-IN-PLACE, SECURE BUILDING, EVACUATE BUILDING, or OFF SITE EVACUATION. Evacuation may be warranted in some buildings and other buildings may be used as shelter.
4. If the explosion occurred within the school buildings, Principal will issue EVACUATE BUILDING action. Students and staff will evacuate using prescribed routes or other safe routes and proceed to the Assembly Area. Teachers shall bring the student roster and take attendance to account for students. Teachers shall notify Student and Staff Accounting Team of missing students.
5. The Principal will call "9-1-1" and School Police [insert number here] to provide the exact location (e.g., building, room, area) and nature of emergency.
6. If necessary, the Principal will advise the Fire/Rescue Team to suppress fires and rescue personnel.
7. The Maintenance and Utility Team Leader will notify the appropriate utility company of damages.

8. The Principal will notify the Superintendent and the Office of School Operations and Safety of the situation.
9. The Security Team Leader will post guards safe distance away from the building entrance to prevent persons entering the school buildings.
10. The Principal will issue other instructions as needed.

SCENARIO 2: CREDIBLE THREAT OF AN EXPLOSION ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

1. Principal will initiate appropriate Immediate Response Actions, which may include DUCK, COVER, AND HOLD, SHELTER-IN-PLACE, SECURE BUILDING, EVACUATE BUILDING or OFF-SITE EVACUATION.
2. If the Principal issues EVACUATE BUILDING action, evacuate the building using prescribed routes or other safe routes and proceed directly to the Assembly Area. Teachers shall bring the student roster and take attendance to account for students. Teachers shall notify Student and Staff Accounting Team of missing students.
3. The Principal will call “9-1-1” and School Police (number) to provide the exact location (e.g., building, room, area) and nature of emergency.
4. The Principal will direct the Fire/Rescue Team to suppress fires and rescue personnel as appropriate.
5. The Maintenance and Utility Team Leader will notify the appropriate utility company of damages.
6. The Principal shall notify the Superintendent and the Office of School Operations and Safety of the situation.
7. The Principal will take further actions as needed.

SCENARIO 3: EXPLOSION OR THREAT OF EXPLOSION IN SURROUNDING AREA

4. The Principal will order SHELTER-IN-PLACE .
5. The Principal will notify “9-1-1” and School Police (number) to provide the exact location (e.g., building, room, area) and nature of emergency.
6. The Principal will take further actions as needed.
7. Remain in SHELTER-IN-PLACE until further instructions.

FIRE

FIRE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

In the event of a fire on school grounds, the following procedures should be implemented:

1. Upon discovery of a fire, direct all occupants out of the building and report the fire to the Principal.
2. The Principal will immediately issue the EVACUATE BUILDING action. Students and staff will evacuate buildings using the prescribed routes or other safe routes and proceed directly to the Assembly Area. Teachers will take student roster and take attendance to account for students. Teachers will notify Student and Staff Accounting Team of missing students.
3. The Principal will call “9-1-1” and School Police (number) to provide the exact location (e.g., building, room, area) of the fire.

4. The Fire/Rescue Team will suppress fires and initiate rescue procedures until the local fire department arrives.
5. The Security Team will secure the area to prevent unauthorized entry and keep access roads clear for emergency vehicles.
6. The Fire/Rescue Team Leader will assign a member of the Team to direct the fire department to the fire and brief fire department official on the situation.
7. The Maintenance and Utility Team will notify the appropriate utility company of damages.
8. The Principal will notify the Local Division Superintendent and the Office of School Operations and Safety of the fire.
9. If appropriate, the Principal will implement the Parent Alert System.
10. For fires during non-school hours, the Principal and Local Division Superintendent will determine whether the school will open the following day.

FIRE IN SURROUNDING AREA

In the event of a fire in the surrounding area, the following procedures should be implemented:

1. The Principal will initiate the appropriate Immediate Response Actions, which may include STAND BY, SHELTER-IN-PLACE, SECURE BUILDING, EVACUATE BUILDING or OFF-SITE EVACUATION.
2. The Principal will notify “9-1-1” School Police (number) to provide the location and nature of emergency.
3. The Principal will activate the Security Team to keep access routes open for emergency vehicles.
4. The Fire/Rescue Team Leader will work with the fire department to determine if school grounds are threatened by the fire, smoke, hazardous atmospheres or other conditions. The Fire/Rescue Team will maintain open communication with the fire department.
5. If the Principal issues the EVACUATE BUILDING action, evacuate using prescribed routes or other safe routes and proceed directly to the Assembly Area. Teachers shall bring the student roster and take attendance to account for students. Teachers shall notify Student and Staff Accounting Team of missing students.
6. The Principal will keep a battery-powered radio tuned to a local radio station for emergency information.
7. In the event of a loss of water or other utilities, the Principal will refer to Loss of Utility Procedure.
8. If appropriate, the Principal will implement Parent Alert System.
9. The Principal will notify the Local Division Superintendent and the Office of School Operations and Safety of the emergency situation.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Incident occurs in school:

- Notify building administrator/office.
- Call 9-1-1. If the type and/or location of hazardous material is known, report that information to 9-1-1.
- Evacuate to an upwind location, taking class roster. Teachers take attendance after evacuation.
- Seal off area of leak/spill. Close doors.
- Fire officer in charge will determine additional shelter-in-place or evacuation actions.

- Shut off heating, cooling and ventilation systems in contaminated area to reduce the spread of contamination.
- Building administrator notifies superintendent.
- Notify parents/guardians if students are evacuated, according to division policy and/or guidance.
- Resume normal operations when fire officials approve.

Incident occurs near school property:

- Fire or law enforcement will notify school officials.
- Consider closing outside air intake, evacuating students to a safe area or sheltering students inside the building until emergency passes or relocation is necessary.
- Fire officer in charge of scene will instruct school officials on the need for sheltering or evacuation.
- Follow procedures for sheltering or evacuation.
- If evacuating, teachers take class rosters and take attendance after evacuation.
- If evacuation is not ordered, be aware of and remain alert for any change in health conditions of students and staff, especially respiratory problems. Seek medical attention if necessary.
- Notify parents/guardians if students are evacuated, according to division policy and/or guidance.
- Resume normal operations when fire officials approve.

Extra staffing is necessary for students with special medical and/or physical needs.

HOSTAGE ARMED/DANGEROUS SITUATIONS

SAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR ARMED HOSTAGE/DANGEROUS SITUATIONS

Checklist

- Contact the police (9-1-1).
- Institute lockdown procedures.
- Notify Superintendent.
- Instruct person answering the phone to direct all requests to Public Information Office.
- Keep telephone lines open for police use (pay telephones as well).
- Keep maps of the building and grounds available in more than one area of the facility (i.e., Main Office and Custodians' Office).
- Identify individuals familiar with the building to assist the police in locating and isolating the intruder.
- Prepare written memo for staff and parents.
- Complete and submit Crisis Team Report.
- Schedule follow-up programs for students and staff and review security plan.
- Call emergency staff meeting.

Specifics

1. Contact the Police: Hostage-taking or endangering the safety of others are criminal offenses.
2. Institute lockdown procedures.
3. Notification:

- The Superintendent's Office should be contacted as soon as possible.
 - The Public Information Office will handle all media and community inquiries.
 - Keep staff well informed. A Crisis Team, identified for the school, can effectively deliver information to the other staff members so your time can be used for other actions/decisions.
 - The Transportation Department will provide buses for evacuation of students to a safer location or to their homes. Transportation will notify the Superintendent of the need for this dismissal.
 - The students will be able to deal with the situation by being informed of the facts as soon as possible, rather than receiving their "facts" through rumors.
 - The other schools should be given the basic information as soon as possible since siblings/neighbors will quickly learn of the disturbance.
 - The parents of the school community will need to learn about the safety of their own children, to be informed where to pick them up if needed, and to learn the real facts to reduce the rumor factor.
 - After the crisis is over, the Public Information Office may wish to arrange a special press conference to give the media the same information that has been shared with the parents.
4. Staff to Keep Students in Present Areas: Students should not be released for any reason until told to do so by the police.
 5. No Personnel Circulating: or the same reason as #4, all staff should be protected from involvement in the crisis where possible.
 6. Telephone Answerer:
Prepare a statement to be read by the individuals who answer the telephones. Instruct them that any further inquiries should be made to the Public Information Office. Give them the telephone number for the caller to call.
 7. Keep Phone Lines Open: The police and other public safety personnel will need access to the phones with highest priority. Even the pay phones need to be available to the police.
 8. Maps in More Than One Location: School maps will be most helpful to the police in locating the intruder and planning strategies for the apprehension. More than one area should house current maps in case the intruder has "holed up" in the area where the maps would usually be found.
 9. I. D. Persons Familiar with the Facility: Persons familiar with the entire building should be available to discuss the interior room arrangements, etc. These individuals should be available at the chosen school map location away from the scene.
 10. Written Memo for Staff and Parents: As soon as the immediate crisis/danger is over, the staff and parents will need to know, not only what occurred, but why you took the action you did.
 11. Serious Incident Report: Complete and submit Crisis Team Report within twenty-four (24) hours.
 12. Follow-up Activities: Guidance counselors, as well as Pupil Personnel Services, can provide counseling for students and staff.
 13. Call emergency staff meeting.

SAMPLE PROCEDURES FOR HOSTAGE SITUATION/BARRICADED CAPTOR

OVERVIEW:

A hostage situation is any situation in which a person or persons is forced to stay in one location by one or more individuals. Weapons are usually in the possession of the hostage taker(s) and hostages are threatened with some degree of bodily harm should they not comply with the directives of the hostage taker(s). Certain demands are usually made of outside officials in return for the release of the hostages.

All hostage situations are dangerous events. A hostage taker might be a terrorist, fleeing felon, disgruntled employee (past or present), spouse's significant other, drug or alcohol abuser, emotionally disturbed person, trespasser, and on occasion, a parent, student or citizen who is usually angry about some situation and decides to resolve it by taking hostages and making demands to achieve some resolution. Likewise, the dynamics of a hostage situation vary greatly and no two incidents will be the same.

SAMPLE PROCEDURES FOR HOSTAGE SITUATION IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS/FACILITIES

Upon notification of a hostage situation within any activity, event, school, or building under the control of the public schools, the following procedures should be implemented.

PRINCIPAL: The principal/administrative head or designated individual will assume command of the situation until the arrival of law enforcement officials at the scene. Security officers should work closely with the principal/administrative head/designee to ensure that this plan of action is safely achieved. School radios should be utilized when it is established that the hostage taker does not have one. If he does, radios should not be used.

CONTAINMENT: Appropriate actions should be taken to isolate the hostage taker and the victims under his control. It is important that no additional individuals be exposed to the hostage taker.

EVACUATION: Using a pre-arranged signal, immediately evacuate the building and ensure that egress of students and personnel is done in a manner that they do not go near the area controlled by the hostage taker. All individuals should proceed to a prearranged location out of sight of the building so that the possibility of injury from gunfire is minimized. Students are to remain under the supervision of public school officials.

RE-ENTRY: Ensure that no individuals enter or re-enter the building.

CONTACT 9-1-1: Immediately have a staff member contact 9-1-1 and give all available information to the dispatcher who will relay the information to the law enforcement authorities. Ensure that the caller remains on the line with the 9-1-1 dispatcher until police actually arrive at the scene. This will ensure that accurate, detailed information is relayed to responding officers and school officials can respond to requests of the police department.

CONTACT OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY/ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF OPERATIONS:

Immediately have another staff member contact the Office of the Deputy/Assistant Superintendent for Operations at _____ and give all available information to that office. Ensure that the caller remains on the line with the Office of the Deputy/Assistant Superintendent until such time as directed to terminate the call by that Office.

DEPUTY/ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR OPERATIONS: The Office of the Deputy/Assistant Superintendent for Operations will immediately contact the Superintendent, the Director of Informational Services, the Coordinator of Security, the Director of Transportation, and the Director of School Plant Facilities.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY: Upon response of the law enforcement agency, control of the scene will be assumed by that agency.

The principal or building administrator should initiate contact with the law enforcement agency and report to the Command Center when it is operational. *It is important that the items such as building keys and detailed building plans be turned over to the police department.* Important information such as camera and monitoring locations, hearing and broadcast devices, motion sensors, location of radios, availability of phones, *et cetera*, must be conveyed to the police department. Anecdotal information regarding the cause of the incident, identity of the hostages and hostage takers, and their location in the building is of great importance. The principal, custodial staff, and plant personnel who are knowledgeable of the building design need to describe the premises using the detailed building plans.

RESPONSE BY PUBLIC SCHOOL OFFICIALS: The Superintendent, Deputy/Assistant Superintendent for Operations, Director of Informational Services, Director of Transportation, Director of School Plant Facilities, and the Coordinator of Security should respond to the Command Center.

MEDIA: The Director of Informational Services for the public schools and the Public Information Officer for the law enforcement agency will handle all press matters as well as the dissemination of information to students and parents at the scene.

DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION: The Director of Transportation will, at the direction of the Superintendent or his designee, coordinate the utilization of school buses to evacuate students to another location or to their homes.

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL PLANT FACILITIES: The Director of School Plant Facilities will interface with appropriate officials of the Police Department to ensure that all their needs are met with regards to the facility under siege.

NEGOTIATIONS: It is important to remember that it is the philosophy of the law enforcement agency to end a hostage situation through negotiating tactics. Often it is a lengthy process. An assault is only used when all indications are that the hostage taker will harm the hostages and lives will in fact be saved through such an assault.

CLOSURE: Upon the arrest of the hostage taker and the release of the hostages the control of the school or building will be returned to the public schools.

SAMPLE PROCEDURES FOR HOSTAGE SITUATION ON SCHOOL BUS

Consideration must be given to the possibility of a hostage situation occurring on a bus operated by the public schools. If such an incident occurs, the following procedures should be implemented.

BUS DRIVER: The bus driver must assume a position of heightened responsibility for the welfare of the students on the bus as well as his/her own safety. Sound judgment, good decision making, knowledge of school and police procedures in handling such incidents, and training are the items that will be of greatest assistance to you should you become a victim. Students must be made aware of the behavior that will be required of them so they will be safe and do not inflame an already volatile situation.

The bus driver should accomplish the following tasks if they can be done in a safe manner:

- Disable the bus or throw the keys away from the bus. This will eliminate the need to move the bus and will be helpful to the _____ Police Department who will respond to the scene as soon as the location has been established.
- Evacuate as many students as possible from the bus and direct them to move to a position out of sight of the bus.
- Clear the area of as many students and others as is safely possible.
- Notify the transportation radio dispatcher of as much information as possible regarding your situation and location. If allowed to maintain radio contact, do so. All radio transmissions must be disciplined.

Transportation Department: The dispatch office should call 9-1-1 and the Deputy/Assistant Superintendent for Operations and all procedures set out in the Plan of Action for Buildings should be implemented.

SAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR EMPLOYEE VICTIM-HOSTAGE

A situation may arise in which you become a hostage.

Other individuals, such as students, employees, and citizens may become hostages at the same time. Remember that each incident involving hostages is different. Variables such as hostage takers, hostages, motivation for the act, and location of the incident make each occurrence unique. Sound judgment, good decision making, knowledge of school and police procedures in handling such incidents, and training are the items that will be of greatest assistance to you should you become a victim.

Responsibility:

The major responsibility of individuals who have become hostages is to remain calm and act in a manner that will preserve their life, as well as the lives of other hostages.

If, in fact, the other hostages are students, public school personnel have the additional duties of ensuring that these children are aware of the behavior that will be required of them so they will be safe and do not inflame an already volatile situation.

Initially, you may be the person who is thrust into the role of negotiating with the hostage taker(s). Always remain calm and request that the situation end by the release of the hostages or the escape of the hostage takers from the area. At all times, remain neutral regarding the reasons given by the hostage taker(s) for taking this action. Your concern is safety and the release of the hostages. Further, responses of the hostage taker may be irrational or illogical, depending upon his/her mental condition and/or the stress of the situation.

Law Enforcement Agency:

Be prepared to wait, as the resolution of hostage situations traditionally takes time. Be assured that the public schools and the law enforcement agency are acting on your behalf, and are acting as quickly as possible.

The law enforcement agency Crisis Negotiator will contact the hostage taker and begin the process of negotiating an end to the situation. If requested to talk to the negotiator, the public schools' employee

should do so. Answer all questions as fully as possible. At this point, the negotiator has the major responsibility to successfully end the situation.

At the conclusion of the situation, the law enforcement agency will request that you talk at some length with a police officer so that all pertinent information can be recorded.

Source: Based on a sample from Norfolk City Public Schools, Norfolk, Virginia

INTRUDER/TRESPASSER

SAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR INTRUDER/TRESSPASSER #1

Checklist

- Determine the whereabouts of the intruder/trespasser.
- Isolate the individual.
- Determine the extent of the crisis.
- Make reasonable notes for potential court case.
- Move other students and staff from area.
- Contact police - 9-1-1.
- Notify superintendent.
- Instruct person answering the telephone to direct all requests to Public Information Office.
- Complete and submit police information for charges.
- Prepare a written memo for staff and parents.
- Complete Crisis Team Report.
- Schedule follow-up activities for staff and students, including security plan review.
- Call emergency staff meeting.

Specifics

1. Determine whereabouts of the intruder: Use school maps to assist police and staff members in locating intruder.
2. Isolate intruder from rest of building and students.
3. Determine extent of the crisis:
 - Trespass with no safety hazard may be dealt with through informing the intruder of the offense being committed. If trespasser refuses to leave, wait for police to arrest. If the trespasser has previously been warned (placed on notice) trespass charges may be filed without the arrest of the offender.
 - Trespass with threat to others' safety will require assistance from the police. Trespass charges should be filed.
4. Make notes. Recording what has occurred can provide information important to the police and in subsequent court cases.
5. Move other Students/Staff:

Staff may be asked to keep their students in certain areas, or to keep them out of certain areas. Staff should move students as quietly and quickly as possible when directed to do so.

6. Contact the Police: Trespassing is a misdemeanor or felony, depending upon the location of the intrusion.
7. Notification:
 - The Superintendent's Office should be contacted as soon as possible.
 - The Public Information Office will handle media and community inquiries.
 - Keep staff informed of actions. A Crisis Team, identified for the school, can effectively deliver information to other staff members so that the administrator's time can be used for other decisions/action.
 - The Transportation Department can, in extreme emergencies, provide buses for early dismissal. The Transportation Department will notify the Superintendent of the need for this dismissal.
 - The students will be able to deal with the situation by being informed of the facts, as soon as possible, rather than receiving their "facts" through rumor.
 - Other schools should be given the basic information as soon as possible by the Public Information Office since siblings/neighbors will quickly learn of the situation.
 - The parents of the students in the community will need to learn the real facts, just as their children have learned them, to reduce the rumor factor.
 - After the crisis is over, the Public Information Office may wish to arrange a special press conference to give the media the same information that has been shared with the parents.
8. Telephone Answerer: Prepare a statement for the individuals who answer the telephones to read. Instruct them that any further inquiries should be made to the Public Information Office. Give them the phone number for the caller to call.
9. Police Information for Charges: The police will need to be sure of details from you as well as from others interviewed. Trespassing is a misdemeanor or felony, depending upon the location of the intrusion.
10. Written Memo for Staff and Parents: As soon as the immediate crisis/danger is over., the staff and parents will need to know, not only what occurred, but why you took the action that you did.
11. Crisis Team Report. Submit it within twenty-four (24) hours.
12. Follow-Up Activities. Pupil Personnel Services will provide counseling for students and staff. The building security plan should also be reviewed.
13. Call emergency staff meeting.

Handling an Angry Parent (Strategies may be adapted to use with angry employees and patrons.)

- Be courteous and confident.
- Remain calm.
- Do not touch.
- Keep at a reasonable distance.
- Listen.
- Allow the opportunity to vent.
- Meet in a neutral, protected location.
- Leave door open or have another staff member join you.
- Avoid blame -- focus on what can be done.

Ask:

- "How can I help you get the services you/your child needs?"
- "How can we work together?"
- "What kinds of support can we put in place to help your child succeed?"

SAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR INTRUDER/TRESSPASSER #2

Intruder — an unauthorized person who enters school property.

- Politely greet intruder and identify yourself.
 - Consider asking another staff person to accompany you before approaching intruder.
 - Inform intruder that all visitors must register at the main office.
 - Ask intruder the purpose of his/her visit.
 - If possible, attempt to identify the individual and/or vehicle.
- If intruder's purpose is not legitimate, ask him/her to leave. Accompany intruder to exit.
- Notify building administrator or law enforcement.

