SAFETY AND SECURITY CONCERNS: PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS OF A
RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Dissertation by

Robert G. Diepenbrock

Master of Education, Wichita State University, 1999

Master of Science Education, Wichita State University, 1989

Bachelor of Arts, Kansas Newman College, 1982

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RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

The following faculty members have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Education with a major in Educational Leadership.

_____
Jean Patterson, Committee Chair

_____
Mara Alagic, Committee Member

_____
Michael Birzer, Committee Member

_____
Randolph Ellsworth, Committee Member

_____
Robert Hull, Committee Member

Accepted for the College of Education

_____
Sharon Iorio, Dean

Accepted for the Graduate School

_____
J. David McDonald, Dean

DEDICATION

To my lovely wife who put up with the agonies and triumphs and was always in my corner. To my children, and my friends who gave me all of the love and support necessary to achieve this milestone. In loving memory of my beautiful daughter, Paige Allyn Diepenbrock, after whom I named the research site. In loving memory of my parents, especially my mom, who inspired me to get the education she was denied. Thank you all and I love you.

Fear is the foundation of safety.
Tertullian

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ABSTRACT

     School safety and security continues to be a concern in schools throughout the world as it is not a matter of *if,* but *when* a crisis will occur. There is a large segment of the population that attends schools in rural settings making preparedness in rural schools a timely topic. The purpose of this study was to examine a Midwestern rural school district to learn the perceptions of how prepared the school's staff felt they were for a crisis situation and to compare their perceptions with local emergency responders. A theoretical framework of protection-motivation theory (PMT) was used throughout the study. PMT postulates when sufficient fear exists and a reasonable probability a catastrophic event could occur, then one is motivated toward protection.

     It was concluded that the school district was well prepared for crisis situations they have faced, but was not prepared for disasters the school district has not faced. The rural school district has an ―it won't happen here" attitude regarding safety and security and as a result, has not kept crisis plans, training, and drills updated. The last thorough update took place shortly after the Columbine school shooting and subsequently, fear of a similar attack motivated the district to update their comprehensive crisis plan at that time. As that fear has waned, so has the preparedness of the district.

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND

̶My God! The school has blown up!" (Ellsworth, 1927, p. 2) Those were the words

spoken by the mother of a child at the school as she cleaned up her house on the morning of May

18, 1927, as one of the worst rural school disasters in American history unfolded. Forty-five

people lost their lives and another 58 were injured as a disgruntled school board member,

Andrew P. Kehoe, decided to blow up the school with dynamite. After the initial explosion,

while standing outside the damaged school, Kehoe grabbed a rifle and shot into his car's

dynamite-laden backseat, killing himself, the superintendent of schools, and two others (Lindle,

2008; Maniac blows up school: Kills 42, mostly children: Had protested high taxes). He had

been unhappy about his high taxes to pay for the rural Bath Consolidated School district

(Ellsworth; Lindle, 2008). At the time of the disaster, Bath was a rural community eight miles

north of Lansing, Michigan. Similar to the 1999 Columbine High School disaster near Littleton,

Colorado, much of the explosive material did not detonate. In both Columbine and Bath, the

perpetrator(s) were determined to induce much higher carnage and had the explosive materials to

do so, but, the explosive did not detonate (Cullen, 2009; Lindle, 2008; Maniac blows up school:

Kills 42, mostly children: Had protested high taxes).

One 11-year-old student and one 13-year-old student formed a deadly partnership as one

calmly walked into school, pulled the fire alarm, and left. Other students reported to teachers that

the alarm was false because they had seen the student pull the alarm, yet students and school

staff treated the fire alarm like the real drill and exited. This event happened on a spring morning

in March of 1998 at Westside Middle School near Jonesboro, Arkansas. The school is in a rural

area with woods only 100 yards from the school. As students exited on that spring morning, little

did the rule-abiding students know they were about to be victims. Shots rang out from the woods, students and teachers fell, and the panicked students could not get back into the doors that locked behind them as they exited like sheep to the blaring fire alarms (Newman, Fox, Harding, Mehta, & Roth, 2004).

