

Chapter 4

Emergency Response

Emergency Response

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Emergency Response

When a crisis occurs, it is time to follow the emergency plan, not make a plan from scratch. However, there will always be an element of surprise and confusion when an emergency occurs. This is why emergency planning and practice are so critical.

In previous sections of this Emergency Response Plan, you learned general procedures for responding to an emergency and you prepared to respond to a crisis by developing site-specific plans. In this section, this manual provides best-practice response procedures to specific emergency events. Site Administrators/Principals or their designees may use the procedures in this section to guide their responses to a variety of potential emergencies.

Expert Recommendations When Responding to an Emergency

Emergency response experts recommend that Site Administrators (Site Incident Commanders) follow these guidelines when responding to any emergency.

Assess the Situation and Choose the Appropriate Response:

A very quick but careful assessment of the situation is essential to responding effectively to an emergency. Determine whether a crisis exists and if so, the type of crisis, the location, and the magnitude. After basic protective steps are in place, more information can be gathered to adjust later responses.

Respond Within Seconds:

When an emergency actually occurs, make the basic decisions about what type of action is needed and respond within seconds. This Emergency Response section includes clear step-by-step procedures for responding to an emergency. In addition, each school's site-specific Emergency Response Plan summarizes key information including staff roles and responsibilities during an emergency. Access these resources and use them as a guide.

Notify Appropriate Emergency

One common mistake is to delay calling 911 to activate emergency responders (i.e., police or fire departments) and to notify the district office. In the midst of a crisis, people often believe that the situation can be handled in-house. It is better to have emergency responders on the scene as soon as possible, even if the incident has been resolved by the time they arrive, than to delay calling and risk further injury and damage. For instance, it is better to have emergency responders arrive at a school to find a fire put out than arrive too late to prevent loss of life or serious property damage. Notifying the school E-Team allows staff to take steps to protect the safety of everyone involved.

Get Essential Emergency Supplies and Resources:

The Site Administrator/Principal should immediately instruct office staff and teachers to access emergency response resources. This includes the school's Emergency Response Backpack, student rosters, and classroom kits. Take these resources with you if the school is evacuated.

Expert Recommendations When Responding to an Emergency

Follow the Incident Command System:

The Site Administrator/Principal should immediately instruct office staff and teachers to access emergency response resources. This includes the school's Emergency Response Backpack, student rosters, and classroom kits. Take these resources with you if the school is evacuated.

In the event of an emergency at a school, the Site Administrator or designee will function as the Site Incident Commander. Site Administrators should expect that, in certain situations, it will be necessary to yield leadership to emergency responders as they arrive at the site – including Fire or Police Departments. In a fire, the expertise of firefighters will lead the way; in a crime, police will be in charge with school staff filling designated roles such as coordinating family-student reunification. The District Incident Commander will make decisions about district resources that are needed and coordinate with city or county emergency responders and the Site Administrator.

Decide to Evacuate or Stay in the School as Appropriate:

This step is crucial! The decision to direct students and staff to evacuate or stay in the school should be one of the first decisions made. These two key emergency responses – Evacuation or Lockdown/Shelter-in-Place – will be discussed in detail below.

Triage Injuries and Provide Emergency First Aid:

The primary goal in an emergency is to protect human life. If students, staff, parents or visitors are injured, their injuries must be attended to as circumstances allow until emergency responders arrive. Each school’s site-specific emergency plan identifies school staff that are knowledgeable in first aid. Triage medical needs and treat the seriously injured to the extent of your ability.

Communicate Accurate and Appropriate Information:

During a crisis, Site Administrators/Principals should first activate an emergency response and then focus on managing the emergency situation. The role of the District Office is to be the single information source, freeing up the Site Administrator to provide for the safety and needs of students, staff, and parents. Parents/Guardians and community members will receive reliable and useful information about an unfolding situation through the Public Information Officer (PIO).

Document Your Actions:

School personnel responding to an emergency should write down actions taken during the response. This will provide a record of appropriate implementation of the emergency plan. Keep all original notes and records as these may be considered legal documents. The Site Administrator should collect and file all documents. Paper and pens should be provided in the Emergency Response Backpack.

Use Plain Language to Give Directives

Communication is essential when responding to an emergency. To activate the school *Emergency Response Team (E-Team)**, the Site Administrator should call them directly or make an announcement to have them report. To direct students, the Site Administrator may make an announcement via the public address (PA) system or a megaphone or direct teachers to have students perform a specific action.

It is strongly recommended that Site Administrators and school staff communicate in an emergency simply by stating the facts. FEMA recommends simply using plain language rather than codes. State requests clearly and calmly. Use plain language that reassures students and staff that you are in control. When making an announcement, it is essential that you repeat the announcement at least twice. Keep in mind that teachers and students may be involved in a noisy activity such as playing loudly in a gym class. The first announcement will quiet them down, the second will ensure they hear, understand and act.

The emergency response procedures in this section provide suggested language that Site Administrators may use to direct staff and students to perform necessary actions.

Site Administrators may use when responding to an emergency:

To Activate the School “E-Team”:

“Attention staff. Please listen closely. Members of the school E-Team please come to the main office immediately.” (You could announce their names.)

To Direct Teachers to Prepare to Evacuate the Building:

“Attention staff. Please listen closely. Please prepare to evacuate the building immediately. Teachers, proceed to your designated safe area. Take your student roster and classroom kit with you. Please evacuate now.”

To Direct a School Lockdown:

“Attention staff. Please listen closely. Please lock your classroom doors immediately. Lock windows. Move students away from windows.”

To Direct Staff and Students to Enter the School Building:

“Attention staff and students. Please listen closely. Clear the playground and come inside the building. Teachers and students return to your classrooms.”

NOTE: Use the term “E-Team” for the Emergency Response Team to avoid unnecessary anxiety—an “emergency” can be anything from a minor to major event.

In the event of an emergency, the Site Administrator must notify the First Responders (911), the District Office and any other programs onsite of the critical incident. The District Office will determine whether the incident can be managed by school/district resources and may take additional action.

A Key Decision—“Stay Safe” or “Leave Safe”

Knowing what to do in an emergency is not overly complicated. Basically, Site Administrators must quickly assess the situation and decide what plan of action will best provide safety and protect property. Many factors might be considered, such as whether a specific response could contain the danger, or whether the emergency involves a few people or the entire school. Emergencies differ and, therefore, require different responses.

A **Lockdown/Shelter-in-Place** or **Evacuation** generally will be ordered when a situation presents a danger to a large portion of the student body. Your decision will be based on the nature of the situation and whether the school building is a safe place. Your answer will result in a key decision: To either stay in the school or evacuate.

Response Procedures and Protocols

The remainder of this section presents emergency response procedures and protocols for specific situations. The procedures were written in a manner that Site Administrators could use as a quick reference guide. However, there is NO substitute for familiarity with these procedures and practice.

Shelter-in-Place

Whenever an emergency situation presents itself such that it is safer for students and staff to remain inside the school building, the superintendent, principal or designee may order “shelter-in-place.” This response action is initiated when there has been an accidental or intentional release of a chemical, radiological, or biological contaminant in the vicinity of the school. “Shelter-in-place” may also be called for in response to severe weather.

Shelter-in-Place Procedures:

- Notify District Office
- Notify staff and students
- Order facilities manager or custodian to shut down air circulation system
- Turn on radio and monitor updates
- Activate Parent Alert Telephone System (parent phone tree, if one is in place)
- Post signs on exterior windows, if there is time and it is safe to do so

Shelter-in-Place During:

- Explosion
- Hazardous Materials Incident
- National Security Emergency
- Radiological Incident
- Severe Weather
- Transportation Accident

Make an announcement over the PA system:

“Attention staff and students! Please listen closely. Clear the playground immediately and come inside the building. Teachers and students return to your classrooms.”

Repeat twice

Post signs if it is safe to do so:

“This School is Sheltering-in-Place. Do NOT attempt to enter any office or building”

NOTE: If you do not have a PA system, and it is safe to do so, send runners to each classroom with the information above. Be sure all classrooms, libraries, cafeterias, gymnasiums, and all other on-campus programs and offices are also notified.

Procedures for Accounting for Students, Staff and Visitors during Shelter-in-Place

During an emergency, accounting for students, staff and visitors is an urgent priority. Follow these procedures for accounting for everyone.

- Teachers/staff move students to safe locations within building (e.g., away from outside walls and windows).
- Teachers keep their student roster with them.
- Designated school staff clear hallways and bathrooms and direct students to secure locations.
- Teachers/staff remain with students, take attendance and report missing students to the Site Administrator (Site Incident Commander) or Operations Team by any means possible.
- In case of missing student, Site Administrator attempts to locate and report any missing students to the Fire Department, Police Department and District Office.
- Site Administrator accounts for all staff and any visitors listed on the school visitor log or sign-in sheet.