If intruder refuses to leave:

- Notify building administrator and law enforcement if intruder refuses to leave. Give law enforcement full description of intruder.
- Back away from intruder if he/she indicates a potential for violence. Allow an avenue of escape.
- To the extent possible, maintain visual contact.
 - Be aware of intruder's actions at this time (where he/she is located in school building, whether he/she is carrying a weapon or package).
 - Maintaining visual contact and knowing the location of the intruder is less disruptive than doing a buildingwide search later.

Should the situation escalate quickly, the building administrator may decide at anytime to initiate lockdown procedures.

Note: To assist staff members who interact with a stranger at school, use the "I CAN" rule.

Intercept

Contact

Ask

Notify

KIDNAPPING

SAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR KIDNAPPING

Checklist

- Telephone police
- Call Superintendent's Office
- Notify parents of child
- Identify team to work on the crisis while rest of school maintains routine
- Obtain full description and pull out school picture
- Search school building and grounds

- If child napping, try to obtain description of suspect
- When child is found, contact Superintendent, notify teacher, fill out Crisis Team Report
- Prepare memo to inform staff and parents of incident and actions taken
- Arrange for counseling for staff and students, if necessary.
- Call emergency staff meeting

Specifics

1. Immediately after it has been determined that a child has been lost/taken, contact the Police.
2. Call the Superintendent's Office to report the incident.
3. Contact the parents of the child involved. Establish a communication plan with them, if necessary.
4. Identify a team to work on the crisis. Designate personnel to deal with phone communications, etc., and other administrative staff to assist as appropriate. If the incident occurs during the school day, classroom routine should be maintained.
5. Locate the school picture of the child and obtain a full description of the child (including clothing) to assist the police.
6. Conduct immediate search of school building and grounds.
7. In cases of childnapping, obtain from witnesses a description of the suspect.
8. When a child is found, contact the Superintendent's Office, notify teacher and fill out the Crisis Team Report.
9. Prepare a memo to staff outlining the situation. Give factual information, as appropriate, to allow them to respond to students' questions knowledgeably. Prepare an appropriate memo to parents.
10. Call emergency staff meeting.

Preventative activities which may help avoid child napping situations are as follows:

- School secretary should have at her desk a list of students who are not to be released to anyone except a particular parent or guardian.
- Emergency cards of such students should be tagged.
- Before releasing a child to anyone except a parent or guardian on the list, the school secretary should check with the custodial parent and/or guardian for approval; a record of the time and date of phone approval should be made and kept.
- When parent telephones a request that a child be released from school, the identity of the caller should be confirmed (by a separate call to the parent or guardian, if needed) before the child is permitted to leave. In the event of any doubt, the message and phone number should be written down; a return call should be made after cross-checking the phone number with those on file in the child's folder or on the emergency card.

SHOOTINGS/WOUNDINGS/ATTACKS

SAMPLE PROCEDURES FOR SHOOTINGS/WOUNDINGS/ATTACKS

Checklist

- Assess the situation.
- Call: 9-1-1
Police/School Resource Officer
Ambulance
- Use emergency signal - all students and staff are to stay in classrooms, secure the door, and stay on the floor.

- Establish a command post with several telephones available.
- Implement first aid procedures until rescue service arrives.
- Notify Superintendent's Office.
- Keep a written log of events.

After the danger has passed:

- Prepare a written memo for staff and parents.
- Implement necessary follow-up activities.
- Call emergency staff meeting.

Specifics

1. Notify the police, and other necessary emergency staff.
2. Determine if the perpetrator is still on premises - determine number of victims and identify witnesses.
3. The emergency signal to staff and students should convey the seriousness of the situation. Follow-up announcements will be necessary to keep everyone informed. Prepare a general statement of the facts.
4. Establish a command post to handle the load of the Crisis Team and to direct the press and concerned members of the community to the Public Information Office.
5. Implement necessary first aid procedures through trained staff, school nurse, nurse's aide, physical education department, and/or athletic trainer. Direct rescue personnel to injured and give any required assistance. Designate staff member to accompany victim(s) in ambulance.
6. Contact Superintendent's Office.
7. Identify a place where a log of events is to be kept. Record all significant events, actions, and individuals that are involved.
8. Keep staff informed through a memo or emergency staff meeting. Parents may be informed through a letter sent home with students.
9. Follow-up management should be well-delegated. Crisis counseling for students and staff may be needed, and security concerns should be considered. All staff will assist in restoring building to normal state. Reopen school as soon as possible.
10. Call emergency staff meeting.

WEAPONS SITUATION

SAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR WEAPONS SITUATION

Checklist

- Assess the situation.
- Notify police.
- Gather information.
- Isolate individual or suspect.
- Do not use force or touch the person or weapon.
- Remain calm.
- Notify another administrator what the situation is.

- Use emergency signal to notify teachers of the threatening situation and institute lockdown procedures until all is clear.
- Notify Superintendent.
- Refer media questions to the Director of Community Relations.

Specifics

1. Assess the situation.
2. Notify police. Provide as much information as possible. Be prepared to act as a resource and liaison between school and police. If necessary, have a map of the school available for police.
3. Gather as much detailed information as possible. Try to determine:
 - Location, identity and detailed description of individual.
 - Location and description of weapon.
 - Any pertinent background information on individual, including possible reason for carrying a weapon.
4. Isolate individual or suspect. (If weapon is in a locker or elsewhere, prevent access to it.)
5. Confer with police when they arrive. They will advise you how they intend to proceed.
6. If interaction with the individual is imminent, do not use force or touch the person or weapon. Avoid sudden moves or gestures.
7. Remain calm. Try not to raise your voice -- but, if this becomes necessary, do so decisively and with clarity. Your tone and demeanor will strongly influence the outcome of the crisis.
8. Be certain that at least one other administrator (or designee) is aware of the situation, but limit information to staff and students on a need to know basis.
9. Notify Superintendent.
10. Use emergency signal to notify teachers of the threatening situation and have teachers keep students in classroom until all is clear.
11. Refer media questions to the Director of Community Relations.
12. Call emergency staff meeting. It is important that staff members leave with accurate information about the incident and subsequent actions to be taken.

E. Weather Emergencies/Disasters

Developing a Severe Weather Emergency Plan for Your School

Source: A Guide to Developing a Severe Weather Emergency Plan for Schools, NOAA.
Accessible at <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/lwx/swep/>

Designate a Plan Coordinator

- Select a staff member who has an interest in weather and is willing to attend a local National Weather Service spotter training program.

Set Up an In-School Weather Information Center

- Use a tonal alert National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio.
- Locate the weather radio near the person responsible for enacting the plan.
- Display a map showing local counties and towns; use to locate storms and track their movement in reference to your school.

Establish a Method of Alerting Teachers and Students

- Use a PA system with back-up alerting device such as a compressed air horn or megaphone.
- Provide wireless communication devices for detached buildings and gymnasiums.
- Make arrangements for handicapped students or others needing assistance.

Identify Tornado and High Wind Safety Zones Within the School

- Get recommendations from an engineer or architect.
- Locate areas of best protection: small interior rooms, bathrooms, windowless interior hallways (with short roof spans).
- Stay away from areas of highest probability of failure: exterior walls and windows, rooms with large roof spans, upper level rooms, roof, interior glass, non-load bear walls, mobile classrooms.

Set Guidelines for Activating the Severe Weather Plan

Thunder: Delay outdoor activities.

Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Watch: Postpone outdoor activities, move students from mobile classrooms and gymnasiums, post school personnel trained in spotting severe weather to watch the storms as they approach, move students from areas with skylights.

Tornado Warning: Should your school be in the storm path, enact an immediate “call to action.” Before the storm arrives, begin moving students from unsafe areas, post a trained employee to act as a storm spotter. Move all students to tornado safe areas. If winds begin to pick up, have students and teachers drop immediately into the protective position.

Plan for Special Problems

- Consider what to do if classes are changing, students are at lunch, or the buses are about to leave as the storm threatens.
- Make arrangements for disconnecting the gas and electricity.

Practice the Severe Weather Emergency Plan

- Conduct drills in September and March.
- Coordinate drills with a severe weather education and awareness program.

ALL-HAZARDS NOAA WEATHER RADIO

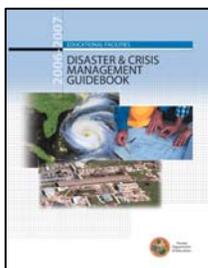
The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has upgraded its Weather Radio network of the 1970s and 1980s to the All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) network.

It communicates both weather-related and nonweather-related alerts to local communities—especially their schools including weather warnings, watches and forecasts; public safety hazards such as chemical spills; terrorist threat advisories; or Amber Alerts (for missing and abducted children).

NWR's all-hazards radios should be placed in schools' main offices or other strategic locations where designated staff can monitor the radios throughout the day. Whoever monitors the radios must know what action to take for each type of emergency or crisis that is broadcast. Having a local map nearby will help officials track the emergency or crisis and plan a response.

All-hazards weather radios may be purchased in electronic stores and generally cost between \$30 and \$80.

A Key Resource for Weather-Related Crises



Educational Facilities Disaster and Crisis Management Guidebook. (2007) Florida Department of Education.

Provides direction for disaster preparedness planning and management in a variety of disasters affecting school divisions and community colleges. The book is intended for facility managers, and is organized around four phases of emergency management: preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. The dual issues of schools as emergency shelters and their prompt return to an educational function are covered. Thirty-eight references are included, as is an appendix advising on sheltering, mental health, debris removal, family preparedness, and other related topics. 232 pages.

Available online at: <http://www.ncef.org/pubs/edfacilities-disaster-management-guidebook-2007.pdf>

EARTHQUAKE

Earthquake Preparation

Source: Information on earthquake preparation was adapted from the State of Missouri Crisis Response Plan. Access at <http://www.accem.org/pdf/schoolplan2.pdf>

Preparation - Identifying Potential Hazards

In the event of earthquake, objects such as the following could cause serious injuries to students and staff:

- Unsecured bookshelves.
- Unsecured wall shelves.
- Freestanding cabinets.

- Unsecured television monitors and other equipment.
- Rolling pianos.
- Hanging plants.
- Heavy objects stored in high locations.

Some questions for the school safety team:

- Are toxic, corrosive, and flammable materials (including lab supplies and chemicals) stored properly and securely?
- Are warning signs posted in areas housing hazardous materials?
- Are appliances (water heaters, space heaters, power tools, etc.) securely anchored?
- Are fire extinguishers checked according to fire code requirements and secured against falling?
- Are office cabinets secured against falling; do drawers have adequate latches to prevent contents from spilling?
- Are "portable" buildings properly tied to foundations?
- Are automatic gas shut-off valves installed?
- Are light fixtures and ceiling fans adequately supported?

Securing Evacuation Routes

It is important to consider various emergency scenarios and to identify hazards that may exist -- or which could occur -- along the designated evacuation routes. Although some of the hazards listed below are particularly relevant for earthquake situations, many of them apply for other emergency situations. Local fire officials may be able to assist in carrying out this assessment.

- Do hallways and/or doors contain glass panels? Are these panels of safety (tempered) glass?
- Do lockers, bookshelves and other storage units line the hallways? After an earthquake or storm, hallways may be cluttered with debris from ceilings, fallen light fixtures, broken glass, and toppled storage units. Students should be advised to anticipate these hazards.
- Is lighting dependent on electricity rather than sunlight? If the lights fail in enclosed hallways or stairs, it will be much more difficult for students and staff to evacuate safely. Are emergency lights present and secured against falling?
- Does your school have elevators? Elevators are extremely vulnerable to damage from earthquakes. Post signs near the elevators prohibiting their use in the event of fire and earthquakes. Make sure you have plans and procedures for helping mobility-impaired students and staff evacuate safely from all parts of the facility.
- Do the exit routes pass under canopies? In an earthquake or strong storm, exterior canopies, roof-overhangs, porches, and supporting columns may collapse. Escape routes could be blocked or become hazardous.
- Is the school building faced with parapets, balconies or cornices? Roof tiles, parapets, balconies, cornices and other structural elements may fall during an earthquake. These structures may be weakened and not fall immediately.

- Are gas, sewer and power lines located near the evacuation routes or near outdoor assembly areas? If the school must be evacuated, students and personnel should not go to areas where these hazards are located. There could be greater risk of harm to students and staff, and their presence could hinder repair crews.

Neighboring Hazards

The school team also needs to evaluate the neighborhood and areas adjacent to school grounds for potential hazards including businesses and factories. These hazards could affect evacuation routes or present additional hazards. Some neighboring hazards that may require specific planning include the following:

- Facilities containing toxic, chemically reactive, flammable and radioactive materials.
- High-voltage power lines.
- Transportation routes of vehicles carrying hazardous materials.
- Underground gas and oil pipelines.
- Underground utility vaults and above ground transformers.
- Multi-story buildings vulnerable to damage or collapse.
- Water towers and storage tanks.
- Storage facilities for agricultural chemicals.

Earthquake Response

When Inside School Buildings

1. Personally execute Action DUCK, COVER AND HOLD ON upon the first indication of an earthquake.
2. Try to avoid glass and falling objects. Move away from windows where there are large panes of glass and out from under heavy suspended light fixtures. (The same applies to other staff members.)
3. When the earthquake is over, initiate Action LEAVE BUILDING. Special consideration should be given to exit routes as many older schools have heavy architectural ornaments over main entrances.
4. Post guards a safe distance away from building entrances to see that no one re-enters the buildings.
Identify guards
Where posted?
5. Warn all personnel to avoid touching electrical wires which may have fallen to the ground.
6. Notify the appropriate Division official.
7. Notify the appropriate utility company of breaks or suspected breaks in utility lines or pipes.
8. Inspect school buildings. When damage is apparent, contact superintendent and determine the advisability of closing the school.
9. Initiate any other Action deemed necessary, or return to normal routine.

When Outside on School Grounds

1. Execute those Actions required under 4 through 9 above.

At Times Other Than School Hours

1. Inspect school buildings. When damage is apparent, contact the superintendent and determine the advisability of closing the school.
2. If school must be closed, notify staff members and students.

Notify the Division Office who will inform public information media as appropriate.

HURRICANE

Hurricane Preparation

FEMA offers numerous informational materials on hurricane preparation at http://www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/hu_before.shtm/

Key activities include the following:

Outdoors

Protect windows and doors

Protecting windows and doors is one of the most effective actions you can take to reduce your risk of wind damage. High winds and windborne debris can easily break unprotected windows and cause doors to fail. Once wind enters a building, the likelihood of severe structural damage increases, and the contents of the building will be exposed to the elements. The most reliable method of protecting windows and doors is installing permanent storm shutters. Alternatives include using temporary plywood covers, replacing existing glass with impact-resistant glass, and covering existing glass with a protective film.

Remove trees and potential windborne missiles

If the area immediately surrounding the school building contains trees, outbuildings, trash cans, or other materials that can be moved by the wind, the school structure will be more likely to be damaged during a hurricane or tornado. The wind can topple trees and can pick up smaller objects and drive them through windows and glass doors. All storage sheds and other outbuildings should be securely anchored, either to a permanent foundation or with straps and ground anchors. Smaller objects should also be anchored or moved indoors.

Indoors

Protect Records and Equipment

To reduce vulnerability, determine which records, files, and materials are most important; consider their vulnerability to damage during different types of disasters (such as floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes); and take steps to protect them, including the following:

- Raising computers above the flood level and moving them away from large windows;
- Moving heavy and fragile objects to low shelves;
- Storing vital documents (plans, legal papers, etc.) in a secure off-site location;
- Regularly backing up vital electronic files (such as billing and payroll records and customer lists) and storing backup copies in a secure off-site location; and
- Securing equipment that could move or fall during an earthquake.

SAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR HURRICANES

Hurricanes are events that can produce extremely high winds, tornadoes, and torrential rain (leading to mud slides and flash floods), and can drive storm surge onto coastal areas.

Secondary hurricane events include:

- Surge inundation
- Rainfall flooding
- High winds
- Power outages
- Tornadoes spawned by hurricanes
- Hazardous material spills
- Wind-borne debris
- Fallen trees
- Building damage

Hurricane alerts include:

Hurricane watch

A hurricane watch (HWA) is issued for a specified coastal area for which a hurricane or a hurricane-related hazard is a possible threat within 36 hours.

Hurricane warning

A hurricane warning (HWW) is issued when a Hurricane with sustained winds of 74 mph (65 knots, 118 kmh) or higher is expected in a specified coastal area in 24 hours or less.

When a hurricane is imminent:

Stay tuned to local radio, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather alert radio, or television for weather advisories and special instructions from local government.

Upon issuance of a hurricane warning:

- Send students home according to division procedures.
- Cancel school as necessary.
- Close schools in threatened area(s).
- Prepare facilities for hurricane.
- If a facility is designated as a shelter, prepare the shelter.

Threat of Flooding

- Monitor NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards and emergency alert radio stations. Stay in contact with emergency management officials.
- Review evacuation procedures with staff.
- Check relocation centers. Find an alternate relocation center if primary and secondary centers would also be flooded.
- Check transportation resources.

If division officials and emergency responders advise evacuation, do so immediately.

- Teachers take class “go-kits” and rosters.
- Teachers take attendance.
- Notify parents/guardians according to division policy.

LIGHTNING

SAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR LIGHTNING

Lightning is a powerful natural electrostatic discharge produced during a thunderstorm. Lightning causes more deaths annually than do hurricanes or tornadoes. To prepare for lightning, train all appropriate school personnel in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Automated External Defibrillator (AED), and First Aid. Lightning victims can often be revived.

In the event of a lightning threat:

- Move students inside a permanent structure.
- Stay tuned to local radio, NOAA weather alert radio, or television for weather advisories and special instructions from local government.
- Cancel outside recess.
- Conduct physical education classes indoors.

In the event of lightning, **stay away from:**

- Open doors
- Glassed in areas
- Radiators
- Stoves
- Metal pipes
- Sinks
- Plugged-in electrical appliances

If in a vehicle, stay in the vehicle unless it's a convertible. If the vehicle is a convertible, then find shelter elsewhere.

If outdoors, and no permanent structure is available for shelter, lie as flat as possible in a ditch for best protection.

Avoid:

- Open doors
- Highest object in area
- Hilltops
- Open spaces
- Wire fences
- Exposed sheds
- Trees (stay twice as far away as the tree is tall)
- Being in bodies of water
- Being in small boats
- Using telephones or electrical equipment

Develop a policy for students who walk home or drive their own vehicle:

- Keep students at school under supervision until the storm passes, walking is safe, or transportation is provided.

Alternate options include:

- Dismissing students early, before an anticipated storm becomes severe.

- Providing emergency transportation.
- Developing policies for school cancellation, delayed school opening, or late dismissal when road conditions are unsafe.

When an electrical charge is felt:

- Hair stands on end
- Skin tingles
- Lightning may be about to strike you; drop to the ground immediately

TORNADO

SAMPLE PROCEDURES FOR TORNADO

Each school should develop a tornado drill annually. Procedures for both Tornado Watch and Tornado Warning will be practiced.

Each school should develop a map to determine areas of shelter to be used during a tornado emergency. Areas of large roof expanses (gyms and cafeterias), and areas with considerable glass should not be used as shelters. The safest shelter areas are interior windowless rooms and hallways that have load-bearing walls and are on the lowest possible level. Upon request, Risk Management and Security staff will assist school staff in conducting a building assessment.

TORNADO WATCH - No funnel clouds have been sighted but weather conditions exist that are conducive to their formation.

Principal

- Advise teachers and staff via the P.A. system that a tornado watch is in effect.
- Advise teachers to review the “drop and tuck” command and designated areas of shelter with students.
- Designate staff to monitor NOAA and television broadcasts for additional information.
- Bring students located outside of the building or in classroom trailers into the main building.
- Advise the custodian or building engineer to be prepared to shut off the main gas supply valve in the event of a tornado warning.
- Ensure that a plan is in place to assist special needs students and staff.
- Have an alternate plan of communication ready should there be a loss of power (e.g., bull horn, phone tree, or runners.)

"DROP AND TUCK"

Protect yourself . . .
Lie face down,

Draw your knees up under you,
Cover the back of your head with your hands.

Teachers

Review the “drop and tuck” command designated areas of shelter with students.
Close windows and blinds.

Be prepared to “drop and tuck” under desks if the immediate command is given over the P.A. system or if there is an immediate need to do so.

Tornado Danger Signs

Severe Thunderstorms - Thunder, lightning, heavy rains, and strong winds.

Hail - Pellets of ice from dark-clouded skies.

Roaring Noise - Like a hundred railroad locomotives; crashing thunderous sound.