Since 2002, school shootings have played havoc on schools across the world. Though several of the shootings have been in urban or larger communities, a surprising number of them have been in rural settings. For instance, in Vlasenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, a town with a population of 4508, one teacher was killed and another student was wounded as a 17-year-old student opened fire. Other shootings across the United States since that time included Red Lion, PA, population 6061, where a student killed his principal and himself in a packed cafeteria. A 15-year-old killed one and wounded another in the small community of Cold Spring, MN in 2003. A 16-year-old shot and killed his grandfather and his girlfriend, then went to school where he killed a security guard, a teacher, and five students, wounded seven others, and then killed himself. That all happened in 2005 in Red Lake, MN where the population is 4069. Another shooting in 2006 perpetrated by a 15- year-old student took place in Cazenovia, WI where the student killed his principal. The population of Cazenovia is only 326. During November of 2005, a 15-year-old seriously wounded two administrators and killed an assistant principal in the small town of Jacksboro, TN (City-data.com, 2009; Indianapolis Star, 2006).

Not all school shootings in rural settings were perpetrated by students. A 27-year-old man went into Essex Elementary School in Vermont in 2006 looking to harm his ex-girlfriend who was a teacher there. Although he did not find the ex-girlfriend, he killed another teacher and wounded yet another. Essex has a population of 6500. A 53-year-old took six girls hostage at the school in the small community of Bailey, CO in 2006. After he molested the girls, he then killed

one girl and himself. Yet, another tragedy struck in a county that has a rural population of 3003 as a 32-year-old man took ten girls hostage in an Amish school near Nickel Mines, PA in 2006. He killed five of the girls before killing himself (City-data.com, 2009; Indianapolis Star, 2006). School shootings and terroristic activities are often the most publicized, but are not the only crises to strike schools in rural communities.

Just as school dismissed and students were loading the bus, student Bob Ellison recalled the dark clouds on the horizon, the green sky, and the sudden calmness of the birds. He asked the driver, Gilbert Julin, if he wanted him to check inside with someone about weather. Rain, thunder, and wind suddenly struck as kids yelled, ―Tornado!" Julin told students on the bus to get down on the floor and cover their heads. They were the last words the driver spoke. Twenty-four people were killed April 21, 1967, when a tornado struck Belvidere, Illinois, a small town approximately 75 miles from Chicago. Multiple buses were hurled through the air and the high school was badly damaged. Of the dead, 16 were students who had just been released from school for the day (Baxter, 2007).

Due to disastrous fires of the past, today, fire drills are routinely conducted, egress routes are plentiful, and state fire marshals hold inspections regularly to insure that schools are up to date with all codes. Yet, fires do occur in schools, and 61% are due to arson at all levels and 70% of high school fires are due to arson. Although damage is usually less than in residential fires, the number of injuries is greater (U.S. Fire Administration, 2002). Historically, a number of fires have claimed many lives in schools. On March 4, 1908, a rural community outside Cleveland, Ohio lost 174 students and two teachers to fire-related injuries. During a school's 1924 Christmas Eve program in Hobart, Oklahoma, a Christmas tree burst into flames killing 36, mostly small children. In 1937, in a New London, Texas school, a gas explosion and resulting

fire killed nearly 500, mostly children. Due to a number of circumstances, a school fire at Our Lady of Angels in 1958 killed 92 children and three teachers, and likely led to the stringent fire codes in effect in American schools today (Lindle, 2008). Fires still present a danger to crowded school halls around the world as evinced by the fire that killed 21 students and one teacher and injured 10 others in a remote village in Russia in 2003. Three days later, another fire in a Russian school claimed 28 children and 17 others were seriously injured (Emergency and Disaster Management Inc., 2009).

Numerous other disastrous events in rural communities have affected schools for decades. For instance, most rural communities have railroads that pass through town. Railroad cars often carry dangerous and explosive chemicals. In February 1978, a rural Tennessee town of 4000 had a devastating explosion that wounded 145 and killed 11 people including the fire and police chief, and a high school student. Additionally, many buildings near downtown burned and the local high school became a makeshift morgue (Beitler, 1978). Numerous disasters and crises have affected schools across the world and nationally. What about Kansas?

