Comprehensive School Safety Guide

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Overview

School emergency planning is a necessary but often unfamiliar task for many school administrators. Statute requires all Minnesota schools adopt a crisis management policy and develop individualized plans addressing potential violent crisis situations, emergencies and natural disasters. The *Comprehensive School Safety Guide* is designed to help simplify school emergency planning and guide school administrators and district emergency planning teams through the emergency planning process.

The updated and revised *Comprehensive School Safety Guide* is the fourth edition of Minnesota's guidance for school emergency planning. The first *Model Crisis Management Policy* and school emergency procedures document was issued jointly by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and the Minnesota Department of Education in 1999. Emergency procedures were revised in 2005 and the first *Comprehensive School Safety Guide* was published in 2008. The 2011 edition includes new guidance on emergency planning for students with disabilities, safe school assessments and recovery planning. Guidance on drills and exercises, school emergency response teams and student reunification has also been updated.

Using the *Comprehensive School Safety Guide*

School emergency planning requires a cooperative effort. The *Comprehensive School Safety Guide* is intended for district emergency planning teams and community emergency response partners responsible for formulating or revising school emergency plans. Procedures in the *Comprehensive School Safety Guide* are general guidelines based on local, state and national best practices. Districts are encouraged to review these procedures in coordination with district policies and crisis plans. Procedures should be customized to fit specific school building sites and coincide with local emergency response procedures.

Four phases of emergency planning

The *Comprehensive School Safety Guide* has been reorganized into four main sections: Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness/Planning, Response and Recovery. These sections mirror the four phases of emergency planning. Universal and Emergency Response Procedures are now located in the Response section.

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Table of Contents

Overview 2
Using the Comprehensive School Safety Guide 2
Four Phases of Emergency Planning 2
School Safety Planning and Response 5
Introduction to Emergency Planning 6
School Emergency Planning: Authorities and Responsibilities 6
A Framework for Emergency Planning: 10
Four Phases of Emergency Management 10
Prevention/Mitigation 10
Preparedness 11
Response 11
Recovery 11
Prevention/Mitigation 17
Prevention/Mitigation 18
Safe School Assessments 19
Threat Assessment 22
Threat Assessment: Inquiry Worksheet 31
Threat Assessment: Analysis Worksheet 35
Evaluation of Gathered Information 11 Key Questions 38
Preparedness/Planning 14
National Incident Management System 41
School Emergency Response Teams 44
Emergency Plan Checklist 52
Planning Questionnaire for Schools 54
Drills 55
Exercises 56
Sample Drill Schedule and Log 58
Sample After Action Report Form 60
Emergency Planning for Students and Staff with Disabilities and Other Special Needs 61
Response 65
Universal Procedures 67
Evacuation/Relocation 67
Lockdown 70
Reverse Evacuation 72
Severe Weather Shelter Area 73
Shelter–In–Place 74
Student Reunification/Release 75
Planning for Student Reunification 76
Sample School-Parent/Guardian Letter 79
Emergency Response Procedures 81
Assault 81
Bomb Threat 82
Demonstration 84
Fight/Disturbance 85
Fire 86
Hazardous Materials 87
Hostage 89
Intruder 90
Media Procedures 92

Medical Emergency 95
Severe Weather 97
Sexual Assault 100
Shooting 102
Suicidal Threat or Attempt 103
Suspicious Package or Mail 104
Terrorism 106
Threat 108
Threat Incident Report Form 110
Weapons 112
Behavioral Health and Recovery Procedures 114
Recovery 115
Four Key Recovery Components 116
Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention 121
Indicators or Symptoms of Distress in Children 122
Minnesota Laws on School Safety 123
Appendix 134
Self Assessment Checklist 135

School Safety Planning and Response

Introduction to Emergency Planning

Providing a safe, thriving environment for students to learn and staff to work is the foremost goal of any school setting. Creating a safe environment that facilitates learning can be a challenging task. School administrators and emergency managers must work together to create healthy school climates, effective intervention and crisis plans that prepare staff and students for emergencies.

Putting school safety in context

Minnesota has had its share of school emergencies. In recent years, natural disasters such as floods, fires and tornadoes have impacted daily school operations. Minnesota schools have also been affected by rare, but tragic acts of violence including; school shootings, assaults and suicides. These events have reinforced the need for Minnesota schools to prepare for potential crises and facilitate safe and healthy learning environments for all students and staff.

School emergency planning directs staff and student preparation and response. Knowing how to respond during a crisis helps everyone remain calm, understand their role, and act as safely and efficiently as possible. Emergency planning must include all risks, crises, and emergencies schools may encounter.

Developing and maintaining a safe school environment is the responsibility of the entire school community, including families. Families trust schools to keep their children safe during the day and expect school staff to be properly equipped to handle emergencies. Working with teachers, principals and staff, parents/guardians can provide resources and assistance to support school emergency preparedness. Successful preparations and response lead to a more resilient recovery and restoration of the school's learning environment.

Purpose

Careful planning, practice, and effective response, saves lives, prevents injuries and minimizes property damage. Exercising, reviewing and revising both school and district emergency plans is crucial to keeping plans current and aligned with best practices. The goal of the *Comprehensive School Safety Guide* is to assist schools in the planning process and provide practical guidance and examples of proven best practice. The *Comprehensive School Safety Guide* provides a variety of examples, tools, procedures, resources, and guidance that serves as a model for emergency planning. Each school and district is encouraged to tailor the examples to meet their specific local needs.

School emergency planning: Authorities and responsibilities

The local district has the authority and responsibility to:

- Develop a plan for school emergencies and crises
- Obtain legal advice on recommended policies and procedures
- Execute agreements with local governments regarding the use of district equipment and personnel during a disaster
- Coordinate with other agencies in developing general standards for local school system emergency plans
- Establish a district school emergency/crisis plan review committee to approve and coordinate all school disaster plans. The review committee should include:

    - The local emergency manager
    - A school system emergency coordinator
    - Individual school and building representatives
    - Parents, students, teachers, and association representatives
- Require all students participate in emergency preparedness training, drills and exercises
- Review school construction, renovation projects and general operations for safety

Superintendent and other administrative staff should:

- Recommend school safety, violence prevention (including bullying/cyber bullying programs) and emergency preparedness programs to the local school board
- Assign selected faculty members to be a part of the District Response Team
- Appoint an emergency coordinator to assist with planning, monitoring and implementation of the plan
- Consult with local emergency managers to analyze system needs for school safety and emergency preparedness, planning, training and coordination of school and community plans
- Develop competency and coordinate in-service exercises, drills, and trainings for all school personnel
- Implement change in school emergency plans based on evaluation of local policies, needs and experiences
- Initiate, administer, participate and evaluate school safety and emergency preparedness programs to ensure coordinated response for all district schools and other buildings/programs including Community Education or Early Childhood
- Be informed of neighboring school system emergency management polices and make mutual aid agreements
- Identify suitable school facilities for use as community emergency facilities and coordinate related activities with local emergency managers
- Arrange notification systems for staff and families

Principals should:

- Appoint designee or act as the school emergency coordinator
- Assign selected staff to be a part of the Building Response Team
- Ensure the building emergency plan coordinates with the district's mission/vision
- Assign school emergency responsibilities to staff as required
- Monitor staff participation in training and competencies
- Encourage incorporation of school safety, violence prevention, and emergency preparedness into curriculum
- Conduct drills and initiate needed plan revisions based on drill evaluations
- Arrange for procurement, storage and maintenance of emergency supplies and equipment
- Keep parents informed of the emergency notification system
- Supervise periodic safety checks of school facilities and transportation vehicles
- Provide copies of the school emergency plan to the district superintendent and local emergency manager
- Keep the district superintendent informed of actions taken and resources needed

Teaching staff should:

- Participate in developing the school emergency plan
- Participate in the execution of school emergency plan exercises, drills and trainings
- Provide instruction and practice in universal emergency response procedures
- Help students develop confidence in their ability to care for themselves and help others
- Provide leadership and activities for students during a period of enforced emergency confinement
- Be familiar with the psychological needs of children in the stress of an emergency situation

Nursing staff should:

- Participate in the development and implementation of the school emergency plan and training
- Render first aid, treat injuries and prepare victims for transport to hospitals
- Supervise and train first aid teams and medical emergency response teams
- Advise students and teachers of emergency health and sanitation measures
- Inform the principal of needed emergency supplies and equipment
- Coordinate school health services with community health services
- Advise on necessary accommodations for persons with special needs during all types of emergencies

Physical plant staff should:

- Inspect facilities for structural safety and report areas of concern
- Identify shutoff valves and switches for gas, oil, water, electric, etc., and post charts for reference in an emergency
- Provide emergency protocol for ventilation systems (HVAC)
- Post location of all protective equipment
- Maintain an inventory of tools and equipment needed for emergency response
- Advise the building response teams of hazardous and shelter areas of school facilities, available emergency equipment and alternate power sources

Transportation staff should:

- Instruct children and practice emergency bus evacuation procedures
- Be prepared to render aid in an emergency
- Inform school and district administration of changing route conditions, road construction projects, etc. which may be potentially hazardous or alter emergency transportation plans
- Follow district policies to ensure students' safe arrival at home (e.g. unscheduled releases)
- Keep emergency equipment, procedures and telephone numbers in the bus
- Be aware of emergency shelter facilities along transportation routes and within the local community
- Service vehicles regularly and be ready to transport evacuees in an emergency

Food service staff should:

- Maintain adequate supplies of food and water for emergency use
- Contract or prepare with a local supplier for times of extended emergencies that may require large amounts of needed water and nutrients
- Rotate supplies to ensure freshness
- Plan for mass feeding under emergency conditions
- Practice kitchen health and safety laws, rules and regulations at all times

Media center staff should:

- Collaborate with teachers and administrative staff to research, evaluate and make recommendations for the acquisition of teaching aids and literature relevant to school safety, violence prevention and emergency preparedness programs

Parents should:

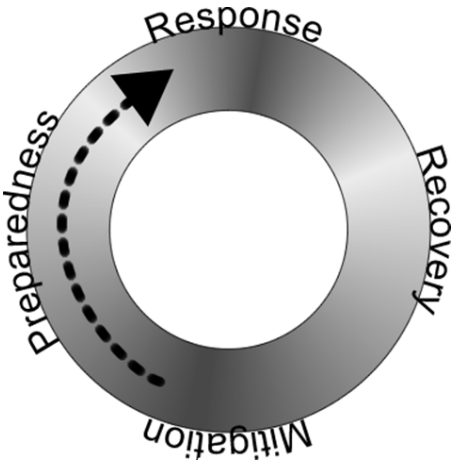
- Encourage and support school safety, violence prevention and emergency preparedness programs within the schools
- Provide volunteer services for school emergency preparedness
- Provide the school with requested information concerning emergency situations, early and late dismissals, and other related release information
- Practice emergency preparedness in the home to reinforce school training and ensure family safety

Students should:

- Cooperate during emergency drills and exercises
- Be responsible for themselves and others in an emergency
- Understand the importance of reporting situations of concern
- Develop an awareness of natural and technological hazards
- Take an active part in school emergency response, as age appropriate

A Framework for Emergency Planning:

Prevention/Mitigation, **P**reparedness, **R**esponse, **R**ecovery



Four phases of emergency management

A comprehensive, all hazards school emergency plan is built on the four phases of emergency management; Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery. Successful school emergency plans are built on the four phases of emergency management and provide direction to the entire school community.

School emergency plans must document everything required to implement and maintain the plan. Plans should be put in writing, communicated to all staff and practiced regularly through drills and exercises. School staff should be trained, at least annually, in plan procedures. School emergency plans must be reviewed and revised on an on-going basis.

The United States Department of Education recommends that all school emergency plans:

- Be developed and strengthened based on the local needs and characteristics of the school district and its buildings
- Be developed and maintained in collaboration with community partners
- Provide for all hazards and reflect the four phases of emergency planning: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery
- Ensure the safety of the whole school community, including students, staff and visitors with disabilities and special needs
- Reflect the principles of the National Incident Management System

Prevention/Mitigation

Schools may not have control over all the hazards that may impact them or be able to prevent all emergencies. Schools can take action to minimize their impact and/or reduce the likelihood of such events. School safety and emergency management experts often use the terms prevention and mitigation differently. Experts encourage schools to examine all hazards to avoid or lessen their impact. This includes assessing and addressing facilities, security and the culture and climate of schools through policy and curricula.

Creating safe, healthy, orderly and supportive school environments is part of most schools' and school districts' daily operations. Many schools have curricula and programs aimed at preventing students from engaging in harmful behaviors, including social problem-solving or life skills programs, anti-bullying programs and school-wide discipline efforts. Many schools also have adopted threat assessment procedures in order to identify students, or in some cases staff, who may pose a threat to themselves or others.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has determined the goal of mitigation is to decrease the need for response as opposed to simply increasing response capability. Mitigating emergencies is also important from a legal standpoint. If a school or district does not take all necessary actions in good faith to develop a safe and secure school, it may be vulnerable to unlawful negligence.

Preparedness

School emergencies can potentially impact every member of a school community – students, staff and parents. Concerted prevention efforts will not prevent schools from encountering emergency situations. Effective planning will facilitate a rapid, well-coordinated and expedient response when an emergency does occur. Being well-prepared requires an investment of time and resources.

Preparedness is the process of developing a school emergency plan, deciding what actions will be taken in an emergency and determining who will respond in an emergency *before* the emergency actually occurs. It involves coordination between local school districts, individual schools and the community at large. A comprehensive planning process is localized and addresses all hazards.

School emergency plans should be reviewed and revised regularly. Schools and districts should also conduct drills and exercises to familiarize everyone with the plan. In emergency situations, people rely on instinct and training. If everyone is familiar with emergency plans and procedures, response is streamlined and more effective.

Response

Response is the process of implementing appropriate actions while the emergency situation is unfolding. In this phase schools and districts mobilize resources and implement emergency procedures necessary to handle the emergency.

Universal procedures are actions taken in response to any emergency, threat or hazard in a school. There are six universal procedures. These include; lockdown, shelter-in-place, reverse evacuation, severe weather shelter area, evacuation/relocation and reunification. Administrators must determine whether conditions are more dangerous outside or inside the school and choose a response procedure accordingly. Detailed procedures for specific situations or events are called Emergency Response Procedures. These procedures are found in the Response section of the *Comprehensive School Safety Guide.*

Recovery

The goal of recovery is to restore the learning environment and infrastructure of the school as quickly as possible. The plan for recovery needs to be developed during the preparedness phase, not

after an emergency or crisis situation. Recovery consists of four main components: emotional, academic, physical/structural and business/fiscal. In recovery planning all four components need to be addressed. The recovery process may be short-term or long-term depending on the circumstances of the event. Time and resources need to be allocated accordingly.

Emotional recovery is the process of assisting people with physical, psychological and/or emotional trauma associated with experiencing tragic events. Training may be provided to staff to assist with the emotional impact of an event. Returning to the “normal” school day facilitates the healing process for students and staff.

Documentation is crucial for both physical/structural and business/fiscal recovery. Response procedures require necessary documentation for insurance policies and state and federal laws.

Prevention/Mitigation

Prevention/Mitigation

Not all emergencies can be prevented, but actions can be taken to minimize the impact or lessen the likelihood of school-based disasters and emergencies. Safe school assessments are tools designed to assess and address safety needs within a school including; access control, security procedures, staff training and emergency plans. The self-assessment checklist is a tool developed for school safety teams to evaluate their own facilities.

Establishing policies and procedures for dealing with potential threats is an important part of school emergency planning. Many schools have curricula and programs aimed at preventing students from engaging in harmful behaviors, including social problem-solving or life skills programs, anti-bullying programs and school-wide discipline efforts. Following a threat assessment process helps schools identify students or staff who may pose a threat to themselves or others.

Safe School Assessments

Preparing for potential emergencies requires schools to identify and evaluate potential hazards and risks. Safe school assessments create opportunities to reduce or eliminate potential hazards and develop recommendations for improvement. Using data from a safe school assessment, schools can address areas of greatest risk or vulnerability in their emergency plans.

What is a safe school assessment?

Every day, from inclement weather to hazardous spills, schools across the country face a variety of potential crises. While Minnesota schools are particularly familiar with the many natural hazards posed by severe weather, our schools also face additional risks of school violence, infectious disease and terrorist attacks. As schools continue to plan and prepare for critical events, implementing a safe school assessment process is an important step to help schools understand their strengths, risks and areas of weakness.

The Minnesota School Safety Center has created the Self-Assessment Checklist for schools to use when conducting their own assessments. While not intended to be prescriptive, this self-assessment checklist is designed to assist schools with evaluating their facilities for strengths and areas of vulnerability. Not all assessment measures will apply to any one school. Items in the assessment that are not present in a particular school building can be eliminated for that building's assessment. A report with recommendations for improvement should be generated to guide corrective actions.

Benefits of a safe school assessment

- Ensures a welcoming, healthy physical environment
- Prevents potential risks for injury and/or liability
- Identifies hazards or obstructions that could impede an effective response to violence
- Brings school and community stakeholders and response agencies together to create an environment where students feel safe
- Builds an accountability system for all school stakeholders

The Self-Assessment Checklist

The Self-Assessment Checklist is an assessment designed for schools to conduct on their own buildings. The checklist includes items related to the school's emergency plan as well as physical items observed when walking through a facility. It should be completed by a team of school stakeholders made up of at least three individuals including a building administrator, facility engineer and a representative from local law enforcement and fire. Participants on the assessment team should have access to and be prepared to assess the following:

- Building access and visitor procedures
- Bus and parking procedures
- Playground, recreation areas, athletic fields
- General interior and exterior of the building

- Cafeteria
- Gymnasium
- Specialized areas for science, art, theater, technology, shop, and others
- Monitoring and surveillance system
- School emergency plan, policies and procedures
- School's internal and external communication procedures
- School staff training, drills, exercises and response teams

Steps in conducting a safe school self-assessment

Get investment and commitment

The self-assessment process begins with an initial meeting of school stakeholders to discuss existing safety concerns, emergency planning issues and areas for improvement. Participants should include representatives from the district, school and community response agencies to ensure diverse perspectives and expertise. Schools may also include administrators, buildings and grounds personnel, communications staff, school resource officers, local law enforcement, local fire department, student support staff, special education staff and others with an investment in the process.

Conduct the assessment

Review the school emergency plan

A team of at least three members should use the self-assessment checklist to discuss and evaluate the school's emergency plan, procedures, staff training, exercising, and other items that cannot be physically observed during a school walk-through. A copy of the school emergency plan should be available for this discussion. The team should also review the latest OSHA and fire inspection reports as OSHA and fire inspection requirements are not included in the self-assessment checklist.

Walk-through of the school building and grounds

After reviewing the emergency plan, team members should walk through the school facility and grounds. Using the checklist as a guide, examine all aspects of the school's interior and exterior. The time required to complete the evaluation depends on the size and purpose of the facility and the number of team members participating. Throughout the assessment process, written comments should be noted for later review. Take photographs and videos to highlight positive observations as well as potential hazards or areas for improvement. Thorough notes and visual documentation provide team members with the critical information necessary to generate a comprehensive and meaningful report.

Create a report and recommendations for improvement

Team members should compile the results of all areas assessed in the self-assessment checklist and create a report for school leadership. Formal reporting establishes a process of accountability that increases the likelihood of improvement and/or corrective action. If findings are not reported, then subsequent emergency plans and preparedness activities will not reflect or effect change.

The report should include documentation on successful prevention efforts and resources the school has already implemented along with the potential risks and areas of weakness identified during the assessment. The team may also make recommendations for improvements based on the assessment. Administrators can then prioritize solutions and proceed with a plan for addressing the most pressing school safety concerns raised through the assessment process.

Keys elements for a successful safe school assessment

- Develop a diverse safe school assessment team representative of a variety of disciplines and perspectives
- Consider all potential hazards that might affect the school, its grounds and its surrounding community, including those areas in which students travel to and from school
- Understand and inventory vulnerabilities and existing resources and capabilities to prevent or mitigate potential impacts
- Survey the school population and surrounding community about potential hazards. Consider reviewing the community's crime incidence and school disciplinary data
- Report assessment findings and update emergency plans. Identify areas or departments for follow-up, estimate cost factors and establish target dates for completion

Final considerations

Implementing and conducting a safe school assessment does not guarantee safety-related incidences or acts of violence will not occur. Rather, assessments need to be viewed as a comprehensive overview of the facility and its operations with recommendations for improvements. The ideal time for completing a safe school assessment is prior to an incident, not in response to an incident. Additionally, analysis of the school climate is also important to consider when assessing all potential risks to school safety.

The complete self-assessment checklist is located in Appendix of the *Comprehensive School Safety Guide*.

Threat Assessment

Adapted from the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education School Safety Initiative.

The primary purpose of a threat assessment is to prevent targeted violence. Targeted violence is defined as any incident of violence where a known or knowable attacker selects a particular target prior to their attack. Through the implementation of a threat assessment process, schools have an opportunity to build capacity for violence-reduction strategies that create healthy cultures of safety, respect, and emotional support for students and staff.

When gathering information about a student of concern during a threat assessment inquiry, it is essential that school district policies and procedures are in place to allow for the collection of valuable information while protecting the rights of all students involved. If policies do not exist, the development of policies is crucial.