Funnel - Dark, spinning "rope" or column from the sky to the ground.

TORNADO WARNING - A funnel cloud has been sighted or indicated on radar. The approximate location and direction is usually broadcast during the warning.

Principal

- Advise teachers and staff of the tornado warning.
- Advise all teachers to escort classes to their pre-designated areas of shelter.
- Notify pre-designated staff to keep a look out in order to spot tornado funnels. Depending on their position, these staff may need a means to make immediate contact with the Principal if a funnel cloud is sighted.
- Be prepared to give the “drop and tuck” command via the P.A. system if danger is imminent. Occupants may need to “drop and tuck” under desks if they have not yet been moved to areas of shelter in the school.
- Delay bus departures.
- Parents picking up students should be advised of the tornado warning and persuaded to stay with their child.
- Have immediate access to the contents of the crisis management kit and distribute flashlights as necessary.

Teachers

- Escort students to the pre-designated areas of shelter.
- Take a class roster and account for all students.
- Ensure that students sit quietly against a wall on the floor and that they understand the “drop and tuck” command.
- Close all fire doors and gates along the corridor to minimize injury from flying debris.

Custodian/Engineer

- Shut off main gas supply valve.
- Be prepared to shut off all other utilities if necessary.

Bus Drivers

- Drive at a ninety-degree angle from the funnel cloud and seek shelter in the closest building if there is time.

- If no building is available, highway underpasses can provide protection. Park the bus down wind so it will not be blown back to your position. Escort the students to shelter up under the underpass.
- If caught near the open, escort the students to a low area such as a ditch, ravine, or culvert.
- Have students lie face down with hands covering their heads.
- Report in as soon as danger has passed.

IF BUILDING IS STRUCK BY A TORNADO

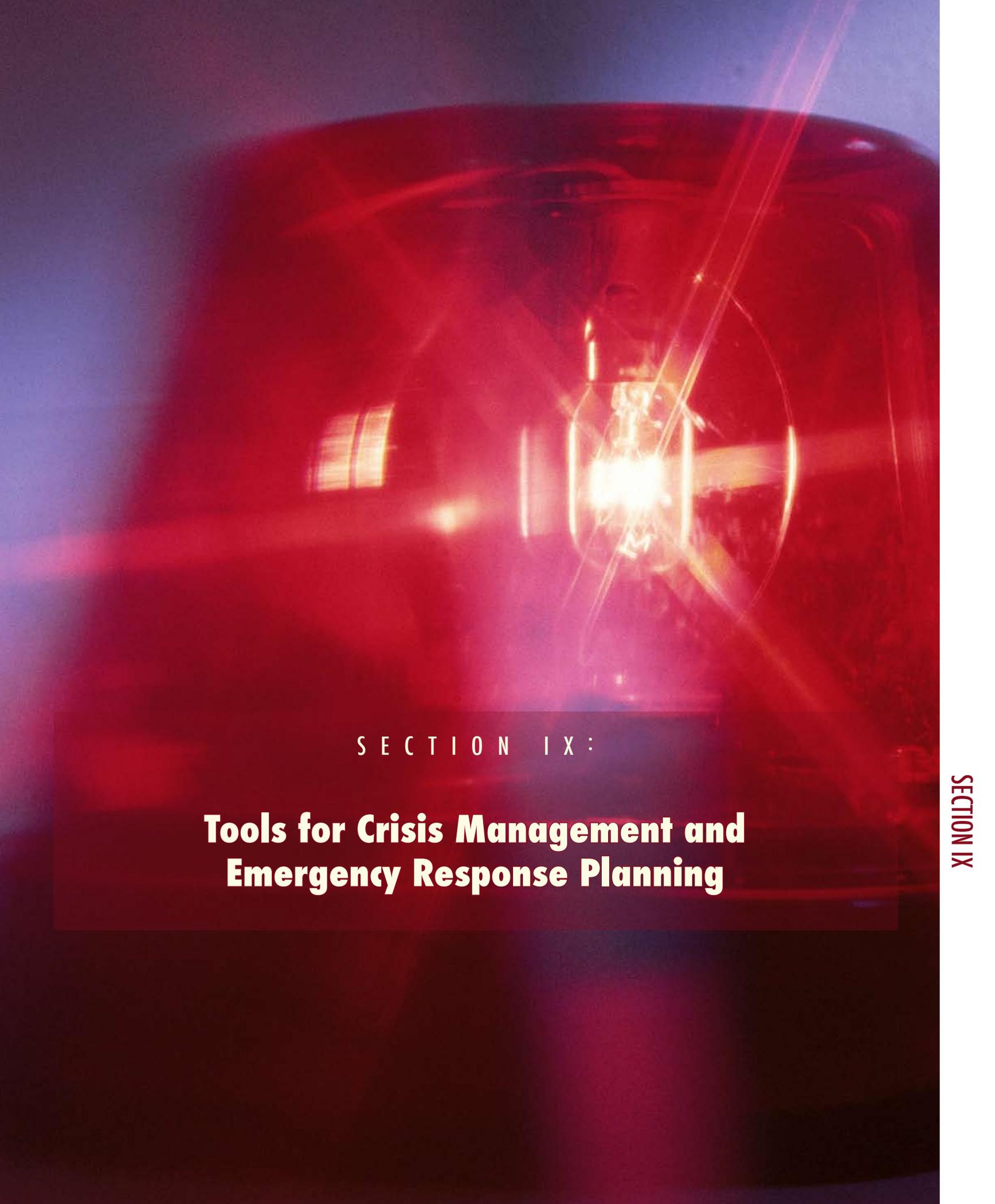
Principal

- Ensure utilities are shut off.
- Call 9-1-1 and give a situation report.
- Determine who was injured and administer first aid.
- Carefully evacuate damaged areas.
- Notify: Superintendent.

Risk Management and Security

- Take roll and conduct a search for missing students and staff, if safe to do so.
- Account for and release students to parents only after a complete roll call has been reported.
- Maintain a list of all injured students and staff. Keep an accurate record of the hospitals to which any were sent.
- Establish a means to disseminate information to parents and media.

FUJITA TORNADO SCALE			
SCALE	INTENSITY PHRASE	WIND ESTIMATE (MPH)	TYPICAL DAMAGE
F0	GALE TORNADO	< 73	Light damage. Some damage to chimneys; branches broken off trees; shallow-rooted trees pushed over; sign boards damaged.
F1	MODERATE TORNADO	73-112	Moderate damage. Peels surface off roofs; mobile homes pushed off foundations or overturned; moving autos blown off roads.
F2	SIGNIFICANT TORNADO	113-157	Considerable damage. Roofs torn off frame houses; mobile homes demolished; boxcars overturned; large trees snapped or uprooted; light-object missiles generated; cars lifted off ground.
F3	SEVERE TORNADO	158-206	Severe damage. Roofs and some walls torn off well-constructed houses; trains overturned; most trees in forest uprooted; heavy cars lifted off the ground and thrown.
F4	DEVASTATING TORNADO	207-260	Devastating damage. Well-constructed houses leveled; structures with weak foundations blown away some distance; cars thrown and large missiles generated.
F5	INCREDIBLE TORNADO	261-318	Incredible damage. Strong frame houses leveled off foundations and swept away; automobile-sized missiles fly through the air in excess of 100 meters (109 yds); trees debarked; incredible phenomena will occur.
INTERESTING NOTE: The size of a tornado is not necessarily an indication of its intensity.			



SECTION IX:

**Tools for Crisis Management and
Emergency Response Planning**

IX. Tools for Crisis Management and Emergency Response Planning

A. Establishing Policy

1. Sample School Division Policy on Crisis Management Planning

A. Definitions

“Crisis incidents” shall include but not be limited to situations involving the death of a student, staff member, or a member of a student’s immediate family by suicide, illness, or accident. The school principal shall have the authority to determine what is a crisis incident and when to convene the Crisis Management Team.

“Critical incidents” shall include situations involving threats of harm to students, personnel, or facilities as well as life-threatening medical emergencies. Critical incidents include but are not limited to natural disasters, fire, flood, tornadoes, or other severe weather; threats involving weapons; explosions; kidnapping; and cardiac arrest. Such incidents require an interagency response involving law enforcement and / or emergency services agencies.

The individual school “Crisis Management Plan” shall be a written plan with explicit intent to protect and sustain life, reduce emotional trauma, assist in emotional recovery from trauma, minimize personal injury and/or damage to the facility. Such plans shall address essential school-specific procedures, operations, and assignments to prevent, manage, and respond to critical events and emergencies set forth in § 22.1-279.8.A, *Code of Virginia*, and include provisions for communications with parents and reunification of students with parents.

B. Crisis Management Team

Individual School Crisis Management Team shall be established at each school to meet the demands of crisis incidents.

Membership: The crisis team shall consist of an immediately accessible core group who have the knowledge and skills to act in any emergency and shall include the principal, assistant principal, one or more school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, nurse/clinic attendant, one or more selected teachers, and a person to record events/minutes of meetings. As needed, the school resource officer and other community mental health and public safety representatives may be asked to consult with the school team. A roster of team members is to be posted in each school administration office.

Purposes: The Crisis Team shall implement and adapt appropriate action from the Crisis Management Plan to address the specific circumstances of the crisis. Roles and responsibilities of team members and consultants will be established in the school’s written Crisis Management Plan.

C. Crisis Management Plan

Each school Crisis Management Plan shall include provisions for preparation/planning, intervention/response, and post-emergency activities, including the establishment or designation of the following:

Explicit procedures for each crisis incident.

Crisis headquarters and command post outside the school facility in the event building evacuation is necessary.

Chain of command in the event a key administrator is not available.

Spokesperson to the media. This person will be the principal or designee and is responsible for gathering and confirming all pertinent information about the incident and for informing the school division's public information officer prior to any media release. The spokesperson will also designate a media reception area when deemed appropriate.

Network of key communicators. It is the responsibility of these key individuals to convey approved information to others. This network may include phone trees to notify staff of emergency incidents and special meetings which may occur before or after school hours. It should also include counselors designated to support groups such as students, faculty, and parents.

Communication plan within the school and to the community. The best means of communication may vary with the crisis. However, the plan must provide for communicating with teachers as soon as possible. When appropriate, well-informed representatives should be ready to go into classrooms. Schools are to avoid giving news via assembly or public address systems as results can be unpredictable when giving shocking news to large groups of students. To ensure accuracy and avoid rumor, information to students must come directly from internal memoranda or statements written specifically for that purpose and approved by the principal. News is best given to students in class so they can ask questions of a person they know. Questions from parents should also be addressed from a pre-approved fact sheet.

Arrangement for support services. One individual from the Crisis Management Team will be designated to contact the school board office and to contact, as needed, other community resources such as mental health services in accordance with the school division Memorandum of Understanding. The school board office will arrange for assistance, as needed, for additional school psychologists, school social workers, guidance counselors, and school nurses. School arrangements should include the designation of meeting spaces, provisions to request on-call services to meet unexpected demand, and provision of long-term follow-up.

Bring closure to the crisis. This activity will vary depending on the crisis. But it is imperative to recognize officially the end of the crisis and the beginning of the healing process. This may include a review of the incident and the implementation of the plan.

Evaluation of the crisis plan. Response to each crisis event will be reviewed and evaluated at the conclusion of each event. In addition, the Crisis Management Team will evaluate annually the plan and its effectiveness and make modifications in accordance with school board policy, as needed.

D. Critical Incident Management Plan

A Critical Incident Management Plan shall be developed in accordance with Joint Memorandum of Understanding executed between the school division and the Police Department, Fire Department, and Department of Emergency Services.

Specific school procedures shall reflect utilization of an Incident Command System and specify the key school-based procedures and methods of communication.

E. Crisis Management Training

The Crisis Management Plan, including procedures for the identification of potential threats, shall be reviewed annually with the full school staff and shared with all transient staff, nurse/clinic attendants, secretaries, cafeteria staff, custodians, and bus drivers. Schools are encouraged to provide additional in-service training on specific crisis related topics such as substance abuse, neglect and abuse, and suicide prevention.

F. Public Access to School Crisis Plans

Individual school plans shall be open to public inspection. However, some details of school plans such as facilities blueprints and communications codes may be withheld from public access for security reasons in accordance with School Security Policy. (See § 2.2-3705.2, *Code of Virginia*, for permitted exclusions from public access.)

B. Planning and Preparedness

Components of Comprehensive Plans: Checklist

The following Emergency Management Plan Checklist is adapted from the ERCM Technical Assistance Center, “Components of Comprehensive School and School Division Emergency Management Plans,” Helpful Hints for School Emergency Management, Vol. 2, Issue 2, 2007.

COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DIVISION EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS

	Extent of Development			Estimated Date to be in Place	Information Related to the Component
	Fully in Place	Partially in Place	Not Yet in Place		
General					
Establishes school and school division crisis response teams based on the National Incident Management System’s (NIMS), Incident Command System (ICS). (For more information on the NIMS, visit http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/index.shtm .)					
Demonstrates meaningful collaboration with community partners (e.g., local public health, mental health, public safety, local government, law enforcement and emergency services personnel) and establishes memoranda of understanding among team members and partners.					
Outlines an all-hazards approach to emergency management planning.					
Documents school board approval of the plan.					
Shows alignment and integration with federal, state, community and division emergency management plans (e.g., supports the implementation of NIMS).					
Specifies accommodations and modifications for people with disabilities and special needs.					
Provides a time line for maintaining and updating plan components.					
Prevention-Mitigation					
Provides or is based on an assessment protocol that outlines: an assessment schedule; the persons responsible for conducting the assessments; the corrective actions to take place; or the support programs to be installed.					
Assesses physical and environmental risks (e.g., regional, buildings).					
Assesses the social and emotional well-being of students, faculty and staff.					
Assesses school culture and climate.					
Lists mitigation activities.					
Prioritizes ongoing risks that cannot be mitigated.					

**COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DIVISION
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS**

	Extent of Development				Information Related to the Component
	Fully in Place	Partially in Place	Not Yet in Place	Estimated Date to be in Place	
Other					
Preparedness					
Institutionalizes the NIMS' ICS and assigns roles and responsibilities to individuals.					
Outlines crisis teams' and community partners' duties as detailed in the memoranda of understanding.					
Incorporates pre-negotiated contracts for services that may be needed in case of an emergency (e.g., transportation, construction work or food).					
Outlines steps for transferring command from school administrators to the incident commander as the crisis unfolds.					
Provides criteria for response (e.g., evacuation, lockdown or shelter-in-place).					
Lists emergency supplies and go-kit components tailored to the:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom ▪ Main office ▪ Cafeteria ▪ Gymnasium ▪ Other non-classroom locations 					
Lists available emergency medical supplies.					
Lists available emergency sanitation supplies.					
Provides information about the school's facilities (e.g., maps, floor plans and location of utility cutoffs).					
Details individual communications plans during an emergency with:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Faculty and staff ▪ Students ▪ Division administrators ▪ First responders ▪ Parents or guardians ▪ Media 					
Lists schoolwide and classroom-specific communication devices and how to use them in different emergencies.					
Incorporates plans for communicating emergency management procedures to parents and guardians.					
Ensures communication equipment interoperability with those of first responders.					
Provides guidance on family reunification plans and procedures.					
Specifies transportation and traffic procedures during and after a crisis.					
Outlines training to be provided to crisis response teams, faculty, staff, students and parents.					
Outlines a schedule of drills and exercises.					
Details maintenance and enhancement activities for the continual revision of the school emergency management plan.					
Response					
Outlines the process for activating the ICS.					
Assigns a public information officer (PIO) to communicate with					

**COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DIVISION
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS**

	Extent of Development				Information Related to the Component
	Fully in Place	Partially in Place	Not Yet in Place	Estimated Date to be in Place	
<p>the media and the public during an emergency. Assigns an incident commander to manage the Command function of the ICS. Assigns crisis response team members to manage the four other functions of the ICS: Logistics, Operations, Planning, and Finance-Administration.</p> <p>Assigns a member of the crisis response team to take detailed notes on practice drills, specific events and actions taken during an emergency. Incorporates structure for conducting after-action debriefings. Outlines procedures for revising the plan based on lessons learned.</p>					
Recovery					
<p>Provides a damage-assessment protocol for physical assets. Outlines procedures and strategies for physical and structural recovery. Outlines financial and logistical protocols and resources for recovery. Establishes procedures for making decisions about school closures. Incorporates a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). Provides criteria for reopening schools. Provides protocols for activating memoranda of understanding with mental health agencies. Identifies types of support (e.g., extra-curricula activities and mental health interventions) for students and staff exhibiting symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder. Offers strategies for providing follow-up and ongoing mental-emotional recovery interventions. Addresses parental or guardian consent for mental health services for students. Incorporates sample templates (e.g., a letter notifying parents or guardians of a student’s death) to notify members of the school community about crisis events. Provides guidelines for standing and temporary memorials, and the observance of anniversaries. Provides the PIO with protocols and templates for ongoing communication with the media, parents or guardians and the local community. Provides guidelines for screening potential volunteers. Provides guidelines for accepting donations.</p>					

Sample Staff Emergency Skills Inventory

SAMPLE STAFF EMERGENCY SKILLS INVENTORY

A form such as the following can be used to inventory skills which may be helpful in a crisis:

Staff Name: _____ Room #: _____

Please check any of the following in which you have expertise or training:

Emergency response:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Safety / Firefighting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CPR | <input type="checkbox"/> Search and Rescue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EMT | <input type="checkbox"/> Critical Incident Stress Debriefing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement Source | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) | |

SAMPLE COMMUNICATIONS INVENTORY

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cellular Phone / Pager | Number(s) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bi/multilingual | Languages _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language | What kind? _____ |

Sample Rosters of Students/Staff Who Need Special Assistance in an Emergency

SAMPLE ROSTER OF STUDENTS/STAFF WHO NEED SPECIAL ASSISTANCE IN AN EMERGENCY

STUDENTS WHO MAY NEED ASSISTANCE

Name	Homeroom # Bus #	Description of Assistance Needed	Person(s) Assigned to Assist

STAFF MEMBERS WHO MAY NEED ASSISTANCE

Name	Room #	Description of Assistance Needed	Person(s) Assigned to Assist

Sample School Crisis Response Box Information Inventory

SAMPLE SCHOOL CRISIS RESPONSE BOX INFORMATION INVENTORY

Note: See Chapter VI for a full description of each item.

CRISIS RESPONSE BOX ITEM	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE
Map Streets surrounding school Intersections near school Vacant lots		
Campus Layout Room numbers, phone numbers, computers, e-mail, cable TV Threat areas, e.g., chemistry and biology labs, shops		
Blueprint of School Building(s)		
Teacher/Employee Roster Room and cell phone numbers Staff directory Copy of employee photo identification		
Keys Clearly marked and master keys		
Fire Alarm Turn-off Procedures How and where located		
Sprinkler System Turn-off Procedures How and where located		
Utility Shut-off Valves Electric Gas Water Where and how to shut off		
Gas Line and Utility Lines Lay-Out		
First Aid Supplies Location and how to access		
Designated Command Posts Law Enforcement, Emergency Personnel Receiving Area for Parents Receiving Area for Press		
Cable Television Shut-off Identify where and how		
Student Photos Copy of photo IDs of students Current yearbook		
Incident Command System (ICS) Key Responder List (names and all phone numbers) ICS School Incident Coordinator Public Information Coordinator First Aid Coordinator Search and Accountability Coordinator Grounds and Maintenance Coordinator		

CRISIS RESPONSE BOX ITEM	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE
Traffic Safety Coordinator Student Assembly, Shelter and Release Coordinator Food, Water and Supplies Coordinator Bi-/Multi-lingual Translator Inventory of Staff Resources		
Emergency Resource List List of agencies and phone numbers to assists during an emergency such as: Victim Assistance Response Team American Red Cross Federal Aviation Authority Counselors Emergency Radio Channels		
Evacuation Sites Maps with routes to at least two evacuation sites; should also be posted in classrooms.		
Disposition Forms Set of forms for parents/guardians/hospitals/ER personnel to sign when a student has been released to them.		
Student Attendance Roster Roster should be entered in the box daily Teachers bring their classroom attendance sheet to evacuation site		
List of Students With Special Needs List of students with special medical needs requiring medications List of students with a disability requiring assistance in an evacuation Student emergency card data		
Additional Items to be included depending on local decisions: SOS Communication System from Classrooms to Emergency Personnel (e.g., color-coded posters to alert outside help about life-threatening injuries, non life-threatening injuries or no injuries)		
Incident Command System Organization Chart Reflecting roles and responsibilities of school officials and local emergency personnel		

Source: *Crisis Response Box: Partnering for Safe Schools*. (Updated 2007). California Attorney General and California Superintendent of Public Instruction

Sample Central Office Crisis Team Roster and Assignment Roster

SAMPLE CENTRAL OFFICE CRISIS TEAM ROSTER

Position/Role	Name	e-mail	Work Phone	Fax	Home Phone	Cell Phone / Pager
Administration						
Ass't Supt*						

Position/Role	Name	e-mail	Work Phone	Fax	Home Phone	Cell Phone / Pager
Facilities Liaison						
Human Resources						
Information Technology						
Media Liaison / Community Relations						
Safety / Security Liaison						
Student Services						
Superintendent						
Transportation Liaison						
Others						

* Designee in the event the Superintendent is not available.