Kansas Rural School Crises and Natural Disasters

̶ Jan. 21, 1985: James Alan Kearbey, 14, armed with a M1-A semiautomatic rifle and a .357-caliber handgun, killed the principal and wounded two teachers and a student at his Goddard (Kansas) Junior High School" (Chalmers, 2009; Indianapolis Star, 2006, p. 63). This event happened years before the extremely violent acts orchestrated on Jonesboro or Littleton, and it happened in a small town west of Wichita, Kansas on a Monday morning. How prepared was Goddard for this attack? Could the school have prevented the tragedy? Did they have a crisis plan ready to enact when a middle school student entered the building? The principal confronted the student; then Kearbey leveled the rifle at the principal and shot him, instilling the fatal

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wound. Robert Francis, a member of the Goddard Board of Education at the time stated shortly after the crime was committed, ―I just haven‗t come to grips with it." A friend of Francis‗ from Houston called him to indicate it was commonplace to take guns away from students there, but Francis added, ―It‗s not in the itinerary here" (Henry, 1985, p. 7).

At approximately 9:45 PM on May 4, 2007, a small Kansas town about 100 miles west of Wichita was reduced to ruins. ―The 205 mile-per-hour winds tore apart buildings in a devastating blast. The town‗s elementary and high schools were flattened"(Nadel, 2007, p. 1) There were no school or community buildings left standing in the town; there were no supplies; there were no desks; there was no means of communication within the town. Only the concrete grain elevator and courthouse remained standing, along with a few houses on the edge of town, leaving most of the schools‗ students temporarily homeless. According to the superintendent, prior to the tornado, the Greensburg school district ―did not have a disaster plan that covered chaos of this scope" (Nadel, p. 3).

During the past few years in Kansas, five school districts have been devastated by natural disasters in different ways. On July 1 2007, the town of Osawatomie was struck by a large flood that displaced hundreds of people. The school facilities became a temporary home for 300 displaced residents. The flood hit during the summer, but what would the district have done if the flood hit when school was in session? Would it have been possible to continue teaching students?

Also on July 1, 2007, another flood hit the southeast Kansas community of Coffeyville. In addition to the devastation of the homes and displaced residents, floodwater breeched levees that protected the oil industry in Coffeyville. As a result, the floodwater mixed with petroleum products that caused a catastrophic pollution problem in the community. Once the floodwater

receded, homes and habitat were damaged beyond repair and were considered unsafe for occupancy. Again, residents were displaced and the community and school district were hit hard by this disaster. How prepared was the school district to handle this crisis?

In the summer of 2008, a little over a year after the tornado leveled Greensburg, another tornado hit Chapman, Kansas. Though the community as a whole was not leveled as in Greensburg, all of the school district's buildings were damaged, especially the schools. It was as if the tornado sought out the schools and struck each of them. That tornado also hit in the evening and during the summer, thus, students and staff were not present. All of the schools needed extensive repairs and insurance and federal aid paid only a portion of what needed to be done. Was Chapman Unified School District ready for such a crisis? Even though there was only one fatality and a small number of injuries, Chapman schools had less than a few months to prepare for a new school year and look into permanent replacement structures and not enough money to pay for the costs of rebuilding (Jones, 2009).

The town of Seneca, Kansas was overwhelmed when its K-8 school was destroyed by a fire on March 10, 2007 (Building or rebuilding timeline, 2007; Davis, 2007). The fire occurred on a Saturday morning and no injuries were reported, but most of the school building and contents were destroyed (Davis). How was the district going to have school? Where were they going to have school? Were they prepared to handle this crisis? Some of those questions were quickly answered as classes were held again on March 19th in makeshift classrooms spread throughout the community (Davis).

Current Status of School Security and Safety in Rural Settings

For decades, those in educational communities have recognized the need for student and staff safety and have accepted that responsibility to varying degrees. Very few students have died

in school-related fires, for example, because fire drills have become an integral part of the monthly routine in schools across the nation. However other events which put students and staff at risk, such as the Columbine High School shooting in April of 1999 and the West Nickel Mines School shooting in October of 2006 have brought to light new issues, and one of the major concerns focuses on the safety and security factors of schools in the rural setting. Dr. Katherine Newman, Princeton University sociologist, claims that one

> similarity between the Pennsylvania and Colorado cases—as well as two other
> shootings in Vermont and Wisconsin—is their rural settings. It is rare for mass
> school shootings to occur in cities. Despite their safe image, rural communities
> can be an especially fertile breeding ground for revenge (Chaddock & Clayton,
> 2006, p. 2).