Special Note: Sheltering Rooms

- Avoid overcrowding by preselecting several interior rooms with the fewest number of windows or vents. The appropriate location depends entirely on the emergency situation. If a chemical has been released, you should take shelter in a room above ground level, because some chemicals are heavier than air and may seep below ground. On the other hand, if there are radioactive particles in the air, you should choose a centrally located room or basement. Knowing what to do under specific circumstances is an important part of being prepared.
- The room should have ten square feet of floor space per person in order to provide sufficient air to prevent carbon dioxide buildup for five hours. In this room, you should store scissors, plastic sheeting precut to fit over any windows or vents and rolls of duct tape to secure the plastic. Access to a water supply is desirable.
- The rooms should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit, including an estimated number of visitors. Large storage closets, utility rooms, pantries, break rooms; copy and conference rooms without exterior windows would work well. Access to bathrooms is a plus. It is ideal to have hardwired telephones in the rooms you select; use cordless phones (but not cell phones—the system may be overloaded in an emergency), if necessary. The rooms should be equipped with a disaster supplies kit.

Whenever an emergency situation presents itself such that it is safer for students and staff to remain inside the school building, the superintendent, principal or designee may order “Lockdown.” “Lockdown” generally will be ordered when a situation presents a danger to a large portion of the student body. The Site Administrator may modify the lockdown or make a planned release from lockdown if the danger is contained or has subsided.

Lockdown Procedures:

- Keep all exterior doors locked
- NO person is allowed to enter or leave the building
- Make an announcement that children and staff may move within the building as the situation indicates (e.g., students may move from class to class, go to the bathroom)
- If Incident Commander deems it safe enough, staff/students can use site facilities
- Teachers are to continue as normally as possible with lesson plan
- Site Administrator will announce the “ALLCLEAR” when it is safe to resume normal school function

Lockdown During:

- Civil Unrest
- Police pursuit

Make an announcement over the PA system:

“Attention staff. Please listen closely. Please lock your classroom doors immediately. Lock windows. Move students away from windows.”

Repeat Twice

NOTE: Direct teachers to continue as best they can until given the “All Clear” sign.

Procedures Accounting for Students, Staff and Visitors during Lockdown

During an emergency, accounting for students, staff and visitors is an urgent priority. Follow these procedures for accounting for everyone.

- If deemed safe to do so, Site Administrator will clear hallways and bathrooms and direct students to secure locations. Also, Site Administrators can allow teachers/staff and students use of facilities if safe
- Teacher lockdown, teachers/staff lock doors and move students to safety within the classroom
- Teachers/staff who are responsible for special needs students needing evacuation assistance must (1) supervise them (2) direct them to Evacuation Staging Areas, and (3) notify the Site Administrator
- Teachers/staff remain with students, take attendance, and report missing students to the Site Administrator (Site Incident Commander) or Operations Team by e-mail or phone
- In case of missing student, Site Administrator attempts to locate and report any missing students to the Fire Department, Police Department, District Office and Search & Rescue Team
- Site Administrator notifies emergency responders about any special needs students or staff awaiting evacuation assistance
- Site Administrator accounts for all staff and any visitors listed on the school visitor log or sign-in sheet
- For serious emergencies (fire, explosion, gun violence), Site Administrator checks the teacher’s reported attendance against the secretary’s updated student roster

Emergency Lockdown Procedures:

- Direct a sweep of the hallways and bathrooms, and move all students into secure rooms
- Teachers/staff/students lock and barricade all doors
- Keep Classroom doors locked and blinds down
- Direct the facility manager/staff to lock all exterior doors
- Direct teachers/staff to lock all interior doors
- Direct teachers/staff to lock all exterior windows
- Direct teachers/staff to create a U-shaped fort in the classroom, away from the entrance, and instruct students to hide inside the fort covered in a low position. Keep children out of sight
- Do not let visitors/students/staff enter or exit your classroom. Doors are to remain locked at all times
- Teachers/staff remain with students, take attendance and report missing students to the Site Administrator (Site Incident Command) or Operations Team by e-mail or phone
- Direct teachers/staff to instruct students to turn off all cell phones. Teachers/staff should use class phones or cell phones only to report information about the intruder or to report a serious injury. Otherwise, the office administrators will be the only ones to communicate with teachers and staff
- Direct teachers to keep computers on to communicate via e-mail
- Direct teachers/staff to turn off all lights and instruct students to remain calm and quiet
- NO person is allowed to enter or leave the building. Under no circumstances should students or staff outside classrooms be allowed to enter a classroom once Code RED Lockdown has been initiated. Doing so could jeopardize the safety of the students and staff within the room

An Emergency Lockdown MAY begin when The Site Administrator (Incident Commander) makes an announcement over the intercom:

“This is an Emergency Lockdown. Immediately close your doors and begin lockdown.”

Repeat Twice

Place a large sign in the front entrance:

“This school is under emergency lockdown. No person may enter or leave. Please move away from the school building.” Please contact _____ for further information”

NOTE: Do not place any signs under the door.

- In case of missing students, Site Administrator attempts to locate and report any missing students to the Fire Department, Police Department and District Office
- Direct teachers/staff to keep doors locked until proper law/fire/school administrator arrive and identify themselves with the code words. The code words will be both the current MONTH _____ and DAY _____
- The Site Administrator will advise staff to prepare for evacuation or other steps as required by emergency responders.
- Site Administrator accounts for all staff and any visitors listed on the school visitor log or sign-in sheet.
- In the event of a required evacuation, direct teachers/staff to lead students in evacuation of classrooms in orderly lines with their hands on their heads. Teachers/staff should instruct students to remove large clothing and take only necessary materials with them in their pockets. Do not bring any bags or containers outside during evacuation. Law/fire enforcements must visibly see that students are not concealing other weapons
- The Site Administrator will release students from lockdown in an orderly manner after consultation once law/fire officials deem site is safe.

EXAMPLE: Law enforcement identifies themselves with the code:

“NOVEMBER. Attention, this is the swat team. Please open the door”

Teacher/staff responds with the code:

“TUESDAY.”

Proceed to open doors for the proper authorities.

Emergency Lockdown during:

- Shooter on campus
- Demonstration
- Terrorist attack

Earthquake

Duck and cover is a self-protective action called for whenever there is immediate danger from flying objects and/or falling debris. Usually initiated in earthquakes, it is an appropriate response for a number of different threats, such as severe weather or shooter-on-campus.

Duck, Cover and Hold on Procedures

- Sound alarm for situations other than earthquake
- Notify staff and students
- When the threat passes, make “All Clear” announcement and issue call to “Resume Regular Activities” or direct another response action (such as Evacuation, Cancellation or Closure of School Students, staff, and employees drop immediately to the floor and crawl under their desks (or a table or work bench). Use one hand to hold onto the furniture/table and the other to cover the back of your neck

Indoors

- Stay put until “All Clear” announcement is made
- Check for injuries and make sure everyone is accounted for

Hallways and Bathrooms

- Kneel next to a bare, inside wall and place your hands over the back of your neck
- Stay put until “All Clear” announcement is made
- Check for injuries and make sure everyone is accounted for

Outdoors

- Move away from trees, billboards, signs, buildings, electrical wiring and power poles
- Drop to the ground and cover the back of your neck with your hands
- Stay put until “All clear” announcement is made
- Check for injuries and make sure everyone is accounted for

Duck, Cover and Hold On during:

- Civil unrest
- Explosion
- Landslide
- Major earthquake
- National Security emergency
- Terrorism
- Transportation accident
- Winter storm

The call to “duck and cover” is usually initiated by classroom teachers. In the event of an earthquake, the ground-shaking initiates the Duck, Cover and Hold On procedures.

Make an announcement over the PA system*:

“Duck, cover, and hold on. Stand-by for further instructions.” Repeat Twice

*If you do not have a PA system or bell code system, and it is safe to do so: send runners to each classroom with above information. Be sure all classrooms, libraries, cafeterias, gymnasiums, and all other on-campus programs and offices are also notified.

NOTE: After an earthquake, remember to stay alert for aftershocks!

Fire or Explosion

Fire or Explosion

- What:** A fire is any destructive occurrence of flame and combustion. An explosion is a sudden, violent release of gas, heat, or energy. Examples of a fire or explosion include: a trashcan fire, burning building, smoke bomb, explosion in a chemistry lab, etc.
- Why:** A school building must be evacuated in the event of a fire or explosion.
- Who:** Any staff member must immediately report a fire or explosion. The Site Administrator must be notified immediately.