SAMPLE SCHOOL ICS ACTIVATION ROSTER #1

Role	Name, Location, Numbers	Alternate Name, Location, Numbers
Incident Supervisor		
Student Accounting		
Off-Site Bus Staging Areas		
Police and Fire Liaison		
Parent Reunion Organizer and Liaison		
Information and Media Representative		
Communication and Recorder		
School Site Security		
Staff Assignments		
Counseling		

SCHOOL ICS ASSIGNMENT ROSTER #2

Based on Assignments in School Critical Incident Planning (SCIP). Software developed by the Justice and Safety Center, Eastern Kentucky University. Web site: <http://www.jsc.eku.edu/>

Role	Description	Person Assigned Alternate(s)
------	-------------	------------------------------

Role	Description	Person Assigned Alternate(s)
Incident Commander	Establishes command post; determines strategies and tactics for operations; activates teams/units; coordinates efforts of all responding agencies.	
Public Information Officer	Obtains approval on all press releases; conducts frequent media briefings; receives and escorts VIPs; coordinates with school Media contact.	
Safety Officer (required for HAZMAT incidents)	Ensures all operations are performed in the safest possible manner; monitors and assesses hazardous and unsafe situations; develops measures to ensure safety of personnel.	
Liaison Officer	Identifies representatives from each law enforcement, fire, rescue, and special unit agencies, as well as school and division; serves as liaison to keep all agencies informed of incident progress; identifies potential inter-agency issues.	
Logistics Officer	Arranges for appropriate facilities, staff, services, and material; anticipates the staffing needs for the incident duration; serves as liaison with agencies and organizations that can provide logistical support.	
Planning Officer	Gathers intelligence on the incident, as well as people involved in the incident (via field and command); maintains status of situation and resources; predicts probable courses of action and incident potential.	
Finance and Administration Officer	Accounts for all financial and cost requirements of the incident; tracks timekeeping and payroll issues; handles all incident paperwork (forms, reports, documentation).	
Agency Representatives	Directs all agency resources; maintains contact with Liaison officer; provides input regarding the use of agency resources. An individual from each agency involved in the incident response who has the authority to make decisions regarding the agency's participation.	
School Resource Officer/Security Officer/other	Responds as appropriate to incidents according to level of training and equipment.	
Command Post Liaison	Monitors situation and reports to School Incident Supervisor; serves as school Agency Representative; communicates and coordinates with the ICS Liaison Officer; in some instances, the Command Post Liaison and School Incident Supervisor may be the same person.	
Outer Perimeter Coordinator	Directs emergency responders, media, parents, school transportation, and general traffic to appropriate or designated areas.	
Staff/Volunteer Resource Coordinator	Assigns staff to fulfill roles as needed; coordinates volunteers; coordinates with the School Incident Supervisor and ICS Logistics Officer; check credentials of responding counselors, volunteers,	

Role	Description	Person Assigned Alternate(s)
	and clergy.	
Media Contact	Works with the ICS Public Information Officer to write media statements and parent communications.	
Parent Site Coordinator	Makes emergency notifications to parents, meets parents at parent site, coordinates early release procedures with Student Accounting Coordinator.	
Student Evacuation Coordinator	Prepares and supervises evacuation location; gathers missing/extra student lists; requests emergency services; coordinate with Transportation Coordinator to request transportation to off-site location.	
Student Accounting Coordinator	Obtains attendance records, visitor sign-in sheets, and missing/extra student lists; coordinates efforts to account for missing students; coordinates early release procedures with Parent Site Coordinator.	
Search Team Coordinator	Facilitates school campus and evacuation route safety sweep for suspicious items and persons; assembles search teams; assigns search zones; gathers findings from teams; may coordinate with law enforcement.	
First Aid Coordinator	Obtains medical supplies; oversees care to the injured at triage/medical site until paramedics arrive; tracks students that are taken to specific area hospitals.	
Transportation Coordinator	Contacts division transportation, arranges off-site evacuation transportation and early or late releases; coordinates with Perimeter Coordinator to direct buses where needed.	
Facility and Grounds Contact	Disables utilities, fire alarm, sprinklers, or bell system, as required; secures entrances and exits to school grounds; provides keys to gain access to various campus locations.	
Record Keeper	Documents events as they occur, including events, decisions, and actions by time; communicates with and gathers information from Command Post Liaison.	

C. Response

SAMPLE NON-EMERGENCY CRISIS RESPONSE ACTIVITIES LOG

This log is designed for use during a crisis response to monitor and document activities.

School _____

Date/Time Response Initiated _____

Description of Incident _____

 Crisis Response Team Members (list those present)

First Hour Response:			
Task	Completed	By Whom	Notes
Verify/gather additional information:	yes/no		
Notify other team members:	yes/no		
Notify Superintendent/designee:	yes/no		
Identify most affected students/staff:	yes/no		
Identify space(s) for crisis management activities:	yes/no		
Prepare public announcement(s):	yes/no		
Inform faculty/staff: Method:	yes/no		
Alter bell/schedule:	yes/no		
Inform students, as appropriate Which students?	yes/no Method(s)		
Establish Day 1 crisis support:	yes/no		
Notify Parents: Which Parents?	yes/no Method(s)		
School faculty meeting(s):	yes/no		
Conduct Day 1 debriefing:			
Plan for Day 2:	yes/no		

D. Recovery

Sample Evaluation of Crisis Response Team Intervention

SAMPLE EVALUATION OF CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM INTERVENTION

The Crisis Response Team (CRT), consisting of both the school counseling staff and the area school student services staff, seeks your input to help us assess the effectiveness of the intervention during the

recent crisis at your school. We would appreciate your taking a few minutes of your time to complete this form as soon as possible and return it to the Crisis Response Team Coordinator.

Please indicate with an "X" the response that most closely reflects your evaluation of the following:

1. Speed of CRT's response to the crisis:

Very delayed Adequate Very timely

2. Comprehensiveness of CRT's response:

Very limited Adequate Exceptional

3. Effectiveness of team's response in meeting students' needs:

Not helpful Adequate Very helpful

4. Assistance to teachers in the classroom

Not supportive Adequate Very supportive

5. Quality of communication with the school faculty and staff:

Not informative Adequate Very explanatory

6. Support and guidance to individual teachers and staff:

Ineffectual Adequate Very empathetic

7. Assistance to the administrative staff:

Limited Adequate Very comprehensive

8. Amount of time allocated for intervention:

Insufficient Adequate Very sufficient

9. Support to families in need:

Lacking Adequate Outstanding

10. Communication of information to parents:

Minimal Adequate Thorough

11. Please circle the adjectives which best describe the students' reactions to the CRT's intervention:

satisfied positive angry apathetic negative ambivalent
receptive relieved grateful hostile

12. Please describe any significant reactions the students had to the CRT intervention that should be considered in future interventions.

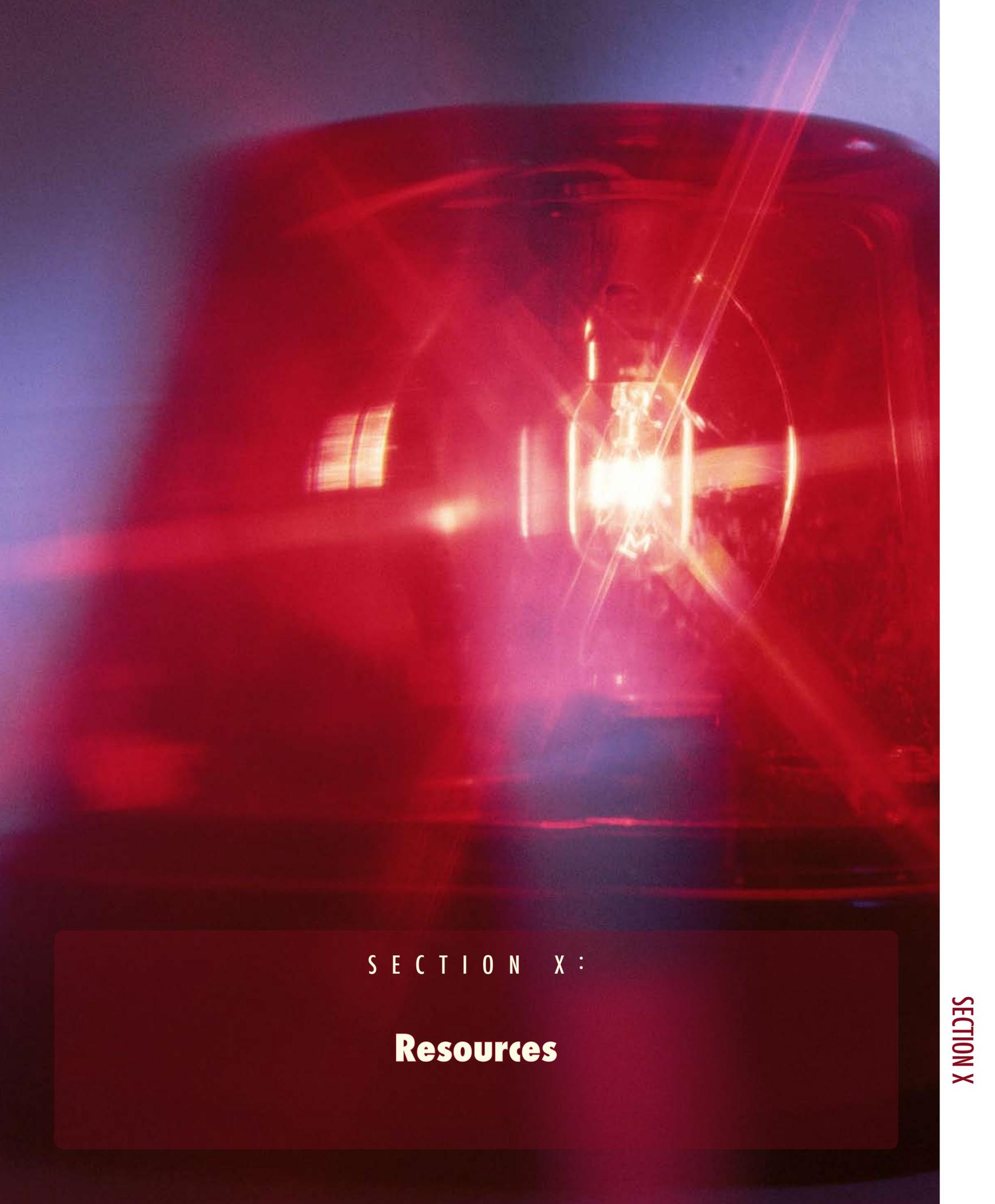
13. Please comment on any aspects of the intervention you found particularly helpful or areas that you think should be modified.

School: _____

Signature (Optional): _____

Please return to Crisis Response Team Coordinator

(Source: Fairfax County Public Schools, VA)



SECTION X :

Resources

X. Resources

A. *Virginia Resources*

Virginia Center for School Safety (VCSS)

<http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/>

Training for school resource officers and school security officers; annual school safety conference; publications.

School Safety Audit Program

<http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/audit/>

School Crisis Plan Review Certification

<http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/audit/crisis.cfm>

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov>

Publications, training, and technical related to school safety.

School Safety Information Resource (SSIR) - Web-based reporting tool that allows users to display school-safety data at the state, division and school levels.

<https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/pti/>

Publications: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/studentsrvcs/>

- Model School Crisis Plan
- Annual Discipline, Crime, and Violence Reports
- Student Conduct Policy Guidelines
- Suicide Prevention Guidelines
- Pandemic Flu Guidelines

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

<http://www.vdem.virginia.gov/> or <http://www.vaemergency.com/>

Lead agency in coordinating state's emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery efforts, offering:

- Training in emergency management, hazardous materials response and search and rescue to prepare local responders.
- Teen CERT Train-the-Trainer course
- Web site contains information on how to prepare for, respond to, and recover from numerous threats and emergencies.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/>

Center for Injury and Violence Prevention

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/civp>

- Suicide prevention information and training
- School-based injury prevention

Emergency Preparedness and Response

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epr/>

Pandemic Flu

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/PandemicFlu/index.asp>

- Information on emergencies impacting public health including bioterrorism, infectious disease outbreaks and other public health emergencies

B. National Resources

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESOURCES

Key Publications

Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Communities and Schools

Guide to provide schools and their communities with a general introduction to emergency management as it applies to schools and basic guidelines for developing school emergency management plans. *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Communities and Schools* outlines the four phases of emergency management (prevention-mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery) and provides checklists of the critical issues encountered in each phase. The Guide also provides information on specific elements of emergency management, including leadership, communication and the Incident Command System (ICS).

Accessible at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>

Publications available on the Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) Web site:

ERCExpress - The *ERCExpress* is a newsletter that provides comprehensive information on key issues in school emergency management.

Accessible at <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=express>

Accessible at <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=hints>

Lessons Learned - Lessons Learned is a series of publications that offers a brief recounting of actual school emergencies and crises.

Accessible at <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=lessons>

Key Web sites

Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) Technical Assistance (TA) Center Web site

The ERCM TA Center Web site offers school-based resources addressing emergency management through the four phases of emergency management. Resources include the Web casts, training documents presented by experts, and publications addressing key issues. Information on the ERCM discretionary grant program is updated annually. The materials are accessible at the following addresses:

- Resources: <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=resources>

- Trainings: <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=trainings>
- Web cast: <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=trainings&#videoConference>
- Publications: <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=publications>

Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS), Emergency Planning Web site

Emergency Planning is part of the Department's Lead and Manage My School series, a group of Web sites designed to support administrators. OSDFS presents information and resources regarding the Emergency Response and Crisis Management Plan Discretionary Grant Program alongside valuable resources for addressing the four phases of emergency planning.

Accessible at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/index.html>

Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS), Emergency Planning: Pandemic Influenza Web site

Emergency Planning: Pandemic Influenza is also part of the Department's Lead and Manage My School series, a group of Web sites designed to support educators and administrators. The Web site offers tools designed to assist schools and school divisions in disseminating health information, planning for staff and student absences and maintaining a learning environment.

Accessible at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/pandemic/index.html>

National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Accessible at <http://www.edfacilities.org>

KEY RESOURCES FROM OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The USDA is the Federal agency responsible for performing research, implementing programs and developing policy to support the nation's agriculture programs. Their work involves use of our lands and protecting America's food supply. The USDA offers specific programs to school divisions and communities to promote a safe and healthy school environment for youth, including school lunch and breakfast programs, food safety programs and nutrition. The Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP), the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) as well as the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) can be accessed through the department's Home page.

U.S Department of Agriculture: <http://www.usda.gov/>

Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion: <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/>

Food Safety and Inspection Service: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>

National School Lunch Program: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/default.htm>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) enhances the physical and mental health of all citizens through research, program implementation, training, technical assistance and service delivery. HHS leads a variety of agencies and programs that address issues within the four phases of emergency planning and supports school and community safety programs: Emergency Readiness and Response, Mental Health in Schools, Violence Prevention, Substance Abuse and Healthy Youth.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/>

Food and Drug Administration (FDA): <http://www.fda.gov/>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):

<http://www.samhsa.gov/>

SAMHSA's Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC):

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/dtac/default.asp>

PandemicFlu.gov

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services manages a Web site focused on bringing up-to-date government pandemic information to individuals, families, schools, businesses and communities across the nation. The Web site presents a range of information from informational fact sheets, to global activities, to links for state and local planning efforts. Presented on the Web site is a School Division (K-12) Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist.

Accessible at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

DHS organizes and unifies our nation's security and emergency management efforts. DHS's mission is to "prevent and deter terrorist attacks and protect against and respond to threats and hazards to the nation." DHS manages and coordinates the emergency management efforts of multiple Federal, State and local agencies through its directorates and agencies (e.g., Office for Domestic Preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, National Incident Management System (NIMS), The U.S. Secret Service, etc.). DHS offers resources for school communities at the Federal, State and local levels.

Department of Homeland Security: www.dhs.gov

State Homeland Security Contacts: http://www.dhs.gov/xgovt/editorial_0291.shtm

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Part of DHS, FEMA works to prepare the nation for all potential hazards and contributes to the Federal response and recovery efforts following emergencies. FEMA also leads essential mitigation activities and trainings, and manages national programs (e.g., Flood Insurance and the U.S. Fire Administration). In addition to Federal initiatives, FEMA has regional and State offices that work with State and local first responders in their emergency management activities. FEMA provides information, guidance and resources addressing the four phases, as well as incident specific issues related to emergency management.

FEMA: <http://www.fema.gov>

FEMA Regional Contacts: <http://www.fema.gov/about/contact/regions.shtm>

State Offices and Agencies of Emergency Management:

<http://www.fema.gov/about/contact/statedr.shtm>

Emergency Management Institute: <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIweb/>

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Integration Center (NIC)

The NIMS is directed by DHS and supported by FEMA. The NIMS provides rules, regulations and guidance that school divisions can use to prepare for and respond to an emergency. The NIMS presents a unified system for managing crises and addressing the roles and responsibilities of all local, State and Federal emergency planners. The NIMS places an emphasis on mutual aid and inter-agency collaboration. The NIMS Integration Center (NIC) provides guidance, tools and resources for supporting the NIMS' implementation efforts and keeping our schools safe.

NIMS Integration Center: <http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/index.shtm>

NIMS Compliance and Technical Assistance:

http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/nims_compliance.shtm

NIMS Training: http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/nims_training.shtm

Ready Campaign

In February 2003, the Department of Homeland Security launched the Ready Campaign, and the Listo Campaign, an English and Spanish version of the national public service advertising campaign. Its purpose is to inform and empower citizens to prepare for and respond to terrorist attacks, disasters and other emergencies. The Ready Campaign offers community-based information, guides and strategies for staying safe and secure at home and in the community.

Ready Campaign: www.ready.gov

Listo Campaign: www.listo.gov

Ready Kids

The US Department of Homeland Security and The Advertising Council created Ready Kids as part of its national public service advertising campaign. The Ready Kids Web site is in a kid friendly format and offers users a variety of interactive choices: “Creating a kit,” “Making a Plan,” “Knowing the Facts,” “Graduating from the Courses,” and playing games and puzzles.

Additionally, the site presents supporting materials to parents and teachers.

Accessible at: <http://www.ready.gov/kids/home.html>

U.S. Department of Justice

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) works to protect and defend the nation’s citizens through the provision of law enforcement, implementation of prevention programs and ongoing public safety efforts through the just and impartial application of the law. DOJ manages numerous programs that continually develop resources and present effective practices supporting the needs of the school emergency management and security communities.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF): <http://www.atf.gov/>

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS): <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/>

National Institute of Justice (NIJ): <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/>

The U.S. Department of Justice/National Institute of Justice’s (NIJ) School Safety Program works with other government agencies, oversees research and development projects, and offers technical assistance as part of an effort to provide School Resource Officers (SROs) and others in the field with tools to help them deal with criminal activity. NIJ also directly supports efforts to develop, test, and evaluate school safety technologies to ensure that they are safe, effective, appropriate, and affordable for schools.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP): <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/>

Office for Victims of Crime (OVC): <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/>

U.S. Department of Transportation

The Department of Transportation develops and coordinates policies that provide an efficient and economical national transportation system, with due regard for need, the environment, and the national defense. It is the primary agency in the federal government with the responsibility for shaping and administering policies and programs to protect and enhance the safety, adequacy, and efficiency of the transportation system and services.

U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT): <http://www.dot.gov>

DOT State and Regional Contacts: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/webstate.htm>

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA): <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA):

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), one of the various agencies under the Department of Transportation has a school bus safety program that is committed to reducing school bus-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities through both behavioral programs and vehicle regulations. NHTSA works to educate school bus drivers, students, and other motorists about safe behavior that reduces the risk of being involved in a school bus-related crash. Accessible at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>

PREVENTION-MITIGATION RESOURCES

The Community-Oriented Policing Services “School Vandalism and Break-Ins”

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services offers a series of Problem-Oriented Guides for Police that also benefit the school community. This guide on school vandalism and break-ins provides cost-effective strategies for designing, operating and maintaining school facilities and promoting security. It also addresses how schools and local law enforcement agencies can work together to apply Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to assist in violence and crime prevention. Chapter 6 details how to establish and maintain a “safe room” within each school to mitigate some hazards.