Tragic events like Columbine High School in Littleton, CO in 1999, Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, AR in 1998, and Heath High School in West Paducah, KY in 1997 have awakened the necessity that steps be taken to insure student and staff safety in schools across the nation. These events have also called for plans of action to be further defined and sophisticated in the event of other types of disasters. Just as fire drills have insured that schools are prepared for evacuation in the event of fire, zero-tolerance measures against weapons, school uniformity in dress code, access control, and clarified lock-down procedures have been adopted to insure safer educational facilities. There are conflicting views as to the effectiveness of increased security procedures and now some emphasize comprehensive violence prevention programs and open communication in lieu of security devices. Violence prevention educational programs are deemed more cost effective and little evaluative data exists on the effectiveness of security devices such as cameras and access controlled entrances (Addington, 2009).

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Rural schools and consolidated school districts comprise a major portion of the schools in Kansas, and while many of those systems have in place crisis plans, the fact remains that the majority of those schools, because of their logistics, may not be equipped to deal with issues of mass casualties, natural disasters, and human-caused issues that are non-intentional or intentional. Response time of emergency responders such as police, fire, and medical personnel is of grave concern in rural areas across the country (Holzheimer, 2008).

Despite these facts, the popularity of rural schools in Kansas seems to remain stable and rural residents often view the tribulations of cities and bigger towns negatively. The attitude among those in the ―wheat state‖ is that rural communities tend to be more closely knit (Gray, Zide, & Wilker, 2000) and neighbors look out for one another. Such a belief has fostered the popular notion that events like Columbine or Goddard Junior High just do not happen in our neck of the woods (Fatah, 1979; Staten, 1995; Wallace, 2008).

The natural disaster tragedies of Greensburg and Chapman school districts that happened in rural school districts roughly one year apart were eye-openers, and have proffered a compelling argument for school personnel to examine their crisis plans for all hazards. Imagine if the events of both of those tornadoes had happened as school or a school event was in session. Would either district have been prepared for such a catastrophic event that no doubt would have led to mass casualties of students and school personnel? Only a few years earlier, students attending a prom at Hoisington (Kansas) High School were able to safely take cover as their community was struck by a tornado. Numerous crises, disasters, and catastrophic events of different nature and terminologies have struck around the country in rural school districts; Kansas is no exception.

Defining Terms

There are a number of terms that must be defined for the purposes of this study. A *school crisis* is defined ̶a̶s̶ an occurrence where resources outside of the school attendance center are called to respond to the situation in order to resolve the situation and return to normal school operations" (Hull & Olathe District Management Team, 2005, p. 8). That is not to say that school personnel do not respond. Indeed, they are most likely the first responders, yet to mitigate the situation, additional, outside resources will be called upon. The Kansas Center for Safe and Prepared Schools defines crisis in a similar way (Hull & Olathe District Management Team). Literature often refers to *campus emergencies*, *catastrophes* or *catastrophic events or incidents* and uses other similar terms in lieu of the term crisis. It is assumed that these terms will meet the criteria defined above for crisis requiring an outside response. Crises in schools vary greatly and can include a litany of issues resulting in everything from mass casualties to non-injurious events that still require outside personnel from agencies other than schools to assist schools and school districts to recover.

This research looked at rural school preparedness for all crisis situations, so, for the purposes of this study, crisis situations as defined above were divided into three general categories, *people crises, natural disasters, and physical plant/technological hazards* (Hull & Olathe District Management Team, 2005). *People crises* included any type of crisis where people are the cause or the focus of the crisis. These types of crises included disruptions/intruders/missing or abducted children, bomb threats, medical emergencies, death of a student or staff member, field trip emergencies, terrorism, and any act or situation involving people as the primary focus or cause. *Natural disasters* included severe weather and floods, tornadoes, lightning, fires, earthquakes, or any crisis caused by some force of nature. *Physical*

plant/technological hazards included crisis issues such as explosions, downed electrical wires, gas leaks, hazardous material releases, power outages, or emergency dismissal of school (Hull & Olathe District Management Team, 2005).