Response

- Assess the situation
- Call 911 if indicated
- Pull the fire alarm to initiate a building evacuation
- Call the District Office
- Take action to suppress the fire
- Follow fire evacuation procedures
- Direct all students and staff outside the building
- Direct students and staff to Outside Assembly Locations a minimum of 100 feet from the building
- Sweep all floors as the building is evacuated
- Check Evacuation Staging Areas
- Account for all students
- Account for disabled students at Evacuation Staging Areas
- Consult with Fire or E-Team to determine whether to evacuate to an Off-Site Emergency Evacuation Location, or if school is to be dismissed
- Reunite students and parents in a systematic manner, signing out all students to parents as indicated
- Do not re-enter the building until given an “all-clear” by the Fire Department and Facilities
- Document actions and complete School/Site Incident Report

Important Details

Re-entering the building:

Although the Fire Department may have extinguished a fire, the building may be unsafe for re-entry. After a fire, re-entry to the facility must be approved by Facilities.

Reporting fires:

All fires must be reported to the Fire Department. Even fires that are found already extinguished must be reported (e.g., a trash can fire that is found burned out in a bathroom).

Students with disabilities:

Notify the Fire Department immediately if students are waiting for assistance at Evacuation Staging Areas. The daily schedule of these students and staff is posted at the fire alarm panel.

Move a safe distance from the building: After evacuating, students should be moved away from busy streets or areas that may pose a safety concern. Move a minimum of 100 feet away from the school building.

Evacuation

This emergency response activity is initiated when it is determined that it is not safe to remain in school buildings or to stay on campus. In this situation, students and staff are moved to a safer location either on or off-site.

- What:** A directive to evacuate that moves all students, staff, and visitors to safety outside the school building.
- Why:** To evacuate when conditions outside are safer than those inside the building (e.g., fire, explosion, hazardous spill, bomb threat).
- Who:** The Site Administrator/Principal (or their designee) is the only person who may give a directive to evacuate.
- How:** Do NOT activate fire alarm. Notify the District Office

The Site Administrator decides the school must be evacuated and makes an announcement:

“Attention staff and students! Please listen closely. Teachers and students, evacuate the school immediately. Teachers, take your student roster and Classroom Kit with you. Proceed to your designated Outside Assembly Location. Please evacuate now.”

Procedures for Evacuation:

- Activate the school “E-Team” and coordinators for assistance
- Take the emergency backpack/box and the ERP with you
- Confirm the building was swept to ensure no person is inside
- Confirm presence of special needs students or staff at Evacuation Staging Areas
- Collect Attendance from teachers and identify missing children
- Report missing children to the Police or Fire Incident Commander
- If Outside Assembly Locations are not safe:
 - Inform District Office that you need assistance from Transportation*
- Move children to an off-campus evacuation location on your ERP
- Implement procedures for reuniting students and parents if needed

Important Details

Building Re-entry:

Consult with Facilities and the Fire Department to determine when it is safe to re-enter the building

Reuniting students and parents:

Refer to the Preparedness section of this manual for procedures to reunite students with parents. All students must be accounted for and signed out in the school’s binder, which has emergency contact information. Direct the Student-Parent Reunion coordinator to facilitate this task

Directed evacuation:

The fire alarm is not activated during a directed evacuation. The evacuation is ordered by announcement. Elevators remain functional

Evacuation is initiated in case of:

- Civil unrest
- Dam failure
- Explosion

- Fire on campus
- Flood
- Gas leak
- Hazardous materials incident
- Landslide
- Major earthquake
- National Security emergency
- Terrorism
- Transportation accident
- Wildland/urban interface fire
- Winter storm

NOTE: Make the megaphone announcement after the building evacuates

Procedure for Accounting for Students, Staff, and Visitors during an Evacuation

During an emergency, accounting for students, staff and visitors is an urgent priority. Follow these procedures for accounting for everyone.

- Teachers/staff supervise students' evacuation to Outside Assembly Areas and take the student roster with them
- Designated school staff sweep and clear school building
- Teachers/staff who are responsible for special needs students needing evacuation assistance must (1) supervise them (2) direct them to Evacuation Staging Areas, and (3) notify the Site Administrator
- Teachers staff remain with students, take attendance, and report missing students to the Site Administrator (Site Incident Commander) or Operations Team
- Site Administrator notifies emergency responders about any special needs students or staff awaiting evacuation assistance
- Site Administrator notifies emergency responders about any special needs students or staff awaiting evacuation assistance
- Site Administrator reports any missing students to the Fire Department, Police Department and/or Search and Accountability Team
- Site Administrator accounts for all staff and any visitors listed on the school visitor log or sign-in sheet
- For serious emergencies (fire, explosion, gun violence), Site Administrator checks the Teacher's reported attendance against the Secretary's updated student roster

Procedure for Accounting for Students, Staff and Visitors

In the event of a serious emergency, it is possible that the school may have to reunite student with parents outside of the regular school schedule. For example, this might happen if a police situation forces the lockdown of a school and the release of students is delayed beyond the school day. It may also be necessary if a fire at a school requires that students be evacuated to an alternative location. Student–Parent reunion may occur either at or away from the school site.

In general, students should only be released to a parent or guardian that is listed as an emergency contact in the student information system. Emergency situations call for the exercise of discretion and school officials will exercise due diligence in making sure students are returned safely to parents or guardians.

Procedures for Reuniting Students and Parents/Guardians:

If there is a need to reunite students and parents following an emergency situation, the following procedures are recommended:

- The Reunification Coordinator will coordinate the return of students to parents/guardians in partnership with the Site Administrator.
- School staff or their designees should use school binder with student's emergency contact information to call parents/guardians and request they pick up their child at a designated location.
- It may be helpful to use tables organized by student's last names (e.g. A-L, L-Z) to facilitate the reunification and sign-out process.
- School staff should have parents or guardians sign-out their child directly next to their child's name in the binder that has students' emergency contact information.
- School staff should confirm parent/guardian identity by requiring them to show a photo ID.
- Do not release any student without parent or guardian permission, and do not release a student to anyone other than those whose name(s) appear in the student's emergency contact information (unless a confirmed parent or guardian gives verbal permission over the phone).

Hazardous Material Spills

Hazardous Material Spills

What: Hazardous Material Spill refers to the spill of products or compounds that are flammable, reactive, corrosive or toxic which may pose a substantial hazard to human health or the environment.

Why: Hazardous material spills pose an immediate risk to safety

Who: The Site Administrator should be notified immediately by any staff member aware of a hazardous material spill.

Response

- Do NOT try to clean up the spill.
- Do NOT pull the fire alarm (as it will lock the elevators).
- Call 911 to activate the Fire Department and HAZMAT.
- Call the District Office.
- Contain the hazardous material spill by closing doors and windows.
- Decide to clear a specific area or to evacuate the school and issue a directive.
- Identify (and get the names of) all students, staff, and visitors that have had contact with the hazardous material(s).
- Quarantine all exposed individuals in a designated room away from danger (so they be treated/decontaminated).
- Complete the School/Site Incident Report and the Pupil Accident Report.

Important Details

Re-entering the building

Affected rooms and or the school may NOT be re-entered until permission is given by Facility Services.

Bomb Threat

Bomb Threat

- What:** A bomb threat is a threat that an explosion of some type will occur. The threat may be delivered in writing, or by email, video, telephone, etc.
- Why:** To gain as much information as possible about the threat and to act to move all students, staff and visitors to safety if necessary.
- Who:** The recipient of the threat must try to gain as much information about the threat as possible and immediately call 911 to report the bomb threat.

The Site Administrator or designee must take action to ensure the safety of everyone in the school. The Site Administrator may give an order to evacuate the school (Directed Evacuation) in an urgent emergency, but consultation with the District Office is advised.

Person Receiving Bomb Threat:

- Talk to caller; do not hang up; complete the Bomb Threat Checklist.
- Signal someone to call 911 while you are on the phone.
- Call 911 immediately.
- Call the District Office immediately.
- Notify the Site Administrator immediately.

Site Administrator:

- The Site Administrator decides if a lockdown or evacuation is needed.

For Lockdown:

- Make Announcement that all students are to remain in class.
- Sweep any potentially dangerous areas.
- Do NOT move or touch suspicious items such as packages or boxes.
- If a suspicious item is found, report the suspicious item to 911, Police, and/or Fire Department.
- Notify the District Office.
- Evacuate the area if indicated.
- Evacuate the school if indicated.

To Direct a School Lockdown, Announce:

“Attention staff. Please listen closely. Please lock your classroom doors immediately. Lock windows. Move students away from windows.”

Important Details

Evacuation, lockdown, and/or search:

Consider having students remain in classrooms while a reasonable search is made. Do not put students in harm’s way by having them evacuate through an area that could contain the bomb. Quickly sweep evacuation routes before allowing students through them.