In May 2002, the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education published the results of the *School Safety Initiative.* This study of 37 incidents of targeted school violence between December 1974 and May 2000 examined the thinking, planning and pre-attack behaviors of attackers. The ten key findings were:

- Incidents of targeted school violence are rarely sudden, impulsive acts
- Prior to most incidents, other people knew of the attacker's intent, idea or plan to attack
- Most attackers did not directly threaten their targets prior to the attack
- There is NO accurate or useful profile of students who engage in targeted school violence
- Most attackers engaged in some behavior prior to the incident that caused concern or indicated a need for help
- Most attackers were known to have difficulty coping with significant losses or personal failures
- Many had considered or attempted suicide
- Many attackers felt bullied, persecuted or injured by others prior to the attack
- Most attackers had access to and had used weapons prior to the attack
- In many cases, other students were involved in some capacity
- Despite prompt law enforcement responses, most acts of targeted violence were stopped by means other than law enforcement intervention

One of the main conclusions the *School Safety Initiative* study identified was those who committed targeted attacks of school violence did not threaten their targets directly. Instead, they engaged in behaviors before the attack, that if identified, would have indicated the inclination toward, or the potential for, targeted violence. By using a fact-based approach, or a threat assessment, it is possible to identify individuals or situations of concern.

Threat assessment process

A threat assessment process is a fact-based approach that relies on the assessment of behaviors, rather than stated threats or traits, as the basis for determining the level of concern. Designed by the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education, the threat assessment process provides a method for school administrators and law enforcement officials to investigate, evaluate and manage potential targeted violence.

The principles of a threat assessment process are:

- Targeted violence is the end result of a process of thinking and behavior
- Targeted violence stems from interaction among the individual, situation, setting and the target
- An investigative, skeptical, inquisitive mindset is critical
- Facts-based rather than based on characteristics or traits
- An "integrated systems approach" should guide the process
- The central question to be answered is: does the student of concern *pose* a threat, not whether the student has *made* a threat

Threat assessment processes are most effective as part of larger violence prevention strategies and when the policies and programs are authorized, developed and implemented by local officials using a multi-disciplinary approach. The components of an effective school threat assessment process include:

- Authority to conduct an assessment
- Capacity to conduct an assessment
- Systems relationships (e.g. law enforcement, mental health)

It is important to understand that not all threat assessments require extensive and elaborate gathering and analysis of data. Whether an assessment is limited in scope or not is determined by the facts of the situation and information developed about a student of concern. Many assessments are resolved after initial information gathering and evaluation.

Including law enforcement or other community agencies in threat assessments may aide the process of effective and appropriate interventions. The involvement of law enforcement should be determined on a case-by-case basis and by school district policies. A school threat assessment team should initiate the threat assessment process and determine the appropriate time for law enforcement involvement.

Identify students of concern

The first step in the threat assessment process is to identify students of concern. Remember, a student of concern is an individual who poses a threat rather than simply makes threatening statements. The evaluation of an individual who poses a threat includes the individual's capacity and capability to actually commit an act of violence. Not every person who makes a threat will act upon it, nor will every person who commits an act of violence necessarily provide warnings in the form of

threatening remarks. All staff, students and parents need to be aware of the process to report a student of concern. These policies and procedures must be clear and accessible to all stakeholders.

A student may rise to the level of concern by engaging in communications such as submitting an essay about bringing a bomb to school, emailing statements about killing people, directly threatening another student or adult, or posting a web page with information regarding weapons or explosives. Someone may also hear a student talking about bringing a weapon to school; a student may report that he or she has been threatened; someone learns that a student is experimenting with bomb-making materials; or someone may hear a student talking about revenge or "getting even." Additionally, district personnel may receive an anonymous tip reporting a threat or concerns about a student's behavior.

The list above provides some examples of how to identify students of concern but the list is not exhaustive. If there is cause for concern, it is important the concern is addressed.

Conducting a threat assessment

Once a student of concern has been brought to the attention of the threat assessment team, the information gathering and analysis components of the threat assessment process begin. All information gathered should be examined for evidence of behavior or conditions that suggest a student is planning or preparing for an attack.

The analysis should answer the following questions:

- Is the behavior of the student consistent with the movement toward an attack?
- Do the student's current situations and setting incline him/her toward or away from targeted violence?

During the threat assessment, research and interviews should be guided by the following key questions from the *Safe Schools Initiative*:

- What are the students' motives and goals?
- Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?
- Has the subject shown inappropriate interest in school attacks or attackers; weapons (including recent acquisition of weapons); or incidents involving mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers)?
- Has the student engaged in attack related behaviors?
- Does the student have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?
- Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation and/or despair?
- Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?
- Does the student see violence as an acceptable, desirable, or the only way to solve problems?
- Is the student's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?
- Are other people concerned about the student's potential for violence?
- What are the circumstances that might affect the likelihood of an attack?

This information can be gathered through:

- School and student data
- Collateral school interviews
- Parent or guardian interviews
- Interview with the student of concern
- Potential target interviews

Documenting all details and actions is critical to the threat assessment process. Well-documented records indicate the student's thinking and action at a specific point in time. Information gathered at this time may help future investigations determine if the student's behaviors and thinking have changed. Also, should the situation rise to the level of prosecution, a well-documented threat assessment demonstrates the process was conducted in compliance with applicable laws, policies and procedures.

Concluding the threat assessment

Once all information gathering and analysis has been completed, the threat assessment team should have enough information to determine the credibility of the threat. If the threat assessment team concludes the threat is not credible, the student may still need additional assistance and support. The threat assessment team's priority should be making the appropriate referrals to prevent any future actions of violence.

When findings suggest a student has the interest, motive and ability to mount a school attack or has started down the path toward an attack, the role of the threat assessment team is to prevent the attack and protect potential targets by developing a management or monitoring plan for the student. Plan components and responsibility for its implementation will vary depending on the student and circumstances.

Tools for the threat assessment process

The U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education developed several resources to assist schools with conducting and implementing a threat assessment. They are useful for training school threat assessment teams.

The Final Report and Findings of the Safe Schools Initiative: Implications for Prevention of School Attacks in the United States

The U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education reviewed and examined 37 acts of targeted school violence between December 1974 and May 2000. The study attempted to answer the questions of, "Could we have known these attacks were being planned?" and "What could we have done to prevent the attacks from occurring?" The study provides ten key findings and their implications for schools and communities.

Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situation and Creating Safe School Climates

The U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education reviewed several acts of targeted school violence as part of the *Safe Schools Initiative.* Through this study, both agencies developed and recommended the use of a threat assessment protocol to prevent future acts of targeted violence. This guide provides an in-depth description of the threat assessment process.

A Safe School and Threat Assessment Experience: Scenarios Exploring the Finding of the Safe School Initiative
This CD provides interactive scenarios to practice conducting a threat assessment.

Prior Knowledge of Potential School-Based Violence: Information Students Learn May Prevent a Targeted Attack
In the first *Safe Schools Initiative* study one key finding was that other students knew of the potential for targeted school violence prior to the event. This pilot study interviewed by-standers and highlighted the critical nature of positive school climate in preventing school violence.

Worksheets

The following worksheets guide the threat assessment process.

Threat Assessment: Sources of Information Guidelines
This guideline assists with gathering additional information from a variety of sources including conducting interviews with staff, other students, and/or parents or legal guardians.

Threat Assessment: Inquiry Worksheet
This worksheet aids in the collection and documentation of information regarding the student or situation of concern.

Threat Assessment: Information Analysis Worksheet
This worksheet assists in the analysis of the threat assessment inquiry and the documentation of decisions made and actions taken.

Threat Assessment: Sources of Information

A school threat assessment inquiry should start with what is known about the student from school records, staff interviews and other information from school officials. Follow school policies and relevant laws regarding information sharing.

Questions that can be answered through school data include:

- Is the student of concern well known to any adult at school?
- Has the student of concern come to attention for any behavior of concern? If so, what?
- Has the student of concern experienced serious difficulties, stress or been in distress?
- Is there anyone with whom the student of concern confides (e.g. shares worries, frustrations, and/or sorrows)?
- Has the student of concern expressed suicidal thoughts?
- Has the student of concern been the victim and/or initiator of hostile, bullying or harassing behavior directed toward other students, teachers or staff?
- Does the student of concern have an interest in weapons? If so, has the student made efforts to acquire or use weapons? Does the student have access to weapons at home?

School records

A variety of information about a student of concern can be identified through school administrative records. These records contain information about the student's background, academic performance, disciplinary issues and any other areas of concern. This data provides a foundation for the threat assessment interview.

Staff and student interviews

Students, staff and other adults who know the student of concern should be interviewed as part of the threat assessment inquiry. They should be asked about communications or other behaviors that may indicate the student of concern's intent or ideas. Interviews should also be conducted with bystanders, witnesses and others present when the student engaged in behaviors of concern or made threatening statements.

Questions that should be answered through staff and student interviews include:

- What was said or written? To whom?
- What was done?
- When and where did this occur?
- Who else observed this behavior? Did the student of concern say why he or she acted in that manner?
- Have there been any changes recently in the student's attitudes and behaviors? Do any of these changes cause concern?

The focus of any staff or student interviews is factual. Individuals interviewed should not be asked to characterize the student or interpret the meaning of communications. These statements may not accurately reflect the student's intent and are unlikely to be useful to the threat assessment inquiry.

Parent or guardian interviews

The parent or guardian of the student of concern should be included in the interview process. The threat assessment team must realize parents or guardians may be protective of their child or embarrassed about the inquiry. The threat assessment team should communicate the objective of the threat assessment inquiry to the student's parent or guardian. The purpose is not only to prevent a targeted act of violence and minimize harm to the student or others, but also to provide assistance to their child.

The threat assessment team should seek assistance from the student's parent or guardian to understand the students' actions and interests. The interview should focus on the students' behaviors and communications, especially those related to attack-behaviors. Questions should explore the student's interest in weapons and access to weapons in the home. It may be useful to conduct a home visit to observe the student of concern's behavior at home.

Potential target interviews

Another source of information is the potential targets of the student of concern. Interviews with potential targets should be conducted with great sensitivity. Care must be taken during the interview not to unduly alarm the potential target while still gathering valuable information. If the threat assessment team believes the target is at risk of violence, assistance and support should be offered to the target.

When conducting interviews with potential targets, let them know the primary purpose of the interview is to gather information about a possible situation of concern. The target should be questioned about his or her relationship to the student of concern and recent interactions with that student. The interview should include questions about potential grievances or grudges that the student of concern may have against a target or others.

Student of concern interviews

A variety of legal concerns need to be considered when conducting either interviews or searches. Policies and procedures need to be in place as part of the threat assessment process to reflect legal issues that may arise during this process.

Key questions that should be addressed in any policy include:

- Should parents or guardians be notified of the interview?
- Should parents or guardians be present during the interview?
- Should information gathered during the interview be used for criminal proceedings?
- Should the student be allowed, offered or provided legal representation?

It also may be essential to the threat assessment process to search the student of concern, his or her property or the property of another student. Since there are a variety of legal considerations to student searches, policies and procedures related to such searches must be enforced by school personnel.

The threat assessment team must complete gathering relevant school data prior to conducting an interview with the student of concern. The team must review this data to prepare for the student interview. The purpose of this interview is to identify the student's thinking, motives and behavior. The tone of the interview must be professional, neutral and non-confrontational, not accusatory or judgmental. In general, the student should be asked directly about his or her intentions as adolescents typically respond frankly to direct questions.

The interview should provide the student of concern with opportunities to be heard and to tell his or her personal stories. The team should address the fact that school personnel have noticed his or her concerning behavior. During the interview, it should be clear that the team is concerned about his or her welfare. Gathering key information will result in a better understanding of the risk of violence and may lead to further inquiry.

While the student interview can provide beneficial information, the data gathered may be incomplete, misleading or inaccurate. Therefore, data must be corroborated through other sources to determine credibility.

Summary

Ensuring school district policies and procedures are in place that allow for collection of valuable information, while protecting the rights of all students involved is critical. If policies do not exist, developing these policies is essential.

Valuable information can be gathered from student records and interviews. Interviewing staff, students, parents or guardians, potential targets and the student of concern provides insight into the situation, motives, intentions and risk for potential violence. All interviews must focus on facts and

behaviors, not *interpretations* of the student of concern's behavior or comments. Throughout the process, data gathered should be corroborated through multiple sources.

Interview questions should be tailored to the interview subject. This will help gather the best information without unduly alarming or offending anyone. Appropriate accommodations may also need to be considered based on the interviewee's needs. The offer of assistance should be provided to anyone interviewed.

Threat Assessment: Inquiry Worksheet

A threat assessment inquiry is conducted by the school threat assessment team. Consult the *Threat Assessment Sources of Information Guidelines* for guidance on collecting the information needed to complete the Threat Assessment Inquiry. The following worksheet is adapted from the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education *School Safety Initiative.*

Provide the facts identifying a student, the situation or potential target(s)

Provide fact-based information. Alleged accounts of behavior may be inaccurate and may be subjective interpretations of events. All information should be corroborated by multiple sources if possible.

1.) What behaviors and/or communications were reported, and by whom?

2.) What was the situation?

3.) Who, if anyone, witnessed the reported behavior of concern?

4.) What was the context for the reported behavior?

Remember that individuals who report information about possible threatening situations may have multiple motives and accounts may be inaccurate or subject to interpretation of events.

Provide identifying information about the student of concern

Name_____ Date of birth_____

Address _____

Home phone _____Cell phone _____

Student ID _____ Social security number_____

Parent guardian _____

Parent or guardian phone numbers _____

Emergency contact info _____

Provide background information about the student of concern

1. Describe the current, known family or home situation.

2. Describe the student's academic performance.

3. Describe the student's social networks (friends).

4. Describe any history of relationships and conflicts.

5. Describe any history of harassing others or being harassed.

6. Describe any history of violence toward self or others.

7. Describe any history of having been a victim of violence or bullying.

8. Describe any known attitudes toward violence.

9. Describe any criminal behavior.

10. Describe any mental health or substance abuse history.

11. Describe any access to and use of weapons.

12. Describe any history of grievances or grudges.

Provide current life information about the student of concern

Note whether the student has any trusting relationship with adults who are emotionally available to the student of concern or whether he or she is known to be consistently respectful to any adult.

1. Describe the present stability of living and home situations.

2. Describe the nature and quality of current relationships and personal support.

3. Describe any recent losses or losses of status (shame, humiliation, recent breakup or loss of significant relationship).

4. Describe any current grievances or grudges.

5. Describe any perceptions of being treated unfairly.

6. Describe any known difficulty coping with a stressful event.

7. Describe any “downward” progression in social, academic, behavioral or psychological functioning.

8. Describe any recent hopelessness, desperation or despair including suicidal thoughts, gestures, actions or attempts.

9. Describe any pending crises or change in circumstances.

Provide information about attack-related behaviors

1. Describe any ideas or plans about injuring him/herself or attacking a school or persons at school.

2. Describe any communications or writings that suggest that the student has an unusual or worrisome interest in school attacks.

3. Describe any comments that express or imply the student is considering mounting an attack at school.

4. Describe any recent weapon-seeking behavior, especially if weapon-seeking is linked to ideas about attack or expressions about interest in attack.

5. Describe any communications or writings suggesting the student condones or is considering violence to redress a grievance or solve a problem.

6. Describe any rehearsals of attacks or ambushes.

Provide information about motives for an attack

All statements should be taken in context. Students make threats and engage in other risky behaviors for a variety of reasons. Many threatening statements do not reflect the student’s actual movement on a path to attack.

Has the student of concern displayed behaviors that show he or she is:

[Check all that apply]

- ☐ Seeking revenge for a perceived injury or grievance
- ☐ Yearning for attention, recognition or notoriety
- ☐ Has a wish to solve a problem otherwise seen as unbearable
- ☐ Has a desire to die or be killed

- ☐ Other (specify)

Provide a description of those behaviors:

Provide information about target selection

Information about a selected target(s) may provide insight regarding motives, planning and attack-related behaviors. Remember that a potential target may shift to another target over time.

Threat Assessment: Analysis Worksheet

(11 Key Questions)

The analysis of the information gathered during the Threat Assessment Inquiry should answer the following two questions:

- Is the behavior of the student consistent with the movement on a path towards an attack?
- Does the student's current situation or setting incline him or her toward or away from targeted violence?

1) What are the student's motives and goals?
   - What motivated the student to make the statements or take the actions that caused him/her to come to attention?
   - Does the situation or circumstance that led to these statements or actions still exist?
   - Does the student have a major grievance or grudge? Against whom?
   - What efforts have been made to resolve the problem and what has been the result?
   - Does the student feel that any part of the problem is resolved or see any alternatives?

2) Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?
   - What, if anything, has the student communicated to someone else (targets, friends, other students, teachers, family, others) or written in a diary, journal or Web site concerning his or her ideas or intentions?
   - Have friends been alerted or "warned away"?

3) Has the student shown inappropriate interest in school attacks, attackers, weapons or incidents of mass violence?

4) Has the student engaged in attack-related behaviors such as developing a plan, attempting to acquire weapons, researching potential sites for attack or rehearsing attacks?

5) Does the student have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?
   - How organized is the student's thinking and behavior?
   - Does the student have the means to access a weapon and/or carry out an attack?

6) Is the student experiencing hopelessness or desperation?

- Is there information to suggest that the student is experiencing desperation and/or despair?
- Has the student experienced a recent failure, loss or loss of status?
- Is the student known to have difficulty coping with a stressful event?
- Is the student now, or has the student ever been, suicidal or accident prone?
- Has the student engaged in behavior that suggests that he or she has considered suicide?

7) Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?
   - Does the student have at least one relationship with an adult where the student feels that he or she can confide in the adult and believes that the adult will listen without judging or jumping to conclusions? With whom?
   - Is the student emotionally connected to other students?
   - Has the student previously come to someone's attention or raised concern in a way that suggested he or she needs intervention or supportive services?

8) Does the student see violence as an acceptable, desirable or only 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?
   - Has the student been dared by others to engage in an act of violence?

9) Is the student's conversation and story consistent with his or her actions?
   For example, does information from collateral interviews and from the student's own behavior confirm or dispute what the student says is occurring?

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?
   - Are those who know the student concerned about a specific target?
   - Have those who know the student witnessed recent changes or escalations in mood and behavior?

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 the student will attempt to mount an attack at school?

- What is the response of other persons who know about the student's ideas or plan to mount an attack?
- Do those who know about the student's ideas actively discourage the student from acting violently, encourage the student to attack, deny the possibility of violence, passively collude with an attack, etc.?

Concluding a threat assessment inquiry

The threat assessment team should determine the response to a situation based on the analysis of the information gathered and the answers to the questions above.

If the threat assessment team concludes there is enough reliable information and the weight of the information leads to the conclusion that the student of concern does not pose a threat, the threat assessment team may close the inquiry. An inquiry can be re-opened at a later date if new information arises.

If the threat assessment team concludes that there is insufficient information to be reasonably certain that the student of concern does not pose a threat or the student of concern appears to be on a path to attack, the team should recommend the matter be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency for a threat assessment investigation.

Evaluation of Gathered Information
11 Key Questions

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

2. Have there been communications suggesting attack?

3. Inappropriate interest school attacks/weapons/mass violence?

4. Has the student engaged in attack related behaviors?

5. Does the student have the capacity to carry out the attack?

6. Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation, despair?

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

8. Does the student see violence as acceptable/desirable/only way to solve problems?

9. Is the student's story consistent with his/her actions?

10. Are other people concerned about his/her potential for violence?

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

Preparedness/Planning

Preparedness/Planning

Preparedness is the process of developing a school emergency plan, deciding what actions will be taken in an emergency and determining who will respond. It involves coordination between school districts, individual schools and the community at large.

Utilizing the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and establishing district and school emergency response teams help schools better prepare and plan for potential emergencies. Familiarizing all students and staff with emergency procedures through drills and exercises is an important part of emergency planning. In emergency situations people rely on instinct and training. If everyone is familiar with emergency plans and procedures, response is streamlined and more effective.

National Incident Management System
Incident Command System in Schools

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) was adopted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for use by all local, state and federal agencies when responding to emergencies. The Incident Command System (ICS) is the organizational structure within NIMS that is used by community response agencies for managing response to all emergencies. The system provides an integrated and coordinated management structure, common terminology and flexibility to add or decrease functions depending on the scope of the emergency.

ICS and School Emergency Response Teams

Incident command functions necessary for emergency response in the community are also necessary for emergencies within schools. School district and building response teams are structured according to incident command functions. The organization of the Incident Command System (ICS) is built around the following key management roles:

Command: Has overall responsibility for managing the incident or event and direct responsibility for public information, safety and liaison with community response agencies

Operations: Provides response to an incident by directing actions, developing objectives, organizing and directing resources

Logistics: Identifies and provides resources and services necessary to support incident response needs

Planning: Develops action plans, collects and evaluates information, identifies issues and makes recommendations for future actions

Finance: Manages financial aspects of an incident, monitors costs, provides for recordkeeping and coordinates with insurance

When building school emergency response teams, schools must identify people to perform each of the five major functions and have at least one backup for every position. Key personnel should be cross-trained in the critical requirements of all functions.