Accessible at <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/mime/open.pdf?Item=1560>

Final Report and Findings: Implications for Prevention of School Attacks in the United States

The U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education collaborated to undertake the Safe School Initiative, an in-depth study of 37 school shootings and other school-based attacks that took place between 1974 and 2000. This report presents the common characteristics of the incidents, the attackers and behaviors that can be seen as cues for interventions. These characteristics led to the modification of the Secret Service traditional threat assessment model to be applied to the school environment.

Accessible at

<http://www.ercm.org/views/documents/FinalReportandFindingsofSafeSchoolInitiative.pdf>

Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2006: Executive Summary

This annual study is performed and presented collaboratively by the Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics. The annual study reports both incident data and self-report school-based crime as perceived by students, teachers, principals and the general population. This resource is a valuable tool for use with school climate assessments.

Accessible at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iscs06.htm>

The Relative Risks of School Travel: 2002

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) convenes a Committee on School Transportation Safety. The Committee published a Special report on "The Relative Risks of School Travel" in 2002. The report provides some valuable data on deaths and injuries associated with travel to and from school.

Accessible at <http://trb.org/publications/sr/sr269.pdf>

The Safe Schools Checklist

Created by The National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, the checklist combines the nation’s best school facility assessment measures into one, comprehensive, Internet-accessible tool. School safety teams can use this tool to assess their physical environment and identify hazards and vulnerabilities on their campuses. The checklist addresses accident prevention, crime prevention and disaster mitigation (e.g.,

the effects of potential natural disasters and terrorist acts), and applies the basic principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Accessible at <http://www.edfacilities.org/checklist/checklist.cfm>

Safe School Design: A Handbook for Educational Leaders Applying the Principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

This Education Resource Information Center (ERIC) publication (ED449541) offers an in-depth synthesis of current, effective practices for integrating the tenets of CPTED into school facilities planning and violence prevention programs. It further explains the causes of common campus vulnerabilities and methods for addressing them to create safer schools. The Handbook contains two valuable resources for school administrators: *The National School Safety Center's School Crime Assessment Tool*, and *The Oregon School Safety Survey*. *The National School Safety Center's School Crime Assessment Tool* allows administrators to evaluate their school's vulnerability to school-crime-related issues and potential risks to school-climate. *The Oregon School Safety Survey*, developed by the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior at the University of Oregon, College of Education, is designed to determine school safety and violence prevention training needs among school personnel.

Accessible at

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/24/9d/9f.pdf

Schools Chemical Cleanout Campaign (EPA)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced its Schools Chemical Cleanout Campaign (SC3) in the summer of 2004 to support schools maintaining chemical management protocols as part of their all-hazards school emergency management plan. The campaign is part of the EPA's Healthy School Environments Initiative. The EPA's SC3 Toolkit, a core component of the Campaign, outlines key responsibilities of a variety of stakeholders (i.e., teachers, facilities personnel, waste handlers, and school chemical suppliers) and includes information and resources for addressing chemical management in all four phases of school emergency management.

Accessible at <http://www.epa.gov/sc3/>

Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates

Based on the Safe School Initiative, the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education published this threat assessment guide to be used as a proactive tool by schools. The guide sets forth a process for identifying and assessing students who may pose a threat of targeted violence in schools. This process, known as threat assessment, was first pioneered by the U.S. Secret Service and was tailored to meet the needs of a school setting, based upon findings from the Safe School Initiative study. This guide is intended for use by school personnel, law enforcement officials and others with protective responsibilities in schools.

Accessible at <http://www.ercm.org/views/documents/ThreatAssessmentinSchools.pdf>

PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

The American Red Cross's Recommended Emergency Supplies for Schools

The American Red Cross is a response organization offering care and assistance to victims of disasters, as well as resources for prevention, mitigation and preparedness. The American Red Cross offers specific planning resources for schools that address multi-hazard emergency management, including disaster-specific resources for droughts, earthquakes, fires, floods, heat waves, hurricanes,

mudslides, terrorism, thunderstorms, tornadoes, tsunamis, volcanoes, wild fires, winter storms, etc. "Recommended Emergency Supplies for Schools" provides recommendations on how to, and where to, store emergency supplies and how much to stockpile. It also includes recommended supply lists for individual kits, individual classrooms, and an entire school. The Web site offers a tool for customizing checklists.

Accessible at <http://www.redcross.org/disaster/masters/supply.html>

American Red Cross's Preparedness for People With Disabilities

"Preparedness for People With Disabilities" is a brief resulting from years of firsthand experience and input by American Red Cross volunteers across the nation. It offers checklists, summaries and points of consideration for a variety of disabilities and disasters. It makes powerful suggestions for the accommodations, modifications and services that students may need and that schools may easily incorporate into their emergency management plans.

Accessible at http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0_603_,00.html

Assessing Legal Preparedness for School Closure in Response to Pandemic Flu or Other Emergencies

This document highlights the Center for Law and the Public's Health's findings from a Centers for Disease Control (CDC)-funded project, "Assessing Legal Preparedness for School Closure in Response to Pandemic Flu or other Emergencies," at the 2007 Public Health Preparedness Summit.

Accessible at <http://www.publichealthlaw.net/Research/Affprojects.htm#SC>

Campus Public Safety: Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism Protective Measures

The Office for Domestic Preparedness of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has published a safety planning series to guide public safety planning efforts regarding weapons of mass destruction and potential terrorist attacks on college campuses. The guides address the four phases of emergency planning and provide additional resources.

Accessible at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/campusafe.html>

The Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Collaboration Toolkit: How to Build, Fix and Sustain Productive Partnerships

The U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) produces a variety of resources that support school and community policing and prevention efforts. As school divisions develop, enhance and plan emergency management activities, they will want to work closely and collaboratively with their community first responders. Recognizing this kind of working relationship presents common and unique challenges for every community. COPS has created a free toolkit that addresses the challenges, provides tips and strategies, and accompanying models for success.

Accessible at <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/ric/ResourceMain.aspx?RID=236>

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) School Safety Guides and Reports CD-ROM

The COPS Office created a CD-Rom composed of more than 30 COPS Office and other U.S. Department of Justice agency links and documents related to youth violence, gangs, bullying, and drugs, and safety. The CD-Rom is divided into three categories: COPS School Safety and Youth Violence Publications, Government Publications and School Safety Related Documents and Resources. The "School Safety Guides and Reports CD-ROM" provides school emergency management teams and their community partners with tools for collaboratively preparing for and responding to crises.

Accessible at http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/html/cd_rom/school_safety/index.htm

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) “School Safety Guides and Reports Web Page”

The COPS Office presents a comprehensive Web site with a section tailored specifically to the school community, “School Safety: Guides and Reports.” The School Safety Web page includes the following resources: “A Guide to Developing, Maintaining, and Succeeding With Your School Resource Officer Program,” “Bomb Threats in Schools” and “Kids, COPS, and Communities.” Through the Web site the COPS office provides training, guidance and materials to assist schools in creating and maintaining safe learning communities.

Accessible at <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=140>

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) School Safety Package

“Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) School Safety Package” is a complete collection including all COPS efforts in safe youth and community development. The package contains the “COPS School Safety Guides and Reports CD-ROM,” the “COPS Campus Safety CD-ROM” and the “COPS SRO Performance Evaluation CD-ROM.”

Accessible at <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=1588>

Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) Technical Assistance (TA) Center’s Emergency Supplies and Go-Kits for Schools

The ERCM TA Center has created two fact sheets for planning, creating and maintaining school emergency supplies and Go-kits. The guides list considerations and resources based on the specific needs of administrators, classrooms, and individual students and staff.

Accessible at <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=resources&a=10#goKits>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Comprehensive Exercise Curriculum

FEMA presents this curriculum aimed at building the capacity of emergency managers to plan, design, conduct and assess an emergency exercise program. A comprehensive program will help schools respond to and recover from crises. The curriculum provides information, guides and exercises for developing both functional exercises and debriefing activities. It is available online and hosted by the Emergency Management Institute.

Accessible at <http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/cec/CECCourses.asp>

Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) Hurricane Preparedness for People with Disabilities

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides through the Web site, “Hurricane Preparedness for People with Disabilities,” information on assisting people with disabilities during a disaster. The Web site presents guidelines for providing assistance, preparing an emergency plan and creating self-help networks.

Accessible at <http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=24487>

A Guide to Developing a Severe Weather Emergency Plan for Schools

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) created this guide to assist school administrators and teachers with developing safety plans during thunderstorms and their accompanying hazards of lightning, hail, tornadoes and flash floods. Information on designing and practicing the plan, recognizing the approach of severe weather and school bus safety are provided.

Accessible at <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/lwx/swep/>

HIPAA Privacy Rule: Disclosures for Emergency Preparedness - A Decision Tool

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) strengthens students' rights to privacy and prevents the disclosure of personal health-related information. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Civil Rights (OCR) establishes and monitors standards for maintaining privacy. In the event of an emergency, schools should only convey personal student

information to first responders providing treatment and to parents or guardians responsible for the student. This tool provides guidance for schools in following HIPAA.

Accessible at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/decisiontool/>

Justice Technology Information Network's (JUSTNET) School Safety Resources

JUSTNET is part of the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ's) National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC). JUSTNET offers an Internet resource directory for School Safety personnel framed in the four phases of emergency management. The directory presents links to programs, guides and information regarding the development of school safety plans.

Accessible at <http://www.nlectc.org/assistance/schoolsafety.html>

Kentucky Center for School Safety's Emergency Management Guide

The Kentucky Center for School Safety created the school-based Emergency Management Guide as a broad support for preventing, planning for and responding to a variety of emergencies at school. The guide provides step-by-step guidance and resources for developing school emergency plans. From multi-hazard to threat specific, the guide supports an all-hazards approach complete with a comprehensive section regarding trauma and recovery.

Accessible at <http://www.kycss.org/clear/EMGpage.html>

Model Safe School Plan. A Template for Ensuring a Safe, Healthy, and Productive Learning Environment Volume 2—Emergency Procedures

The Model Safe School Plan covers emergency preparedness and response, based on the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), which is designed to centralize and coordinate the emergency response actions of various Los Angeles division organizations and public agencies. It provides an effective framework for managing emergencies, from minor incidents to major earthquakes. The program was evaluated by FEMA and listed in its "Partnerships in Preparedness: A Compendium of Exemplary Practices in Emergency Management, Volume IV."

Accessible at <http://lausd-oehs.org/docs/ModelSSP/ModelSafeSchoolPlanV2Template.pdf>

Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools (IS 362)

IS-362 is part of The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Online Independent Study Program presented by the Emergency Management Institute. IS-362 is an eight-hour, Web-based course addressing the four phases of emergency planning using a multi-hazard approach that has been tailored to the school community. Specifically, it addresses hazard assessment, plan development, emergency management operations and the necessary roles and responsibilities to be represented on a school emergency team. School division and school-based professionals with key roles and responsibilities in emergency management should take this course as an introduction to their team's emergency management activities.

Accessible at <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is362.asp>

National Organization on Disability's (NOD) Guide on the Special Needs of People With Disabilities for Emergency Managers, Planners and Responders

The National Organization on Disability (NOD) created the "Guide on the Special Needs of People With Disabilities for Emergency Managers, Planners and Responders" to inform emergency management personnel of key concerns and needs faced by people with disabilities during an emergency. The guide offers information gleaned from past disasters, as well as research and resources for integrating people and students with disabilities into all emergency management activities. Accessible at

<http://www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=1430&nodeID=1&FeatureID=1034&redirected=1&CFID=3574674&CFTOKEN=46137470>

National Organization on Disability's (NOD) Interactive Map of Disability and Emergency Preparedness Resources

The National Organization on Disability's Emergency Preparedness Initiative has launched an interactive map providing links to local, regional and state disability-related emergency management agencies and organizations. Links include the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), local, regional and state offices, Americans With Disabilities Act and Information Technology (ADAandIT) Technical Assistance Centers, Governors' Web sites, state disability resource agencies, State Citizen Corps and American Red Cross Chapters.

Accessible at http://www.nod.org/EPIResources/interactive_map.html

Ready America's Supply Checklists

Presented by Ready America, part of Ready.gov, these checklists include supplies for such basic needs as food, clean air and first aid. Special checklists are also available for portable kits and for people with special needs.

Accessible at http://www.ready.gov/america/get_a_kit.html

Virginia Department of Emergency Management School Crisis Management Exercise Development Guide

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management offers this guide to assist schools in breaking down the simulation process into numerous discreet steps complete with information, checklists and worksheets for collaboratively developing, conducting, and evaluating emergency simulations. From defining the goals and objectives to debriefing and evaluating the data, planners should consult this guide and its tools for successful emergency exercise activities. Accessible at

<http://www.vdem.state.va.us/prepare/schoolcrisisguide.pdf>

Disaster Services, Educator's Information

The American Red Cross provides additional curricular supports and materials for teachers, educators and presenters to help children and families learn how to stay safe and prevent or reduce the effects of disasters or other emergencies.

Accessible at <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for Kids

FEMA has created a Web site on emergency preparedness specifically for children. The Web site, FEMA for Kids, teaches children how to prepare for disasters and prevent harm from disasters. Kids can play games, read stories and learn about what causes disasters.

Accessible at <http://www.fema.gov/kids/>

FEMA Resources for Parents and Teachers

FEMA has created a Web site tailored to meet the needs of parents and teachers as they support students in their preparedness and coping efforts. The Web site provides caregivers with safety information, curriculum and learning activities appropriate for the home or classroom.

Accessible at <http://www.fema.gov/kids/teacher.htm>

BAM! (Body and Mind) - Kids Survival Skills

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) presents BAM! Body and Mind! an interactive Web site for youth that addresses key issues affecting their safe and healthy development at school, home and in the community. BAM! offers information, games, challenges, and daily lessons in friendly terms for youth aged 9 to 13. The Web site is designed to be a support tool for students interacting with daily life stresses and presents valuable information in six core categories: Diseases, Food and Nutrition,

Physical Activity, Your Safety, Your Life and Your Body. Resources are also made available for teachers in the classroom.

Accessible at <http://www.bam.gov/index.html>

RESPONSE RESOURCES

American Red Cross Earthquake Guide

The American Red Cross is a response-oriented association that offers specific planning and response resources for schools. The Red Cross addresses both multi-hazard emergency management and disaster-specific resources for droughts, earthquakes, fires, floods, heat waves, hurricanes, mudslides, terrorism, thunderstorms, tornadoes, tsunamis, volcanoes, wild fires, or winter storms. This informative Red Cross Earthquake guide will support schools in a variety of aims: preparing for earthquakes, teaching students and staff immediate response protocols (including first-aid) and guidance for what information to communicate to parents.

Accessible at http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_241_,00.html

Bomb Threat Response: An Interactive Planning Tool for Schools

The Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) and The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) collaborated to develop this tool (CD) for schools and law enforcement. The CD is available for free, and it offers a comprehensive guide on how to best respond to bomb threats in schools. The planning tool offers guidance for schools administrators and law enforcement to develop policies specific to the school division and its unique needs. The Bomb Threat Response also addresses communication and presents guidelines for how to communicate during the response phase.

Accessible at <http://www.threatplan.org/>

A Biosecurity Checklist for School Food Service Programs: Developing a Biosecurity Management Plan

In response to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conducted vulnerability assessments of school food service facilities, the agency developed a biosecurity checklist for schools. It is presented alongside a training video and this 40-page training guide aimed at school food service managers.

Accessible at <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/biosecurity.pdf>

Video version accessible at <http://130.74.84.77/launcher.php?file=%2Fomo%2Fcmp%2Fbio.wmv>

Chemical Agents: Facts About Sheltering In Place

The Center for Disease Control's fact sheet defines this response shelter in place, provides criteria for activating the response and guidance for doing it safely. Although it is delivered in reference to the home setting, the information will be useful for school shelter in place officials.

Accessible at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/planning/shelteringfacts.asp>

Emergency Readiness Plan: A Guide for the School Foodservice Operation

Developed by the National Food Service Managers Institute (NFSMI) through an agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the "Emergency Readiness Plan: A Guide for the School Foodservice Operation" is a response guide for school foodservices and emphasizes emergencies caused by natural disasters or unintentional factors.

Accessible at <http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/e-readiness.html>

Fact Sheet: National Incident Management System (NIMS)

The NIMS establishes standardized incident management processes, protocols and procedures that all responders--Federal, State, tribal and local--will use to coordinate and conduct response actions. Since school divisions are an integral part of local government, their use of the NIMS should be achieved in close coordination with other components of the local government. School divisions are not traditional response organizations and more typically are recipients of first responder services provided by fire and rescue, emergency medical and law enforcement agencies. This traditional relationship should be acknowledged in achieving the NIMS compliance within an integrated local government plan. School division participation in a local government's NIMS preparedness program is essential to ensure that first responder services are delivered to schools in a timely and effective manner.

Accessible at http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/press_release_0363.shtm

Incident Command System (ICS) Fact Sheets

The ICS is the standard incident management system for all emergency responders as implemented by the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The ICS outlines how to respond to and manage emergencies; provides structure; and offers guiding concepts, principles and protocols. The system integrates procedures from all response partners (e.g., officials in the public health, mental health, fire and law enforcement communities) as well as the use of facilities and equipment, personnel, terminology and communications. ICS manages both short-term and long-term operations for a broad range of emergencies, from small to complex incidents, both natural and manmade.

ICS-100 Fact Sheet accessible at http://www.fema.gov/pdf/nims/ics_100_fs.pdf

ICS-200 Fact Sheet accessible at http://www.fema.gov/pdf/nims/ics_200_fact_sheetm.pdf

An Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS 100)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offers this online independent study (IS) program course. Key emergency school personnel from both the school division and individual schools are advised to take the course as it addresses the key components of the ICS (e.g., chain of command, critical points for decision-making.)

Accessible at <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is100.asp>

Incident Command Systems for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents (ICS 200)

EMI offers this online independent study (IS) program course to complement the ICS 100. Key school personnel with roles and responsibilities connected to school safety should take this course to learn how to effectively manage smaller-scaled incidents that do not require the use of first responders from multiple agencies.

Accessible at <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is200.asp>

Mercury: Health Effects

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed a fact sheet that compares and contrasts the three chemical forms of Mercury: Methylmercury, Elemental mercury and other mercury compounds (inorganic and organic). The fact sheet explains the specific effects mercury has on human health and the symptoms of mercury exposure. The fact sheet also addresses conditions known to worsen the impact of exposure, such as closed rooms.

Accessible at <http://www.epa.gov/mercury/effects.htm>

Public Health Instructions for Mercury Spills

In its quest to promote safer schools, the Kentucky Center for School Safety, Kentucky Department for Public Health, Kentucky Department for Education, Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection, Kentucky Department for Military Affairs-Emergency Management and the Kentucky

Poison Control Center have compiled a lists of Do's and Don'ts of public health instructions for school officials regarding Mercury spills.

Accessible at <http://www.kysafeschools.org/articles/?article=61>

National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza

The Web site describes the potential threat for a pandemic alongside the nation's strategies for preparedness and communication, surveillance and detection, response and containment. School divisions' should plan according to the State and local responsibilities defined within the National Strategy.

Accessible at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/pandemic-influenza.html>

Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Bulletin, "School Crisis Response Initiative"

This bulletin describes the work of the School Crisis Response Initiative of the National Center for Children Exposed to Violence at the Yale Child Study Center and provides an overview of the program's organizational model for school emergency preparedness and response. The organizational model presented in this bulletin is intended to guide schools and school divisions as they develop their own school-based emergency response plans.

Accessible at

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/bulletins/schoolcrisis/ncj197832.pdf>

Pandemic Influenza: Preparing and Responding to a School Crisis

Diane Allensworth, of the Center for Disease Control presented at the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) Grantees Meeting on January 11, 2006 in Atlanta, Georgia. Ms. Allensworth's PowerPoint presentation offers valuable information and guidelines for schools for guarding against potential infectious disease.

Accessible at http://www.ercm.org/views/documents/PandemicFlu_Allensworth.ppt

Infectious Disease Planning: Incorporating Pandemic Planning into School Crisis Plans

Dana Carr, a Program Specialist with the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, presented at the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) Emergency Management for Schools Training on May 16, 2006 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Ms. Carr provided information about infectious diseases and a pandemic influenza framed in the four phases of emergency management. She outlined the common steps schools can take to prepare for a pandemic influenza.