Safety is often used interchangeably with security, but distinctions are made as well. Generally, safety looks at issues related to non-intentional acts, whereas security deals with intentional acts. Non-intentional acts include natural disasters, building maintenance issues, accidents, and are without premeditation or deliberation. Intentional acts include trespass, assault and battery, weapons violations, property damage and involve some degree of premeditation on the part of the perpetrators. Some of the literature reviewed use safety and security terms interchangeably (Beauford, 1971), while other authors make a distinction (Benne, 2008; Lindle, 2008). Terms used in this study included both safety and security as a comprehensive look at crisis preparedness in a rural district. Either safety or security issues could be a crisis situation, so for purposes of this study, they were used interchangeably, but most often the term *crisis* will appear.

Another term that must be defined for the purpose of this study is *rural school and/or rural school district*. The researcher is basing the definition of *rural* on the relative size and location of schools used for this study. Senior high or middle schools that are identified as 3A, 2A, or 1A by the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) and the districts where they are located will be considered rural if the school is located in a town with a population of less than 20,000 or located at least 20 miles from a town or city larger than 20,000 as long as the district's schools meet the criteria of 3A or smaller (Kansas State High Schools Activities Association, 2009).

Research Problem

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, raised the level of concern for student and staff safety to all-time highs. No Child Left Behind legislation included requirements that schools develop crisis plans and have a public accounting for safety and security issues (Lindle, 2008). It is now a common practice for schools to have secured entrances and other limited access areas and signs posted stating that all visitors must report to the office (Dinkes, Cataldi, Lin-Kelly, & Snyder, 2007). Administrators, teachers, and school staff have greater vigilance when any unidentified person is in the school (Rossman & Morley, 1996). The 9-11 attack on Manhattan also exposed the limitations of communication and information dissemination in areas near the attacks. Teachers in New York had to use their judgment and instincts to protect their students with far less knowledge of the tragedy than much of the world (Bisland, 2006). Teachers and administrators are routinely trained to handle a variety of crisis situations, yet often there is a perception that ―it won‗t happen here‖ and this notion seems especially prevalent in rural and suburban settings (Menifield, 2001).

It is generally accepted that rural schools are safer than their urban counterparts, but rural schools are often far more vulnerable to safety and security issues than urban schools. Little work has been done to document the realities of safety and security in rural schools as compared to other schools. Although the perception exists that rural schools are generally safer, that is not always borne out (Dinkes, et al., 2007; Graham, Shirm, Liggin, Aitken, & Dick, 2006). It will be illustrated in the literature review that urban administrators actually feel their schools are as safe as or safer than schools found in rural settings. Urban administrators point out that security personnel, prevention and intervention programs, emergency services, and school resource officers are an added bonus to the security of their schools (Brady, Balmer, & Phenix, 2007;

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Chen, 2008). On the other hand, rural administrators may perceive security personnel as unnecessary because the sheer size difference and ensuing student behaviors do not warrant those employees as evinced by lower crime rates and fewer numbers of violent incidents (Dinkes, et al.). When it comes to disaster planning, rural schools are typically less prepared (Graham, et al., 2006) and have fewer community resources and capability than corresponding urban schools (Office of Rural Health Policy, 2002).

Rural schools are far more isolated from emergency services such as police protection, fire, and emergency medical services. Many urban schools have security officers trained in emergency procedures or school resource officers, whereas security personnel in rural schools are fewer or less common. In fact, according to the Kansas Association of School Resource Officers' (SRO) directory, of the 131 SROs listed, only ten of them are currently assigned to rural school areas (2008). As previously mentioned, rural communities are often more likely to have a view of their setting as pastoral and far safer than urban settings. As a result, they tend to view safety and security issues in their country schools as minor, and insignificant compared to the gangs, drugs, vandalism, and weapons of their urban counterparts. In addition, rural communities seem to feel a sense of unity—a banding together—of their people, so that in the event of a natural disaster; they feel a sense of confidence and security. This attitude, coupled with the ―It won't happen here" attitude that is so prevalent in smaller communities, shifts the focus from the inevitable tragedies that may very well occur to the sense of security and small town values.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine school staff perceptions of safety and security preparedness of their rural school district. An in-depth qualitative study was used for one rural