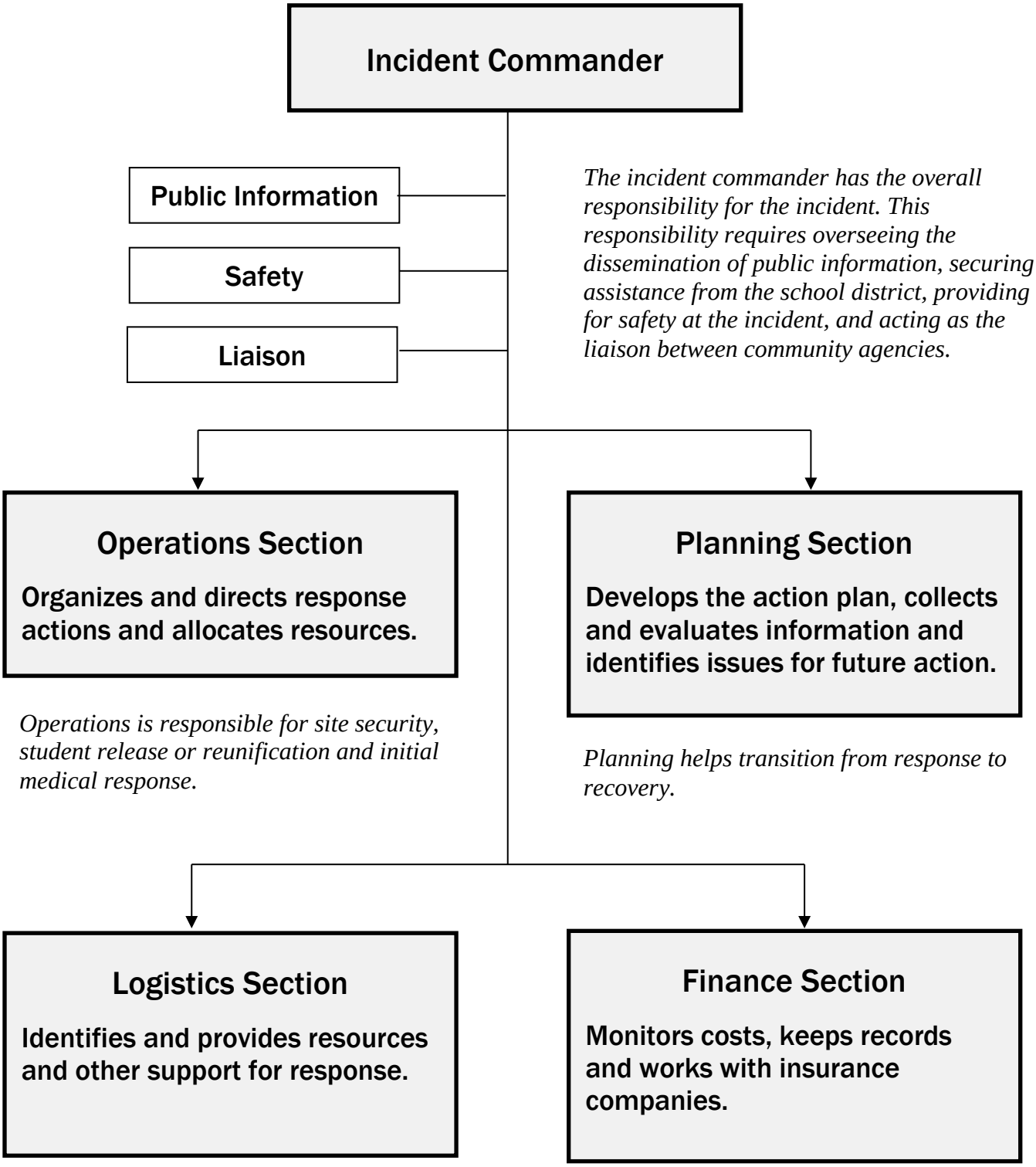
The Incident Command System can be expanded or contracted according to the management needs of each incident. Only those functions necessary to manage the incident or event need to be filled. Team members may be assigned to more than one function in the Incident Command System, but roles and responsibilities in these functions are not combined.

Incident Commander Pre-Incident Planning Guidelines

This checklist is intended to provide guidance to superintendents, principals and others designated to serve as Incident Commanders during a school emergency. The tasks in this checklist should be completed at the beginning of each school year. Additional checklist tasks may be added according to your school or district emergency response plan.

Task/Step	Action
☐	Acknowledge your position is ultimately responsible for site emergency preparedness.
☐	Become familiar with all aspects of the site emergency plan.
☐	Review emergency response procedures and nonstructural hazard mitigation with all staff. Ensure that all staff are familiar with required drills; lockdown, evacuation and severe weather shelter.
☐	Survey staff to identify skills and preference of emergency assignments.
☐	Select and train back-up individuals for all roles in emergency response.
☐	Identify the individual and their backup with primary responsibility for after-hours emergencies.
☐	Coordinate and train leaders of all groups using the site after hours.
☐	Review and revise all necessary plans, lists, and maps.
☐	Create a plan for training other individuals (e.g. substitute teachers, paraprofessionals) who may be in charge of the classroom.
☐	Schedule date(s) for skills training for your emergency response team.
☐	Submit an updated emergency plan to the district office.
☐	Include emergency preparedness information in the Student/Parent Handbook.
☐	Schedule drills and communication checks.
☐	Meet with volunteers to ensure understanding of the school/district emergency plan.

Incident Command Structure for Schools



School Emergency Response Teams

Teams of trained school personnel serve as first responders for school emergencies and assist administrators in developing and revising district and building level emergency plans. The district emergency plan provides the vision/mission, implementation strategies and training parameters for school emergency response teams. Building level plans provide specific procedures and protocols. Several teams may be established to manage various responsibilities and needs in an emergency.

District response team

The district response team develops the school emergency plan with local community response agencies. The district response team also assists building response teams with planning, training and drills to ensure compliance with state drill requirements and continuity of planning. The team may also perform incident command functions typically reserved for district-level response such as public information, finance or behavioral health crisis intervention.

District response team members include key school district administrators and staff. *Recommended administrators* on this team include; the superintendent or designee, secondary and elementary principals/assistant principals, health and safety director, building and grounds supervisor, emergency coordinator and transportation, food services, special education and communications directors. *Recommended additional staff* may include; the lead school nurse, school resource officer, social worker, school psychologist and teacher representatives.

Building response team

Each school facility should have an emergency response team consisting of staff trained to perform emergency response functions according to the school district emergency plan. Building level teams are responsible for developing and revising the building emergency plan and procedures, training staff, conducting required drills, documenting and evaluating drill performance and response to real incidents.

Building level response teams include staff members from various school operations trained to perform key incident command functions. Team members should include; building administrators, representatives from student support services, food service, technology, buildings and grounds, health services, teachers, special education, school resource officer and office support staff.

Medical response team

Buildings may also establish a medical response team to provide assistance in medical emergencies until emergency responders arrive. Medical response team members may include; the school nurse, counselor and/or psychologist, chemical health specialist, teachers or other staff trained to use First Aid, CPR and AED. Periodic training and annual certification is critical to the competency and capacity of this team's performance.

Recovery team

The recovery team is a district level team responsible for developing and implementing the district recovery plan. This team's mission is to reestablish the learning environment and restore the infrastructure of the school as soon as possible following a major emergency. The superintendent (or designee) is the team's leader with members chosen for their leadership and expertise in the four areas of recovery: physical/structural, business/fiscal, academic, and emotional.

The recovery team oversees all aspects of the recovery process in each of the four recovery areas. Team members will also provide ongoing communications, make mutual assistance agreements with community resources and apply for applicable grant funding.

School Response Team Functions

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) was adopted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and is intended for use by all local, state and federal agencies when responding to emergencies. The system provides for integrated and coordinated management for all types of disasters and emergencies. Most of the functions necessary for emergency response in the community are also necessary for emergencies within schools. Incident Management functions described here are within the context of a school setting.

Incident Commander

The Incident Commander activates the school emergency response plan, assesses threats, orders protective measures such as lockdown, evacuation or shelter-in-place, notifies district authorities, provides situation updates and requests resources.

Safety: Person responsible for safety and security of the site; will stop operations if there are unsafe conditions.

Public Information: Person may be designated as a site spokesperson; coordinates with the district and other agencies on joint news releases; coordinates media briefings as necessary.

Liaison: Staff contact person for outside agencies; may represent school/district at city EOC or emergency responders' on-scene command post.

Operations Chief

The Operations Chief directs all actions during an emergency including; lockdown, evacuation, site security, release of students to parents/guardians, first aid or medical care, clean up, control of utilities.

Medical: Staff trained to provide first aid or other medical care; coordinates with emergency medical services personnel; activates school's medical responders.

Logistics Chief

The Logistics Chief estimates logistical needs; provides personnel, facilities (relocation sites), services, and materials to support operations.

Communications: Person responsible for emergency communications systems and equipment; may act as lead or hub for internal communications response.

Transportation: Person responsible for arranging transportation for emergency relocations and early dismissal of school

Planning Chief

The Planning Chief assists the Incident Commander with assessing emergencies, establishing priorities, identifying issues, and preparing an incident action plan.

Financial/Recordkeeping

Manages financial aspects of an emergency; compiles record of expenditures; tracks injuries and lost or damaged property; coordinates with district for insurance; initiates business recovery efforts.

School Emergency Response Structure

District Response Team

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

District Recovery Team

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

Building Response Team

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

Medical Response Team

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

School Emergency Response Team

A school emergency response team should be comprised of individuals who will perform the following functions. Back-up personnel should be assigned to each function and key personnel should be cross-trained in critical requirements of *all* functions. Staff members who are not directly responsible for students should fill as many functions as possible. Depending on the emergency, multiple functions or assignments may be filled by one person.

Function	Staff Assigned	Back-up Staff
Incident Commander *(Person in charge)*	_____	_____
Safety	_____	_____
Public Information	_____	_____
Liaison	_____	_____
Operations Chief	_____	_____
Medical	_____	_____
(Attach list of qualified first aid/CPR responders in building)		
Site Security/facility check	_____	_____
Student Release Coordinator	_____	_____
Logistics Chief	_____	_____
Communications	_____	_____
Transportation	_____	_____
Planning Chief	_____	_____
Documentation	_____	_____
Financial Recordkeeping	_____	_____

These functions mirror the National Incident Management System (NIMS) used by emergency responders.

Staff Skills Inventory

Name_____ School _____Room_____

During an emergency situation, it is important to draw from all available resources. The special skills, training and capabilities of staff play a vital role in coping with the effects of any emergency. The purpose of this inventory is to pinpoint staff members with equipment and the special skills that might be needed. ***Please indicate the areas that apply to you and return this sheet to your administrator***.

Please check any of the following in which you have expertise & training. Check yes or no where appropriate.

_____ First Aid (current ❑ yes / ❑ no) _____ CPR (current - ❑ yes / ❑ no) _____ AED

_____ Hazardous Materials _____ Firefighting _____ Triage

_____ Emergency Planning _____ Emergency Management _____ Search/Rescue

_____ Law Enforcement _____ Conflict Resolution

_____ Construction (electrical, plumbing, carpentry, etc.)

_____ Bus/Truck Driver (class 1 or 2 license - yes / no)

_____ Bi/Multi-lingual (if so, what language(s)? _____

_____ Other _____

Do you keep a personal emergency kit: In your room? ❑ yes / ❑ no In your car? ❑ yes / ❑ no

Do you have materials in your room that would be of use during an emergency? (i.e., athletic bibs, traffic cones, carpet squares) ❑ yes ❑ no

Do you have equipment or access to equipment or materials at your school site that could be used in an emergency? ❑ yes ❑ no

Please list equipment and materials:

Comments :

What would make you feel more prepared should an emergency occur while you are at school?

Emergency Phone Numbers

Fire, Ambulance, Police Emergency 911

Dispatch Center _____
(to contact local police, fire, and emergency medical services)

Public Utilities:

Electricity: Company_____ Contact Person_____

24-hr emergency number(s) _____

Gas: Company_____ Contact Person_____

24-hr emergency number(s) _____

Water: Company_____ Contact Person_____

24-hr emergency number(s) _____

Emergency Management Agencies:

Local emergency management director_____
(Name and numbers)

County emergency management director_____
(Name and numbers)

Hazardous Materials:

Report hazardous materials leaks or spills to Minnesota Duty Officer

24-hr numbers	Statewide	(800) 422-0798
	Metro area	(651) 649-5451

Poison Control Center: _____

Crime Victim Services: _____

County Social Services (Child Protection): _____

Post-Crisis Intervention/Mental Health Services: _____

Emergency Plan Checklist

This checklist will help the school emergency planning team ensure key components are addressed in the school emergency plan. The checklist generally follows typical community emergency plan formats used by county emergency managers in Minnesota and borrows some of the terms used in the section headings. This can help schools and community responders coordinate their plans. Use this list to verify all necessary elements of the school district or building plan have been developed.

Introduction to the Emergency Plan	
Statement of the purpose of the plan	☐
Citations of applicable state regulations and local relevant school board policies	☐
Table of contents	☐
An approval statement and dated approval signature(s) as appropriate	☐
General narrative description of the district or school building including size and characteristics of student and staff populations.	☐
A listing of the plan's distribution including community emergency response agencies	☐

Concept of Operations *(includes descriptions of how the school district/building will respond in an emergency)*	
Description of how the district/building will know of an emergency (notification process)	☐
Description of how the district/building will physically communicate an emergency to staff and students including what actions they should take.	☐
Description of how district personnel (district team) will coordinate supporting services with affected school personnel (building teams)	☐
Summary of universal procedures that will be used and how they will be implemented (who determines which universal procedure to use and how the decision is disseminated)	☐
Description of procedures for giving out information to the public (media relations)	☐
Description of how parents will be notified and informed of what they should do (parent notification and communications)	☐
Description of how resources will be obtained: • Transportation • Supplies • Additional personnel	☐
Description of reunification process including provision of crisis mental health services as appropriate.	☐
Summary of methods of coordinating district/building response with community emergency response agencies. Includes notification, communication, liaison, media and reporting coordination.	☐
Description of the threat assessment process used by the district/building.	☐
Note: The complete file of procedures to be used by the district/building is included as an attachment at the end of the plan.	

Roles and responsibilities	
Description, including necessary flow charts, of the school's incident command system with command and support roles identified • Identification and description of district and building level response teams and the roles for team members within the incident command system	☐
Note: A listing of assigned staff and staff backups with necessary contact information can be included as an attachment at the end of the plan.	
Assignment and description of responsibilities for • Logistical support • Transportation coordination • Internal communications • Media relations • Training of staff and students • Conducting drills and exercises • Documentation of events • Liaison with community response agencies • Maintenance of district/building "go kits"	☐
Note: District and building level teams may want to develop checklists of responsibilities for roles assigned to team members. These checklists would be included as attachments at the end of the plan.	

Plan development and maintenance	
Designation of person(s) responsible for plan development and maintenance	☐
Determination of frequency of regular plan reviews and updates	☐
Process for updating the plan based on needs identified through after action reports from drills, exercises and actual emergency events	☐

Appendices/Attachments	
This section of the plan can include the following: • File of universal procedures • File of emergency procedures • Team member responsibility checklists • Maps (per fire code requirements and others as needed) • Emergency contact lists (internal and external contacts) • Organizational charts for district/building teams, incident command structure, and others • Forms • Other operational guidelines that might be specific to a certain person, function or hazard	☐

Planning Questionnaire for Schools

Use the questions below to help your school plan for an emergency.				
		Yes	**No**	**Not Sure**
1.	Does your school have a multi-hazard emergency plan in place?			
2.	Are staff and students *trained* on the procedures?			
3.	How often has your school exercised the plan? Have any changes been made, based on the exercise?			
4.	Does your staff know where the emergency procedures are posted in each room?			
5.	Do new hires, volunteers, student teachers, and substitutes get training on your emergency procedures *before* starting to work?			
6.	Does every school principal know *how long* would it take for local fire, police, or EMS to arrive, after dialing 9-1-1?			
7.	Is your staff *trained* to handle emergency tasks until help arrives?			
8.	Is any of the school staff trained to do CPR?			
9.	Does your school have 9-1-1 on speed dial?			
10.	Does your school know *how long* it will take for a principal to obtain personnel or equipment from other facilities?			
11.	In an evacuation, does your school have enough buses to transport *all* of the students to another site?			
12.	Do the local emergency services (police, fire, etc.) have current floor plans of all schools buildings in their jurisdiction?			
13.	Have your principals invited local police and fire to do a “walk-through” of their schools *annually*?			
14.	*When* does the school practice fire, evacuation, and tornado drills?			
15.	Does your school have a student release system established? Is the staff trained to do their tasks?			
16.	Do you have procedures in place if an emergency occurs on a bus?			
17.	Who (besides the principal and janitor) has the keys to the buildings, classrooms, locked fences and gates? What about after school and on the weekends?			
18.	If your school holds children after normal school hours because of a disaster in the community, is the school prepared to keep students for long periods of time? (Do you have enough food, water, medication, etc?)			
19.	When does the school’s responsibility for the students end? Is your school legally responsible for students if they are kept at school?			
20.	Do you have a backup system for your vital records?			

Drills

Minnesota Statutes 121A.037 and 123B.90 require schools to conduct at least five school lockdown drills, five school fire drills and one tornado drill each year. Students are expected to be present and participate in all drills. Additionally, many students are required to receive training on bus evacuation procedures and participate in one bus evacuation drill.

Purpose

The purpose of drills is to demonstrate a school's commitment to prepare for crises, emergencies and disasters. Drills test universal procedures (e.g. lockdowns, evacuation, shelter-in-place), build staff and student awareness, and provide training to students and staff. Drills are a crucial component of emergency planning and preparedness, but they are not the only component of testing a school emergency plan.

Drills provide schools with the opportunity to:

- Test universal procedures
- Reveal weaknesses in procedures
- Improve response and coordination
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Improve individual performances

Planning for drills

At the beginning of each school year schools should create a drill schedule. When scheduling drills, consider changing elements of drill scenarios by:

- Varying the times of drills
- Blocking evacuation routes
- Including a hazardous material scenario in a fire drill
- Hosting a community emergency response drill using a school emergency scenario

Documenting drills

Documentation is a necessary follow-up to every drill. It identifies steps for improving procedures and corrective actions to be implemented. Documentation includes, but is not limited to, drill logs and after action reports.

Drill logs provide necessary documentation for compliance with statutory obligation. They are a record of the planned drill schedule and implementation dates. Other relevant information can also be recorded within the drill logs. A sample drill schedule and log is found on page 58.

After action reports are a detailed analysis of the drills. The reports document the process; identify successes, challenges and failures; and make recommendations. A sample after action report is found on page 60.

Exercises

Purpose

Exercises test the school's emergency plan, in whole or in part. They typically involve elements of the plan that require internal and/or external coordination and joint problem resolution.

- Discussion-based exercises (tabletops) take participants through a scenario offering everyone a chance to identify and resolve issues in a low stress environment.
- Operations-based exercises (functional, full-scale) test specific plan functions or the entire plan in a "real time" simulation. These exercises include all necessary participants to address the issues of a given scenario.

Planning

When planning an exercise, first determine what the school wants to test. Using data from a safe school assessment or hazard analysis, and past experiences or exercises, schools might consider testing:

- High priority hazards or incidents with a that may likely occur
- Communication breakdown or power outages that may result from an incident in the community
- Coordination of functions between buildings, district offices and/or schools and emergency responders (e.g. communications, incident command coordination)
- Groups that need to coordinate actions (e.g. building and district response teams)
- Plan improvements made after previous exercises or real events.

Schools and emergency responders create exercise planning teams to coordinate all aspects of an exercise. The size and scope of the exercise will determine how many team members are needed and the groups that need representation. Exercise planning teams set specific objectives that relate directly to one or more plan elements. The type of exercise (e.g. discussion-based, operations-based) is selected to best match the groups' capacities and capabilities. Teams then create a scenario, conduct pre-exercise briefings and trainings, determine participants and provide for an evaluation of the exercise outcomes.

Evaluation and plan improvement

Exercises are conducted to test the emergency plan. Exercise evaluations are critical to documenting potential problems and making recommendations for changes to the plan. The number of evaluators needed during an exercise depends on the size and scope of the exercise and the number of objectives and functions being tested. The exercise planning team determines the makeup of the evaluation and creates forms for collecting data from evaluators and exercise participants.

A final evaluation of an exercise may take the form of an “after action review” or “lessons learned.” These include recommendations from evaluators for further action or emergency plan revisions. Changes to the overall plan or procedures, if they are district-wide, are made by the district response team with the approval of school administration. Revisions of building level procedures could be made by building response teams with approval of the principal. All staff must be notified of any changes made to the plan or procedures and given necessary training or re-training as soon as possible.

Sample Drill Schedule and Log

Minnesota state law requires schools conduct five fire drills, five lockdown drills, one tornado drill and one bus evacuation drill each year. The following worksheet will assist in the planning and documentation of school drills when they occur.

School:_____ Principal:_____

Fire Drills: Schools must conduct at least five fire drills annually

Date Scheduled	Date Conducted	Weather Conditions	Number of Occupants	Evacuation Time	Comments:

Lockdown Drills: Schools must conduct at least five lockdown drills annually

Date Scheduled	Date Conducted	Number of Occupants	Student Participation	Response Time	Comments:

Tornado Drill: Schools must conduct at least one tornado drill annually

Date Scheduled	Date Conducted	Weather Conditions	Number of Occupants	Evacuation Time	Comments:

Bus Evacuation Drill: Schools must conduct at least one bus evacuation drill annually

Date Scheduled	Date Conducted	Weather Conditions	Number of Occupants	Evacuation Time	Comments:

Other Drills: Reverse evacuation, shelter in place

Date Scheduled	Date Conducted	Weather Conditions	Number of Occupants	Evacuation Time	Comments:

Sample After Action Report Form

Name of person completing report:_____

School:_____ _____ _____Date:_____ _____

Drills/Exercises [check one]

- ❑ Drill [check one]:
  - ❑ Fire
  - ❑ Lockdown
  - ❑ Evacuation
  - ❑ Tornado
  - ❑ Other (specify):_____
- ❑ Table-Top exercise
- ❑ Functional or full-scale exercise
- ❑ Other exercise (specify):_____

Incident response [check one]:

- ❑ Fire
- ❑ Tornado
- ❑ Lockdown
- ❑ Intruder
- ❑ Bomb threat
- ❑ Other (specify):_____ _____ _____

Participation: Provide a list of individuals and agencies participating in the event

Start time:_____ End time:_____ _____

If the school conducted a functional or full-scale exercise, consider completing a comprehensive review and evaluation with your building and/or district emergency response teams.

Timeline of events: Provide a detailed outline, log or description of events and activities.

Lessons learned: Provide an overview of lessons learned related to personnel, training, coordination, logistics, etc.

Discussion and recommendations: Provide recommendations for improvements or changes to the emergency plan and procedures.