Decision to cancel school:

Consider a plan to send students home if an explosive device is found or a more thorough search is necessary. Make decisions in collaboration with Superintendent, Police and or Fire Departments.

Evacuation:

- Prior to evacuation, sweep the evacuation routes to check for suspicious items (i.e., the bomb)

- Do NOT move suspicious items, packages, boxes, etc.
- Decide what evacuation routes should be used to avoid dangerous areas.
- Make Announcement to evacuate the building and specify by which routes.
- Do NOT allow students and staff into dangerous areas.
- Direct teachers to ensure students quietly exit the building.
- Account for all students and staff.
- Refer all media inquiries to the Public Information Officers.
- Work with Police, Fire and the District Office to determine if it is safe to reenter the building.

Decision to cancel school:

Consider a plan to send students home if an explosive device is found or a more thorough search is necessary. Make decisions in collaboration with Superintendent, Police and or Fire Departments

PA Announcement Sample Script

Teachers direct students to exit the building quietly:

“Attention staff and students! Please listen closely. Teachers and students, prepare to evacuate the building. Avoid the _____ area. Do NOT enter the _____ area. Do NOT use cell phones or pagers. Teachers, take your student roster with you. Proceed to your designated Outside Assembly Location. Please evacuate now.”

(Optional) “Students in the hallway, leave the building immediately and check in with the nearest teacher. Members of the school E-Team report to _____.”)

Repeat Twice

Suspicious Package/Mail/Email

Characteristics of suspicious letters or packages:

- Origin – Postmark doesn't match the city of the return address, name of sender is unusual or unknown, or no return address is given
- Postage – Excessive or inappropriate postage
- Balance – The letter is lopsided or an unusually thick weight or seems heavy for its size
- Contents – Stiffness or springiness of contents; protruding wires or components; oil on outer wrapping or envelope; feels like it contains powdery substance
- Smell – Particularly almond or other suspicious odors
- Writing – Handwriting of sender is not familiar or indicates a foreign style not normally received by recipient or cut-and-paste or run-on-block letters are used. Common words, names or titles are misspelled or special instructions like "fragile," "confidential," or "do not delay" are present. Title, but no name

If the letter or package is a mail bomb, the letter or package may also have:

- Protruding wires or aluminum foil
- Strange odors or stains
- Unusual amount of tape
- Buzzing, ticking, or a sloshing sound
- Irregular shape, soft spots or bulges
- Excessive weight for its size
- Letter bombs may feel rigid or appear uneven or lopsided

Gun or Weapon on Campus

Gun or Weapon on Campus Expanded Guidelines

If a teacher becomes aware of a firearm or weapon on campus, s/he should contact the front office immediately without alerting student(s) or the suspect(s), if at all possible. These are suggested methods of notification

- What:** A weapon is considered a knife, firearm or similar appearing device that could be used to inflict harm and that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of students.
- Why:** Any weapon on school grounds is dangerous! Immediate action must be taken to provide for safety.
- Who:** Any staff member must report the presence of a weapon on school grounds. Notify the Site Administrator immediately. The Site Administrator must take immediate action to mitigate danger and ensure the safety of everyone in the school.
- How:** When a Weapon is reported:

Response:

- Call 911/ Notify campus security officers.
- Notify the District Office.
- Keep reporting student(s) in the main office.
- Reporting student(s) may remain anonymous.
- Use extreme caution and do NOT confront the suspect.
- Determine if a Lockdown or Evacuation is needed.
- Consider having police investigate the situation.
- Conduct a thorough search of all school property, as indicated.
- Conduct a thorough search of personal property (backpacks, automobiles, jackets, purses, etc.).
- Conduct a thorough search of student, or delegate search of student to a police officer as indicated for obvious safety reasons.
- Follow all search procedures.
- Document that you are delegating search to a law enforcement officer given potential safety concern.

Student Observes Weapon

Send reporting student to the office if possible

- The student may remain anonymous

Teacher Observes/Learns of Weapon

- Send sealed message with trusted student to the Site Administrator.
- Seek assistance from another teacher to report the incident.
- Report your name and location.
- Give the name and a description of the suspect.
- Describe the type of weapon and location if possible.
- Discreetly call the police if possible.
- Wait for a response from administration.
- Use extreme caution; do not confront the suspect.

When a Weapon is Brandished

- Assess the situation
- Call 911 if possible

- Notify the District Office

The Site Administrator should decide to:

- Clear the site or evacuate
- Secure the area or initiate a lockdown
- Remain calm; avoid sudden moves or gestures
- Do NOT attempt to take the weapon from the individual
- Using a calm and clear voice, instruct the individual that they need to place the weapon down
- Use the individual's name while talking to

When a Weapon is Found

- Secure the area if a firearm is found; do not touch a firearm
- Confiscate any weapon that is not a firearm and secure as evidence
- If a weapon is found, call 911 or Police non-emergency as indicated
- Call the District Office
- Take statements from students and/or staff witnesses as indicated
- Follow appropriate discipline procedures and notify parent(s)
- Refer media request to the Public Information Officer
- Debrief all students or staff involved
- Provide for counseling services as needed

Shooting or Stabbing

A shooting refers to the discharge of a gun/firearm with or without injury to a person. A stabbing refers to an aggressive gesture with a knife or sharp weapon that causes injury to a person. Any staff member should call 911 and the District Office immediately in the event of a shooting or stabbing. The Site Administrator should be notified immediately.

Response

- Call 911 immediately
- Notify the District Office
- If known, describe assailant: age, height, weight, color of hair, color of eyes, clothing, and type of vehicle
- Provide for the ongoing safety of students and staff and initiate a Lockdown or Directed Evacuation if indicated
- Administer first aid as indicated
- Cooperate with Police action
- Do not disturb crime scene
- Identify witnesses and assist Police in taking statements
- Follow procedures to notify victim's parents/guardians (police may make notification)
- Follow procedures to notify assailant's parents/guardians (police may make notification)
- Document Action

RUN: Evacuate If Possible

- If there is considerable distance between you and the gunfire/armed person, quickly move away from the sound of the gunfire/armed person. If the gunfire/armed person is in your building and it is safe to do so, run out of the building and move far away until you are in a secure place to hide.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Keep your hands visible to law enforcement.
- Take others with you, but do not stay behind because others will not go.
- Call 911 when it is safe to do so. Do not assume that someone else has reported the incident. The information that you are able to provide law enforcement may be critical, e.g. number of shooters, physical description and identification, number and type(s) of weapons, and location of the shooter.

HIDE: Hide silently in as safe a place as possible

- If the shooter is in close proximity and you cannot evacuate safely, hide in an area out of the armed person's view.
- Choose a hiding place with thicker walls and fewer windows, if possible.
- Lock doors and barricade with furniture, if possible.
- Turn off lights
- Silence phones and turn off other electronics.
- Close windows, shades and blinds, and avoid being seen from outside the room, if possible.
- If you are outdoors and cannot RUN safely, find a place to hide that will provide protection from gunfire such as a brick wall, large trees or buildings.
- Remain in place until you receive an "all clear" signal.

FIGHT: Take action to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter

- As a last resort, fight. If you cannot evacuate or hide safely and only when your life is in imminent danger, take action.
- Attempt to incapacitate or disrupt the actions of the shooter.
- Act with physical aggression toward the shooter.
- Use items in your area such as fire extinguishers or chairs.
- Throw items at the shooter if possible.
- Call 911 when it is safe to do so.

Immediately after an incident:

- Wait for Local Law Enforcement officers to assist you out of the building, if inside.
- When law enforcement arrives, students and employees must display empty hands with open palms.

Note:

- Understand that gunfire may sound artificial. Assume that any popping sound is gunfire.
- If there are two or more persons in the same place when a violent incident begins, you should spread out in the room to avoid offering the aggressor an easy target.
- Be mindful that violent attacks can involve any type of weapon, not just a gun. Knives, blunt objects, physical force or explosives can be just as deadly as a gun. The suggested actions provided here are applicable in any violent encounter.
- Plan ahead: Visualize possible escape routes, including physically accessible routes for students and staff with disabilities and others with limited mobility.

The Site Administrator decides the school must be evacuated and makes an announcement:

“Attention staff and students! Run, hide, fight immediately!”