Accessible at http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=trainings#EPST_PA

RECOVERY RESOURCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Food Safety and Safe Water Guidelines

The CDC offers guidelines for safe food and water consumption after a natural disaster. Precautions for preparing and storing food, drinking water, feeding infants and young children and sanitizing food-contact services are presented. Links to other food safety resources, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), are also provided.

Accessible at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/foodwater.asp>

Eye Safety Emergency Response and Disaster Recovery

After physical destruction has taken place, responders need to take precautions against any new hazards in the environment (i.e., dust, falling or shifting debris, noxious/poisonous gases, etc). The National Institute on Office Safety and Health presents general precautions that must be taken to

protect the eyes during many response procedures that can pose a risk of abrasion or infection to the eyes (i.e., abrasion from dust, concrete particles).

Accessible at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/eyesafe.html>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Repairing Your Flooded Home

“Repairing Your Flooded Home” is a flood recovery publication that provides a step-by-step guide to repairing your home and how to get help after a flood disaster. This publication provides information to homeowners, building officials and state and local officials and is applicable to schools.

Accessible at <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1418>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) After a Flood: The First Steps

“After a Flood: The First Steps” is a recovery guide created by the FEMA Flood Division office. It presents guidance for staying healthy, cleaning up, making repairs and getting help after a flood. It has resources for the school community.

Accessible at <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/flood/aftfld.shtm>

Guidance for Filtration and Air-Cleaning Systems to Protect Building Environments from Airborne Chemical, Biological or Radiological Attacks

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention created a guide schools may use to reinstate and maintain healthy filtration and air-cleaning systems. The guide will help schools to ensure a healthy ventilation system before and after disasters.

Accessible at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2003-136/>

Worker Safety During Fire Cleanup

This Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Fact Sheet details the types of hazards in the environment after fires including electrical hazards, carbon monoxide poisoning, musculoskeletal hazards, heat stress, hazardous materials and confined spaces.

Accessible at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/firesafety/cleanupworkers.asp>

Center for Trauma, Response and Preparedness (CTRP) Educational Materials

The Center for Trauma, Response and Preparedness (CTRP) is a University of Connecticut and Yale University Center of Excellence. The Center was established late in 2001 through the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The CTRP presents a Web page titled “Educational Materials,” which offers an array of resources for educators to address the mental health needs of students proactively. It provides resources for including mental health in the school emergency plan and other preparedness resources. The Center also offers a wealth of school-based resources addressing emergency intervention and response.

Accessible at http://www.ctrp.org/resources_educators.htm

A Guide for Intermediate and Long-Term Mental Health Services After School-related Violent Events

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency’s (SAMHSA) National Mental Health Information Center (NIMH) offers this brief guide. It outlines the different roles of school-based service providers, including teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, social workers and school nurses.

Accessible at <http://www.mentalhealth.org/publications/allpubs/NMH03-0151/page4.asp>

GulfGov Reports: Education — An Examination of the Impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the Public School Divisions in 15 Communities

This report presents the findings of a multi-year *GulfGov Reports* research project to track the recovery efforts of the communities in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama that were greatly affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The project examines the state of the public school system in areas that are struggling, areas that are rebounding and those that are growing.

Publication information: Principal Author: Karen Rowley, Special Projects Manager, Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana. (April 11, 2007).

Accessible at <http://www.rockinst.org/GulfGov/pdf/GulfGovEducationReport.pdf>

Listen, Protect, and Connect – Model and Teach: Psychological First Aid for Children

This guide provides information for teachers to help students recover emotionally and academically following a school emergency or crisis situation. The guide includes the five steps of psychological first aid: 1) listen; 2) protect; 3) connect; 4) model; and 5) teach. It also offers helpful questions to guide teachers as they provide support to students.

Publication information: M. Schreiber, R. Gurwitch, and M. Wong. (2006).

Accessible at http://www.ready.gov/kids/_downloads/PFA_SchoolCrisis.pdf

National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Assessment Resources

The Department of Veterans Affairs funds the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The Center presents guidance and materials for screening and assessing trauma as well as a Web page titled “Assessment” comprised of fact sheets and resources addressing screening and diagnosis of trauma related disorders.

Accessible at <http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/assessment/>

Reactions and Guidelines for Children Following Trauma/Disaster

The American Psychological Association offers an extensive set of resources addressing recovery issues for schools. The document highlights post-trauma reactions and behaviors and explores what to expect of typical elementary school students, middle school students, high school students and teachers exposed to trauma. It also offers guidelines for teachers and parents seeking to help students of different ages cope with their emotions.

Accessible at <http://www.apa.org/practice/ptguidelines.html>

Tips for Helping Students Recovering from Traumatic Events

In September 2005, the U.S. Department of Education published a brochure for parents and students coping with the after-effects of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina. The brochure offers expert advice for those directly impacted by a natural disaster, as well as information for teachers and school personnel assisting those affected.

Accessible at <http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/recovering/index.html>

The Three R’s for Dealing with Trauma in Schools: Readiness, Response and Recovery

This free, comprehensive training package was produced by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Harvard Public School of Health, The Prevention Institute, and Education Development Center’s Health and Human Development Programs. The broadcast and accompanying training materials and tools are available online.

Accessible at <http://www.walcoff.com/prevention/>

Uncommon Sense, Uncommon Courage: How the New York City School System, Its Teachers, Leadership, and Students Responded To the Terror of September 11

The report discusses what actually took place during the terror attacks of 9/11, in an in-depth report presented by the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health. Uncommon Sense, Uncommon Courage describes how school and emergency personnel successfully evacuated 9,000 students from eight schools, ensuring that every child returned

home safely and was reunited with loved ones. The report covers actions taken and lessons learned on a variety of topics, with a focus on response and recovery. It is the result of interviews during an 18-month period, beginning shortly after the attacks. Emergency responders, public health officials, the New York City School Board, educators and administrators all contributed to the report.

Accessible at http://www.ncdp.mailman.columbia.edu/files/9_11reportASSESSMENT.pdf

Who Cares for the Caregivers? Helping Administrators and Faculty Cope with a Crisis

The article discusses the specific needs of adults, how to support them and lessen the negative impact of an emergency on the school community. When a crisis or emergency occurs at a school, teachers are expected to be the support system for students, and sometimes parents as well. Facing the varying expectations of stakeholders, teachers are often left not knowing what is expected of them. To cope, they often carry on with academics instead of addressing their own needs, which in turn, does not serve the best interests of their students.

Publication information: Franklin, J. (March 2005). Education Update, volume 47, number 3.

Accessible at

<http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.c97770c239d90bdeb85516f762108a0c/>

Selected Examples of Crises/Emergency Guides

Educational Facilities Disaster and Crisis Management Guidebook

(Florida Department of Education, Tallahassee, Jan 02, 2007)

Provides direction for disaster preparedness planning and management in a variety of disasters affecting school divisions and community colleges. The book is intended for facility managers, and is organized around four phases of emergency management: preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. The dual issues of schools as emergency shelters and their prompt return to an educational function are covered. Thirty-eight references are included, as is an appendix advising on sheltering, mental health, debris removal, family preparedness, and other related topics. (This very large document may take several minutes to download. Or, you can right click on the link and save it to your computer.) 232 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.ncef.org/pubs/edfacilities-disaster-management-guidebook-2007.pdf>

Crisis Response Box: A Guide to Help Every School Assemble the Tools and Resources Needed for a Critical Incident Response. [California]

Lockyer, Bill; Eastin, Delaine

(California Attorney General's Crime and Violence Prevention Center; California Department of Education's Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office, 2006)

This is a guide to assist schools in preparing for a school emergency. The box contains crucial information needed to respond to a critical incident. The guide states that these elements should be part of a crisis response box: an aerial photo of the school campus; a map that identifies streets, intersections and vacant lots near a school and includes planned emergency routes; an up-to-date layout of classrooms and other campus facilities; architectural blueprints of school buildings; a list of teachers and other employees; master keys for all the rooms in a facility; turn-off procedures for fire alarms, sprinklers, utilities and cable television service; photos of all students; phone numbers for all key staff members, including those involved in coordinating with local emergency responders; identification of three separate staging areas for law enforcement and emergency personnel, for the news media, and for parents; an emergency resource list of people or groups that can assist in an

emergency; identification of evacuation routes; student disposition forms so administrators can keep track of which students have been released and to whom; a list of which students are present at school that day; a list of students with special needs; and first-aid supplies, as well as a listing of where additional first-aid supplies can be found. 18 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/cp/documents/crisisrespbox.pdf>

In Their Own Words: 9/11 Parents Help Other Parents and Schools with Lessons Learned. 2005 Edition.

(Healthy Schools Network, Inc. Albany, NY, Sep 2005)

Through the constructive advice of experienced parents, this discusses emergency planning for schools. The events of September 11 and its aftermath have challenged health, environment, and education agencies to understand how children are different from adults in relation to environmental hazards, and how schools are different from offices in terms of their responsibilities for the occupants and the demands on the facilities. 8 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.healthyschools.org/documents/INTHEIROWNWORDS.pdf>

Regulations and Procedures To Comply with the Standards and Criteria of the National Flood Insurance Program.[Georgia]

(Georgia State Dept. of Education, Facilities Services Unit, Atlanta, 2003)

The state of Georgia provides the legislative rules for complying with the National Flood Insurance Program and applicable to the construction of state facilities and recipients of state grants or loans in flood plain areas. Sections present findings of fact relative to Georgia's flood plains, and the general provisions of the regulation and the provision of flood plain management and administrative services. A Floodplain Determination Request form is attached. 7 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/documents/schools/facilities/flood.pdf>

Statewide Policy for Strengthening Domestic Security in Florida's Public Schools

(Florida Department of Education, Sep 10, 2003)

This provides policy guidance to Florida school divisions in terms of terrorism protection procedures and training focused on deterrence, and explores infrastructure enhancements and policy guidance for infrastructure. A list of policy requirements is provided for access control, emergency equipment, training, communication and notification procedures, coordination with partners, and vulnerability assessment. A list of resources and a glossary is included. 6 pages.

Accessible at: http://www.firn.edu/doe/besss/em_plan/pdf/terrorism_policy.pdf

Safety and Security Checklist. [Wyoming]

(Wyoming State Legislature, School Finance Office, Cheyenne, WY, July 2003)

Wyoming's safety and security checklists for school buildings and grounds, beginning on page 25, as Appendix C of this document. School landscape items include fencing, parking, circulation, lighting, visibility, bus loading, drop-off and pick-up areas, and playgrounds. 12 pages.

Accessible at: <http://sfc.state.wy.us/pdf/DesignGuidelines.pdf>

Model Safe School Plan. A Template for Ensuring a Safe, Healthy, and Productive Learning Environment. Volume 2--Emergency Procedures. [California]

(Los Angeles Unified School District, Office of Environmental Health and Safety, CA, Jun 05, 2003)

This volume covers emergency preparedness and response and is based on the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). SEMS which is designed to centralize and coordinate emergency response actions among various Los Angeles district organizations and public agencies and provides an effective framework for managing emergencies ranging from minor incidents to major earthquakes. 120 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.laschools.org/oehs/>

New York State Homeland Security System for Schools

(University of the State of New York, State Education Department, and New York State Police, Apr 2003)

The purpose of this guidance document is to provide a uniform system for notifying school divisions of possible threats and appropriate response actions. It is meant to provide guidelines for school officials to make informed decisions in consultation with local law enforcement and emergency personnel in the context of division and building School Safety Plans. Includes a color coded risk level system and recommended actions for schools flowchart; definitions; school safety plan review; response actions; school safety audit checklist; resources; bomb threat response instruction card; and legal citations. 29 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/deputy/Documents/alerts/homelandsecurityguidance.PDF>

Disaster Preparedness Planning Guide for Facilities. [Pennsylvania]

(Bureau of Plans, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, Harrisburg, PA , Mar 2003)

This preparedness planning guide is directed to facility managers and administrators and is intended to provide assistance in meeting the planning requirements necessary to protect facility occupants. It is intentionally generic in nature, so that it may apply to a variety of public buildings and large facilities where populations may be at risk as a result of natural or man-caused disasters. 22 pages.

Accessible at: http://www.pema.state.pa.us/pema/CWP/view.asp?A=200&QUESTION_ID=252955

Emergency Preparedness Guidelines: Chemical, Biological, and/or Radiological Incidents [Maryland]

(Montgomery County Public Schools, Department of School Safety and Security, in conjunction with Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services., Feb 2003)

This provides concise definitions and response/action guidelines to assist school system administrators in responding to a chemical, biological, or radiological incident. Includes an emergency/crisis checklist. 5 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/info/press/EmerPrepGuidelines.pdf>

Terrorism Supplement to the Indiana Department of Education's Checklist for a Safe and Secure School Environment. [Indiana]

(Indiana Department of Education, Feb 2003)

This checklist covers three types of terrorist activities: radiological, biological, and chemical. The supplement is divided into two sections: first, an overview of terrorism and the types of attacks that might result from terrorist activity; second, some suggestions to help schools prepare for terrorism. This checklist is designed to be brief, to-the-point, user-friendly, and practical. 20 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.doe.state.in.us/issas/pdf/cklstterrorism.pdf>

Emergency Preparedness Plan for Utah Schools.

(Utah State Office of Education, Salt Lake City, UT , 2003)

This plan includes purpose, policy, and planning guidelines for specific hazards such as utility failure, severe weather, civil disturbance, bomb threats, etc. 42 pages.

Accessible at: <http://des.utah.gov/pdf/safeschools/utedschoolplan.pdf>

Florida Safe School Design Guidelines.

(Florida Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Facilities, Tallahassee , 2003)

These guidelines begin with the assumption that proper design and management of the physical environment can help prevent criminal behavior on campuses. The manual considers design and maintenance issues beginning with the largest level of concern, the site, and proceeding toward the most specific, systems and equipment. In between these two, each area of building design and interior spaces is covered. Bullet points summarize the most significant elements and direct the user to the corresponding design principle in the Florida Building Code. Results of surveys, field investigations, and interviews concerning security design and practices, incidence of crimes, and attitudes are included. Recommendations drawn from these results are linked to the guidelines. (Includes 100 references and a listing of 40 organizations for additional resources.) 202 pages.

Accessible at: http://www.fldoe.org/edfacil/safe_schools.asp

Hazard Identification Guidelines [Arizona]

(Arizona Department of Education, 2003)

As part of multi-hazard emergency planning for schools, these guidelines are intended to assist in a hazard identification and risk analysis process. Includes the following sections: 1) preparing for hazard identification; 2) school grounds hazard assessment; 3) building hazard assessment; 4) classroom hazard assessment; 5) identifying potential hazards along evacuation routes; and 6) identifying potential hazards in the neighborhood and community. 8 pages.

Accessible at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20040731093646/>

Model Marin County School Emergency Disaster Preparedness and Incident Plan. [California]

(Marin County Office of Education, CA. , 2003)

This document is designed to provide a framework for protecting students, staff and school facilities, as well as to describe the responsibilities of staff members, for a wide range of emergency and disaster situations that may occur. 109 pages.

Accessible at: <http://mcoeweb.marin.k12.ca.us/emereprep/plan.html>

School Safety and Security. [California]

(California Department of Education, School Safety and Violence Prevention Office, Sacramento, CA, 2002)

This document offers guidelines for school facilities in California in the areas of safety and security, lighting, and cleanliness. It also offers a description of technology resources available on the World Wide Web. On the topic of safety and security, the document offers guidelines in the areas of entrances, doors, and controlled access to campuses; windows; visibility; traffic patterns and parking areas; play and sports areas; landscaping; fencing and gates; exterior lighting; lavatories; environmental design features; visitor control and access; and specialized sites. An extensive list of related resources is also provided. Regarding lighting standards, the document offers research-based design recommendations and suggestions concerning reflectances, fixture brightness, ceiling height, excess wall luminance (windows), nonuniformity of illumination (general lighting), and energy

conservation. This section also includes a glossary. The section on clean school standards offers questions to consider when establishing policies for a maintenance and operations program. Finally, the section on technology resources includes Web sites on comprehensive technology planning, integration of technology into the curriculum, and staff development. 32 pages.

ERIC NO: ED465260;

Accessible at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20040331234412/>

Voices from the Field: Working Together for Safe and Secure Schools. Summary of Findings from Florida Education Commissioner Charlie Crist's School Safety and Security Summits.

(Florida Department of Education, Tallahassee, FL , 2002)

During summer and fall 2001, the Florida Commissioner of Education conducted eight regional meetings, open to the public, on school safety and security. The purpose of the meetings was to explore safety issues faced by divisions and schools, share best safety practices, and generate local discussion on matters of school safety and security. This booklet is a report on those meetings. It includes findings from a survey of students; a list of resources; and an inventory of proven and promising programs. Additionally, the report contains the following recommendations identified by meeting participants as key to maintaining safe schools: (1) Include all appropriate partners in developing operative crisis plans that specify a schedule for plan revision, training updates, and regular drills; (2) establish and maintain effective internal and external communication to ensure emergency procedures are efficiently and effectively followed; (3) ensure that accurate facility site plans for every school are provided to local law-enforcement and emergency-response agencies; (4) employ strategies and techniques to break the "code of silence" among students; (5) listen to and implement students' ideas and perceptions on school-safety issues; and (6) provide additional school resource officers at all levels: elementary, middle, and high school. 50 pages.

ERIC NO: ED471877

Accessible at: <http://www.firn.edu/doe/besss/pdf/voices.pdf>

Crisis Response Plan Checklist. [Pennsylvania]

(Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Community and Student Services, Crisis Response Committee., Nov 2001)

This checklist is for use when developing a school's crisis response procedures or plan. The checklist is divided into four planning stages: pre-planning, prevention, intervention, and postvention. 11 pages.

Accessible at:

http://www.pde.state.pa.us/svcs_students/lib/svcs_students/CrisisResponseChecklist.doc

School Safety and Security Best Practices Approved by the Commissioner of Education. Information Brief. [Florida]

(Florida State Legislature, Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, Tallahassee, November 2001)

The 2001 Florida Legislature passed Ch. 2001-125, Laws of Florida, Section 40, which is often referred to as the Safe Passage Act. It requires all school divisions to conduct a self-assessment of their school safety and security using best practices developed by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA). It also requires that OPPAGA and the Partnership for School Safety and Security make annual recommendations for adding, deleting, or revising those practices. The practices cover six school-safety goals requiring that each school division: (1) ensures that its safety and security program has clear direction, and is effective at meeting its intended purpose in a cost-efficient manner; (2) has comprehensive plans and procedures to ensure student and employee safety and security; (3) has developed a clearly written code of student conduct and

communicated with students and parents; (4) identifies, minimizes, and protects others from disruptive and/or violent student behavior; (5) ensures that educational facilities and equipment are safe and in good working condition; and (6) takes steps to ensure student and staff safety and security during transportation.

Report NO: OPPAGA-R-01-57

ERIC NO: ED462743;

Accessible at: http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/monitor/school_districts/safety/schoolsafety.html

School Occupational Safety and Crisis Response Plan. [Mississippi]

(Mississippi Department of Education, October 2001)

This comprehensive school safety plan includes: 1.Policies and procedures that afford a safe school environment; 2.The Crisis Response Plan; and 3.Programs that promote a safe school environment. 104 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/lead/osos/PLAN2.doc>

District of Columbia Public Schools Safety Manual.

(District of Columbia Public Schools , Jun 04, 2001)

Describes the District of Columbia Public Schools' Safety and Health Program, as applicable to the employees of both DCPS Facilities and its contractors, performing construction, renovation, assessment, facility operation, and maintenance work. It also covers issues relevant to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for school personnel, students, and visitors. The manual documents appropriate requirements for workplace safety and health on DCPS capital projects and in DCPS facilities operation and maintenance activities; provides guidelines for achieving a safe and healthy environment for the students, staff and visitors of the DCPS school facilities during construction, renovation, maintenance and operations; delineates the organizational and procedural elements of the safety and health program for its effective implementation; and provides guidelines to designers on how to incorporate safety and health into facility and project design. 401pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.k12.dc.us/dcps/OFM/web/index.htm>

Guidance Document for School Safety Plans. [New York]

(The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department, Albany, NY, Apr 2001)

The District-wide School Safety Plan provides the framework for a school district to identify and implement appropriate strategies for creating and maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for all its students. This publication includes guidelines for developing safety plans, provides sample outlines and a building-level emergency response plan, includes state agency contacts, selected Web-based resources, and print references. 79 pages.