Emergency Planning for Students and Staff with Disabilities and Other Special Needs

Students and staff with disabilities are increasingly integrated into traditional educational settings. The Minnesota Department of Education identifies 13 categorical disability areas. These include; students with autism spectrum disorders, blind-visually impaired, deaf-blind, deaf and hard of hearing, developmental cognitive disabilities, developmental delay, emotional or behavior disorders, other health disabilities, physically impaired, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairments and traumatic brain injury. Students with any of these needs may require special consideration or planning in an emergency situation. Additionally, students receiving services on a 504 plan, students with temporary conditions such as broken bones, or students who are English language learners may require specialized assistance in an emergency.

Students with special needs are provided with education services required under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) http://idea.ed.gov . Part B of IDEA, which covers students age 3 through 21, governs how states and school districts provide special education and related services to children who qualify. IDEA requires that planning for educational success is done on an individual, case-by-case basis through the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP is a written statement developed for each child with a disability that outlines measurable annual goals for the child's academic achievement and functional performance. IEPs are reviewed annually by school staff and parents to discuss a student's progress and update goals and objectives.

Planning for emergencies with students with disabilities and other special needs

In an emergency, students with disabilities and other special needs may require assistance in functional areas including; maintaining independence, communication, transportation, supervision, and medical care. The requirements for IEPs as outlined in IDEA do not include any specific items related to emergency procedures for students with disabilities. However, nothing in IDEA prevents schools from developing individual emergency plans similar to an IEP. While there is no designated section in the IEP for individual emergency plans, this information can be included in the student's IEP under Related Services.

Developing an individual emergency plan should involve parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, first responders and possibly the student. Students with other health disabilities should have an emergency health information document outlining their condition, emergency care and current contact information. This document may be a tool schools can use when creating individual emergency plans.

Identifying students and staff with special needs

A key first step when developing individual emergency plans is identifying those students and staff members who may require special assistance in an emergency. For example, does the student or staff member have a physical disability that could hinder their ability to evacuate? How does a staff person who is deaf learn of a lockdown? When identifying students and staff who may require

assistance, it is also important to consider students or staff with less obvious needs including; asthma, panic attacks, significant allergies, or heart conditions. Students with these needs may not have an IEP, but their condition may be known to the school nurse or classroom teacher. Including a question about special considerations on the student emergency card is one strategy schools can use to identify students who require additional assistance in an emergency.

Developing an individual emergency plan

Once a student or staff members' needs have been identified, appropriate plans of action can be created and effective assistance identified. Confer with students and parents regarding their preferences for assistance in emergency situations whenever possible. Schools should also discuss evacuation preferences with local first responders and ensure they understand the needs of students with disabilities or other special needs. In some cases, it may be useful to provide training for first responders on various special needs and how those needs could impact a student's ability to follow emergency procedures. First responders may have equipment, expertise and strategies that could help schools as they make plans to assist those with special needs.

A similar planning process should be followed for developing plans for school staff with special needs. When developing plans for staff, it is important to discuss preferred or necessary supports or assistance. If possible, try to address necessary accommodations before an emergency occurs. For example, assigning staff with mobility impairments to offices or classrooms on the first floor eliminates the need for evacuating down a stairwell.

Finally, it is critical to include students with special needs in emergency drills and exercises. Regular practice ensures necessary assistance is provided to students with special needs and identifies possible gaps that can be corrected. Each student and staff member's individual emergency plan should be integrated into the school's emergency plan.

Considerations specific to evacuation planning

Procedures and protocols for evacuating individuals with special needs should be developed with key school stakeholders and local first responders. When evaluating options, schools should make decisions based on research, needs and preferences, and school staff capacity. Consider these key aspects related to the evacuation of individuals with special needs when developing individual emergency plans:

Evacuation chairs

- Decisions about the use of evacuation chairs in emergencies should be made based upon recommendations from local first responders, student and parent preferences, weight limits of chairs, staff lifting capabilities and cost.
- Train multiple staff members in the use of evacuation chairs in the event the student or staff member's primary caregiver or person assigned to assist is unavailable.
- For students or staff evacuating with an evacuation chair or being carried, schools should include a plan for removing the student's wheelchair or providing an alternate means of mobility once they are in a safe area.

Areas of refuge
The Access Board's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) http://www.access-board.gov/evac.htm, cover requirements for new construction, alterations to existing buildings and requirements for fire-resistant spaces where persons unable to use stairs can call for and await evacuation assistance. Known as *areas of rescue assistance* or *areas of refuge*, these spaces must meet specifications for fire resistance and ventilation. In Minnesota, the State Fire Marshal's office requires the following of districts wanting to implement *areas of refuge*:

- Districts that would like to explore using areas of refuge must contact the Minnesota State Fire Marshal's office for the most up-to-date requirements for school buildings.
- The fire marshal's office must inspect and approve any buildings using areas of refuge before including them in building emergency procedures.
- If areas of refuge are approved for a school building, local fire responders must know where they are and who will be sheltering there.

Communication considerations

For staff and students with sensory or cognitive disabilities, schools may want to consider the following options to help with notification and communication in an emergency:

- Use strobe lights or other alerting devices such as vibrating pagers to supplement audible alarms.
- Use Braille signage or audible directorial signage.
- Color-code escape doors and routes or pre-record directions on a CD.

Go-kits

An emergency go-kit is a portable collection of emergency supplies and information. Go-kits often come in the form of backpacks, buckets or bags on wheels that can be easily taken out of a school in case of an emergency. School staff with special needs may want to have personalized go-kits. Classrooms that include students with disabilities or special needs may want to use classroom go kits that include items specific to student needs. Some examples of go-kit items may include:

- Work gloves for operation of manual wheelchairs over rough terrain
- Stuffed animals, stress balls, head phones or other tactile objects to help lessen potential anxiety
- Masks for those with respiratory difficulties
- Snack items for those with diabetic conditions

Consult with staff members, students and their parents to determine the essential go-kit items that may be needed in an emergency.

Transportation

Specialized transportation will be needed for those students and staff who cannot be accommodated on a standard school bus. Transportation coordinators can provide specially equipped buses, but need to know in advance how many individuals will require special transport. Schools should plan for a staff member to take attendance and accompany students as they are transported.

Medical needs

Some students and staff take regular medications during the school day. Others need specialized medical equipment to successfully function in school. In an emergency situation, these students and staff may need additional assistance from others to bring their equipment or medications to the evacuation site. Create plans and assign responsibility for the transport of medications and medical equipment for these individuals.

Supervision needs

For some students with disabilities, the stress of an emergency situation can pose difficulties and create unpredictable responses. For some, being part of a large crowd of people (like an evacuation) becomes unmanageable. For others, extra noise (sirens, people shouting) is so confusing they lose focus and cannot take direction. For others, turning off lights and remaining quiet (in a lockdown) might be almost impossible without specialized and individualized assistance. These students may be in specialized classrooms or integrated into regular classrooms depending on their IEP. In an emergency, it may be necessary to place additional trained adults with these individuals to help them and their teachers deal with things that are out of the ordinary. Special education teachers, classroom teachers, parents, and student support staff should be consulted when designing plans for students needing additional supervision.

Response

Response

Response is the process of implementing appropriate actions in an emergency situation. Schools and districts mobilize resources and execute emergency procedures necessary to handle an emergency.

Universal procedures are actions taken in response to any emergency, threat or hazard in a school. There are six universal procedures; lockdown, shelter-in-place, reverse evacuation, severe weather shelter area, evacuation/relocation and reunification. In an emergency, administrators must determine whether conditions are more dangerous outside or inside the school and choose response procedures accordingly. Detailed procedures for specific situations or events are called Emergency Response Procedures. Both Universal Procedures and Emergency Response procedures are contained in the following section.

Universal Procedures

Evacuation/Relocation

Critical Information

Evacuation procedures are used when conditions are safer outside the building than inside the building.

Evacuation routes should be specified according to the type of emergency:

- Bomb threats: Building administrators notify 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
- Hazardous Materials: Total avoidance of hazardous materials is necessary as fumes can overcome people in seconds. Plan route accordingly

When implementing Evacuation procedures:

Building Administration

- Determine evacuation routes based on location and type of emergency
- Announce evacuation
- Specify any changes in evacuation routes based on location and type of emergency
- Monitor the situation and provide updates and additional instructions as needed
- Announce “all clear” signal once it is safe to re-enter the building

Staff

- Take emergency go-kit and class roster
- Take the closest and safest way out as posted or announced
- Use a secondary route if the primary route is blocked or hazardous
- Assist those needing special assistance
- Do not lock classroom doors when leaving
- Do not stop for student or staff belongings
- Go to assembly area

When outside the building:

- Check for injuries
- Account for all students
- Immediately report any missing, extra or injured students to building administration or incident command
- Continue to contain and maintain students
- Wait for additional instructions

When implementing Evacuation and Relocation procedures:

Building Administration

- Determine whether students and staff should be evacuated to a relocation center
- Alert school emergency response team of emergency type and evacuation
- Notify relocation center
- If necessary, coordinate transportation or student process to relocation center
- Announce evacuation
- Specify any changes in evacuation routes based on location and type of emergency
- Notify superintendent's office and district public information office of relocation center address
- Implement reunification procedures at the relocation/reunification site
- Document the reunification of all students released

Staff

- Take emergency go-kit and class roster
- Take the closest and safest way out as posted or announced
- Use a secondary route if the primary route is blocked or hazardous
- Assist those needing special assistance
- Do not lock classroom doors when leaving
- Do not stop for student or staff belongings
- Remain with class en route to the relocation center
- Take attendance upon arriving at the center
- Immediately report any missing, extra or injured students to building administration or incident command
- Continue to contain and maintain students
- Wait for additional instructions

When planning primary and secondary relocation sites, consider distance, accessibility, hours of operation, transportation and amenities (e.g. bathrooms, drinking water).

An agreement should be made with owners of non-district buildings that may be used for relocation/reunification sites that details usage and availability. A sample agreement follows this section.

Relocation Centers

List primary and secondary student relocation centers. Include maps and written directions to centers for staff reference.

Primary relocation center	Secondary relocation center
_____	_____
Address:	Address:
_____	_____
Phone:	Phone:
_____	_____

Universal Procedures

Lockdown

Critical Information

Lockdown procedures are used to protect building occupants from potential dangers in the building (e.g. threats, intruders) or external threats that may enter the building.

Lockdown with Warning occurs when there is a threat outside the building or there are non-threatening circumstances that people need to be kept away from (e.g. medical emergency or disturbance).
Lockdown with Intruder occurs when there is a threat or intruder inside the building

When implementing Lockdown with Warning procedures:

Building Administration

- Announce "lockdown with warning"
- Repeat announcement several times
- Be direct. DO NOT USE CODES
- Bring people inside
- Lock exterior doors
- Control all movement
- Disable all bells
- Direct any movement by announcement only
- Announce "all clear" signal when the threat has ceased

Staff

- Lock all exterior doors
- Cover exterior windows*
- Keep students away from windows
- Continue classes. Move on announcement only
- Wait for further instructions

** Check with local law enforcement agencies regarding the covering of windows and doors.*

When implementing Lockdown with Intruder procedures:

(these actions happen rapidly)

Building Administration

- Announce "lockdown with intruder"
- Repeat announcement several times.
- Be direct. DO NOT USE CODES

- Call 911 and notify law enforcement
- Direct all students, staff and visitors to the nearest classroom or secured space
- Classes outside the building SHOULD NOT enter the building
- Move outside classes to primary evacuation site
- DO NOT lock exterior doors
- Announce “all clear” signal when threat has ceased as authorized by law enforcement

Staff

- Clear all students, staff and visitors from hallways immediately
- Report to nearest classroom
- Assist those with special needs accommodations
- Close and lock all windows and doors
- DO NOT LEAVE for any reason
- DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR for any reason
- If a fire alarm has been activated, do not evacuate unless fire or smoke is visible
- Shut off lights
- Stay away from all doors and windows
- Be quiet
- Wait for further instructions

Reverse Evacuation

Critical Information

Reverse evacuation procedures are implemented when conditions inside the building are safer than outside. Reverse evacuation procedures are often implemented in combination with other procedures (e.g. lockdown, shelter-in-place) in order to ensure the safety of students and staff who are outside the building.

When implementing Reverse Evacuation procedures:

Building Administration

- Make an announcement or sound alarm for reverse evacuation
- Direct staff to physically notify any classes that may be too far away from the building to hear the announcement or alarm
- Monitor the situation
- Provide staff with any updates or additional instructions
- Announce “all clear” signal when the emergency has ceased

Staff

- Move all students and staff inside as quickly as possible
- Assist those needing additional assistance
- Report to classroom
- Take attendance
- Report any missing, extra or injured students to building administration
- Wait for further instructions

Universal Procedures

Severe Weather Shelter

Critical Information

Severe Weather Shelter procedures are implemented during a severe weather emergency.
"DROP and TUCK" procedures are used in severe weather emergencies or other imminent danger to building or immediate surroundings.

When implementing Severe Weather Shelter procedures:

Building Administration

- Make an announcement or sound alarm for severe weather emergency
- Move students and staff from any portable classrooms into a permanent building
- Announce "all clear" signal when the severe weather has ceased

Staff

- Take emergency go-kit and class roster
- Take the closest and safest route to shelter in designated safe area
- Use secondary route if primary route is blocked or dangerous
- If outside, return to main building
- If in a portable classroom, go to a permanent building and designated safe area
- Assist those needing additional assistance
- Do not stop for personal belongings

Once in safe area

- If appropriate, implement "drop and tuck" procedures
- Take attendance
- Report any missing, extra or injured students to building administration
- Remain in safe area until "all clear" is given by building administration
- Wait for additional instructions

When implementing "DROP and TUCK" procedures:

- Face an interior wall
- Drop to your knees and roll forward to the balls of your feet
- If physically unable to perform, sit on the floor
- Tuck your head down and place your hands on top of your head and neck
- Do not lie flat on the ground

MN State Statute 121A.037 requires that schools practice at least one tornado drill annually.

Universal Procedures

Shelter–In–Place

Critical Information

Sheltering in place is used when evacuation would put people at risk (e.g. environmental hazard, blocked evacuation route). 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.

When sheltering-in-place:

Building Administration

- Announce students and staff must to go to shelter areas
- Close all exterior doors and windows, if appropriate
- Turn off ventilation system (HVAC), if appropriate
- Monitor the situation
- Provide updates and instructions as available
- Announce “all clear” when the emergency has ceased

Staff

- Clear the halls of students and staff immediately and report to the nearest available classroom or other designated shelter area
- Assist those with special needs
- Take emergency go-kit and class roster
- Take attendance and report any missing or extra students to building administration or incident commander
- Do not allow anyone to leave the classroom or shelter area
- If there appears to be air contamination within the shelter area, place a wet handkerchief or wet paper towel over the nose and mouth for temporary respiratory protection

If sheltering-in-place because of an external gas or chemical release

- Close and tape all windows and doors
- Seal the gap between the floor and the bottom of the door

If sheltering-in-place because all evacuation routes are blocked

- Seal door
- Open or close windows as appropriate
- Limit movement and talking
- Communicate your situation to administration or emergency officials
- Stay away from all doors and windows
- Wait for instructions

Universal Procedures

Student Reunification/Release

Critical Information

Student reunification and release procedures should be communicated to parents at the beginning of each school year when reviewing school safety procedures. The procedures should be included in the student handbook distributed at the beginning of the school year.

When implementing Student Reunification/Release procedures:

Building Administration

- Designate a location for reunification of students with authorized adults (e.g. parents, legal guardians or others authorized in student's emergency information)
- Notify district administration and public information officer
- Coordinate messages to parents with public information officer
- Notify emergency responders for assistance with traffic control, crowd control and medical needs as needed
- Activate staff assigned to set up the location for reunification.
- Assign staff to take most current student emergency contact/pick up information to the site along with other reunification supplies
- Request transportation for students and staff including special needs transportation
- Provide for behavioral health services at the reunification site for students and parents
- Ensure documentation of release of students

Planning for Student Reunification

When students are evacuated and cannot return to school, reunification with parents or guardians is top priority. Reunifying students and parents at an off-site location is a complex process. Successful reunification requires significant pre-planning, coordination and organization.

Planning for reunification

Planning for reunification begins with identifying available staff to lead the reunification process. Staff without classroom duties including; office staff, student support services, administration and transportation are ideal choices to support the process. Members of the school emergency response team, technology personnel and facility management staff may also play important roles in planning and leading the reunification. Ideally all staff should be trained on reunification procedures. Tabletop exercises may be used to test procedures with staff and identify potential gaps or complications.

Pre-selecting a reunification site

Several factors should be considered when selecting a reunification site. First evaluate the selected building's potential capacity to accommodate the student body, staff and parents. Parking must be adequate for parents picking up their children as well as restroom facilities, accessibility and building access control.

If the reunification site is not another district-owned building, a written agreement must be developed outlining school and facility responsibilities during a reunification. Schools should plan to have keys available for building access and a method for notifying the facility of an emergency requiring the building's use. It is ideal to designate one reunification site for the entire district with at least one additional site for backup.

Two reunification sites may be necessary if a single site will not accommodate the entire student body. When planning for two reunification sites, building administrators should pre-designate division of the student body and communicate plans to staff, students and parents to minimize confusion.

Planning transportation and site set up

Transporting students to a reunification site during an emergency requires significant pre-planning and coordination. Staff responsible for setting up the reunification site should arrive before the students to organize. During reunification planning, schools should determine the number of students and staff requiring transportation and communicate this information to the transportation coordinator. Transportation for students with special needs must also be pre-arranged.

Transportation and arrival at a reunification site must be well-organized. Administrators should pre-determine classroom and staff organization to avoid confusion. Keeping staff with their classrooms increases accountability and may calm and reassure students.

Additional considerations for reunification site set up:

- ❑ Designate parking areas for parents
- ❑ Determine separate entrances for students and parents if possible
- ❑ Designate holding area for students and staff—near restrooms if possible
- ❑ Put the check-in or registration close to parent entrance
- ❑ Find a separate place for counseling and medical follow-up
- ❑ Make signs for all locations and for traffic flow
- ❑ Pre-assign staff for reunification duties and locations

Reunification process

Informing parents and guardians about reunification plans at the beginning of the school year helps ease anxiety in an emergency. Reunification information should be included in the student handbook. Inform parents where to pick up their child and what they will need to properly identify themselves. Ideally, children and parents will be segregated at the site until matched through the reunification process. If this is not possible, the process could be reversed to ensure a correct match using a check-out procedure. Plans must also be made for children who are not picked up in a timely manner.

Reunification materials and supplies

The most crucial aspect of reunification is getting the right children matched with the right parents or guardians. To ensure a smooth reunification process, schools must have the most current emergency contact information. Schools may want to ask parents to update emergency information more than once a year. Plans should also be made for instances when non-authorized individuals attempt to pick up students.

Administrative Go-Kits

Emergency go-kits are portable collections of emergency supplies and information. Go-kits often come in the form of backpacks, buckets or bags on wheels that can be easily taken out of a school in case of an emergency. Supplies useful for reunification may be contained in an administrative go-kit. Consider including these items:

- Vests or hats for reunification staff
- Communication devices—for the registration area, student and parent holding sites, counselors, nurses and student services staff
- Signs—pre-made and laminated
- Masking tape, duct tape, markers, pencils, pens
- Registration forms
- Maps of facility with areas designated

Roles for community emergency responders

Successful reunification requires coordination and cooperation between schools and community emergency response agencies. Establishing clear expectations and understanding of roles for schools and community response agencies is an important part of reunification planning. While schools manage certain aspects of the reunification process, other roles including; traffic control, crowd

control or medical assistance will be provided by emergency responders. Depending on the magnitude of the emergency, community response agencies may need to plan for additional response personnel or other jurisdictions to assist with reunification.

Sample School-Parent/Guardian Letter

[Date]

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Should an emergency situation arise in our community and/or one of our schools while school is in session, we want you to be aware the schools have made preparations to respond effectively and appropriately to such situations. _____ school district has a detailed, all-hazards emergency plan that has been formulated to provide direction to its staff and students during such an incident.

In the event of an emergency, we ask for your cooperation in the following procedures:

1. **Please do not telephone the school**. Telephone lines must be kept available for emergency communication.

2. **Please do not come to the school** unless requested to pick up your child.

3. ***In the event of an emergency that requires us to evacuate and relocate,*** students may be picked up at a designated reunification location by an identified, responsible adult who has been identified on the student's emergency card. Emergency cards must be filled out by parents/guardians at the beginning of every school year and kept updated as needed.

When authorizing another person to pick up your child, please consider the following requirements:

- He/she is at least 18 years of age.
- He/she is usually available during the day.
- He/she could walk to school if necessary.
- He/she is known to your child.
- He/she is both aware of and able to assume this responsibility.

3. **You can expect the school district** to respond in the following manner:
    a. For weather-related incidents, turn your radio to _____ for weather updates and emergency announcements.
    b. Information regarding day-to-day school operations will be available on our district web site and updates will be made as appropriate.
    c. Information will also be made available via: ***(modify to your district's capabilities)***
        i. Email notification system
        ii. Rapid Connect ***(or other name of service you may have)*** phone system

4. **Please impress upon your children** the need for them to follow the directions of any school personnel in times of an emergency.