Threats

Threats

- What:** A threat is an expression of intent to harm a person or property. A threat can be spoken, written, or symbolic (e.g., a gesture). A threat can be direct, indirect, veiled or conditional (see Expanded Guidelines below).
- Why:** All threats must be taken seriously and evaluated to address safety concerns. Action must be taken to prevent harm from being carried out. A threat may be a crime.
- Who:** Any staff member must immediately report and respond to a threat. The Site Administrator should be notified immediately.
- How:**

Response

- Call the District Office
- Call 911 if there is imminent danger
- Detain the student making the threat to keep others safe from harm
- Do not allow access to backpack, purse, locker, and other personal property
- The Site Administrator should convene a school team to evaluate the threat
- Direct the building team to evaluate the threat
- Conduct search of school and personal property following procedures
- Receive findings from the threat assessment team
- Determine if disciplinary action and/or Police involvement is required
- Notify parents of situation, concerns, and course of action
- Complete School/Site Incident Report
- Send report the District Office

Important Details

Team Approach:

Threat assessment should not be performed by a single individual. There may be a coordinating staff member, but it is essential to share and discuss information with all members of the threat assessment team. This enhances decision making by ensuring that different perspectives are represented (e.g., psychological, administrative, medical, etc.) and discussed.

Access to weapons:

Depending on the nature of the threat, it is essential that a student's access to weapons, especially firearms, be evaluated. Consider access at the homes of parents, friends and relatives. Ask parents about weapons access and advise them about safe storage. Inform them that potential for dangerousness is highest when a child is in emotional distress and the child has access to a means to do harm.

Threats Expanded Guidelines

Guidance from the U.S. Department of Education

Two key publications guide the assessment of dangerous situations in schools. The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States (U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Department of Education, 2002) presents findings from a retrospective analysis of 37 incidents of targeted violence. This document reviews psychological and behavioral factors that have contributed to school related violence and provides recommendations for evaluating and preventing violence.

The second publication Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situation and to Creating Safe School Climates (U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Department of Education, 2002) provides guidelines for evaluating threatening situations. The guide highlights the importance of a team approach to information seeking, evaluation, and intervention so that potential instances of targeted violence may be disrupted. It is strongly recommended that members of school threat assessment teams become familiar with these important publications.

Making a Threat versus Posing a Threat

All threats must be taken seriously and evaluated. The central question is whether a student poses a threat, not simply whether the student made a threat. Evaluators must seek to understand whether the student intends to follow through with his/her threat. Base your judgments on the student's communications and behaviors (i.e., what was said and what has been done). Determine the extent to which a student is progressing on a path towards a violent act. Is there evidence to suggest movement from thought to action?

Interviews

As part of a threat assessment, members of the school team will likely interview others that know the student or have information. For example, team members may contact previous schools or Juvenile Probation to ask about court/probation involvement. The team may also elect to interview students, teachers, the target of the threat, and parents to gather information to address concerns. Look for consistency in the information provided. This will give credibility to the team's conclusions.

When interviewing, ask about:

- What was said, who heard what was said, who saw what was done
- Whether students, teachers, or parents are worried or concerned
- The student's motives, behavior, and intentions
- Grievances and/or grudges
- How parents will assist you in searches, supervision, and intervention

Questions for Analyzing Information

The U.S. Secret Service and Department of Education recommend that these 11 questions be addressed when a student makes a threat:

1. What are the student's motives and goals?

Why did the student make a threat or behave in the manner they did? Does the student have a grievance or grudge? Against whom?

2. Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?

What, if anything, has the student communicated to others (targets, friends, other students, teachers, family) or written in a diary, journal, or website concerning their ideas and intentions?

3. Has the subject shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?

School attacks or attackers, weapons (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon), or incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers)

4. Has the student engaged in attack-related behaviors?

These behaviors might include: developing an attack idea or plan; making efforts to acquire or practice with weapons; casing, or checking out possible sites and areas for attack; rehearsing attacks or ambushes

5. Does the student have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?

Does the student have the means to do harm, such as access to a weapon

6. Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?

Is the student emotionally connected to, or disconnected from, other students and adults?

7. Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation or despair?

Has the student experienced a recent failure, loss or loss of status?

Is the student now, or has the student ever been, suicidal?

8. Does the student see violence as an acceptable or desirable way to solve problems?

Does the setting around the student (friends, fellow students, parents, teachers, adults) explicitly or implicitly support or endorse violence as a way of resolving problems or disputes?

9. Is the student's conversation and "story" consistent with their actions?

Does the student's behavior and information from collateral interviews confirm or dispute what the student says is going on?

10. Are other people concerned about the student's potential for violence?

Are those who know the student concerned that he or she might take action based on violent ideas or plans?

11. What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?

What factors in the student's life and/or environment might increase or decrease the likelihood that he or she will attempt to mount an attack at school?

Assault and Battery

Assault and/or Battery

What: Assault is alleged or actual physical contact causing bodily harm to another person. (If indicated, see procedures for Child Abuse/Sexual Assault)

Employee to Student: Any incident of alleged physical or extreme emotional abuse or neglect of a student by a school employee could be defined as assault

Student to Student: An incident in which a student is physically injured or in imminent danger of being injured

Why: A quick response will allow for treatment of injuries, possible referral to Police, a thorough investigation, and prevention or intervention.

Who: Any staff member must immediately report an alleged or actual assault. The Site Administrator should be notified immediately.

Response

- Notify the Site Administrator
- Always call the District Office
- Call 911 as indicated
- If not an emergency, call the Police on the non-emergency line
- Give description of assailant: age, height, weight, color of hair, color of eyes, clothing, and type of vehicle
- Administer first aid as indicated
- Provide for the ongoing safety of students and staff and initiate lockdown if indicated
- Follow procedures for notifying the victim's parents
- Follow procedures for notifying the assailant's parents
- Document actions and complete School/Site Incident Report

Important Details

Collaborate with Police:

Provide information to Police as required for investigative purposes.

Discipline:

Follow procedures for student discipline as indicated.

School Bus Accident or Field Trip Emergency

School Bus Accident or Field Trip Emergency

- What:** A School Bus Accident refers to a crash or wreck of a school vehicle transporting staff or children. A Field Trip Emergency occurs when students or staff are injured during a field trip.
- Why:** Accidents or injuries require an immediate emergency response. Pertinent departments and/or administrators should be notified. Parents or guardians must be notified.
- Who:** Any staff member must immediately report a school bus accident or injury that occurs on a field trip. The Site Administrator should be notified immediately.

Response

- The Site Administrator will receive notification of accident/injury from the Transportation radio dispatcher including: Names of students and staff, names of injured, name of hospital to which students and staff were transported
- Immediately notify parents of all the students involved in the accident
- Immediately notify parents of all students transported to medical facilities so they may give permission for medical treatment
- In partnership with Transportation, arrange for school staff to go to medical facilities to assist parents and students being treated
- Direct that students may only be released to and signed out by authorized parent or guardian
- Direct staff to remain available at the school in support roles as indicated
- Consider activating the School or District Crisis Recovery Team
- Coordinate communication and release of information with the District Office
- Document actions

Missing or Lost Child

- What:** A missing or lost student is any child who cannot be located after s/he is known to have reported to school, been in route to or from school or boarded a school bus.
- Why:** A quick response is critical so that efforts can be made to locate the child immediately.
- Who:** Any staff member must immediately report a missing child. The Site Administrator should be notified immediately.

Response

- Notify the Site Administrator
- Immediately conduct a search of the school building (e.g., including closets, under desks, etc.) and the grounds
- Determine when the child was last seen
- Call the District Office
- Call 911 as indicated
- Ask teachers and staff about any problems that are known regarding the child
- Provide a school picture and full description of the child (age, height, weight, color of hair, color of eyes, clothing, time last seen, where last seen, home address) to assist campus security or Police
- Contact the parents of the child involved to establish a communication plan with them
- Maintain the classroom routine for the other children
- Document actions and complete School/Site Incident Report
- When the child is found, contact all appropriate individuals

Important Details

Support:

Keep in mind that the parents of an abducted child will experience a variety of strong emotions and need considerable support. Consider how you might best support parents or guardians during this difficult time. The District Crisis Recovery Team has a variety of support resources.

Communication:

Communication about the situation should be sensitive and discreet. Contact the District Office for assistance in drafting messages to parents and children. Route all communication through the Public Information Officer.

Custody Disputes:

Treat situations involving custody disputes as a possible abduction. Obtain records and clarify the custodial arrangement for a child. Seek consultation with legal services as indicated.

Student Abduction

Student Abduction

- What:** Child abduction occurs when any person takes a child without proper authorization. A child may be taken forcibly, by persuasion, or by enticement.
- Why:** Quick response is critical so that efforts can be made to locate the child.
- Who:** Any staff member must immediately report a child's abduction. The Site Administrator should be notified immediately.