Accessible at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20050515094047/>

School Violence: Physical Security. [Utah]

(Utah State Office of Education, Salt Lake City , 2001)

This booklet provides an overview of security technology product areas that might be appropriate and affordable for school applications. Topics cover security concepts and operational issues; security issues when designing for new schools; the role of maintenance; video camera use; walk-through metal detectors; duress alarm devices; and a partial list of possible security measures to address various security issues such as outsiders on campus, fights on campus, vandalism, theft, parking problems, bomb threats, and teacher safety. A second section addresses how schools can prepare to

deal with bomb threats and the illegal use of explosives, including responding to bomb threats, evacuation, search techniques and teams, and handling the news media. 26 pages.

ERIC NO: ED449640

Accessible at: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/>

School Facilities Manual: Nonstructural Protection Guide. Safer Schools, Earthquake Hazards, Nonstructural. Second Edition. [Washington]

Noson, Linda Lawrance; Perbix, Todd W.

(Washington Office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Seattle Public Schools, May 2000)

This guide addresses the strengthening of nonstructural elements of a school building to resist earthquake-induced damage and improve school building safety in Washington state regions with notable earthquake activity. Nonstructural elements include the decorative details and those functional building parts and contents which support the activities in, and the performance of, the building such as mechanical and electrical systems, furnishings and equipment, and necessary hazardous materials. The first section discusses earthquake activity in Washington, earthquake-induced damage to Washington schools, the causes of earthquake damage, the school division nonstructural protection program, and the use of school site teams. The second section presents inventory forms and inventory process for nonstructural elements. A revision of this section is included at the end of the guide. The third section provides the details for protecting nonstructural elements from earthquake-induced damage. 155 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/SchFacilities/NSEQguide.aspx>

Sacramento City Unified School District Emergency Preparedness Guidelines. [California]

(Sacramento City Unified School District, CA, 2000)

The purpose of these guidelines is to aid the school district and its employees during an emergency. The guidelines include specific actions to take in response to a number of emergencies, such as bomb threats, chemical accidents, explosions, floods, etc. There are several "What to do" checklists, and emergency telephone numbers. A section details site planning before the emergency. Includes sample letters to parents. 73 pages.

Accessible at: http://www.scusd.edu/risk_management/pdf_docs/ERGUIDE.pdf

Emergency/Disaster Preparedness. A Planning Guide for Schools. [Minnesota]

(Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management, St. Paul, Nov 1999)

This is a procedures guide that is meant to be localized and tailored to each school facility in Minnesota and distributed to all staff within each building. Staff responsibilities are delineated in case of fire, severe weather, bomb threats, demonstrations, hazardous materials, shootings, suicide, terrorism, etc. Procedures are described for a lock-down situation, sheltering, evacuation, handling the media, and creating a crisis team. 27 pages.

Accessible at: <http://www.hsem.state.mn.us/>

Illinois School Emergency Planning Guide. [Illinois]

(Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield, IL, Mar 1999)

This guide provides school administrators and their staffs with information they can use to develop or revise school preparedness plans that minimize problems and confusion during emergency situations. Guidelines cover natural disasters (tornado, winter storm, or earthquake), technological disasters (fire,

or hazardous material incident), and civil disturbance (terrorism, bomb threat, or demonstrations). 35 pages.

Accessible at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20041011001548/>

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Glossary of Crisis Management Terms and Concepts

Access controls. Procedures and controls that limit or detect access to minimum essential infrastructure resource elements (e.g., people, technology, applications, data, and/or facilities), thereby protecting these resources against loss of integrity, confidentiality, accountability, and/or availability.

Assembly area: A pre-designated area where personnel and students are trained to gather following directives to evacuate buildings. Sites chosen should minimize exposure to hazards, provide quick and accessible shelter for all and consider the needs of persons with disabilities. Monitoring the safety and well-being of students and staff begins here. Most experienced trained crisis interveners should be assigned here and begin the provision of on scene support.

Asset. A resource of value requiring protection. An asset can be tangible (e.g., people, buildings, facilities, equipment, activities, operations, and information) or intangible (e.g., processes or a company's information and reputation).

Biological agents. Living organisms or the materials derived from them that cause disease in or harm to humans, animals, or plants or cause deterioration of material. Biological agents may be used as liquid droplets, aerosols, or dry powders.

Briefing: An educational and informational presentation to groups following a crisis or critical incident. Objectives would include; sharing the official nature and scope of the event to reduce and dispel rumors, provide details concerning the plan of action the school is taking to manage the crisis and mitigate its effects and group education in stress management within naturally occurring support systems.

Chemical agent. A chemical substance that is intended to kill, seriously injure, or incapacitate people through physiological effects. Generally separated by severity of effect (e.g., lethal, blister, and incapacitating).

Communication: Plans should have established lines of internal communication (i.e., within the school), external communication (i.e., with the division office and community). Plans should include provisions for after-hours communication (telephone tree), and alternate means if telephone lines are disabled.

Community: A group of persons who are closely affiliated. Affiliation may be natural, such as a neighborhood, school, fire service, or other existing organizations or groups or they may be artificial such as passengers on a plane who are affiliated by the mutual experience of a crisis or critical incident.

Contamination. The undesirable deposition of a chemical, biological, or radiological material on the surface of structures, areas, objects, or people.

Control center. A centrally located room or facility staffed by personnel charged with the oversight of specific situations and/or equipment.

Controlled area. An area into which access is controlled or limited. It is that portion of a restricted area usually near or surrounding a limited or exclusion area. Correlates with exclusion zone.

Coping skills: A range of thoughts, feelings and behaviors utilized to decrease the negative effects of an experience or to master a threatening situation. Individuals who have successfully worked through past traumatic events often develop strengths and coping skills that help them and others facing current traumatic events.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). A crime prevention strategy based on evidence that the design and form of the built environment can influence human behavior. CPTED usually involves the use of three principles: natural surveillance (by placing physical features, activities, and people to maximize visibility); natural access control (through the judicious placement of entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping, and lighting); and territorial reinforcement (using buildings, fences, pavement, signs, and landscaping to express ownership).

Crisis: A state in which coping skills are overwhelmed leaving the individual feeling out of control, helpless and anxious.

Crisis intervention: The application of short term repeated interventions designed to support problem solving, reduce feelings of isolation, helplessness and anxiety and promote return to normal functioning. Crisis intervention practice over the past 20 years has been multidisciplinary. Paraprofessionals and volunteers have been primary caregivers (Caplan, 1964)

Crisis management (CM). The measures taken to identify, acquire, and plan the use of resources needed to anticipate, prevent, and/or resolve a threat or act of terrorism.

Critical incidents: Events that overwhelm an individual's capacity to cope. They are psychologically traumatic, cause emotional turmoil and cognitive problems and often result in behavioral changes. These effects can be lasting, depending upon the quality of the experiences during and shortly after the incident.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM): Is a comprehensive, integrated multi-component crisis intervention system. CISM services provide a framework for the application of education and crisis intervention during the acute stage following a crisis or disaster. These services enhance and compliment the delivery of traditional mental health services. These services include:

1. Pre-crisis preparation - set expectations, improve coping
2. Individual Consultation - symptom driven
3. Briefing - share information, provide consultation and stress management information
4. Defusing - post-crisis (12-24 hrs) symptom/event driven - small group process
5. Debriefing (Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, CISD) - post-crisis, (1-10 days) symptom/event driven, small group process
6. Parent/family/organization consultation - group process - event driven, provides education, support
7. Referral/follow-up – transfer of crisis counseling to longer term providers

Damage assessment. The process used to appraise or determine the number of injuries and deaths, damage to public and private property, and the status of key facilities and services (e.g., schools, hospitals and other health care facilities, fire and police stations, communications networks, water and sanitation systems, utilities, and transportation networks) resulting from a manmade or natural disaster. A *Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA)* is a mechanism used to determine the impact and magnitude of damage and the resulting unmet needs of individuals, businesses, the public sector, and the community as a whole. Information collected is used by the state as a basis

for the Governor's request for a Presidential declaration, and by FEMA to document the recommendation made to the President in response to the Governor's request.

Debriefing (CISD): A group process utilizing both crisis intervention and educational processes targeted toward mitigating or resolving the psychological distress associated with a critical incident or traumatic event. A debriefing is a peer driven process in partnership with mental health professionals who provide oversight and guidance. Although its application was developed and utilized primarily with emergency personnel it has been modified and utilized extensively in workplace settings, the military and with survivors of crisis and disasters. It is only one intervention in a framework of interventions ranging from pre-crisis to follow-up.

Decontamination. The reduction or removal of a chemical, biological, or radiological material from the surface of a structure, area, object, or person.

Defusing: A group crisis intervention technique conducted by a trained facilitator. It provides a supportive, safe interactive process among individuals in small groups, providing clarity and complete expression of the event and experiences.

Disaster. An occurrence of a natural catastrophe, technological accident, or human-caused event that has resulted in severe property damage, deaths, and/or multiple injuries.

Division support team: Initially, the Team directs the process of adapting this guide to reflect local conditions. Ongoing, the Division Support Team serves to assist the schools when an emergency occurs and the need exceeds the school's resources.

Drop-in-room: A safe welcoming place for students to gather during the school day with their peers for group and one-on-one support from trained crisis intervention team members after a traumatic event, such as the death of a fellow student or teacher.

Emergency. Any natural or human-caused situation that results in or may result in substantial injury or harm to the population or substantial damage to or loss of property.

Emergency management protocols: Emergency Management Protocols are the step-by-step procedures for schools to implement in the event of an emergency.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Services including personnel, facilities, and equipment required to ensure proper medical care for the sick and injured from the time of injury to the time of final disposition, including medical disposition within a hospital, temporary medical facility, or special care facility; release from the site; or declared dead.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The protected site from which state and local civil government officials coordinate, monitor, and direct emergency response activities during an emergency.

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). A document that describes how people and property will be protected in disaster and disaster threat situations; details who is responsible for carrying out specific actions; identifies the personnel, equipment, facilities, supplies, and other resources available for use in the disaster; and outlines how all actions will be coordinated.

Emergency Public Information (EPI). Information that is disseminated primarily in anticipation of an emergency or at the actual time of an emergency and, in addition to providing information, frequently directs actions, instructs, and transmits direct orders.

Entry control point. A continuously or intermittently manned station at which entry to sensitive or restricted areas is controlled.

Evacuation. Organized, phased, and supervised dispersal of people from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas.

First responder. Local police, fire, and emergency medical personnel who first arrive on the scene of an incident and take action to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs.

Grief: The normal, healthy, appropriate response to death or loss. Each person grieves in his or her own way, learned by experience with loss over the years. It is described as a journey through an intense range of emotions; including denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

Hazard. A source of potential danger or adverse condition.

Hazard mitigation. Any action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards. The term is sometimes used in a stricter sense to mean cost-effective measures to reduce the potential for damage to a facility or facilities from a disaster event.

Hazardous material (HazMat). Any substance or material that, when involved in an accident and released in sufficient quantities, poses a risk to people's health, safety, and/or property. These substances and materials include explosives, radioactive materials, flammable liquids or solids, combustible liquids or solids, poisons, oxidizers, toxins, and corrosive materials.

High-hazard areas. Geographic locations that, for planning purposes, have been determined through historical experience and vulnerability analysis to be likely to experience the effects of a specific hazard (e.g., hurricane, earthquake, or hazardous materials accident.), resulting in vast property damage and loss of life.

Human-caused hazard. Human-caused hazards are technological hazards and terrorism. They are distinct from natural hazards primarily in that they originate from human activity. Within the military services, the term threat is typically used for human-caused hazard. See definitions of technological hazards and terrorism for further information.

Incident Command System (ICS): Is a nationally recognized organizational structure designed to handle: Management, Operations, Logistics, Planning, and Administration and Finance. The ICS allows for appropriate utilization of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications.

Incident commander: Highest ranking official in charge and responsible for the emergency/disaster operations who directs from a command post set up in close proximity to the incident.

Intrusion Detection System (IDS). The combination of components, including sensors, control units, transmission lines, and monitor units, integrated to operate in a specified manner.

Lockdown. A lockdown is a critical incident response that secures students and staff, usually in classrooms, to prevent access or harm to the occupants of the lockdown locations. This may also involve quickly moving students and staff from unsecured locations to secure locations.

Mitigation. Those actions taken to reduce the exposure to and impact of an attack or disaster.

Mutual aid agreement. A pre-arranged agreement developed between two or more entities to render assistance to the parties of the agreement.

Natural hazard. Naturally-occurring events such as floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, tsunamis, coastal storms, landslides, and wildfires that strike populated areas. A natural event is a hazard when it has the potential to harm people or property (FEMA 386- 2 Understanding Your Risks). The risks of natural hazards may be increased or decreased as a result of human activity; however, they are not inherently human-induced.

Nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons. Also called Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Weapons that are characterized by their capability to produce mass casualties.

Peers: Emergency services and school personnel trained as peer counselors who provide crisis intervention services following crises and disasters.

Physical security. The part of security concerned with measures/concepts designed to safeguard personnel; to prevent unauthorized access to equipment, installations, material, and documents; and to safeguard them against espionage, sabotage, damage, and theft.

Practice: Practicing the plan consists of drills, tabletop exercises, orientation for staff, etc. It is generally recommended that schools start with basic orientation and tabletop exercises prior to engaging in full-scale simulations or drills.

Preparedness: Preparedness is the process of division and school-based planning to prevent emergencies when possible, and to respond effectively when they occur.

Primary asset. An asset that is the ultimate target for compromise by an aggressor.

Protective measures. Elements of a protective system that protect an asset against a threat. Protective measures are divided into defensive and detection measures.

Protective system. An integration of all of the protective measures required to protect an asset against the range of threats applicable to the asset.

Public Information Officer (PIO): The official spokesperson designated by an organization to coordinate internal and external communications. Responsible and handles all requests for information and proactively provides consistent, accurate and timely information. Establishes a central site for the media. Maintains a log of all actions and communication. Prepares press releases, keeps Incident Commander apprised and keeps all documentation to support history of the event.

Recovery. The long-term activities beyond the initial crisis period and emergency response phase of disaster operations that focus on returning all systems in the community to a normal status or to reconstitute these systems to a new condition that is less vulnerable.

Referral: During individual and group crisis intervention sessions, trained peers and mental health professionals are actively assessing and monitoring the overall status of survivors. Any indication of the need for medical supervision or the threat of harm to self or to others requires immediate transfer to appropriate level/provider of care.

Response. Executing the plan and resources identified to perform those duties and services to preserve and protect life and property as well as provide services to the surviving population.

Restricted area. Any area with access controls that is subject to these special restrictions or controls for security reasons. See controlled area, limited area, exclusion area, and exclusion zone.

Risk. The potential for loss of, or damage to, an asset. It is measured based upon the value of the asset in relation to the threats and vulnerabilities associated with it.

School-centered emergency management plan: A written document as a consolidated plan to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. It is the modified version of this guide, tailored and fine-tuned to meet the unique needs and resources of a given school. The plan includes Emergency Management Team assignments, emergency numbers, and protocols.

Secondary hazard. A threat whose potential would be realized as the result of a triggering event that of itself would constitute an emergency (e.g., dam failure might be a secondary hazard associated with earthquakes).

Shelter in place: Procedure designed to protect individuals from an outside influence such as release of chemicals. Usual procedures include: closing doors and windows; placing tape or wet towels around doors, windows and vents; and turning off pilot lights, air conditioning and exhaust fans. No one leaves the room until further instructions are given.

Shock: Psychological and emotional defense shield characterized by numbness, confusion and disorientation during which time the full impact of what has happened is not totally absorbed by the survivor.

Situational crime prevention. A crime prevention strategy based on reducing the opportunities for crime by increasing the effort required to commit a crime, increasing the risks associated with committing the crime, and reducing the target appeal or vulnerability (whether property or person). This opportunity reduction is achieved by management and use policies such as procedures and training, as well as physical approaches such as alteration of the built environment.

Social support: A term utilized by social scientists to describe positive interactions among people. These exchanges may involve passing along information, offering material help or providing emotional support. The health implications of these exchanges are especially important during times of stress, life transitions and crises. One's relationship with spouse, friends, family, co-workers and neighbors can buffer stress and have a positive effect on physical and mental health. Research with disaster survivors demonstrates the importance of social support to their recovery. Supportive relationships are equally important to emergency service workers in coping with stress and maintaining health.

Structural protective barriers. Manmade devices (e.g., fences, walls, floors, roofs, grills, bars, roadblocks, signs, or other construction) used to restrict, channel, or impede access.

Student release: A pre-planned process to assure the reunification of students with their families and significant others. May involve setting up separate request and release stations to ensure accountability and crowd control.

Terrorism. The unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.

Threat. Any indication, circumstance, or event with the potential to cause loss of, or damage to an asset.

Threat analysis. A continual process of compiling and examining all available information concerning potential threats and human-caused hazards. A common method to evaluate terrorist groups is to review the factors of existence, capability, intentions, history, and targeting.

Training: Training is important on at least three levels: 1) Team Training for general emergency preparedness; 2) Training to address specific emergency response or recovery activities (i.e., severe weather training, threat assessment training, or Critical Incident Stress Management training); and 3) awareness training for all staff (i.e., Universal Emergency Procedures).

Unified command: A unified team effort which allows all agencies with responsibility for the incident, either geographical or functional, to manage an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies. This is accomplished without losing or abdicating agency authority, responsibility or accountability.

Universal emergency procedures: Universal Emergency Procedures are a set of clear directives that may be implemented across a number of emergency situations. These procedures include Evacuation, Shelter in Place, Drop, Cover, and Hold, Reverse Evacuation, and Lockdown.

Vulnerability. Any weakness in an asset or mitigation measure that can be exploited by an aggressor (potential threat element), adversary, or competitor. It refers to the organization's susceptibility to injury.

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Any device, material, or substance used in a manner, in a quantity or type, or under circumstances showing an intent to cause death or serious injury to persons, or significant damage to property. An explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than 4 ounces, or a missile having an explosive incendiary charge of more than 0.25 ounce, or mine or device similar to the above; poison gas; weapon involving a disease organism; or weapon that is designed to release radiation or radioactivity at a level dangerous to human life.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

REACTIONS TO TRAUMA/DISASTER

Children’s Reaction to Trauma: What Adults Can Do to Help

Source: National Education Association and National Association of School Psychologists

Trauma can change the way children view their world. Assumptions about safety and security are now challenged. Children’s reactions will depend upon the severity of the trauma, their personality, the way they cope with stress and the availability of support. It is common for children to regress both behaviorally and academically following a trauma.

A good way to view the situation is that they are normal children in an abnormal circumstance.

It is natural for children to first experience some sort of denial that the situation really happened. Fears, worries, or nightmares are common following a trauma. Sleep disturbances or eating difficulties may happen. Also children may begin to regress emotionally or act younger than their chronological age. They may become more clinging, unhappy, and needy of parental attention and comfort. Feelings of irritability, anger, sadness, or guilt may often emerge. Somatic complaints such as headaches, stomachaches, or sweating are not unusual. Children and adolescents may repeatedly relive the trauma by acting it out in play or dreams. Other students may seek to avoid all reminders of the trauma by withdrawing from others, refusing to discuss their feelings, or avoiding activities that remind them of the trauma. Some loss of interest in school, misbehavior, and poor concentration are other common reactions.

These symptoms may range from mild to severe. More severe symptoms may indicate that a child is experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder or depression. The National Association of School Psychologists suggest that children process their emotions and reactions to a trauma within 24 hours to 36 hours following a crisis in order to prevent post-traumatic stress disorder. The process is called a “group crisis intervention” or “debriefing.”

Group Crisis Intervention: Aftercare to Process Trauma

A trained crisis responder or counselor generally facilitates the intervention or debriefing, asking the group who experienced the trauma together to sit in a circle. Following the model from NOVA (National Organization for Victims’ Assistance, call 1-800-TRY-NOVA), the process begins with survivors thinking about and articulating their sensory perceptions during the trauma—what they saw, heard, tasted, smelled, and touched. They are then asked to think about and articulate the accompanying thoughts and emotions.

This helps survivors understand how unconscious associations are made with certain sights, sounds, smells, and experiences. In addition, by sharing aloud, individuals realize that others experienced similar reactions and emotions. It is a bonding exercise that provides feelings of safety and security. Finally, individuals in the group are asked to think about the future and imagine upcoming events. They then discuss how they will cope with future events and share their sources of strength and support systems.

The goal of the group crisis intervention is to provide three urgent needs.