We sincerely appreciate your cooperation in helping us respond to an emergency situation and providing a safe and healthy learning environment for your child. If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Principal
School

SAMPLE: Emergency Building Use Agreement

THIS AGREEMENT is made and entered by and between_____Schools, District #_____, Address_____, of _____ County, Minnesota ("School District") and _____, Address _____ of _____ _____ County, Minnesota ("Shelter Provider").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Shelter Provider is authorized and empowered to enter into leases and buildings use agreements; and

WHEREAS, if the School District should need to evacuate students or staff from one of its school buildings or grounds due to an emergency, the School District desires to identify a site where residents or staff may be housed until they can be released. Since the Shelter Provider has a building that could act as a temporary shelter, it is reasonable to set up an agreement outlining the terms of an emergency building use agreement; and

WHEREAS, the School District desires to enter into an agreement for the emergency use of the building for staff and students on the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth; and

WHEREAS, the Shelter Provider understands and agrees that after meeting its responsibilities to its primary usage, it will permit the School District to use its physical facilities as a shelter for students or staff in case of disaster or other emergency;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and promises contained herein, it is agreed as follows:

1. The School District shall replace or reimburse the Shelter Provider for goods or supplies that may be used in the School District's conduct of shelter activities.
2. The School District shall exercise reasonable care in the use of Shelter Provider's facilities and shall reimburse the Shelter Provider for any damage to the physical facilities directly caused by these shelter activities.
3. The Shelter Provider shall make reasonable efforts to make a building available for emergency shelter use by the School District with minimal notice.
4. This Agreement shall commence upon the date of execution by both parties. This Agreement will remain in full force and effect, but may be terminated by either party at any time upon 30-day written notice to the other.

WHEREFORE, this Agreement was entered into on the date set forth below and the undersigned, by execution hereof, represent that they are authorized to enter into this Agreement on behalf of the respective parties and state that this Agreement has been read by them and that the undersigned understand and agree to each and every provision hereof, and hereby, acknowledge receipt of a copy hereof.

_____ **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**	_____
By:_____	By:_____
Authorized representative/position	Authorized representative/position
_____	_____
Date	Date

Emergency Response Procedures

Assault

Critical Information

An assault is the intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm upon another person. Early intervention may reduce or eliminate escalation of the incident.

When an assault occurs:

Staff

- Notify building administration
- Ensure the safety of students and other staff
- Work as a team in response
- Use a calm voice and low tones in addressing the assailant
- If behavior escalates, shout “Stop!” and continue to use a calm voice
- Disperse onlookers and keep others from congregating
- Ensure first aid is rendered to all injured parties (see Medical Emergency procedures)
- Do not leave the victim alone
- Seal off area to preserve evidence for law enforcement
- Identify the assailant by name and description (e.g. clothing, height)
- If the assailant has left the building, determine direction and mode of travel
- If assailant leaves in a vehicle, provide description of the vehicle and license number
- Identify any witnesses

Building Administration

- Call 911 and notify law enforcement
- Give type and number of injuries
- Advise if assailant is still in the building or on the property
- Give name and description of the assailant
- Give direction and mode of travel (vehicle type and description)
- Consider lockdown procedures
- Notify district administration
- Notify parents or legal guardians of students involved
- Make appropriate referrals to student services or student assistance team
- Document all actions taken by staff and complete incident reports

Minnesota Statute 121A.582 Subdivision 1. Student Discipline; Reasonable force standard. (a) A teacher or school principal, in exercising the person's lawful authority, may use reasonable force when it is necessary under the circumstances to correct or restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to another.

Bomb Threat

Critical Information

ALL bomb threats must be taken seriously until they are assessed. Schools are primarily responsible for assessing the threat. The decision to evacuate rests with the school, not emergency responders, UNLESS a device is located.

Upon receiving a bomb threat:

Staff

- Notify building administration
- Preserve evidence for law enforcement
  - If written threat, place note in paper envelope to preserve fingerprints
  - If the threat is written on a wall, photograph
  - If phoned threat, document all relevant information (see Threat Incident Report Form)
- Complete Threat Incident Report Form

Building Administration

- Call 911 to notify law enforcement
- Assess the threat by using the Threat Assessment Procedures
- Consult with emergency responders, as time permits
- Determine credibility of threat
- Document all actions taken by staff

If the bomb threat is determined to be credible:

Building Administration

- Initiate appropriate Lockdown procedures
  - Provide additional instructions as necessary
- Direct staff to implement scanning process for suspicious items
  - Bombs may be placed anywhere on school property — inside or outside
- Document all actions taken and findings by staff
- Determine if evacuation procedures should be initiated

Staff

- Implement appropriate Lockdown procedures
- Scan classroom or assigned areas for suspicious items
- **Do not touch** any suspicious devices, packages, etc. If a device(s) is located, it should be pointed out to emergency responders

- Notify building administration of findings

If Evacuation Procedures are initiated:

Building Administration

- Notify staff via phone system, hardwired PA system or by messenger. Do not use cell phones, radios or fire alarm system because of risk of activating a device
- Ensure evacuation routes and area(s) are clear of suspicious items

Staff

- Implement Evacuation procedures
- Take emergency go-kit and class roster

When responding to a bomb threat, law enforcement and first responders generally will not search a building unless requested. A bomb squad will generally not respond unless a suspicious package has been located.

Demonstration

Critical Information

Demonstrations on school property could be deemed trespassing. Minnesota State Statute 609.605 gives a school building administrator authority to have persons removed from school property as trespassers if they are not authorized to be there.

If demonstration is near, but not on school property:

Staff

- Notify building administration

Building Administration

- Notify district administration
- Notify and consult with law enforcement in developing a plan of action
- Notify building staff
- Encourage staff not to participate in student-led or public demonstrations and to maintain the learning environment
- Monitor situation and make decisions based on developing information
- Consider communication venues (e.g. Web site posting, email)
- Consider lockdown with warning procedures (see Lockdown procedures)

If demonstration is on school property:

Staff

- Notify building administration

Building Administration

- Notify district administration
- Notify and consult with law enforcement
    - Identify who asks the demonstrators to leave
    - Develop an action plan
- Notify building staff
- Encourage staff not to participate in student-led or public demonstrations and to maintain the learning environment
- Consider lockdown with warning procedures (see Lockdown procedures)
- Ensure safe entry into and exit from the building
- Monitor situation and make decisions based on developing information
- Consider communication venues (e.g. Web site posting, email)

Fight/Disturbance

Critical Information

Not all fights are criminal in nature. Many fights or disturbances are spontaneous behavioral situations that should not elicit a significant response from law enforcement. They should be handled by school staff and follow school district disciplinary policies and procedures.

When a fight or disturbance occurs:

Staff

- Notify building administration
- Ensure the safety of students and other staff
- Work as a team in response
    - One staff member seek administration assistance
    - One staff member address the disturbance
- Use a calm voice and low tones in addressing students
- If behavior escalates, shout “Stop!” and continue to use a calm voice to de-escalate the situation
- Disperse onlookers and keep others from congregating in the area
- Don’t let a crowd incite participants
- Separate participants
- Ensure that first aid is rendered to all injured parties (see Medical Emergency procedures)

Building Administration

- Address the event according to school district discipline policy and procedures
- Notify parents or legal guardians of students involved in fight
- Notify district administration and law enforcement as indicated by school policy
- Make appropriate referrals to student services or student assistance team
- Document all actions taken by staff and complete incident reports

Fire

Critical Information

Smoke is just as dangerous as fire. Most fire deaths are due to smoke inhalation.

In the event of fire or smoke:

Staff

- Activate fire alarm and notify building administration
- Check assigned locations where students may not hear alarm (e.g. washrooms, lunchroom, sound booths, dark rooms, pool, locker rooms)
- Implement evacuation plan for any students needing special accommodations
- Evacuate students and other staff to designated areas
- Take emergency go-kits and class roster
- If primary route is blocked or dangerous, use closest, safe exit
- If trapped by fire, implement Shelter-in-Place procedures
- Once outside, assemble a safe distance from building and emergency apparatus
    - Take student attendance
    - Report missing, extra or injured students to building administration

Building Administration

- Call 911 and notify emergency responders
- Confirm address of school
- Provide exact location of smoke or fire
- Ensure fire alarm has sounded
- Notify district administration
- Meet with fire officer
    - Identify the location of fire
    - Advise location of injured persons
    - Provide names of any missing persons
- Determine if students need to be transported to an evacuation site
- Notify parents or legal guardians of student reunification and release procedures
- Signal “all clear” when safe to re-enter school building

Additional Considerations

- Plan for accommodations for students or staff with special needs

Hazardous Materials

Critical Information

In the event of a natural or propane gas leak or odor – EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY.
In all other cases, first responders will take command of the situation and determine the steps to take regarding evacuation, shelter-in-place and ventilation systems (HVAC).

In the event of a hazardous material incident inside a school building:

Staff

- Notify building administration
- Report location and type (if known) of the hazardous material
- Move students away from the immediate danger zone
- If safe, close doors to the affected area
- If implementing Evacuation procedures
  - Take emergency go-kits and class roster
  - Take attendance and report missing, extra or injured students to building administration
- Render first aid as needed

Building Administration

- Call 911 and notify emergency responders
- Report location of leak or spill and type of material (if known)
- Report any students or staff missing or injured
- Develop an action plan with emergency responders (e.g. evacuation, shelter-in-place, shutdown ventilation system (HVAC)
- Notify district administration
- Move staff and students away from the immediate danger zone
- Keep staff and students from entering or congregating in danger zone
- Document all actions taken
- Report incident to Minnesota Duty Officer (800-422-0798 or 651-649-5451)

In the event of a hazardous material incident outside a school building:

Staff

- Notify building administration
- Report location and type (if known) of hazardous material
- Move students away from the immediate vicinity of the danger
- If outside, implement Reverse Evacuation procedures

Building Administration

- Monitor situation
- Notify district administration
- Consult with emergency responders
- Identify the need for evacuation
- Develop an action plan with emergency responders
- Consider implementing Shelter-in-Place procedures
- If there is an airborne release, shutdown ventilation system (HVAC)
- Notify parents or legal guardians of student reunification and release procedures
- Document all actions taken

Hostage

Critical Information

If the hostage–taker is unaware of your presence, ***Do Not Attract Attention!***

In the event of a hostage situation and you are taken hostage:

- Cooperate with the hostage-taker to the fullest extent possible
- STAY CALM, try not to panic; calm students if they are present
- Be respectful to the hostage-taker
- Ask permission to speak; do not argue or make suggestions

If you witness a hostage situation:

Staff

- Notify building administration immediately
- Keep all students in their classrooms until further notice
- Wait for further instructions

Building Administration

- Initiate Lockdown with Intruder procedures
- Call 911 and notify emergency responders
- If known, provide a description of the following:
    - Identity and description of the individual
    - Description and location of the incident
    - Number of hostages
    - Number of injuries
- Seal off area near hostage scene
- Students should be moved from exposed areas or classrooms to safer areas of the building
- As soon as possible, and only if it can be accomplished safely, assign a staff member to stand outside warning visitors of the danger, until law enforcement arrives
- When law enforcement arrives, they will take control of the situation
    - Continue to coordinate with law enforcement for the safety and welfare of students and staff
- Document all actions taken

In planning, work with local law enforcement to identify their response methods and capabilities. At the beginning of each school year, provide them with updated building diagrams.

Intruder

Critical Information

An intruder may be either well- or ill-intentioned. Early intervention may reduce or eliminate the escalation of the incident. There is always the potential that an intruder may possess a weapon or become violent.

*When interacting with a stranger at school, use the **"I CAN"** rule.*

Intercept ***Contact*** ***Ask*** ***Notify***

In the event an unauthorized person enters school property (intruder):

Staff

- Politely greet the subject and identify yourself
- Consider asking another staff person to accompany you before approaching the subject
- Inform the subject that all visitors must register at the reception area
  - Ask the subject the purpose of his or her visit
  - If possible, attempt to identify the individual and vehicle
  - Escort the subject to the reception area
- If the subject refuses or his or her purpose is not legitimate, notify building administration that there may be an intruder in the school building
  - Attempt to maintain visual contact with the intruder until assistance arrives
  - If possible keep students away from the intruder
  - Take note of the subject name, clothing and other descriptors
  - Observe the actions of the intruder (e.g. where he or she is located in the school building, whether he or she is carrying a weapon or package)
- Back away from the subject if he or she indicates a potential for violence
- Allow an avenue of escape for both the intruder and yourself

Building Administration

- Respond to call for assistance from staff
- Advise the subject they are trespassing and need to leave the school or law enforcement will be notified
- If the subject refuses or his or her purpose is not legitimate,
  - Consider initiating Lockdown with Intruder procedures
  - Call 911 and notify law enforcement
  - Advise law enforcement of the intruder's location and provide a full description
  - Attempt to keep the subject in full view until law enforcement arrives while maintaining a safe distance

    - Provide all staff with a full description of the intruder
- Notify district administration
- Document all actions taken by staff

Minnesota State statute 609.605 subd.4 gives a school building administrator authority to have persons removed from school property as trespassers if they are not authorized to be there.

Media Procedures

Critical Information

All media inquiries must be referred to the district information officer. The school district, in coordination with community response agencies, assumes responsibility for issuing public statements during an emergency.

When communicating with the media during an emergency:

District Administration

- Designate a district public information officer (PIO) to coordinate all media communications for the school and school district.
- Designate a district spokesperson. If spokesperson is unavailable an alternate assumes responsibilities.
- In partnership with all involved agencies, establish a joint information center (JIC) away from the affected area. The JIC establishes one point of contact for the media and ensures the release of coordinated messages

Public Information Officer

- Prepare and coach district spokesperson
- Coordinate with other responding agencies an area for media to shoot video footage and photographs safely and in accordance with school privacy policies and agencies protocols.
- DO NOT allow media to hinder emergency responders or be put in harm's way
- Provide regular updates and press releases and let media know when to expect the next update
- DO NOT say "No comment." It is okay to say "I don't know"
- Monitor media reports to ensure message accuracy. Provide media with any corrected information.
- Track rumors and ask the media to dispel inaccurate information
- Document all contact with media

Building Administration

- Notify district administration and all staff of emergency event
- Direct all media contacts to district PIO
- Relay all factual information to district PIO
- If directed by district administration, designate a site spokesperson
- Update staff throughout the emergency, review details of the emergency and dispel rumors
- Inform district administration and PIO of any media presence at the building. Request on-site assistance with media if necessary

Staff

- Direct all media contacts to district PIO

District Communication Contacts

List the district spokesperson and public information officer along with their alternates in case the primary contact is unavailable during a crisis. Consider pre-designating building or site spokespersons.

District public information officer (PIO)

_____
Name

_____
Contact number

Alternate district PIO

_____
Name

_____
Contact number

District spokesperson

_____
Name

_____
Contact Number

Alternate district spokesperson

_____
Name

_____
Contact Number

Sample Public Information Release

Check as appropriate: ❑ District/District-wide ❑ School

Date: _____ Time: _____

Note: If this is used as a script, read only those items checked. Make no other comments

(Check off, fill in, and cross off as appropriate)

_____ has just experienced _____

❑ The (students/employees) [(are being) or (have been)] accounted for.

❑ No further information is available at this time.

❑ Emergency medical services [(are here) or (are on the way) or (are not available to us)].

❑ Police [(are here) or (are on the way) or (are not available to us)].

❑ Fire Dept./paramedics [(are here) or (are on the way) or (are not available to us)].

_____ [(are here) or (are on the way) or (are not available to us)].

❑ Communications to parents (is/are) being posted (on the school's web site, elsewhere?) and delivered by phone (and/or email?) through _____.

❑ Reunification center(s) for parents to pick up their student(s) (is/are) being set up at

_____

❑ Injuries have been reported at _____

and are being treated at the site by (staff/professional medical responders)

❑ (#)_____reported injured.

❑ Students have been taken to a safe area _____and are with

(classroom teachers/staff) or (_____).

❑ (#) ____students have been taken to the local emergency room for treatment of serious injury.

❑ Parents of injured students should go to the emergency room at _____.

❑ (#) ____Confirmed deaths have been reported at _____.

Names cannot be released until families have been notified.

❑ Structural damage has been reported at the following sites:_____.

Release restrictions: ❑ No ❑ Yes / what? _____

Released to the Public: Information Release #_____ Date/Time: _____

Medical Emergency

Critical Information

The role of school staff in a medical emergency is to provide care to the victim until first responders arrive. Staff should NOT provide any first aid beyond their training. Staff should comfort the victim and reassure him or her that medical attention is on the way. Before providing assistance, staff should survey the scene for additional hazards and ensure it is safe to render aid.

In the event a non-responsive or life-threatening injury or illness:

Staff

- Send for immediate help (notify health office staff or school nurse) and Call 911
- Describe injuries, number of victims and give exact location
- Notify building administration
- DO NOT move the victim(s), especially if you suspect a head or neck injury, unless safety is a concern
- Check victim for medical alert bracelet or necklace
- Provide information to first responders
- Disperse onlookers and keep others from congregating in the area
- If possible, isolate the victim(s)
- Direct someone (e.g. staff, student) to meet and guide the first responders
- Assist emergency medical services personnel with pertinent information about the incident
- Complete an incident report and document all actions taken

Building Administration

- Ensure 911 was called and provide any updated information
- Secure victim(s) medical emergency profile
- Activate school emergency response team
- Ensure someone (e.g. staff, student) meets and directs first responders
    - Provide any additional information about the status of the victim(s)
    - Provide information from the victim(s) medical emergency profile
- If needed, assign a staff member to accompany victim(s) to the hospital
- Notify district administration
- Notify victim(s) parents, legal guardians or emergency contact
- Activate Recovery procedures as appropriate
    - Conduct a debriefing

- Document all actions taken by staff

For medical emergencies related to life-threatening allergies:

- Students with life-threatening allergies should have emergency care plans completed by their parents or legal guardians and made accessible to school personnel
- Bus drivers and kitchen staff should be informed of students with known life-threatening allergies
- Encourage all employees with special health considerations to alert building administration

Severe Weather
Tornado/Severe Thunderstorm/Flooding

Critical Information

Tornado shelter areas are interior hallways, interior restrooms or rooms away from exterior walls and windows and large rooms with long-span ceilings in permanent structures. Building diagrams should be posted in each classroom highlighting routes to safe areas.

Watches: Indicate conditions are right for development of a weather hazard. Watches provide advance notice.

Warnings: Indicate a hazard is imminent or the probability of occurrence is extremely high.

If a tornado or severe thunderstorm WATCH includes all or part of the district area:

District Administration

- Monitor National Weather Service (NOAA) weather radio, all-hazard or emergency alert radio
- Notify impacted schools, buildings and programs in the district

Building Administration

- Monitor National Weather Service (NOAA) weather radio, all-hazard or emergency alert radio
- Activate appropriate members of the school emergency response team to be aware of potential weather changes
- Notify head custodial staff of potential utility failure
- Consider moving all persons inside building(s)
- Consider closing windows
- Review severe weather sheltering procedures and location of shelter areas

Staff

- Review “Drop and Tuck" procedures with students

If a tornado or severe thunderstorm WARNING has been issued or a tornado has been spotted near the school:

District Administration

- Notify impacted buildings and programs in the school district

- Continue to monitor National Weather Service (NOAA) weather radio, all-hazard or emergency alert radio or television stations
- Provide any updated information to impacted schools, buildings and programs

Building Administration

- Activate appropriate members of the school emergency response team of a change in weather status
- Initiate Severe Weather Shelter Area procedures
- Move students and staff out of portable classrooms and into a permanent building
- Notify parents and legal guardians according to district policy

Staff

- Initiate Severe Weather Shelter Area procedures
- Close classroom doors
- Take emergency go-kit and class roster
- Ensure students are in “tuck” positions
- Take attendance and report any missing, extra or injured students to building administration
- Remain in shelter area until an “all clear” signal is issued
- In the event of building damage, evacuate students to safer areas
- If evacuation does occur, do not re-enter the building until an “all clear” signal is issued

If flooding occurs near or at a school:

District Administration

- Monitor NOAA weather radio, all-hazard or emergency alert radio stations
- Develop an action plan with local emergency management officials and transportation coordinator
- Notify any impacted buildings or programs in the district

Building Administration

- Review evacuation procedures with staff
- Notify relocation centers
- Determine an alternate relocation center if primary and secondary centers are affected
- Notify transportation resources
- If district officials and emergency responders advise evacuation, do so immediately
    - Notify parents or guardians of evacuation and relocation

Staff

- Initiate Evacuation procedures as directed
- Take emergency go-kit and class roster

- Take attendance and report any missing, extra or injured students to building administration

Sexual Assault

Critical Information

Sexual assault is a crime of violence. For the victim, it is often an experience of fear, humiliation, violence and loss of control. Victims may experience a full range of emotional reactions. It is extremely beneficial for the victim to seek support regarding the assault.

Schools should address sexual assault as a crisis or emergency when:

- A rape or sexual assault occurs on campus
- A member of the victim's family or friend requests intervention
- Rumors or myths of an alleged incident are widespread and damaging

In the event of a sexual assault or notification of a sexual assault:

Staff

- Notify building administration immediately
- Complete all required reports
- Maintain confidentiality during the investigation
    - Direct the individual (e.g. student or staff) not to repeat any information elsewhere in the school, especially if not the direct victim
- *Do not leave the victim alone*
- Ensure the short-term physical safety of the victim
- Notify the school nurse or student services to provide care and secure immediate medical treatment if needed
- If appropriate, preserve all physical evidence

Building Administration

- Maintain confidentiality during the investigation
    - If a staff person heard the report, instruct them not to repeat anything or give any information within or outside the school unless specifically told to do so
- If assault occurred on campus
    - Notify appropriate law enforcement
    - Notify local rape crisis center
- Designate a school counselor or staff member who has a positive relationship with the victim to review the types of support she or he may need
- Determine needs for peer support
- Encourage the victim to seek support from a rape crisis center
- Take action to control rumors

- Document all actions taken by staff and complete incident reports
- Store all records related to sexual assault incidents and services provided in an confidential administrative file

A sexual assault examination is an important piece of evidence in a sexual assault investigation. The exam should be performed as soon as possible to preserve quality and quantity of the evidence. A trained medical professional will perform the exam. The victim must be advised on how to protect the evidence she or he may have. The victim must be told not to douche, bathe, shower, wash or throw away the clothing she or he was wearing at the time of the sexual assault.

Shooting

Critical Information

School policies should address who has the authority to initiate lockdown procedures in all schools and buildings.