Response

- Immediately call 911 to report the child's abduction
- Describe what happened and describe the abductor: age, height, weight, color of hair, color of eyes, clothing, vehicle type, and location
- Call the District Office
- Conduct immediate search of school buildings and grounds
- Identify witnesses and notify police who will question witnesses
- Provide a school picture and full description of the child (age, height, weight, color of hair, color of eyes, clothing) to assist the police
- Contact the parents of the child involved to establish a communication plan with them
- Move other children away from the area of the abduction
- Maintain the classroom routine for children
- Call an emergency staff meeting if appropriate
- Consider activating the School and District Crisis Recovery Team
- Document all actions and complete School/Site Incident Report
- When the child is found, contact all appropriate individuals

Important Details

Support:

Keep in mind that the parents of an abducted child will experience a variety of strong emotions and need considerable support. Consider how you might best support parents or guardians during this difficult time. The District Crisis Recovery Team has a variety of support resources.

Communication:

Communication about the situation should be sensitive and discreet. Contact the District Office for assistance in drafting messages to parents and children. Route all communication through the Public Information Officer.

Custody Disputes:

Treat situations involving custody disputes as a possible abduction. Obtain records and clarify the custodial arrangement for a child. Seek consultation with legal services as indicated.

Child Abuse and Sexual Assault

What: Child abuse is generally defined as non-accidental physical or mental injury caused by the acts or omissions of the child's parents or caretakers. Any injury inconsistent with an explanation of how the injury occurred may be considered child abuse. Child abuse includes the four following types of abuse:

- Physical Abuse: Non-accidental physical injury to a child
- Physical Neglect: Failure on the part of the child's caretaker to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter or supervision
- Emotional Maltreatment: The constant belittling and rejecting of a child, not providing a positive emotional atmosphere
- Sexual Abuse: Sexual exploitation, molestation, or prostitution of a child

Why: School personnel have a legal obligation to make a report if child abuse or neglect is suspected. Suspicion or knowledge of abuse or neglect must be reported to the police.

General Principles for Reporting:

- Follow specific reporting procedures
- After the probability of abuse or sexual assault has been established, school staff should not question the student further
- Provide a confidential setting for a caseworker or police officer to interview the child
- The principal may designate one staff person with whom the child is familiar to be present during the interview

No person within the school district has the authority to veto the reporting of child abuse!

Sexual Assault is any physical contact of a sexual nature to a student, with or without, physical force or violence.

Child Abuse and Sexual Assault—Response

Child Abuse by Family or Primary Caregiver

- Notify the Police and/or Child Welfare Services
- Complete the Child Abuse reporting form and send copies to appropriate departments
- Parents will be notified by a caseworker after the report is made, not by school personnel

Child Abuse by Someone Other than the Primary Caregiver

- Notify the Police

Child Abuse by a District Employee

- Notify the Police
- Notify the District Office
- Complete a School Site/Incident Report
- Send Report to appropriate district personnel
- Decide in partnership with the Superintendent or designee who will notify parent or guardian

Sexual Assault by Student/Other

- Notify the Police
- Notify the District Office

- Complete a School Site/Incident Report
- Send report to
- Decide in partnership with the Superintendent or designee who will notify parent or guardian

Sexual Assault by a District Employee:

- Notify the Police
- Notify the District Office
- Complete a School Site/Incident Report
- Send report to appropriate district personnel
- Decide in partnership with the Superintendent or designee who will notify parent or guardian

If a Caseworker Has Not Responded by Dismissal Time:

- Site Administrator may send the student home if the student does not appear to be in imminent danger
- If the caseworker is on the way, remain with the student until the caseworker arrives
- If the student is afraid to go home, refuses to go home, or is determined to be in imminent danger, call the Police and remain with the student until the police arrive
- If the child is taken into custody by the Police, the Site Administrator should notify the parent or guardian by telephone
- If parents or guardians are not reachable, complete the Notification Card, make copies, seal it in an envelope, address it to parent or guardian, and deliver to their residence.

Important Details

Communication among departments:

It is essential that all relevant departments be involved in reports of child abuse or sexual assault. Communication between Principals, Superintendent, Human Resources, Legal Services, and other departments may be called for. Child Abuse and Sexual assault should always be reported to the Police.

Collaborate with Police:

Provide information to the Police as required for investigative purposes. Copies of a child abuse report should only be provided to police upon request.

When in doubt, report!

Suicide Threat or Suicide Attempt

Suicide Threat or Suicide Attempt

What: Suicidal ideation is having thoughts of suicide. A suicide threat is an expression that a person intends to harm himself or herself. This may be a statement. A suicide attempt is taking action to end one's own life. These are all expressions of a need for help and support and reflect possible imminent danger.

Why: Evaluation and intervention must be immediate to protect a child and/or others from injury or death.

Who: Any staff member must immediately report a suicide threat or attempt. The Site Administrator should be notified immediately. The Site Administrator must ensure that the child is appropriately evaluated.

When a Student is thinking about Suicide:

- The Site Administrator must ensure the student is safe
- Assign a staff member to remain with the student
- Assign a school psychologist, social worker or nurse, or other professional with mental health training to evaluate the student
- Use the Suicide Risk Assessment form to assess the student
- Notify the parent or guardian of the situation in partnership with a specialized services staff member
- Review the Emergency Response Plan on the Suicide Risk Assessment form developed by specialized services staff
- Consider having the student sign the Student Safety Contract form
- Consider having the parents sign the Parent/Guardian Emergency Conference Notice
- If a specialized service staff member cannot be reached, consider calling psychological services, social work services, nursing services, the Police or 911

Important Details

Consider the impact on other students:

It is important to consider the impact of a particular student's suicidal thinking or attempt on other students. In some cases, a student's suicide attempt has led to suicide attempts by other students.

Parental involvement:

Parents should be contacted as soon as possible in every situation involving suicidal thinking on the part of their child. Their input and support is essential to providing support and services to address concerns about their child.

Chronic suicidal threats by a child:

On occasion, a child will make ongoing suicidal threats. This is a sign that serious mental health concerns are present. Every suicidal threat must be taken at face value and evaluated to determine whether the child is in danger. Keep in mind that circumstances may change from moment to moment. In chronic cases, the help of mental health professionals in the community should be obtained (e.g., the child's therapist) with the permission of the parent or guardian. Parents should also be included in developing an ongoing Emergency Response Plan for their child.

Suicide Threat or Suicide Attempt—Response

When a Student Makes a Suicide Attempt

- The Site Administrator must take action to ensure the student is safe
- Provide immediate first aid and call 911 if indicated

- Call the District Office
- Remove all students from the area
- Notify the student's parents/guardians immediately
- Consult with a mental health professional to evaluate the student and make recommendations

Legal Issues

Several court rulings provide best practice decisions guidelines for Site Administrators and staff to follow when intervening with students that are suicidal.

- Parents must be notified when a student is suicidal (Wagon Mound Public Schools, District of New Mexico, 1998)
- School districts must offer adequate supervision of students that are suicidal (Wyke V. Polk County School Board, 1997)
- Even if a student denies suicidal intent, and collaborative teams suspect otherwise, the obligation is to notify parents (Eisel V. Board of Education of Montgomery County, 1991)

Suicide Threat or Suicide Attempt Expanded Guidelines

When Assisting a Suicidal Student, DO

- Stay with the student at all times
- Use the Suicide Risk Assessment form to conduct your assessment
- Assess the student for depression and broadly assess mental health functioning (e.g., thinking, impulse control, etc.)
- Report suicidal ideation to parents or guardians
- Listen to what the student is saying and accept the student's feelings
- Observe the student's nonverbal behavior such as facial expressions and body language which may convey more than what the student says
- Determine if a student has a plan to commit suicide and access to the means to complete the plan
- Seek consultation from a mental health professional
- Be reassuring, positive, and offer hope
- Assure the student that you will keep him/her safe and will find help
- Emphasize that there are alternatives to suicide and that the student is not the first person to feel this way
- Talk to someone about your experience after the event

When Assisting a Suicidal Student, DON'T

- Leave the student alone (even for a moment) or send them back to class
- Make deals or be sworn to secrecy; suicidal ideation must be reported to parents
- Be judgmental, debate whether suicide is right or wrong, give advice or lecture on the value of life
- Let the student convince you that the crisis is over; make sure you inform parents and develop a Suicide Prevention Plan that is on the Suicide Risk Assessment protocol
- Try and do too much; your responsibility to the student is to listen, assess, support, and refer the student to a trained medical professional

If a Student Completes Suicide

The loss of a student is a tragic event that will impact a number of students and staff at a school. Compassion, sensitivity and discretion are called for when deciding how to provide a supportive response to students, staff, and parents.

- Convene your school crisis recovery team and plan how to support your school

- Do NOT release personal information about the student or state that the student completed suicide
- Contact the District Crisis Recovery Team for support and to plan information to release to parents
- Contact the District for assistance in developing information to release to parents, students, and possibly the community
- Consider discussing with a student's parents what information should be released about the student who has died

Preventing Contagion at a School

Suicide threats and attempts, or a completed suicide may strongly impact other students. If a student is suicidal, try to determine if other students may be impacted. If a student has completed suicide, try to identify those who had close relationships with the student to check their needs for support and to ensure they are not contemplating suicide.