Kansas school to study the perceptions of their crisis preparedness. The results of a survey given to Kansas school superintendents by the Governor's commission on healthy and prepared schools indicated that approximately 25% of schools lacked sufficient safety and security services. Less than a third of schools employ school resource officers (Hull et al., 2007). Those schools employing school resource officers are generally not in rural settings (Kansas Association of School Resource Officers, 2008). Additional results of the commission survey indicated a need for a state office that would assist in crisis prevention, preparedness, and mitigation as 83% of superintendents felt they would benefit from expanded training and resources (Hull, et al.). The health and safe school survey did not disaggregate by school size or urbanicity. Data gathered from the Kansas State High School Activities Association helped identify an appropriately-sized rural school district by meeting the earlier definition of Kansas rural schools. The study focused in-depth on one rural Kansas school district's perceptions of its preparedness for a crisis. District staff included the superintendent, principals, faculty, and classified staff. District and/or school staff terms were used interchangeably since rural schools often have small numbers of personnel and may have school staff with district-wide responsibilities. The overarching question guiding this study is: What are the staff's perceptions of their school district's readiness to handle a school crisis?

Research Questions

The following three questions guided this research to examine the state of safety and security preparedness of a rural school district in Kansas.

1. How do staff members in one rural school district describe their school's crisis plan?

2. What are staff members' perceptions of how safe and secure their rural school is?

3. How would staff members in a rural school district respond when faced with a crisis?

CHAPTER 2

THEORTETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE

The next sections will describe the theory used throughout the research and a broad array of literature reviewed prior to and during the study. Fear can be a motivating factor to actions and the theory utilized in the study is described throughout this section. Additionally, articles and peer reviewed journals, when available were reviewed to provide a greater understanding for the study.

Theoretical Framework

How a person views attacks (with anger or fear) plays a role on how he/she views a situation (with various amounts of optimism or pessimism) (Lerner, Gonzalez, & Small, 2003). The theory guiding the theoretical framework of this study explores what motivation is needed to protect oneself against potential threats of safety and security and promote changes that will improve the safety and security of an organization.

Protection-Motivation Theory (PMT)

There are three components to protection-motivation theory (PMT): 1) there must be a sufficient amount of fear that if an event occurred, it would be catastrophic; 2) there must be a reasonably high probability that a catastrophic event could occur; and 3) some type of protective response is required. When an event is considered serious enough and is likely to happen, a person's attitude will change. If he/she cannot avoid or remove him or herself from the danger, he/she will respond by changing a behavior to protect him or herself (Rogers, 1975).

How prevalent are self-protective behaviors? What can be done to increase precautionary behaviors and how can increasing precautions become more consistent? People drive automobiles regularly and view themselves as safer than they may be. There are a number of

behaviors where people have an illusion that they are safe, yet it may take a negative act or a perception that a significant risk is involved before precautions or behavioral changes take place (Norris, 1997). Before significant improvements to school readiness can be attained, a significant catastrophic event would have to have occurred or a threat that such an event might occur would have to be realized.

The negative health effects of non-protection are often gradual and the —timing of possible damage is uncertain" (Melamed, Rabinowitz, Feiner, Weisberg, & Ribak, 1996, p. 209). Even with threats that are known by students and others, the timing of actual crisis events such as school shooters, may not occur immediately, if at all, and the exact timing of the event may not be known until it occurs. Melamed, et al, (1996) connected protection motivation theory to the behaviors of workers and the resultant negative effect on health. They explain the five main factors of the PMT as a) perceived vulnerability; b) severity of consequences; c) effectiveness of taking actions; d) barriers to taking actions; and e) the ability to successfully implement actions. The five factors listed above may preclude the motivation needed for adults and students in schools to adequately protect or plan for protection.