If a person displays a firearm, begins shooting or shots are heard:

Staff

- Seek immediate shelter for staff and students
- Initiate Lockdown with Intruder procedures
- Notify building administration
- Provide location of the shooting, if known
- Take attendance and notify the building administrator of missing students or staff as soon as the threat is removed

Building Administration

- Initiate Lockdown with Intruder procedures
- Call 911 and notify emergency responders
- Provide the following information, if known:
  - Location of shooter(s)
  - Description, identity and number of shooters
  - Description of weapon(s)
  - Number of shots fired
  - Is shooting continuing?
  - Number of injuries
- Notify district administration
- Document all actions taken by staff
- Implement Media procedures
- Implement Recovery procedures

Work with local law enforcement to identify their response methods and capabilities. Provide law enforcement updated building diagrams at the beginning of each school year.

Suicidal Threat or Attempt

Critical Information

Writing, talking or even hinting about suicide must be taken seriously. Immediate intervention is essential. Student confidentiality is superseded by the need for student safety.

In the event a staff member believes a student is a suicide risk or has attempted suicide:

Staff

- Stay with the student until assistance arrives
- Notify school administration, counselor, social worker or school psychologist
- Ensure short-term physical safety of the student, provide first aid if needed
- Listen to what the student is saying and take the threat seriously
    - Assure the student of your concern
    - Assure the student you will find help to keep him or her safe
    - Stay calm and don't visibly react to the student's threats or comments
    - Do not let the student convince you the crisis is over
    - Do not take too much upon yourself. Your responsibility is limited to listening and providing support until the student can receive appropriate medical care or counseling

Building Administration

- Call 911 if the student needs medical attention, has a weapon, needs to be restrained or a parent or guardian cannot be reached
- Determine a course of action with social worker or other mental health professional
- Contact student's parent or guardian and make appropriate recommendations
- Do not allow the student to leave school without a parent or guardian
- Notify district administration
- Document all actions
- Follow-up and monitor to ensure student safety
- Implement Recovery procedures

School staff must exercise caution when discussing an attempted suicide or death by suicide with students. When the incident becomes public knowledge, it is best to request permission from the family to discuss it with students in order to address emotional reactions within the school community.

Suspicious Package or Mail
Chemical/Biological Threat

Critical Information

Characteristics of a suspicious package or letter include excessive postage or excessive weight; misspellings of common words; oily stains, discolorations, or odor; no return address or a city or state postmark that does not match the return address; or a package that is not anticipated by someone in the school or is not sent by a known school vendor.

If you receive a suspicious package or letter by mail or delivery service:

Staff

- DO NOT OPEN package or letter
- Notify building administration
- Limit access to the area where the suspicious letter or package is located to minimize the number of people who might directly handle it
- Preserve evidence for law enforcement

Building Administration

- CALL 911 and notify law enforcement
- Notify district administration
- Document all actions taken by staff

If a letter/package contains a written threat but no suspicious substance:

Staff

- Notify building administration
- Limit access to the area in which the letter or package was opened to minimize the number of people who might directly handle it
- Preserve evidence for law enforcement
- Complete Threat Incident Report Form

Building Administration

- Call 911
- Preserve evidence for law enforcement and turn the letter or package over to law enforcement
- Document all actions taken by staff

If a letter or package is opened and contains a suspicious substance:

Staff

- Notify building administration
- Limit access to the area in which the letter or package was opened to minimize the number of people who might directly handle it
- Isolate the people who have been exposed to the substance to prevent or minimize contamination
- Preserve evidence for law enforcement
- Complete Threat Incident Report Form

Building Administration

- Call 911
- Preserve evidence for law enforcement
- Turn the letter or package over to law enforcement
- Consult with emergency officials to determine:
    - Need for decontamination of the area and the people exposed to the substance
    - Need for evacuation or shelter-in-place
- Notify district administration
- Notify parents or legal guardians according to district policies

When sorting mail, staff should always be aware of the characteristics of a suspicious package or letter. When a suspicious package or letter has been identified, these procedures should be implemented immediately.

Terrorism

Critical Information

Terrorism is the unlawful use of force or 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 (Federal Bureau of Investigation).

Most terrorism events are at a national or international level. Initially, domestic or local events will be perceived as a criminal act and not immediately recognized as terrorism.

In the event of an attack within the United States:

District Administration

- Monitor the situation
- Consult with local law enforcement and emergency management agencies
- Develop an action plan
    - If school is in session, consider a district wide lockdown with warning (see Lockdown procedures) or student release
- Notify all building administration
- Implement district-wide behavioral health crisis intervention procedures
- Notify parents or legal guardians of actions taken
    - Availability of counselors
    - If implementing Lockdown procedures, instruct parents not to come to the school
    - If implementing Student-Release procedures, notify parents of reunification plan
- Re-evaluate action plan as new information develops

Building Administration

- Monitor the situation
- Consult with district administration
- Implement district-wide action plan
- Implement behavioral health crisis intervention procedures
- Notify all staff
- Allow teachers to suspend regular learning programming
- Provide opportunities for students to meet with student services staff

Staff

- Inform students of the incident in an age appropriate manner
- Stay calm and address student concerns

  - Limit access to media outlet (e.g. television, radio, internet)
  - Answer student questions honestly
  - Do not allow students to speculate or exaggerate graphic details
- Decide whether or to temporarily suspend regular learning programming adjusting lesson plans to include discussion and activities about the event
- Monitor student behaviors and reactions and make referrals to appropriate student services staff

It is important to restore the learning environment as soon as possible, maintaining structure and stability throughout the school day. Try to engage in classroom activities that do not focus solely on the attacks. Children are comforted by normal routines and "back-to-normal" activities will help and reassure them.

Threat

Critical Information

A threat is the expression of intent to harm one's self, another person or property. A threat can be spoken, written, or symbolic (e.g. a gesture). A threat can be direct, indirect, veiled or conditional. A threat may be a crime. All threats must be taken seriously and evaluated to address imminent danger and determine course of action.

In the event of IMMEDIATE danger:

Staff

- Take immediate action to secure or isolate the individual making the threat
- Prevent access to potential weapons
- Prevent access to the individual's backpack, purse, locker, cell phone or other personal property that may contain a weapon
- Take immediate action to move others from harm's way (in the immediate vicinity of the incident)
- Notify building administration

Building Administration

- Initiate Lockdown with Intruder procedures
- CALL 911
- Notify district administration
- Document the incident

If threat is identified but there is no immediate risk:

Staff

- Complete a Threat Incident Report Form
- Notify building administration and student services staff
- Maintain confidentiality

Building Administration

- Convene the appropriate staff to evaluate the threat (e.g. Threat Assessment Teams or Student Assistance Teams). Use Threat Assessment guidance to determine threat credibility
- Notify law enforcement, if appropriate
- Conduct search of school and personal property, if needed
- Interview the individual posing a threat
- Develop an action plan

- Notify district administration
- Contact parents or legal guardians
- Inform them of the situation, any concerns and course of action
- Obtain permission to exchange information between agencies
- Document any referrals, actions taken and decisions made
- Implement Recovery procedures

Threat Incident Report Form

All Threats

Date: Time: Location:

Recorded by:

Means of threat: ❑ Phone ❑ Written ❑ Face-To-Face ❑ Suspicious Package

Students involved:

Staff involved:

Phone Threat

Phone number shown on the caller ID:
Exact words of the threat:

Critical questions for caller:
Where is the bomb, chemical or other hazard?

What does it look like?

What kind of bomb or hazard is it?

When is it going to explode or be activated?

What will cause it to explode or be activated?

Did you place the bomb or hazard? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Who did?

Why did you place the bomb or hazard?

What is your name?

Where are you calling from?

What is your address?

Caller's voice *(circle all that apply)*

Calm	Stressed	Deep	Crying	Squeaky	Incoherent	Normal
Stutter	Disguised	Nasal	Loud	Raspy	Broken	Young
Giggling	Slow	Lisp	Soft	Slurred	Rapid	Middle Aged
Laughter	Distinct	Sincere	Angry	Drunken	Excited	Old

Accent:
Is the voice familiar? ❑ Yes ❑ No Who does it sound like?

Background noises *(circle all that apply)*

Voices	Airplanes	Street noises	Vehicles	Music
Clear	Static	Animals	Trains	Factory Machines
Horns	House noises	Party	Quiet	
Motor	Phone Booth	PA System	Bells	Other

Written Threat

Describe:

Where found?
Unusual markings:
Documentation and reporting trail:

Face-To-Face Threat

Who made the threat?
Exact words:

To whom was the threat directed?
Documentation and reporting trail:

Suspicious Package

Describe:

Where found?
Unusual markings:
Documentation and reporting trail:

Weapons

Critical Information

Student access to weapons creates significant risk within a school environment. Early intervention may reduce or eliminate escalation of the incident**.**

If you are aware of a weapon on school property:

Staff

- Notify building administration immediately and provide the following information:
  - Location, identity and description of the individual
  - Description and location of weapon(s)
  - Whether the individual has threatened him or herself or anyone else
- Limit information to staff and students on a need to know basis
- Stay calm and do not call attention to the weapon

Building Administration

- Call 911 to report that a weapon is in school
  - Provide location, identity and description of the individual
  - Provide description and location of weapons
- Develop an action plan for response
  - If the weapon is located on an individual, isolate the individual
  - If the weapon is in a locker or in a backpack, prevent access to that area
- Determine whether to initiate Lockdown, Evacuation or other procedures
- Notify district administration
- Conduct weapon search, if needed
- DO NOT approach the individual alone. Consider these factors:
  - Need for assistance from law enforcement
  - Best time and location to approach individual
  - Description, location and accessibility of weapon(s)
  - Safety of persons in the area
  - State of mind of the individual
- If the individual displays or threatens with the weapon(s):
  - DO NOT try to disarm him or her
  - Avoid sudden moves or gestures
  - Use a calm, clear voice
  - Instruct the individual to place the weapon down
  - Use the individual’s name while talking to them

    - Allow for escape routes. Back away with your hands up
- If the individual is a student, notify parent or guardian
- Document all actions taken by staff
- File report according to district policy

Staff members should be familiar with definitions of weapons within their school district's policies.

Behavioral Health and Recovery Procedures

Recovery

The goal of recovery from a school disaster or traumatic event is to restore the learning environment as soon as possible. Recovery starts as soon as the response phase has ended. Actions taken during the first few days after an event set the tone for how the school intends to move forward. Depending on the trauma of the experience, the recovery process may last well into the future, as the school and community establish a “new normal.”

Recovery consists of four main components: emotional, academic, physical/structural and business/fiscal. In recovery planning all four components need to be addressed. The recovery process may be short-term or long-term depending on the circumstances of the event. Time and resources must be allocated accordingly.

Recovery

After a disaster, local governments assess community needs and determine the actions required to return the community to a state of normalcy. The local emergency manager, working with the assessor's office and public works department, is usually charged with assessing damages, tabulating losses to businesses and homeowners and estimating needed repairs. Similarly, the school district is responsible for assessing needs of its affected buildings after a disaster or traumatic event. There are four key components of recovery in a school setting:

- Physical/structural recovery
- Fiscal recovery
- Academic recovery
- Social/emotional recovery

Often disasters and traumatic events affecting schools involve several of these components.

Recovery Team

Recovery is an important part of a district emergency plan. Staff involved with recovery planning may differ from those participating in preparedness or response planning. A recovery team should include people who have responsibilities and expertise in the four key recovery components. Core team members should include those at the district level who are in charge of buildings and grounds, curriculum and instruction, mental health and student support services, business and finance, and administration. Other key members could include a teacher representative, director of communications and other community organizations or resources.

Four Key Recovery Components

Physical/Structural Recovery

Ensuring the safety and usability of a building is the primary goal of physical and structural recovery. Physical damages must be assessed to determine the cost and feasibility of repairing or replacing structures or contents. For a school, building and grounds personnel working with the district business/risk manager and insurance carrier would most likely perform this function.

Physical recovery planning considerations:

- Assess the building structure. Depending on the scope of the damages, inspections from OSHA, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and the State Fire Marshal's office may be necessary
- Provide for temporary relocation of classes or activities if damages require extensive repair or rebuilding
- Resume transportation and food service. Reroute buses if necessary and possibly reconfigure drop off zones. If the cafeteria is affected, look at alternative areas for food service and inspection by health authorities
- Assess damages or replacement of furniture, equipment and supplies (desks, books, computers, gym equipment, labs, teacher supplies, etc.)
- Clean up damaged facilities. Determine who will do it, how soon and who pays

Physical damages may also be linked to social/emotional needs. For example, in a school shooting, if deaths or injuries occurred in a certain room, the school may decide to not use the room again due to the extreme trauma associated with that room even if it was cleaned and repaired.

Fiscal Recovery

Following a disaster, *critical business functions* of a school must be restored as soon as possible. Payroll systems, accounting and access to personnel and student data need to be available and operational. Most school districts keep electronic files for many of these functions and should have at least one current backup of their system. Unexpected expenditures and the need to manage grant funds or donations may result from the disaster or emergency. Additional staff may be required to handle these activities.

Fiscal or business recovery also involves planning for *lines of succession* for key administrators. Schools must have "continuity of operations plans" (COOP) to ensure a smooth transition of authority and responsibility should top leadership be unable to function in their role due to a disaster or traumatic incident.

Fiscal and business recovery planning considerations:

- Assign responsibilities and determine who is in charge of fiscal services restoration
- Develop continuity of operations or succession plans
- Track expenditures and payments for the incident. Track overtime hours, rentals, supplies and equipment. Determine who is responsible for these tasks and how things will be reported and segregated from normal school business
- Expedite contracting services needed immediately (clean up, debris removal, utility restoration). This may require a board policy for implementation
- Apply for and administer recovery grant programs
- Back up electronic data files. Determine who is responsible, where the files will be stored and how the school's technological functions will be restored

Academic Recovery

Restoring the structure and routine of learning is the goal of academic recovery. Returning to the normal school day enhances the healing process. While changes in routine may occur due to the disaster or emergency, staff, students, and families working through the event will create a "new normal."

Planning for academic recovery involves personnel in curriculum, public information (communications), technology (IT), transportation, food service, health & safety, building and grounds, administration, and teaching. Plans for academic recovery involve short and long term considerations.

Short-term planning considerations:

- Resume classes as soon as possible. Determine who makes the decision, what factors might affect the date/time and method for returning and how the information is communicated to staff, students, and families
- Modify the academic routine as needed. Modifications may be necessary if buildings have been significantly damaged and cannot be used safety. Also consider the social/emotional needs of students and staff as they learn how to cope with results of the disaster
- Replace academic materials, supplies and equipment if necessary for class resumption. Involve teaching staff, business manager and building and grounds personnel in developing lists of "needed" and "wanted" items
- Communicate regularly with staff. Hold briefings for all staff supplemented by emails and printed materials. Staff will need to be aware of modifications made to the regular routine, provisions of counseling services and communications sent to students' homes
- Communicate with parents or guardians. Determine what information is needed and how the information will be communicated (i.e. meetings, phone, web site, letter, email)

Long-term planning considerations:

- Arrange for homebound instruction or tutoring services for students unable to attend school
- Rearrange or reschedule tests or assignments if necessary due to physical limitations of the building, loss of instruction time or lack of necessary materials
- Allow for periodic visits to counseling services

Social/Emotional Recovery

The goal of emotional recovery is to promote coping and resiliency for students, staff and their families following a disaster or traumatic event. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, both children and adults demonstrate a wide range of reactions after a catastrophic event including physical, cognitive, and emotional symptoms. For some, adverse effects lessen with emotional support and the passage of time. Others are more deeply affected and experience longer-term consequences. It is important to know that these emotional reactions are normal responses to an abnormal event.

Planning for social/emotional recovery is the responsibility of student support staff (nurses, school social workers, counselors, school psychologists) working with teachers, school administrators, and key community mental health agencies. This planning involves establishing partnerships and developing agreements between the school and community agencies, providing training for staff and recommending policies for school board consideration. Community-based resources need to be identified *before* an emergency or disaster so they are available for families needing assistance.

Social/emotional recovery planning considerations:

- Assess emotional needs of students and staff. Determine who will do this and how teachers, school resource officers and others can help identify students in need of assistance
- Organize emotional support systems with student support services personnel district-wide. Establish partnerships with community mental health agencies and faith groups
- Promote messages of resiliency and hope. Work with communications and district leadership to prepare messages, arrange parent meetings, provide fact sheets and web based materials
- Train staff to recognize symptoms of extreme stress in children. Schools may want to provide a class on Psychological First Aid or similar curriculum and involve community agencies
- Determine intervention methods for students, staff and families in need of emotional support. Plan for student support services staff availability, method of referral to community agencies, allotment of time with counselors and ongoing assessment for longer term support
- Plan for memorials. Make pre-disaster recommendations for spontaneous memorials (flowers, posters, stuffed animals, etc.) and prepare district response to requests for permanent memorials. Plan for first anniversary events and consider holding events during the school year that allow students to express themselves

Recovery Communications

Many school stakeholders including staff, parents, students, and vendors need information after an emergency response is over. Communication is key to getting timely, accurate information to a wide variety of audiences.

When the school is actively responding to an emergency, the district's public information officer (PIO) works closely with the community's PIO to coordinate statements and press releases with emergency responders. During recovery, the district PIO works with school administrators and recovery team members to plan for the school's continuing communication with internal and external audiences. Timeliness and accuracy are critical in disseminating recovery messages and controlling rumors. The district may also want to designate one phone number for all "recovery" calls and/or provide an email contact on their web site for recovery inquiries. Communications staff can monitor information trends coming from these inquiries to help identify rumors and possible misinformation so corrective messages can be sent out immediately.

Recovery communication considerations:

- Identify and prioritize stakeholders and their need for information from the school. Consider internal and external audiences, the kind of information each will need and the form and method of delivery used. Set up news briefings and parent meetings when necessary
- Determine authorship of communications from school administrators or subject matter experts (i.e. school psychologist, transportation coordinator)
- Identify information audiences may need. Consult with recovery team members to select formats and methods for dissemination
- Update the school or district web site, voice mails, messages to parents and frequently asked questions in a timely manner
- Provide resources. Determine who will answer recovery calls and respond to email inquiries, add links to outside resources on the school's web site and communicate information about school-based resources
- Control rumors. Track down rumors and misinformation. Respond with corrections
- Convey messages of resilience and a return to normalcy

Communications may be very active in the first few days after a major emergency. The need for communications changes over time as the recovery process is put into place. There may be a need for periodic messages dealing with school changes and methods to help children cope. Communications and other recovery team members should plan together for anniversaries of major, traumatic events.

Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention

Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention is the first step in assisting students, staff and parents with their social/emotional recovery. School behavioral health teams perform these actions during the first 48-72 hours after a traumatic event in the school.

When an emergency occurs:

Building administration and student support services

- Evaluate the situation and determine the need for behavioral health crisis interventions for staff, students and families
- Provide grief counseling as necessary
- Arrange for information and referrals to community mental health resources
- Ensure ongoing support for staff, students and families
- Identify and monitor at–risk students
- Follow–up with assessment or treatment referrals, if necessary
- Implement longer-term social/emotional recovery plan

Staff

- Be aware of staff and student need for behavioral health crisis interventions
- Make referrals to designated staff professionals as necessary
- Identify, monitor and refer students (or other staff) at risk
- Re-establish school and classroom routines as quickly as possible
- Facilitate opportunities for students to talk about their fears or concerns. Communicate a positive, “I’m not helpless” attitude

Each school district should identify a 24–hour contact person or agency responsible for behavioral health crisis assessment and intervention in the community or region.

In the event of a tragic, highly publicized event, unsolicited mental health professionals from federal, state and non-government agencies may respond to offer post-crisis aid. Consult with the Minnesota Department of Health for support, advice and assistance when coordinating the activities of these outside organizations.

Indicators or Symptoms of Distress in Children

As a result of traumatic experiences, children may exhibit a variety of symptoms of distress. Knowing a child's baseline or typical behavior is critical to identifying unusual or problematic behaviors in the child. The following symptoms, if uncharacteristic, may indicate a child is experiencing distress.

Symptoms:

- Unusual complaints of illness
- Isolation from the rest of the group
- Acting out
- Changes in behavior and/or appearance
- Refusing to open up; no eye contact
- Difficulty concentrating and focusing in class
- Emotional displays
- Lack of emotional expression
- Poorer performance
- Lethargic or apathetic
- Easily startled, jumpy

How Teachers Can Assist Students

Children may have difficulty understanding that certain events cannot be controlled or predicted and the adults in their lives cannot always "fix" problems or keep them from happening again. Listed below are some ways teachers and other school staff can help students deal with trauma and the distress or difficult emotions that may result.

- Cope with your own feelings of helplessness, fear, and anger
- Learn to recognize signs and symptoms of distress in children
- Give children opportunities to talk—then listen to them
- Help children put the emergency or disaster in context. Provide a perspective
- Communicate a positive "I'm not helpless" attitude
- Help children to feel safe and secure
- Identify children who seem particularly distressed—those who don't seem to be progressing emotionally after a few weeks. Refer them to school support staff for follow up

From Kentucky Center for School Safety's "Emergency Management Resource Guide: Revision 2008"

HSEM
Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Keeping Minnesota Ready

Minnesota Laws on School Safety

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND OTHER DRUGS

M.S. 121A.29 REPORTING; CHEMICAL ABUSE

Subdivision 1. **Teacher's duty.** A teacher in a nonpublic school participating in a school district chemical use program, or a public school teacher, who knows or has reason to believe that a student is using, possessing, or transferring alcohol or a controlled substance while on the school premises or involved in school-related activities, shall immediately notify the school's chemical abuse preassessment team of this information. A teacher who complies with this section shall be defended and indemnified under section 466.07, subdivision 1, in any action for damages arising out of the compliance.