- If indicated, offer counseling services to students who had close relationships with the student who completed suicide, or other students who have expressed suicidal thoughts
- Instruct staff to be aware of warning signs in other students
- Let staff know who to contact if they are concerned about students

Medical Emergency/Illness or Injury

All staff are encouraged to enroll in a First Aid, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) course. Familiarize yourself with their locations of the first aid box and AED in your area in the event of a medical emergency.

If the medical emergency requires immediate medical attention or is life threatening, call 911 using a district phone. Give the following information:

- Your name
 - Telephone number
 - Location of the problem (using building address, floor and room number, if possible)
 - Description of the situation
- NOTE:** Do not hang up until the dispatcher advises you to disconnect
- Repeat your location

Do not attempt to move a person unless they are in immediate danger (i.e., fire, building collapse, etc.)

Office personnel will respond with first aid equipment and will render basic first aid as necessary, and summon additional assistance as required (paramedics, etc.).

Avoid unnecessary conversation with, or about, the ill or injured person. You might add to the person's distress or fears, increasing the risk of medical shock. Limit your communication to quiet reassurances.

If the medical emergency is not life threatening, immediately contact the main office.

Seasonal Flu and Pandemic Influenza

Influenza or flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by particular strains of viruses. Seasonal flu occurs every year, typically in the fall and winter. Pandemic flu is different. It is a global outbreak of the influenza disease that occurs when a new influenza virus appears in the human population. Because people have little or no immunity to the new strain, serious illness can occur, and the virus can spread easily and rapidly from person to person without a vaccine immediately available.

In the event of a pandemic outbreak in the United States, the district will work closely with the state medical community to determine the best course of action to reduce the risk of infection.

Prevention recommendations:

- Get a flu shot when they are available
- Keep immune systems strong with regular exercise, nutritious foods, sufficient sleep and plenty of fluids
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water and avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs, and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth
- Avoid sharing eating utensils, water bottles, or towels without first washing these items with soap and hot water.
- Clean surfaces soiled with bodily fluids with a household disinfectant. (Use glove while cleaning)
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw tissue in trash after use. If tissue is not available, direct the cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow, not into your hand
- Stay home from work, classes or errands when sick with a fever or actively coughing
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

Severe Weather

- What:** Severe weather is any weather condition (e.g., high winds, snow) that may cause injury to students and staff or damage to structures. Different types of weather call for different types of action.
- Why:** To protect human life, ensure safety and protect property.
- Who:** The Site Administrator or designee must take action to respond to severe weather conditions (i.e., Lockdown/Shelter-in-Place).
- How:** For Extreme Weather Watch:

Response:

- Keep the Weather Radio on in the school office
- Continue monitoring
- The Site Administrator should listen to alerts from the city/county and take any necessary action
- Make an announcement to move all students and staff to their classrooms
- Use a megaphone to direct parents, bus personnel and visitors to come inside the building from the school grounds
- Direct teachers to take attendance and report missing children
- Do NOT activate the fire alarm
- Make announcements to keep teachers and staff informed of current status
- Decide whether to have students Lockdown/Shelter-in-Place
- Close all exterior doors
- Close all interior doors
- Move children and staff from rooms on the perimeter, glass-walled rooms or rooms with skylights to designated safe areas within the school (e.g., hallways, basement).
- Get emergency supplies

Weather Radio:

The Weather Radio is to be located in the school office and turned on at all times.

All school sites should have a NOAA weather radio.

After the Storm Passes

- Check all reports from staff for injuries and damage to the building
- If the building is damaged, direct building maintenance staff to turn off all gas and electric at main disconnects if doing so is safe
- Evacuate the building if the building is damaged and unsafe
- Do not allow students or staff to walk through water because of the danger of live electrical wires
- Call the District Office with school conditions and safety updates
- Call 911 if appropriate
- Make an “all clear” announcement after danger has passed

For High Winds

- The Site Administrator should direct students to move inside the building
- Direct students to stay away from windows

For Hail

- The Site Administrator should direct students to move inside the building
- Direct students to stay away from windows

For Snow

- The Site Administrator should consult with the Superintendent regarding possible school closing

For Flood and Water Damage

Serious water damage can occur from many sources: burst pipes, fire sprinkler activation, clogged drains, broken skylights and windows, construction projects, major rainstorms, water main breaks, or loss of power.

If a water leak occurs:

- Call the main office; they will call Maintenance and give the following information:
 - Your name
 - Telephone number
 - Location of the leak (building, floor, number, etc.)
 - Severity of the leak
 - Indicate whether any people or equipment are involved or are in imminent danger
- If you know the source of the water and are confident of your ability to stop it (unclog drain, turn off water), do so cautiously
- If there are electrical appliances or outlets near the leak, avoid contact
- If there is any possible of danger, evacuate the area
 - If you can do so safely:
 - Secure vital equipment, records, and hazardous materials by moving them to higher, safer ground
 - Shut off all non-essential equipment
 - Locate those persons with special needs, and provide assistance if possible. Otherwise, provide their location to emergency responders.

Severe Weather Expanded Guidelines

Inside Safe Assembly Locations are General

- Internal hallways
- Internal classrooms without glass walls
- A basement if quickly accessible and internally safe
- An internal stairwell if glass is not present

Inside Safe Assembly Locations Should Not Be

- Classrooms or rooms with high profile ceilings, such as gyms and auditoriums
- Classrooms with an outside wall and/or windows
- Adjacent to an entrance or exit doors with glass inserts
- Adjacent to atriums, skylights, glass walled classrooms

Teacher Guidelines When Directed to Shelter-in-Place

- Take an attendance sheet with you
- Make sure the classroom door is closed after the last person has left the room
- Check to make sure all students are out of bathrooms
- Instruct the students to line up and sit down against the inside wall of the hallway
- Teachers will keep students calm

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Power Outage

Power outages can be caused by a variety of circumstances. Stay in place until told to move.

Be prepared:

- Keep a flashlight with spare batteries immediately accessible
- Know how to locate the closest exit

If a power outage occurs:

- Remain calm
- Assess the extent of the outage in your area
- Report the outage to the main office
- Help persons in darkened work areas move to safety
- Unplug personal computers and non-essential equipment, turn off light switches
- Open windows for additional light and ventilation
- Do not light candles or other types of flames for lighting

Emergency Generators:

Some buildings in campus are equipped with emergency generators that activate automatically in the event of an outage. If your building has a generator:

- Become familiar with the location of electrical outlets provided with emergency power
- Ensure that critical equipment is plugged in to emergency outlets
- Do not use emergency power outlets for non-critical equipment if it can be avoided

Additional information for labs:

- Keep lab refrigerators/freezers closed during the outage
- Secure all vital equipment, records, experiments, and hazardous materials if safe to do so
- Store all chemical in their original or marked containers and fully open all fume hoods. If this is not possible, or natural ventilation is not adequate, evacuate the area until power is restored.

Cancellation/Closure of School

During School Hours

Schools are closed or classes cancelled when it is *unsafe* for students and staff to be there due to road closures, power outages, severe weather, earthquakes, etc. Schools may also be closed if the campus is needed for public sheltering or wide-scale public health measures.

Cancellation/Closure Procedures

- Notify District Office
- Notify staff and students
- Check for injuries and make sure everyone is accounted for
- Activate Parent Telephone Alert System (parent phone tree, (if one is in place)
- Prepare for Student Release

Involved in School Cancellation/Closure

- Management/Command
- Operations: Student Release

School may be cancelled/closed *during* school hours if there is:

- Civil unrest
- Dam failure
- Explosion
- Flood
- Hazardous materials incident
- Landslide
- Major earthquake
- National Security emergency
- Pandemic influenza
- Radiological incident
- Terrorism
- Transportation accident
- Tsunami
- Wildland/urban interface fire
- Winter storm

Announce over the PA system:

“Your attention please. Your attention please. We will be initiating school closure and student release procedures. Teachers and students should remain in their classrooms until notified that student release teams are in place.”

Or, send runners to each classroom with above information. Be sure all classrooms, libraries, cafeterias, gymnasiums, and all other on-campus programs and offices are also notified.

Post signs in school office and main entry points:

“School Closed. For more information, call _____ or tune your radio to _____”

Cancellation/Closure of School *BEFORE* the school day

If conditions warrant the cancellation of school prior to the beginning of the school day, the superintendent normally requests the following protocol be utilized. The utilization of this procedure will ensure that all authorized school closure announcements are properly communicated to media representatives.