- Safety and security—freedom from fears and terrors associated with the event; sensory perceptions and how thoughts and feelings are encoded.
- Validation and ventilation—need to tell the story of their experiences and understand the patterns of trauma reaction, and then recognize the human commonality of that pattern.
- Predict and prepare—facing the future and preparing for how they might cope. Identifying sources of strength.

The process helps survivors regain some sense of control or mastery over their lives. By providing a forum to help participants predict future events and their reactions to them, victims are better prepared to respond. The debriefing is critical in laying the foundation for a support system and provides comfort through sharing common feelings. It can ameliorate long-term adverse affects, add structure to a crisis, and help contain chaos and confusion.

AFTER TRAUMA

The following information on what to expect after a trauma was developed by the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

What to Expect After Trauma: Possible Reactions in Elementary School Students

- Feelings of anxiety, fears, and worries about safety of self and others (more clingy to teacher or parent)
- Worries about re-occurrence of violence
- Increased levels of distress (whiny, irritable, more "moody")
- Changes in behavior:
 - Increased activity level
 - Decreased concentration and/or attention
 - Withdrawal
 - Angry outbursts
 - Aggression
 - Absenteeism
 - Increased somatic complaints (e.g., headaches, stomachaches, aches and pains)
- Changes in school performance
- Recreating event (e.g., talking repeatedly about it, "playing" the event)
- Increased sensitivity to sounds (e.g., sirens, planes, thunder, backfires, loud noises)
- Statements and questions about death and dying

In addition, at home parents may see:

- Changes in sleep
- Changes in appetite
- Withdrawal
- Lack of interest in usual activities
- Increased negative behaviors (e.g., defiance) or emotions (e.g., sadness, fears, anger, worries)

- Regression in behaviors (e.g., baby talk, bedwetting, tantrums)
- Hate or anger statements

What to Expect After Trauma: Possible Reactions in Middle School Students

- Feelings of anxiety, worries, and fears about safety of self and others
- Worries about re-occurrence or consequences such as war, as well as worries about school violence
- Changes in behavior:
 - Decreased attention and/or concentration
 - Increase in hyperactivity
 - Changes in academic performance
 - Irritability with friends, teachers, events
 - Anger outbursts and/or aggression
 - Withdrawal
 - Absenteeism
 - Increased somatic complaints (e.g., headaches, stomachaches, chest pains)
- Discomfort with feelings, particularly those associated with revenge
- Increased likelihood to discuss the gruesome details
- Repeated discussions of event
- Increased sensitivity to sounds (e.g., sirens, planes, thunder, backfires, loud noises)
- Negative impact on issues of trust and perceptions of others, particularly of those that are "different"
- Repetitive thoughts and comments about death and dying

In addition, at home parents may see:

- Changes in sleep or appetite
- Withdrawal
- Lack of interest in usual activities (e.g., after-school activities, time with friends)
- Increased negative behaviors (e.g., defiance) or emotions (e.g., sadness, fears, anger, worries)
- Hate or anger statements
- Denial of impact

What to Expect After Trauma: Possible Reactions in High School Students

- Worries, fears, and anxiety about safety of self and others
- Worries about re-occurrence or repercussions such as war or school violence
- Changes in behavior:
 - Withdrawal
 - Irritability with friends, teachers, events
 - Anger outbursts and/or aggression
 - Changes in academic performance
 - Decrease in attention and concentration
 - Increase in hyperactivity
 - Absenteeism
- Discomfort with feelings, particularly revenge, but also those of vulnerability
- Increased risk for substance abuse, including drinking

- Discussion of events and reviewing of details
- Negative impact on issues of trust and perceptions of others, particularly those that are "different"
- Increased sensitivity to sounds (sirens, planes, thunder, backfires, or loud noises)
- Repetitive thoughts and comments about death or dying (including suicidal thoughts)

In addition, at home parents may see:

- Changes in sleep or appetite
- Withdrawal
- Lack of interest in usual activities (after-school activities or time with friends)
- Increased negative behaviors (defiance) or emotions (sadness, fears, or anger, worries)
- Hate or anger statements
- Denial of impact

What to Expect After Trauma: Reactions in Teachers

- Increased irritability and impatience with students and staff (decreased tolerance of minor student infractions- remember, they are trying to cope, too)
- Difficulty planning classroom activities and lessons
- Decreased concentration
- Worries and fears that answers or responses to students could make things worse for them
- Worries about re-occurrence and repercussions
- Increased concern about school violence (e.g., hypersensitivity)
- Feelings of discomfort with intense emotions, such as anger and fear
- Denial that the traumatic event may impact the students

GRIEF: Guidelines for Students

The following guidelines for students were developed by Ken Roach, School Psychologist, Chesterfield County Public Schools, Virginia.

What Can I Do To Help? Guidelines for Teachers of High School Students

Reinforce ideas of safety and security, even though many high school students will not verbalize fears around these issues. This may be needed multiple times, particularly in response to changes, loud sounds, or other events that may remind students of the tragedy. After any classroom discussion of the event, end the discussion with a focus on their current safety and a calming activity, such as having a moment of quiet reflection.

Maintain a predictable class schedule and rules to provide support and consistency for the students.

Listen to and tolerate your students retelling of events. Schedule specific times for discussion during the school day to allow for opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings about the tragedy; however, set limits on scary or hurtful talk (e.g., specific threats of retribution). This may need to be done in multiple classes.

Encourage students to talk about confusing feelings, worries, daydreams, and disruptions of concentration by accepting feelings, listening carefully, and reminding students that these are normal reactions following a very scary event. Discuss students' perceptions of media descriptions of events.

Information focused on safety will be important. For example, discuss what the United States and other world leaders are doing to address safety. From this tragedy, opportunities for learning and discussion of world events are heightened.

Some students might express hate toward a large group of people. It can be helpful to validate their strong feelings of anger. However, it will be critical to help students separate thoughts and feelings about the specific people who caused the tragedy from generalizing it to larger groups of people, including their classmates and other acquaintances (e.g., all people of Arab descent). It may be helpful to have discussions about how world leaders can help with reducing hate and preventing future violent acts.

Students will often process the information about the events at unpredictable times throughout the day. As they try to develop an understanding for what has happened, they may ask questions that are initially shocking to adults, including questions that have gruesome details. Try to respond in a calm manner, answering the questions in simple, direct terms and help the students to transition back to their activity.

Students will often misunderstand the information about the event as they are trying to make sense about what happened. For example, they may blame themselves, believe things happened that did not happen, believe that terrorists are in the school, etc. Gently help students develop a realistic understanding of the event.

Students may ask the same types of questions repeatedly, which can be confusing and/or frustrating for teachers. Understand that students may need to hear the information multiple times before being able to integrate and understand it. Give students time to cope with their fears.

Expect some angry outbursts from students. Try to catch students before they "act out", taking them aside, helping them calm down and regain control of their behavior. In addition, redirect students who are being irritable with each other which could escalate to direct conflict.

Do classroom activities that will reinforce the message that one person can make a difference to help and heal. Activities can include drawing pictures and sending cards or class projects of collecting pennies or aluminum cans or making origami cranes.

Encourage some distraction times, which would include doing school work that does not require high levels of new learning and enjoyable activities. Help students do activities that allow them to experience mastery and build self-esteem.

Expect some brief (temporary) decline in students' school performance. Consider suspending standardized testing and classroom testing for the rest of the week. Also, consider reducing homework as the nation heals and the national routine is stabilized (e.g., parents are back to work, no additional threats).

Provide reassurance to students that the feelings will get smaller and easier to handle over time.

Protect students from re-exposure to frightening situations and reminders of trauma. This includes limiting teacher-to-teacher conversations about the events in front of students.

Maintain communication with other teachers, school personnel, and parents to monitor how students are coping with the demands of school, home, and community activities. Should difficulties coping with the event persist and interfere with students' functioning, consider seeking help from a mental health professional. In addition to helping those who are clearly angry or depressed, monitor students who are withdrawn and isolated from others.

Remain aware of your own reactions to students' trauma, as well as your own reactions to the trauma. It is okay to express emotions to your students, such as "I am feeling sad about what happened." However, if you are feeling overwhelmed with emotion, it is important to take care of yourself and to seek support from other teachers and staff.

Source: University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (2001).

Handout for Students: HELPING A GRIEVING FRIEND

First Steps

- If you learn of a grieving friend outside of school hours, call and go over as quickly as you can, if possible; or at least call.
- If you learn of a grieving friend during school, try to see the friend or send a note until you are able to talk.
- Your presence is all that is needed; if you wish to take a flower or anything meaningful, that's all right, too.
- Offer physical comfort.
- Don't be afraid to cry with your friend.
- Do not try to take away the pain from your grieving friend.

Communication

- Talk about the deceased person. Grieving people often like telling stories about the deceased, "Do you remember the time. . ."
- No cliché statements (e.g., He's better off now since he now has no pain.")
- Don't be afraid you will upset your friend by asking or talking about the deceased; they are already very upset and should be.
- Just sitting with your friend may be all that's needed at times; don't be afraid of silence, the grieving person will most likely fill it talking about the deceased.
- Offer suggestions only when advice is asked.
- Listen, no matter what the topic.
- Do not tell the griever to feel better since there are other loved ones still alive.
- Call to check on the griever.

Attending a Visitation at the Funeral Home or Attending a Funeral

- If you have not ever been to a funeral home or a funeral, expect to feel nervous.
- Go with a friend or ask a parent to accompany you, if you wish.
- If this is the first time you've seen the grieving friend, simply offer your condolences; just saying "I am so sorry about _____'s death" will open a conversation, or simply point out something special to you about the deceased.
- If the visitation or funeral is open casket, view the physical remains if you want; you do not have to.

Later Involvement

- Ask your grieving friend to go places, do activities together (it's all right if he/she initially resists).
- If invitations are turned down, keep inviting.
- Call to check on and talk to.
- Continue to talk about the deceased from time to time.

WHEN A GRIEVING CLASSMATE RETURNS

First Words

- The classmate probably feels like he/she is from a different planet when returning to school.
- There is very little you can say wrong, so talk to the classmate.
- At least say, "hello," "welcome back," "I'm glad to see you," or something similar.
- The brave might even say: "I missed you," "I'm so sorry to hear about your _____'s death." Even braver friends might even make statements like "It must be incredibly tough to have your _____ die."
- Another option: write a brief note.
- If your classmate cries, that is okay; you did not cause the grief and you can't make the person feel worse. Offer comfort and a tissue.

Helping the Classmate Adjust to the Class

- Offer to provide past notes.
- Offer to provide notes for comparison for the next week or so (your classmate's attention span will probably vary for several weeks).
- Give the classmate your phone number to call if having problems with homework.
- Ask your classmate if you can call to check on how homework is going.
- Ask the teacher if you can be the student's helper for a week.

- Offer to study together in person or over the phone; this might help with both motivation (grieving students frequently do not feel like doing school work) and with concentration.

Some Don'ts

- Don't shun. Speak to the student.
- No cliché statements (e.g., "I know how you feel" when nobody knows the unique relationship the classmate had with the deceased).
- Don't expect the person to snap back into the "old self".
- Don't be surprised if classmate seems unaffected by the loss, everybody has his/her own way of grieving.
- Don't be afraid to ask appropriate questions about the deceased, like "what did you and your _____ enjoy together?" (people never tire of talking about the people they grieve).
- Just because the classmate may seem to be adjusting to school again, don't assume the grieving has stopped, nor the need for comfort and friendship.

HELPING GRIEVING PARENTS

This information should be helpful when interacting with the parents of a deceased friend. Always respect the wishes of grieving parents. These suggestions must fit the parents' needs and requests.

First Steps

- In the vast majority of cases the parents very much want to see the friends of their deceased child; they find it comforting.
- If you were a close friend of the deceased and you know the parents, then go visit them at their home.
- If you were a friend but had not met the parents (yet they know who you are), you might still visit the home.
- Other friends might wait until the visitation, such as held at a funeral home, or wait until the funeral.
- Regardless of the depth of your relationship with the parents, let them hear from you either by a call or a note.

Communication

- When you visit, do not worry about what to say; your presence is all that is needed. If you wish to take a flower or anything meaningful, that's all right, too.
- Don't be afraid you will upset the parents by asking or talking about the deceased; they are already upset.
- Don't be afraid to cry with the parents. Just sitting with the parents may be all that's needed at times; don't be afraid of silence, the parents will most likely fill the silence talking about their deceased child.
- Offer physical comfort.
- Listen, no matter what the topic.
- If you were a really close friend, the parents might be pleased for you to even visit the deceased friend's room.
- Ask what you can do for them; ask other relatives what you might do to help.
- Do not try to take away the pain from the grieving parents.
- No cliché statements (e.g., "He's better off now since he now has no pain").
- Talk about the deceased person (grieving people really like telling stories about the deceased, "Do you remember the time...").
- Offer suggestions only when advice is asked. Do not tell the parents to feel better since there are other children and loved ones still alive.

Attending a Visitation at a Funeral Home or Attending a Funeral

- Expect to feel nervous when going to a funeral home or a funeral.
- Go with a friend or ask a parent to accompany you.
- If this is the first time you've seen the parents, simply offer your condolences; just say, "I am so sorry about _____'s death" probably will open a conversation; or maybe better, simply point out something special to you about the deceased.
- If the visitation or funeral is open casket, view the physical remains if you want; you do not have to.

Later Involvement

- After the funeral, continue to visit the parents; they probably will continue to want to see the friends of their deceased child.
- Call to check on and talk to.
- Continue to talk about their deceased child from time to time.

WHEN YOUR TEACHER HAS SOMEONE DIE

Feelings

- Expect you and your classmates to experience different feelings, ranging from shock, sadness, vulnerability ("this could happen to me or someone I know"), to detachment or nothing. All are okay.
- Some in your class may even laugh because they are nervous hearing or talking about grief and death. This may be their way of handling it, so don't become angry.
- Don't be surprised to catch yourself asking how this might affect you, your grades, or your relationship with your teacher.
- It's okay to think about other people who have died.

What To Do

- Talk with somebody (a friend or parent) about what has happened. This helps make the situation seem more real and keeps you from holding everything in.
- Try to get the courage to communicate with your teacher.

Communicating With Your Grieving Teacher

- Your teacher probably has a lot to do and cannot take calls from students.
- Send a card (buy or make).
- Write a note (and you don't have to have fancy stationery).
- Just write "I'm sorry" or "I'm thinking about you." or "I hope you are okay."
- Others may write more, even share their own experiences with grief. One student even composed a poem!
- There is nothing you can say that could make your grieving teacher feel worse.
- You are not going to remind a grieving person that he/she has had somebody die.
- Your teacher may never throw your card/note away, that's how important your communication will be. Your parents probably still have notes they've received.

Flowers and Donations

They are not necessary. If you really want to do something, maybe you and some friends could pitch in together. Or maybe the class wants to do something as a group. It just takes one person to organize this.

What If You See Your Teacher Out in the Community

If you see your teacher at the grocery store, a part of you will want to hide. How will that make your teacher feel? Speak to your teacher! You don't have to say much. "How are you doing?" or "We miss you at school." is enough.

What About Funerals and Memorial Services

- You have to respect the wishes of grieving people.
- Some teachers may welcome students. Others may not feel ready to cope with you yet. Some may feel uncomfortable with you around and their being "out of control." We have to understand and respect their needs. Also, 120 students take up a lot of space.
- Sometimes there is no chance to talk with the family. Other times you can't leave the building without doing so. If given the opportunity, speak. Again, just say "We're sorry." or something brief. Have your first several words chosen to lessen your fear.

WHEN YOUR GRIEVING TEACHER RETURNS

Getting Ready

- Plan some type of simple welcome back signal from the class to your grieving teacher.

Consider:

- a card signed by all the class;
 - a small banner from "second period" or
 - some flowers from a parent's yard, if in season; or,
 - a small, inexpensive bouquet.
- If you have not communicated with your teacher, it's not too late to have a note ready just from you. It could be waiting in the teacher's mailbox on his/her return to school.
 - Realize that the same teacher who left will return. Your teacher may initially seem a little distant or preoccupied but this should not last too long.
 - Your teacher may have very poor concentration for a while after returning to work. He/she might repeat things. You may have to repeat your questions.
 - Do not expect tests and homework to be returned as quickly as before; poor concentration, low motivation, and fatigue are typical grief reactions.

On the Big Day

- Expect to feel nervous. Your teacher will feel the same way.
- Your teacher also will probably feel like he/she is from a different planet.
- When you first see your teacher, at least say something simple, like, "Welcome back."
- The class also could even let a very brave volunteer speak for the class to formally welcome your teacher back. Or the volunteer could present the card.
- Show your good behavior; use your best listening skills. Help your teacher out; it will be a tough day. Smile!

- Some teachers will return quickly to teaching; others will discuss their grief. There is no single right way.

What If Your Teacher Cries?

- You do not have to do anything but be patient.
- Your class could have a brave volunteer designated to offer comfort by saying something simple, such as, "We're supporting you."
- The student closest to the tissue box should take the box to the teacher. This shows the class cares and says it's okay to cry.
- At the end of class students might individually offer brief words of comfort or encouragement ("It's okay to get upset." or "I'm glad you are back.").
- Your teacher may be embarrassed by crying, but crying can be very helpful.
- If your teacher is having a really bad day, let your guidance counselor or other staff member know.

SUICIDE

Myths and Facts About Suicide

Source: Association of California School Administrators (1995)

Myth: People who talk about suicide don't commit suicide.

Fact: Most people who commit suicide have given clues of some type to one or more people. It is not safe to assume that someone talking about suicide will not attempt it; the majority of those who attempt suicide have stated their intent to someone.

Myth: Suicide happens without warning.

Fact: While explicit verbal warnings are not always given, there are clues ahead of time. The difficulty is that not everyone recognizes the signs and symptoms that would alert him/her to the possibility of suicide.

Myth: Suicidal people are fully intent on dying.

Fact: Rather than specifically wanting to die, students who attempt/commit suicide often do so simply because they have exhausted their coping skills and see no other options for relief from pain.

Myth: Once suicidal, a person is suicidal forever.

Fact: Preoccupation with suicidal thoughts is usually time-limited. Most young people who work through a suicidal crisis can go on to lead healthy lives.

Myth: Once a person attempts suicide, the humiliation and pain will prevent future attempts.

Fact: Eighty percent of persons who commit suicide have made at least one prior attempt. It is critical that concerned adults and peers monitor a student who has attempted suicide for several months following the attempt. Those students who receive help for their suicidal risk before they made an attempt have a better prognosis than those who were intervened upon following an attempted suicide.

Myth: Suicide occurs more often among the wealthy.

Fact: Suicide knows no socioeconomic boundaries.

Myth: Suicidal behavior is inherited.

Fact: As with other patterns of behavior, suicide sometimes seems to run in families. However, suicide is not a genetic trait, so it is not inherited. What can appear to be a family trait of suicide may be because family members share a common emotional environment and often adopt similar methods of coping. In a family where someone has committed suicide, suicide may be viewed as acceptable in times of distress.

Myth: People who attempt or commit suicide are mentally ill/psychotic.

Fact: Many suicidal persons historically have had difficulty in working through problems. Other people who attempt or commit suicide choose it as an option when their previously successful means of coping are not effective, and they are unable to otherwise stop the pain they are experiencing. A history of mental illness does not increase the risk of suicide.

Myth: Talking about suicide can encourage a person to attempt it.

Fact: On the contrary, initiating a discussion of suicidal feelings may give a suicidal adolescent permission to talk about the pain she/he is experiencing and, by so doing, provide significant relief. It is highly unlikely that discussing suicide would influence a nonsuicidal person to become preoccupied with the idea.

Myth: People who attempt suicide just want attention.

Fact: Suicide should be considered a "cry for help." Persons overwhelmed by pain may be unable to let others know they need help, and suicide may seem the best way to relieve the pain. Suicidal behavior may be a desperate move to reach out for much needed help.

Myth: Suicide is most likely to occur at night as well as over the holiday season.

Fact: Suicides can occur at any time, regardless of season, time of day or night, weather or holidays. Childhood and adolescent suicides, however, are most likely to occur in the spring, and second most likely to occur in the fall. Most childhood and adolescent suicides occur at home on weekends or between the hours of 3 p.m. and midnight.

Myth: When depression lifts, there is no longer danger of suicide.

Fact: Although the existence of any form of depression increases the probability of suicide, this is a dangerous misconception. The lifting of depression often accompanies the development of a suicide plan and the final decision to commit suicide. If the improvement in mood is sudden and circumstances have not changed, the risk of suicide remains high. It is most useful to see suicidal behavior as a symptom not a disease. As such it may be caused by a variety of factors.

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