Subd. 2. **Other reports.** Nothing in this section prevents a teacher or any other school employee from reporting to a law enforcement agency any violation of law occurring on school premises or at school sponsored events.

M.S. 144.4165 TOBACCO PRODUCTS PROHIBITED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

No person shall at any time smoke, chew, or otherwise ingest tobacco or a tobacco product in a public school, as defined in section 120A.05, subdivisions 9, 11, and 13. This prohibition extends to all facilities, whether owned, rented, or leased, and all vehicles that a school district owns, leases, rents, contracts for, or controls. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the lighting of tobacco by an adult as a part of a traditional Indian spiritual or cultural ceremony. For purposes of this section, an Indian is a person who is a member of an Indian tribe as defined in section

DRILLS

M.S. 121A.037 SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS

Private schools and educational institutions not subject to section 121A.035 must have at least five school lock-down drills, five school fire drills consistent with section 299F.30, and one tornado drill and an expectation that students be present and participate in these drills.

M.S 299F.30 FIRE DRILL IN SCHOOL; DOORS AND EXITS

Subdivision 1. **Duties of fire marshal.** Consistent with sections 121A.035, 121A.037, and this section, it shall be the duty of the state fire marshal, deputies and assistants, to require public and private schools and educational institutions to have at least five fire drills each school year and to keep all doors and exits unlocked from the inside of the building during school hours.

Subd. 2. **Fire drill.** Each superintendent, principal, or other person in charge of a public or private school, educational institution, children's home or orphanage housing 20 or more students or other persons, shall instruct and train such students or other persons to quickly and expeditiously quit the premises in case of fire or other emergency by means of drills or rapid dismissals while such school, institution, home, or orphanage is in operation. Records of such drills shall be posted so that such records are available for review by the state fire marshal at all times and shall include the drill date and the time required to evacuate the building.

Subd. 3. **School doors and exits.** Consistent with section 121A.035 and this section, each superintendent, principal, or other person in charge of a public or private school, educational institution, children's home, or orphanage shall keep all doors and exits of such school, institution, home, or orphanage unlocked so that persons can leave by such doors or exits at any time during the hours of normal operation.

LEVIES RELATED TO SCHOOL SAFETY

M.S. 126C.44 SAFE SCHOOLS LEVY

(a) Each district may make a levy on all taxable property located within the district for the purposes specified in this section. The maximum amount which may be levied for all costs under this section shall be equal to $30 multiplied by the district's adjusted marginal cost pupil units for the school year. The proceeds of the levy must be reserved and used for directly funding the following purposes or for reimbursing the cities and counties who contract with the district for the following purposes: (1) to pay the costs incurred for the salaries, benefits, and transportation costs of peace officers and sheriffs for liaison in services in the district's schools; (2) to pay the costs for a drug abuse prevention program as defined in section 609.101, subdivision 3, paragraph (e), in the elementary schools; (3) to pay the costs for a gang resistance education training curriculum in the district's schools; (4) to pay the costs for security in the district's schools and on school property; (5) to pay the costs for other crime prevention, drug abuse, student and staff safety, voluntary opt-in suicide prevention tools, and violence prevention measures taken by the school district; or (6) to pay costs for licensed school counselors, licensed school nurses, licensed school social workers, licensed school psychologists, and licensed alcohol and chemical dependency counselors to help provide early responses to problems. For expenditures under clause (1), the district must initially attempt to contract for services to be provided by peace officers or sheriffs with the police department of each city or the sheriff's department of the county within the district containing the school receiving the services. If a local police department or a county sheriff's department does not wish to provide the necessary services, the district may contract for these services with any other police or sheriff's department located entirely or partially within the school district's boundaries.

(b) A school district that is a member of an intermediate school district may include in its authority under this section the costs associated with safe schools activities authorized under paragraph (a) for intermediate school district programs. This authority must not exceed $10 times the adjusted marginal cost pupil units of the member districts. This authority is in addition to any other authority authorized under this section. Revenue raised under this paragraph must be transferred to the intermediate school district.

(c) If a school district spends safe schools levy proceeds under paragraph (a), clause (6), the district must annually certify that its total spending on services provided by the employees listed in paragraph (a), clause (6), is not less than the sum of its expenditures for these purposes, excluding amounts spent under this section, in the previous year plus the amount spent under this section.

M.S. 123B.57 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE; HEALTH AND SAFETY.

Subdivision 1. **Health and safety program**. (a) To receive health and safety revenue for any fiscal year a district must submit to the commissioner an application for aid and levy by the date determined by the commissioner. The application may be for hazardous substance removal, fire and life safety code repairs, labor and industry regulated facility and equipment violations, and health, safety, and environmental management, including indoor air quality management. The application must include a health and safety program adopted by the school district board. The program must include the estimated cost, per building, of the program by fiscal year. Upon approval through the adoption of a resolution by each of an intermediate district's member school district boards and the approval of the Department of Education, a school district may include its proportionate share of the costs of health and safety projects for an intermediate district in its application.

(b) Health and safety projects with an estimated cost of $500,000 or more per site, approved after February 1, 2003, are not eligible for health and safety revenue. Health and safety projects with an estimated cost of $500,000 or more per site, approved after February 1, 2003, that meet all other requirements for health and safety funding, are eligible for alternative facilities bonding and levy revenue according to section 123B.59. A school board shall not separate portions of a single project into components to qualify for health and safety revenue, and shall not combine unrelated projects into a single project to qualify for alternative facilities bonding and levy revenue.

Subd. 2. **Contents of program**. A district must adopt a health and safety program. The

program must include plans, where applicable, for hazardous substance removal, fire and life safety code repairs, regulated facility and equipment violations, and health, safety, and environmental management, including indoor air quality management.

(a) A hazardous substance plan must contain provisions for the removal or encapsulation of asbestos from school buildings or property, asbestos-related repairs, cleanup and disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls found in school buildings or property, and cleanup, removal, disposal, and repairs related to storing heating fuel or transportation fuels such as alcohol, gasoline, fuel, oil, and special fuel, as defined in section 296A.01. If a district has already developed a plan for the removal or encapsulation of asbestos as required by the federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986, the district may use a summary of that plan, which includes a description and schedule of response actions, for purposes of this section. The plan must also contain provisions to make modifications to existing facilities and equipment necessary to limit personal exposure to hazardous substances, as regulated by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration under Code of Federal Regulations, title 29, part 1910, subpart Z; or is determined by the commissioner to present a significant risk to district staff or student health and safety as a result of foreseeable use, handling, accidental spill, exposure, or contamination.

(b) A fire and life safety plan must contain a description of the current fire and life safety code violations, a plan for the removal or repair of the fire and life safety hazard, and a description of safety preparation and awareness procedures to be followed until the hazard is fully corrected.

(c) A facilities and equipment violation plan must contain provisions to correct health and safety hazards as provided in Department of Labor and Industry standards pursuant to section 182.655.

(d) A health, safety, and environmental management plan must contain a description of training, record keeping, hazard assessment, and program management as defined in section 123B.56.

(e) A plan to test for and mitigate radon produced hazards.

(f) A plan to monitor and improve indoor air quality.

Subd. 3. **Health and safety revenue**. A district's health and safety revenue for a fiscal year equals the district's alternative facilities levy under section 123B.59, subdivision 5, paragraph (b), plus the greater of zero or:

(1) the sum of (a) the total approved cost of the district's hazardous substance plan for fiscal years 1985 through 1989, plus (b) the total approved cost of the district's health and safety program for fiscal year 1990 through the fiscal year to which the levy is attributable, excluding expenditures funded with bonds issued under section 123B.59 or 123B.62, or chapter 475; certificates of indebtedness or capital notes under section 123B.61; levies under section 123B.58, 123B.59, 123B.63, or 126C.40, subdivision 1 or 6; and other federal, state, or local revenues, minus

(2) the sum of (a) the district's total hazardous substance aid and levy for fiscal years 1985 through 1989 under sections 124.245 and 275.125, subdivision 11c, plus (b) the district's health and safety revenue under this subdivision, for years before the fiscal year to which the levy is attributable.

Subd. 4. **Health and safety levy**. To receive health and safety revenue, a district may levy an amount equal to the district's health and safety revenue as defined in subdivision 3 multiplied by the lesser of one, or the ratio of the quotient derived by dividing the adjusted net tax capacity of the district for the year preceding the year the levy is certified by the adjusted marginal cost pupil units in the district for the school year to which the levy is attributable, to $2,935.

Subd. 5. **Health and safety aid**. A district's health and safety aid is the difference between its health and safety revenue and its health and safety levy. If a district does not levy the entire amount permitted, health and safety aid must be reduced in proportion to the actual amount levied. Health and safety aid may not be reduced as a result of reducing a district's health and safety levy according to section 123B.79.

Subd. 6. **Uses of health and safety revenue**. (a) Health and safety revenue may be used only for approved expenditures necessary to correct fire and life safety hazards, or for the removal or encapsulation of asbestos from school buildings or property owned or being acquired by the district, asbestos-related repairs, cleanup and disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls found in school buildings or property owned or being acquired by the district, or the cleanup, removal, disposal, and repairs related to storing heating fuel or transportation fuels such as alcohol, gasoline, fuel oil, and special fuel, as defined in section 296A.01, Minnesota occupational safety and health administration

regulated facility and equipment hazards, indoor air quality mold abatement, upgrades or replacement of mechanical ventilation systems to meet American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers standards and State Mechanical Code, Department of Health Food Code and swimming pool hazards excluding depth correction, and health, safety, and environmental management. Testing and calibration activities are permitted for existing mechanical ventilation systems at intervals no less than every five years. Health and safety revenue must not be used to finance a lease purchase agreement, installment purchase agreement, or other deferred payments agreement. Health and safety revenue must not be used for the construction of new facilities or the purchase of portable classrooms, for interest or other financing expenses, or for energy efficiency projects under section 123B.65. The revenue may not be used for a building or property or part of a building or property used for postsecondary instruction or administration or for a purpose unrelated to elementary and secondary education.

(b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), health and safety revenue must not be used for replacement of building materials or facilities including roof, walls, windows, internal fixtures and flooring, nonhealth and safety costs associated with demolition of facilities, structural repair or replacement of facilities due to unsafe conditions, violence prevention and facility security, ergonomics, building and heating, ventilating and air conditioning supplies, maintenance, and cleaning activities. All assessments, investigations, inventories, and support equipment not leading to the engineering or construction of a project shall be included in the health, safety, and environmental management costs in subdivision 8, paragraph (a).

Subd. 7. **Proration**. In the event that the health and safety aid available for any year is prorated, a district having its aid prorated may levy an additional amount equal to the amount not paid by the state due to proration.

Subd. 8. **Health, safety, and environmental management cost.** (a) A district's cost for health, safety, and environmental management is limited to the lesser of:

(1) actual cost to implement their plan; or

(2) an amount determined by the commissioner, based on enrollment, building age, and size.

(b) The department may contract with regional service organizations, private contractors, Minnesota Safety Council, or state agencies to provide management assistance to school districts for health and safety capital projects. Management assistance is the development of written programs for the identification, recognition and control of hazards, and prioritization and scheduling of district health and safety capital projects. The department shall not exclude private contractors from the opportunity to provide any health and safety services to school districts.

(c) Notwithstanding paragraph (b), the department may approve revenue, up to the limit defined in paragraph (a) for districts having an approved health, safety, and environmental management plan that uses district staff to accomplish coordination and provided services.

History: *1988 c 718 art 8 s 19; 1988 c 719 art 5 s 84; 1989 c 329 art 5 s 11-13; 1Sp1989 c 1art 6 s 6; art 9 s 4; 1990 c 562 art 5 s 8; art 10 s 5; 1990 c 604 art 8 s 1,2; 1991 c 130 s 19,20; 1991 c 265 art 5 s 6; 1993 c 224 art 5 s 22-26; 1994 c 647 art 6 s 28; 1Sp1995 c 3 art 5 s 7; art 16 s 13; 1Sp1997 c 4 art 4 s 17,18; 1998 c 299 s 30; 1998 c 397 art 7 s 97,98,164; art 11 s 3; 1998 c 398 art 4 s 3; 1999 c 86 art 1 s 33; 1999 c 241 art 4 s 7,29; 2000 c 464 art 3 s 9; 2000 c 489 art 5 s 5,19,27; 1Sp2001 c 6 art 4 s 3-5; 1Sp2003 c 9 art 4 s 5-7; 2006 c 282 art 5 s 1; 2007 c 146 art 4 s 7*

NOTE: The amendment to subdivision 6 by Laws 2006, chapter 282, article 5, section 1, is effective for revenue for fiscal year 2008 and later. Laws 2006, chapter 282, article 5, section 1, the effective date.

NOTE: The amendment to subdivision 3 by Laws 2007, chapter 146, article 4, section 7, is effective for revenue for fiscal year 2009. Laws 2007, chapter 146, article 4, section 7, the effective date.

POLICIES ON SCHOOL SAFETY

M.S. 121A.03 MODEL POLICY

Subdivision 1. **Model policy.** The commissioner shall maintain and make available to school boards a model sexual, religious, and racial harassment and violence policy. The model policy shall address the requirements of subdivision 2, and may encourage violence prevention and character development education programs, consistent with section 120B.232, subdivision 1, to prevent and reduce policy violations.

Subd. 2. **Sexual, religious, and racial harassment and violence policy.** A school board must adopt a written sexual, religious, and racial harassment and sexual, religious, and racial violence policy that conforms with chapter 363A. The policy shall apply to pupils, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel, include reporting procedures, and set forth disciplinary actions that will be taken for violation of the policy. Disciplinary actions must conform with collective bargaining agreements and sections 121A.41 to 121A.56. The policy must be conspicuously posted throughout each school building, given to each district employee and independent contractor at the time of entering into the person's employment contract, and included in each school's student handbook on school policies. Each school must develop a process for discussing the school's sexual, religious, and racial harassment and violence policy with students and school employees.

Subd. 3. **Submission to commissioner.** Each school board must submit to the commissioner a copy of the sexual, religious, and racial harassment and sexual, religious, and racial violence policy the board has adopted.

M.S. 121A.035 CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Subdivision 1. **Model policy.** The commissioner shall maintain and make available to school boards and charter schools a model crisis management policy that includes, among other items, school lock-down and tornado drills, consistent with subdivision 2, and school fire drills under section 299F.30.

Subd. 2. **School district and charter school policy.** A school board and a charter school must adopt a crisis management policy to address potential violent crisis situations in the district or charter school. The policy must be developed cooperatively with administrators, teachers, employees, students, parents, community members, law enforcement agencies, other emergency management officials, county attorney offices, social service agencies, emergency medical responders, and any other appropriate individuals or organizations. The policy must include at least five school lock-down drills, five school fire drills consistent with section 299F.30, and one tornado drill.

M.S. 121A.05 POLICY TO REFER FIREARMS POSSESSOR

A school board must have a policy requiring the appropriate school official to, as soon as practicable, refer to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system, as appropriate, a pupil who brings a firearm to school unlawfully.

M.S. 121A.64 NOTIFICATION; TEACHERS' LEGITIMATE EDUCATIONAL INTEREST

(a) A classroom teacher has a legitimate educational interest in knowing which students placed in the teacher's classroom have a history of violent behavior and must be notified before such students are placed in the teacher's classroom.

(b) Representatives of the school board and the exclusive representative of the teachers shall discuss issues related to the model policy on student records adopted under Laws 1999, chapter 241, article 9, section 50, and any modifications adopted under Laws 2003, First Special Session chapter 9, for notifying classroom teachers and other school district employees having a legitimate educational interest in knowing about students with a history of violent behavior placed in classrooms. The representatives of the school board and the exclusive representative of the teachers also may discuss the need for intervention services or conflict resolution or training for staff related to placing students with a history of violent behavior in teachers' classrooms.

M.S. 121A.65 REVIEW OF POLICY
The principal or other person having general control and supervision of the school, and representatives of parents, students, and staff in a school building shall confer at least annually to review the discipline policy and to assess whether the policy has been enforced. A school board must conduct an annual review of the district wide discipline policy.

M.S. 121A.69 HAZING POLICY
Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) "Hazing" means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization.
(b) "Student organization" means a group, club, or organization having students as its primary members or participants.
Subd. 2. **Model policy.** The commissioner of education shall maintain and make available to school boards a model policy on student or staff hazing that addresses the requirements of subdivision 3.
Subd. 3. **School board policy.** Each school board shall adopt a written policy governing student or staff hazing. The policy must apply to student behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and after school hours. The policy must include reporting procedures and disciplinary consequences for violating the policy. Disciplinary consequences must be sufficiently severe to deter violations and appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. Disciplinary consequences must conform with sections 121A.41 to 121A.56. Each school must include the policy in the student handbook on school policies.

M.S. 121A.0695 SCHOOL BOARD POLICY; PROHIBITING INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING
Each school board shall adopt a written policy prohibiting intimidation and bullying of any student. The policy shall address intimidation and bullying in all forms, including, but not limited to, electronic forms and forms involving Internet use.

M.S. 121A.72 SCHOOL LOCKER POLICY
Subdivision 1. **Policy.** It is the policy of the state of Minnesota that:
"School lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school authorities must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials."
Subd. 2. **Dissemination.** The locker policy must be disseminated to parents and students in the way that other policies of general application to students are disseminated. A copy of the policy must be provided to a student the first time that the student is given the use of a locker.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

M.S. 123B.90 SCHOOL BUS SAFETY TRAINING
Subdivision 1.[Repealed, 1Sp2003 c 9 art 10 s 14]
Subd. 2. **Student training.** (a) Each district must provide public school pupils enrolled in kindergarten through grade 10 with age-appropriate school bus safety training, as described in this section, of the following concepts:
(1) transportation by school bus is a privilege and not a right;
(2) district policies for student conduct and school bus safety;

(3) appropriate conduct while on the school bus;
(4) the danger zones surrounding a school bus;
(5) procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus;
(6) procedures for safe street or road crossing; and
(7) school bus evacuation.

(b) Each nonpublic school located within the district must provide all nonpublic school pupils enrolled in kindergarten through grade 10 who are transported by school bus at public expense and attend school within the district's boundaries with training as required in paragraph (a).

(c) Students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 6 who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first or second week of school must receive the school bus safety training competencies by the end of the third week of school. Students enrolled in grades 7 through 10 who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first or second week of school and have not previously received school bus safety training must receive the training or receive bus safety instructional materials by the end of the sixth week of school. Students taking driver's training instructional classes must receive training in the laws and proper procedures when operating a motor vehicle in the vicinity of a school bus as required by section 169.446, subdivisions 2 and 3. Students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 10 who enroll in a school after the second week of school and are transported by school bus and have not received training in their previous school district shall undergo school bus safety training or receive bus safety instructional materials within four weeks of the first day of attendance. Upon request of the superintendent of schools, the school transportation safety director in each district must certify to the superintendent that all students transported by school bus within the district have received the school bus safety training according to this section. Upon request of the superintendent of the school district where the nonpublic school is located, the principal or other chief administrator of each nonpublic school must certify to the school transportation safety director of the district in which the school is located that the school's students transported by school bus at public expense have received training according to this section.

(d) A district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense may provide kindergarten pupils with bus safety training before the first day of school.

(e) A district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense may also provide student safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety, for students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 5.

(f) A district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must make reasonable accommodations for the school bus safety training of pupils known to speak English as a second language and pupils with disabilities.

(g) The district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must provide students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 school bus safety training twice during the school year.

(h) A district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must conduct a school bus evacuation drill at least once during the school year.

Subd. 3. **Model training program.** The commissioner shall develop a comprehensive model school bus safety training program for pupils who ride the bus that includes bus safety curriculum for both classroom and practical instruction and age-appropriate instructional materials.

M.S. 123B.93 ADVERTISING ON SCHOOL BUSES

(a) The commissioner, through a competitive process, may contract with advertisers regarding advertising on school buses. At a minimum, the contract must prohibit advertising and advertising images that:
(1) solicit the sale of, or promote the use of, alcoholic beverages and tobacco products;
(2) are discriminatory in nature or content;
(3) imply or declare an endorsement of the product or service by the school district;
(4) contain obscene material;
(5) are false, misleading, or deceptive; or
(6) relate to an illegal activity or antisocial behavior.

(b) Advertisement must meet the following conditions:
(1) the advertising attached to the school bus does not interfere with bus identification under section 169.441; and
(2) the bus with attached advertising meets the school bus equipment standards under sections 169.4501 to 169.4504.
(c) All buses operated by school districts may be attached with advertisements under the state contract. All school district contracts shall include a provision for advertisement. Each school district shall be reimbursed by the advertiser for all costs incurred by the district and its contractors for supporting the advertising program, including, but not limited to, retrofitting buses, storing advertising, attaching advertising to the bus, and related maintenance.
(d) The commissioner shall hold harmless and indemnify each district for all liabilities arising from the advertising program. Each district must tender defense of all such claims to the commissioner within five days of receipt.
(e) All revenue from the contract shall be deposited in the general fund.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

M.S. 121A.06 REPORTS OF DANGEROUS WEAPON INCIDENTS IN SCHOOL ZONES

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** As used in this section:
(1) "dangerous weapon" has the meaning given it in section 609.02, subdivision 6;
(2) "school" has the meaning given it in section 120A.22, subdivision 4; and
(3) "school zone" has the meaning given it in section 152.01, subdivision 14a, clauses (1) and (3).

Subd. 2. **Reports; content.** School districts must electronically report to the commissioner of education incidents involving the use or possession of a dangerous weapon in school zones. The form must include the following information:
(1) a description of each incident, including a description of the dangerous weapon involved in the incident;

(2) where, at what time, and under what circumstances the incident occurred;
(3) information about the offender, other than the offender's name, including the offender's age; whether the offender was a student and, if so, where the offender attended school; and whether the offender was under school expulsion or suspension at the time of the incident;
(4) information about the victim other than the victim's name, if any, including the victim's age; whether the victim was a student and, if so, where the victim attended school; and if the victim was not a student, whether the victim was employed at the school;
(5) the cost of the incident to the school and to the victim; and
(6) the action taken by the school administration to respond to the incident.
The commissioner shall provide an electronic reporting format that allows school districts to provide aggregate data.