Cancellation Procedures

- District Office will start phone tree
- Automated phone call to all staff and parents

School may be cancelled/closed *BEFORE* the school day begins, if there is:

- Civil unrest
- Dam failure
- Explosion
- Flood
- Hazardous materials incident
- Landslide
- Major earthquake
- National Security emergency
- Pandemic influenza
- Radiological incident
- Terrorism
- Transportation
- Tsunami
- Wildland/urban interface fire
- Winter storm

Searches

Appropriate searches must be performed when a student makes a threat. Keep in mind that the student has expressed an intention to harm property or person. A search is an essential step to ensure that the student does not have access to a means to follow through with their threat

What:

- A search refers to the careful and thorough examination/inspection of school property, personal property, or an individual and their personal effects. A search is justified when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will turn up evidence of a violation of the law or school rules.

A search is reasonable when (1) the action was justified at its inception; and (2) the search was conducted was reasonably related in scope to the circumstances justifying the search.

Why:

- School officials may take necessary action to provide a safe and effective learning environment for students and staff. It may be necessary for school personnel to search the person and or the personal property of a student and to seize any property deemed injurious or detrimental to the safety and welfare of students and staff.

Who:

- The Site Administrator and/or designees (e.g., Assistant Principals, Student Advisors, Security Staff, etc.) should conduct an appropriate search.

How:

- The Site Administrator should determine if there is reasonable suspicion that a search will turn up evidence that the student has violated school policy or the law
- Justify the search at inception (i.e., the beginning based on observations, information received from students or staff, a student's behavior or writings, odors, or physical characteristics such as bloodshot eyes or slurred speech)
- Document reasonable suspicion
- All school district property, including any room closet locker, desk, computer equipment, book, and electronically recorded information, is subject to search at any time
- Upon request, any student shall make his or her motor vehicle available for search if it is on school grounds
- Backpacks, purses, briefcases, lunchboxes or other similar containers brought onto school property are subject to search at any time
- A search of a student should be conducted in a private and secure location such as the main office
- Direct that two staff should be present during a search from the inception of the search until evidence is properly secured
- Direct that a search of a student should be conducted and witnessed by two members of the same sex if possible
- Conduct the search outside of the presence of other students; never search a student in front of another student

NOTE: Conduct a search where contraband or evidence may be reasonably found.

Searches Expanded Guidelines

Best Practice Procedures for Conducting Student Searches

- Designate an individual to be responsible for seized contraband
- Always require an adult witness to be present during the entire search
- Search in ways that cause the least amount of embarrassment to the student
- Escort the student directly from class to the place where the search is to be conducted
- No “Strip Searches”

Factors to Consider in Determining Whether a Search is “Reasonable”

- Your level of suspicion
- The reliability and probative value of information that is to justify the search
- The nature of the infraction
- The prevalence and seriousness of the problem
- The age, history and school record of the student
- The exigency requiring the search to be conducted without delay
- Your prior experiences with the student

Important Details

Delegation of search to police:

In cases of potential danger (e.g., an allegation that a student is in possession of a firearm), a school official may request that a Police officer be present at a search conducted by a school official. In cases of potential danger, a school official may also elect to delegate a search to a Police officer. Document the circumstances that justify the search at inception. Also document that a school official is delegating the search to a Police officer based on serious danger concerns.

Possible Basis for Reasonable Suspicion

- Possession of cigarette rolling papers
- Presence in a school restroom without a pass coupled with nervous behavior, where restrooms are frequently scenes of drug activity
- Previous misbehavior and unusually heavy use of a public restroom
- Furtive gestures (i.e., stealth, surreptitious, or shifty gestures)
- Drug paraphernalia observed through a car window
- Observation of a request to sell drugs
- A record of concealed weapons plus suspicious behavior
- Observation of smoking and the odor of marijuana
- Bulging pockets plus possession of a large sum of money
- An objectionable odor suggestive of contraband
- An anonymous tip with corroborative evidence
- Information from a reliable student or third-party informant
- A Police tip
- Secretive movements and flight from instructors

Search of a Locker

- Lockers should not be shared by students, since this confuses ownership issues
- The student should be present when a locker is searched but not allowed near the locker
- Witnesses should arrange themselves so they can see both the locker search and the student’s face

- Start from the top of the locker, working down
- Do not replace item in the locker until it is empty

Search of a Student

- Student searches should be conducted in a private area where there will not be interruptions
- Have student remove all outer clothing such as a coat, sweater, hat and shoes
- Have student remove all objects from pockets; lay these aside until student is searched
- Conduct the search of the student's person working from top to bottom on each side
- Check middle of back, inside forearms and thighs
- Instead of patting material, crush the cloth in articles of clothing; flat objects may be easily overlooked by just a pat
- Don't stop if contraband is found; continue until all objects have been investigated
- Turn attention to items that had been set aside; items that could conceal contraband should be taken apart or, in the case of books, thumbed through
- Remember that the scope of the search must be reasonably related to the circumstances which justified the search

Vehicle Searches

- The vehicle must be on school property
- Student should be present at time of search
- Any illegal object in plain sight can justify the search
- The automobile should not be damaged by the search
- Conduct a thorough search of the vehicle

Communicating with the Media

- What:** It is essential that information be managed responsibly in a crisis. The inappropriate release of inaccurate or confidential information may seriously compromise an effective emergency response. The Site Administrator should coordinate messages and the release of information with the District Office or refer inquires directly to that office.
- Why:** Parents/guardians and community members will receive reliable and useful information about an unfolding situation. The release of information will be coordinated among schools and departments.
- Who:** All staff should coordinate the release of information with the designated PIO officer

The Site Administrator Should:

- Notify the District Office of the emergency. The District Office will identify its own PIO officer if the scope is larger than the school-site
- Coordinate with the PIO Officer the release of all information regarding a crisis (including the release of information about students)

The PIO officer will

- Field all media inquiries and requests for interviews
- Coordinate with responding agencies to determine appropriate release of information
- Develop key messages
- Provide timely and accurate official statements, news releases, fact sheets, website notices and letters to families and employees as events unfold
- Schedule media briefings or news conferences to provide updates and address rumors
- Serve as official spokesperson and identify other spokespeople (if appropriate)
- Provide guidance and training for additional spokespeople (if appropriate) and provide general guidelines to district staff for working with the media
- Establish a single area or onsite “camp” for media and regulate access to district property
- Manage media coverage (if appropriate) and arrange coverage (if appropriate) of memorial services and special events

Coordinating the Release of information:

The District Crisis Recovery Team and the PIO Officer will coordinate the release of information regarding an emergency or crisis. The District Crisis Recovery Team maintains a variety of materials that may be provided to parents regarding the impact of traumatic events on students and recovery.

Employee Personal Preparedness

There are some simple steps you can take as an individual to help meet any emergency, whether a natural disaster or civil disturbance.

- Be sure that the district/building has your correct current address, phone number, and emergency notification information. If you expect to stay somewhere other than your home in an emergency, be sure your supervisor knows how to reach you.
- Develop a personal emergency plane with your family. Be sure to include pets.
- Establish an out of state contact. If families become separated, everyone has one point of contact. Often out-of-state phone lines continue to function.
- If you have children, talk with your schools or day-care providers about emergency procedures.
- Make sure you have adequate supplies at home and in your car for emergencies.
 - Keep your car's gas tank at least half full at all times.
 - Be sure you have plenty of gas to get to your destination, even with major traffic delays.
 - Have enough cash on hand for several days.
 - Keep adequate prescriptions on hand.
 - Keep an emergency kit at home with 72 hours supply of food (canned goods, granola bars, etc.) and emergency water (Minimum 1 gallon per person/per day).
 - Remember pet food, if applicable.
 - Regularly check the batteries (extra batteries) in your portable radios, smoke detectors and flashlights.
 - Be sure the fire extinguisher in your home and car are in working order.
 - Keep a change of clothes in your car and at work.
 - Regularly conduct drills to practice your plan.
- Know how to shut off utilities (gas, water, electricity) if necessary.
- Inventory your possessions using a video or still camera and store in a safe location.
- Collect important documents (insurance policies, home title, wills) and store them in a safe or safety deposit box.
- Have identification and important phone numbers accessible.
- Program emergency contact numbers in your cell phone using ICE, ICE1, ICE2, ICE3 (in case of an emergency).
- If you normally use public transportation, consider making arrangements to ride with someone else as a contingency plan.
- If a decision is made to close the district, go directly to your planned destination. Do not make side trips. Notify a relative or friend that you arrived safely.
- If you are in doubt about whether to report to work, watch the local TV channels, listen to the radio and/or you will get an automated call from the district.

There are several on-line resources for building your personal emergency kit for disasters.

www.ready.gov/build-a-kit