Subd. 3. **Reports; filing requirements.** By July 31 of each year, each public school shall report incidents involving the use or possession of a dangerous weapon in school zones to the commissioner. The reports must be submitted using the electronic reporting system developed by the commissioner under subdivision 2. The commissioner shall compile the information it receives from the schools and report it annually to the commissioner of public safety and the legislature.

M.S. 121A.44 EXPULSION FOR POSSESSION OF FIREARM

(a) Notwithstanding the time limitation in section 121A.41, subdivision 5, a school board must expel for a period of at least one year a pupil who is determined to have brought a firearm to school except the board may modify this expulsion requirement for a pupil on a case-by-case basis. For the purposes of this section, firearm is as defined in United States Code, title 18, section 921.
(b) Notwithstanding chapter 13, a student's expulsion or withdrawal or transfer from a school after an expulsion action is initiated against the student for a weapons violation under paragraph (a) may be disclosed by the school district initiating the expulsion proceeding. Unless the information is

otherwise public, the disclosure may be made only to another school district in connection with the possible admission of the student to the other district.

M.S. 121A.582 STUDENT DISCIPLINE; REASONABLE FORCE

Subdivision 1. **Reasonable force standard.** (a) A teacher or school principal, in exercising the person's lawful authority, may use reasonable force when it is necessary under the circumstances to correct or restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to another.

(b) A school employee, school bus driver, or other agent of a district, in exercising the person's lawful authority, may use reasonable force when it is necessary under the circumstances to restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to another.

(c) Paragraphs (a) and (b) do not authorize conduct prohibited under sections 121A.58 and 121A.67.

Subd. 2. **Civil liability.** (a) A teacher or school principal who, in the exercise of the person's lawful authority, uses reasonable force under the standard in subdivision 1, paragraph (a), has a defense against a civil action for damages under section 123B.25.

(b) A school employee, bus driver, or other agent of a district who, in the exercise of the person's lawful authority, uses reasonable force under the standard in subdivision 1, paragraph (b), has a defense against a civil action for damages under section 123B.25.

Subd. 3. **Criminal prosecution.** (a) A teacher or school principal who, in the exercise of the person's lawful authority, uses reasonable force under the standard in subdivision 1, paragraph (a), has a defense against a criminal prosecution under section 609.06, subdivision 1.

(b) A school employee, bus driver, or other agent of a district who, in the exercise of the person's lawful authority, uses reasonable force under the standard in subdivision 1, paragraph (b), has a defense against a criminal prosecution under section 609.06, subdivision 1.

Subd. 4. **Supplementary rights and defenses.** Any right or defense in this section is supplementary to those specified in section 121A.58, 121A.67, 123B.25, or 609.06, subdivision 1.

M.S. 121A.61 DISCIPLINE AND REMOVAL OF STUDENTS FROM CLASS

Subdivision 1. **Required policy.** Each school board must adopt a written district wide school discipline policy which includes written rules of conduct for students, minimum consequences for violations of the rules, and grounds and procedures for removal of a student from class. The policy must be developed in consultation with administrators, teachers, employees, pupils, parents, community members, law enforcement agencies, county attorney offices, social service agencies,

and such other individuals or organizations as the board determines appropriate. A school site council may adopt additional provisions to the policy subject to the approval of the school board.

Subd. 2. **Grounds for removal from class.** The policy must establish the various grounds for which a student may be removed from a class in the district for a period of time under the procedures specified in the policy. The policy must include a procedure for notifying and meeting with a student's parent or guardian to discuss the problem that is causing the student to be removed from class after the student has been removed from class more than ten times in one school year. The grounds in the policy must include at least the following provisions as well as other grounds determined appropriate by the board:

(a) willful conduct that significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education, including conduct that interferes with a teacher's ability to teach or communicate effectively with students in a class or with the ability of other students to learn;

(b) willful conduct that endangers surrounding persons, including school district employees, the student or other students, or the property of the school; and

(c) willful violation of any rule of conduct specified in the discipline policy adopted by the board.

Subd. 3. **Policy components.** The policy must include at least the following components:

(a) rules governing student conduct and procedures for informing students of the rules;

(b) the grounds for removal of a student from a class;

(c) the authority of the classroom teacher to remove students from the classroom pursuant to procedures and rules established in the district's policy;
(d) the procedures for removal of a student from a class by a teacher, school administrator, or other school district employee;
(e) the period of time for which a student may be removed from a class, which may not exceed five class periods for a violation of a rule of conduct;
(f) provisions relating to the responsibility for and custody of a student removed from a class;
(g) the procedures for return of a student to the specified class from which the student has been removed;
(h) the procedures for notifying a student and the student's parents or guardian of violations of the rules of conduct and of resulting disciplinary actions;
(i) any procedures determined appropriate for encouraging early involvement of parents or guardians in attempts to improve a student's behavior;
(j) any procedures determined appropriate for encouraging early detection of behavioral problems;
(k) any procedures determined appropriate for referring a student in need of special education services to those services;
(1) the procedures for consideration of whether there is a need for a further assessment or of whether there is a need for a review of the adequacy of a current individual education plan of a student with a disability who is removed from class;
(m) procedures for detecting and addressing chemical abuse problems of a student while on the school premises;
(n) the minimum consequences for violations of the code of conduct;
(o) procedures for immediate and appropriate interventions tied to violations of the code;
(p) a provision that states that a teacher, school employee, school bus driver, or other agent of a district may use reasonable force in compliance with section 121A.582 and other laws; and
(q) an agreement regarding procedures to coordinate crisis services to the extent funds are available with the county board responsible for implementing sections 245.487 to 245.4889 for students with a serious emotional disturbance or other students who have an individualized education plan whose behavior may be addressed by crisis intervention.

Safe School Self-Assessment Checklist

Updated January 2014

Appendix

Disclaimer: The following checklist, constructed by the Minnesota School Safety Center using a compilation of various resources, provides an overview of school facility vulnerabilities and hazards that should be identified and addressed in the prevention/mitigation phase of a school's emergency management process. The checklist is designed for schools to use while conducting their own assessments. Although comprehensive, this checklist should not be construed to replace mandated safety requirements enforced by building inspectors, Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards, and/or State and Federal fire codes.

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
THE EMERGENCY PLAN						
1. Multi-hazard in nature within the emergency management model of *Prevention, Preparedness, Mitigation, Response and Recovery*.						
2. District articulates a strategic vision, mission and methodology for response agencies.						
3. District's plan is then developed in collaboration with community stakeholders and response agencies.						
4. Plan identifies designees (ideally three) who will direct emergency response in the absence of the administrator.						
5. Plan is reviewed and updated on a regular basis. (How often?)						
6. Plan includes specific procedures and accommodations for students with special needs and English Language Learners (ELLs)/English as Second Language (ESL).						
7. Plan uses common vocabulary for all school stakeholders and emergency responders.						
8. Plan includes after-school activities.						
9. Plan includes an Incident Command System (ICS) and describes school emergency response teams.						
10. Plan includes special events, (e.g. prom, graduation, homecoming, etc.)						
11. Plan includes a threat assessment process.						
12. Plan includes the following ***required*** universal procedures:						
a. lockdown						
b. evacuation						
c. severe weather shelter						
13. Plan includes the following ***suggested*** universal procedures:						
a. shelter-in-place						
b. reunification						
14. Plan includes cash handling procedures.						
15. Plan includes mail handling procedures.						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
THE EMERGENCY PLAN continued						
16. Plan includes emergency procedures specific to a variety of potential incidents, (e.g. bomb threats, fights, intruders, etc.)						
17. Plan includes emergency procedures specific to a variety of potential incidents, (e.g. bomb threats, fights, intruders, hazardous materials.)						
18. The school/district has communicated their crisis plan to community response agencies and included them in planning/training.						
19. Drills and exercises make use of:						
a. emergency go kits						
b. accountability systems (e.g. attendance)						
c. after action reports						
20. Maps of facilities are updated and communicated to all community stakeholders and emergency responders.						
21. Plan includes a recovery module for post-crisis response, (e.g. access to mental health services.)						
22. Plan addresses community hazards, (e.g. railway, expressway, pipelines, waterways, chemical facilities, airports, etc.)						
23. Plan identifies relocation facilities, (i.e. memorandums have been established if needed.)						
Comments:						
POLICY						
1. Required policies are in place:						
a. bullying						
b. harassment and violence						
c. crisis management						
d. hazing						
e. student discipline						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
POLICY continued						
2. The school has a student assistance team for assessing students who are demonstrating at risk behaviors.						
Comments:						
DRILLS						
1. Required drills take place in each school building throughout each school year:						
a. 5 lockdown						
b. 5 fire (first fire drill of each school year must be within first ten days of beginning of classes)						
c. 1 severe weather						
Comments:						
BUILDING ACCESS						
1. There is a policy, system, and practice for ensuring secure entry/exit.						
2. There is a single point of public entry/exit to each building.						
3. Designated points of entry are monitored to control building access.						
4. School staff monitors all entrances and exits during *arrival* and *departure* of students.						
5. Main entrance is observable from main office.						
6. Students are required to have written permission to leave school grounds.						
7. Signs are visibly posted listing items not allowed in the school (e.g. weapons, drugs, tobacco, alcohol, etc.)						
8. Staff follow written procedures for accessing the building before and after school hours.						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
BUILDING ACCESS continued						
Comments:						
KEYS AND IDENTIFICATION						
1. There is a master key control system to monitor keys, access cards, and their duplicates.						
2. Keys and access cards are audited annually.						
3. The school has a Knox Box or other system to provide quick access to keys by law enforcement and fire department.						
4. All staff members are required to wear photo ID.						
5. Staff members are required to turn in photo IDs, keys, and access cards upon termination of employment.						
6. Emergency response team staff members are identified by lanyards or some other clear form of designation on a daily basis.						
Comments:						
VISITOR PROCEDURES						
1. Policy/Procedures signs are posted at all entrances.						
2. Visitors are required to:						
a. show picture ID						
b. sign in AND out						
c. wear visible identification						
3. Sign-in stations/desks are identified, staffed and properly equipped (e.g. phone, radio, duress button, etc.)						
4. Supply of visitor IDs are out of reach of visitors.						
5. Visitors are escorted, when deemed necessary.						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
VISITOR PROCEDURES continued						
6. Contractors and vendors are required to check in AND out and display visible identification.						
Comments:						
STAFF TRAINING						
1. Staff receive training in:						
a. threat assessment						
b. all required drills/evacuation routes						
c. awareness of any suspicious or unusual activity						
d. awareness of irregularities in the surroundings (e.g. suspicious vehicles containers, broken air vents, etc.)						
e. proper procedures for checking suspicious packages and deliveries						
f. proper response to bomb threats or other threatening/suspicious phone calls						
g. personal safety						
2. Emergency medical response team members have been trained and certified in CPR and First Aid.						
3. If AEDs exist, building emergency response team members have been trained and drilled in their use and know their location.						
4. School emergency response teams practice regularly scheduled and unscheduled drills and exercises to ensure competency.						
COMMENTS:						
PHYSICAL CLIMATE						
1. School demonstrates a welcoming environment.						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
PHYSICAL CLIMATE continued						
2. Student work is displayed to show pride and ownership by students (needs to be less than 20% of corridor wall).						
3. Environment displays student activities and opportunities for involvement.						
4. Posters are displayed encouraging positive behavior choices and well being.						
5. Staff members are visible in hallways, supervising/interacting with students.						
6. Things work and/or get fixed immediately.						
7. There is a school discipline plan that is communicated to staff, students and parents.						
8. Teachers are required to submit a classroom management plan to their administrator.						
9. The school provides conflict resolution training for staff and/or students.						
10. There is an anti-bullying program which includes cyber-bullying.						
11. Mentoring programs are in place.						
12. The school student services team includes a mental health specialist (e.g. social worker, counselor, and/or psychologist).						
Comments:						
COMMUNICATIONS						
School communications systems:						
1. There is a 2-way communication modality between the main office and the:						
a. classrooms						
b. administration						
c. school-based security staff						
d. playground staff						
e. portable classrooms/buildings						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
COMMUNICATIONS continued						
f. ball fields						
g. health services						
h. custodial staff						
i. transportation dispatcher						
j. other student services personnel (counselors, social workers, and special ED staff, etc.)						
2. All classrooms are equipped with a system to communicate in an emergency that is clearly marked with the appropriate "911" designation to get an outside line.						
3. A process is in place to communicate security instructions to staff in a timely and understandable manner (e.g. PA system)						
4. Filters or other such mechanisms are in place to routinely monitor suspicious internet activity on school computers.						
5. A reporting system is in place in the event of discovering suspicious internet activity.						
6. An anonymous reporting system is in place for students and staff. (e.g. comment box, web-based, texting method, etc.)						
7. All safety related parent or media inquiries are directed to a designated spokesperson.						
District/Media Emergency Communications:						
8. The school/district communicates with parents throughout the year about emergency procedures via newsletters, emails, website, and/or other means.						
9. The district has a protocol for working with the media in the event of any emergency.						
10. In the event of an emergency during school hours, a system is in place to contact parents with alerts and/or instructions.						
Comments:						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
GENERAL EXTERIOR: *while answering the following questions, keep in mind seasonal differences may apply; (e.g. snow accumulation, snow piles, vegetation growth, etc.)*						
1. School has marquee, visible from road.						
2. School reflects use of school colors/symbols.						
3. Grounds are fenced in appropriate areas.						
4. Gates if present are secured when not in use (if allowed by the fire code).						
5. Perimeter of school building is clear of safety hazards, debris, overgrown vegetation and obstructions.						
6. Mechanical, electrical and other such equipment on ground level is surrounded by a protective enclosure.						
7. Shrubs and foliage are trimmed low to allow for good sightlines.						
8. Building(s) are free of graffiti.						
9. Posted signs indicate restricted areas.						
10. Ground floor windows have functional locks and unbroken panes.						
11. Roof access is restricted.						
12. Outside air intakes are greater than 10 feet above ground level.						
a. air handling units can be controlled (shut off) in zones						
b. air handling system can be shut down by at least 3 employees						
13. All trailers/outbuildings are secured to their location and labeled.						
14. Areas around buildings are adequately lit.						
15. Exterior doors:						
a. have a sturdy center mullion and/or are equipped with appropriate security						
b. have non-removable hinge pins						
c. unless designated for entry, lack exterior hardware						
d. allow for keyed re-entry						
e. are coded on the outside and clearly visible (North 1 or N1)(continue numbering on all sides of facility)						
f. are coded on the inside matching exterior numbers (North 1 or N1)						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
GENERAL EXTERIOR continued						
Comments:						
BUSES AND PARKING						
1. Bus loading zone is visible from main office or monitored by staff.						
2. Buses are prevented from creating a visual obstacle where crime may occur.						
3. Bus loading and drop off zones are clearly marked.						
4. Parking areas are lit.						
5. Parent drop off and pick up areas are clearly marked.						
6. Fire zones are maintained free of cars and buses at all times.						
7. Parking lot has signs to direct staff, students and visitors to designated parking areas.						
8. Student cars are properly marked through the use of identification.						
9. Campus supervision/security includes regular parking lot monitoring.						
10. Bicycle or motorcycle parking is in view of the building or monitored by security.						
Comments:						
PLAYGROUND / RECREATION AREAS						
1. Play and recreation areas are protected by fencing.						
2. Vehicular access is restricted around play areas.						
3. Emergency vehicles can access play and recreation areas easily.						
4. Bleachers are well maintained.						
5. Risers between bleacher seats are protected to prevent entrapment.						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
PLAYGROUND / RECREATION AREAS continued						
6. An adequate number of recess monitors are appropriately positioned around the play area perimeter.						
7. Recess monitors have equipment to warn children in case of emergency.						
8. Play areas and equipment comply with Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines (CPSC):						
a. surfaces are free from holes and other blemishes that could cause injury						
b. surfacing extends at least 6’ in all directions from play equipment						
c. play structures more than 30” high are spaced at least 9’ apart						
d. posts are secure and free from sharp points or edges						
e. hardware is secure (e.g. no open “S” hooks)						
f. elevated areas have guardrails						
g. spaces (e.g. openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs) are appropriate in size and free from risk of entrapment						
Comments:						
DELIVERIES						
1. Deliveries are accepted only at designated receiving areas.						
2. Deliveries are documented using delivery logs.						
3. There is a system for inspecting and approving items delivered to the building.						
4. Loading dock doors are secured unless observed by staff during deliveries.						
Comments:						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
GENERAL INTERIOR						
1. Stairwells are uniformly and adequately lit.						
2. Hallways are:						
a. uniformly and adequately lit						
b. free of graffiti						
3. Restrooms:						
a. are uniformly and adequately lit						
b. are free of graffiti						
c. have hardware that prevents the main entrance from locking from the inside						
d. have no inlay ceilings						
4. Doors and locks are in good condition.						
5. Classrooms with windows have curtains and/or window shades.						
6. All rooms are locked when not in use.						
7. Controlled access by specialized staff is required for:						
a. electrical panel access doors						
b. boiler and mechanical rooms						
c. custodial closets						
8. Doors opening into interior areas like courtyards are kept locked with limited access.						
9. Unused areas are closed off when not in use after school hours if allowed by the fire code. Gates are not allowed to create dead-end corridors.						
10. Locker bays are well lit.						
11. Locker height allows for clear sightlines.						
12. Exit signs are visible and adequately lit.						
13. Classroom doors can be locked from the inside.						
a. if not procedures are in place to safely block, wedge or obstruct movement of classroom doors						
b. procedures are rehearsed						
14. Emergency lighting is properly installed and functioning.						
15. All interior glass doors are properly installed and repaired.						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
GENERAL INTERIOR continued						
16. All interior glass doors are properly installed and repaired.						
17. Floor coverings are properly installed and in good repair.						
18. There is unobstructed access to AEDs and first aid supplies.						
19. Hallway safety mirrors (convex mirrors) are used as necessary.						
20. All rooms have emergency procedures posted.						
21. All rooms have evacuation routes and severe weather safe areas posted.						
22. High-risk areas are protected by high-security locks and an alarm system, (e.g. main office, cafeteria, computer labs, industrial arts, science labs, nurse's office, boiler room, electrical rooms, swimming pool, and communication closet.)						
Comments:						
CAFETERIA						
1. Is uniformly and adequately lit.						
2. The freezer door can be opened from the inside.						
3. Cafeteria is supervised adequately by staff.						
4. Physical layout of cafeteria allows for quick, safe entry AND exit of students.						
5. Physical layout of cafeteria allows for good sightlines.						
6. A system is in place for inspecting and approving food deliveries.						
7. Cafeteria loading dock door(s) are secured when not in use.						
Comments:						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
GYMNASIUM AREA(s)						
1. Lighting fixtures and windows are protected in gym areas.						
2. AEDs are present in physical education wing.						
3. Safety mats and equipment are maintained.						
4. Equipment is properly stored and secured.						
Comments:						
SPECIALIZED AREAS (reference fire code for other essential safety elements)						
Science, Art, Theater, Shop, Swimming Pool, Gymnastics and Weight Rooms:						
1. Phones are present in primary work spaces and office areas.						
2. Emergency procedures are posted and readily available; students are trained in procedures.						
Comments:						
MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE						
1. Security cameras are stationed outside the school.						
2. Security camera locations provide maximum coverage possible of grounds.						
3. Security cameras are stationed inside the school.						
4. Security cameras are monitored throughout the day by trained staff.						
5. Remote and isolated hallways are monitored by security cameras.						
6. There is a retention period for recorded data. Retention period is _____ days.						
7. There is a central security alarm system which is connected to a monitoring company.						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE continued						
8. School Resource Officers (SROs) are on site.						
9. School security officers (non-law enforcement) are on site.						
10. Staff members monitor: ❑ hallways ❑ stairwells ❑ restrooms						
11. Bus loading area monitored by: ❑ camera ❑ direct line of sight ❑ patrols/staff presence						
12. Parent pick-up/drop-off area monitored by: ❑ camera ❑ direct line of sight ❑ patrols/staff presence						
13. Play/recreation areas are monitored by: ❑ camera ❑ direct line of sight ❑ patrols/staff presence						
14. Formal/informal gathering areas (patios, courtyards, etc.) are monitored by: ❑ camera ❑ direct line of sight ❑ patrols/staff presence						
15. Parking lots are monitored by: ❑ camera ❑ direct line of sight ❑ patrols/staff presence						
16. If the building is used after school or on weekends, supervision is present.						
a. specific persons are designated to secure buildings after activities						
b. school staff conducts daily visual inspections of the school for suspicious packages and other items						
c. a designated staff member is assigned to check the following:						

CRITERION	YES	NO	NOT ✓	N/A	FURTHER STUDY	COMMENTS
MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE continued						
1) all classrooms are locked						
2) all bathrooms unoccupied and locked						
3) all exterior doors locked						
4) all security lights are on						
5) building alarm is activated						
17. There are written job descriptions for security personnel and/or monitors.						
18. School requires faculty and staff undergo background checks.						
19. Classrooms are equipped with a system to communicate in an emergency.						
20. The school has access to a weather radio, which is monitored by a designated staff member.						
21. Duress/panic buttons are installed in the:						
a. main office						
b. administration offices						
c. special ED classrooms						
d. counselor's office						
Comments:						

OBSERVED STRENGTHS:

1.)

2.)

3.)

4.)

5.)

AREAS REQUIRING ATTENTION:

1.)

2.)

3.)

4.)

5.)

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

1.)

2.)

3.)

4.)

5.)

ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED BY: _____ TITLE/AFFILIATION: _____ DATE_____