Many crises can be avoided at schools if school personnel have an appropriate response in place. Rippetoe and Rogers (1987), describe —maladaptive" and —adaptive" behaviors that can be applied to school crisis situations. They describe maladaptive behaviors as those that may have intrinsic rewards such as the pleasurable effects of smoking. As an analogy, in a potential school crisis situation, a student who is affected by peer pressure may not communicate potential threats to authorities even though the threat carried out could have a negative effect on him/her. School officials may ignore potential safeguards and choose to use funds for areas other than safety and security. Rippetoe (1987) further describes that fear awakening may arouse protective

behaviors in some, but ―adaptive‖ behaviors are most effective and are taken when it appears success is inevitable. Those in schools who see that safety and security procedures are likely to be effective and not cause too much distress are more likely to be motivated to adopt them.

Individuals are different and take different approaches to how they assess threats and the measures they take once threats are identified. Brouwers and Sorrentino (1993) depicted two different personality types and how each approached PMT differently. They described the types as those with an ―uncertainty orientation‖ and a ―certainty orientation.‖ How individuals approach threatening situations may depend upon their individual differences in whether they choose to ignore or pay attention to circumstances. Certainty oriented people attend to the familiar conditions whereas uncertainty oriented persons are more motivated to process information relevant to them. Regardless, both types can be motivated to address threatening situations when the danger threshold is met. Effective safety and security plans sufficiently address numerous personalities, provide adequate training to identify risks, and are perceived as successfully intervening to prevent or mediate crisis events at schools.

Adolescents and young adults will change behaviors and attitudes to protect themselves and work to prevent crisis events only if they feel adequately able to cope with the danger. If they do not feel able to cope with the dangers, they are less likely to attempt any change in attitude or behavior. Protection-Motivation Theory works from two premises: 1) assessment of the danger; and 2) ability to cope with the danger. How well a student is able to avoid catastrophic events and how well he/she can respond to an event determine his or her motivation to change an attitude or behavior (Sturges & Rogers, 1996). Students who are trained in evaluating and preventing school catastrophes see potential success in evaluating and preventing crises and practice at responding to a crisis are more likely to adopt a positive attitude with

regard to school security and safety. Students will not be directly involved in this study, however staff perceptions of student awareness, involvement in prevention and response to crises are key components to perceptions of successful crisis plans.

Literature Review

Winnenden, Germany is approximately 12 miles from its nearest urban center not unlike many suburbs or small towns in the United States. Winnenden's school was attacked by a 17-year-old on March 11, 2009. The event at the school was over in approximately two minutes, yet nine students and three teachers lay dead along with several others with injuries as the result of a former student who went on a killing rampage in the ―small, idyllic town." The former student, turned killer, ―wasn't someone who was negative or known for violence" (Byron, Magnay, Pleitgen, Schmidt, & Watson, 2009, p. 21). The Friday before prom, a school assembly was held at Columbine High School in Colorado where the principal told the student body personal stories of tragedy and how much he loved his students and to be safe during the prom. Among those in attendance at the prom that weekend was Dylan Klebold who would become one of those responsible for the worst school shooting in American history just a few days later. Both he and his fellow perpetrator, Eric Harris, were smart, received good grades, and were generally popular. No adult authority suspected they were planning a violent rampage (Cullen, 2009). Whether in Germany, Colorado, or in rural Kansas, similar tragic events have taken place, and may continue to take place in school settings.

The literature review will identify areas of importance related to school safety and security, particularly in rural school settings. The review begins with research on the three categories of crisis events that happen in or to schools: people crises, natural disasters, and technological/physical plant crises. It is followed by research on the role media coverage plays in

how crisis events are viewed and its portrayal of events. Literature related to school readiness and the constraints put on schools as it relates to school security is examined. Finally, literature on model practices for prevention and management of crises is presented.

People Crises

Many of the tragic events (crises) that take place in schools are people crises. As defined earlier, they involve medical emergencies of students or staff members, student or staff deaths, bomb threats, field trips, anthrax or other terroristic threats, and disruptions that include intruders, missing children, and abductions (Hull & Olathe District Management Team, 2005). Much of the literature focuses on people crises that bring media attention such as school shootings or other violent events. This section will discuss *people crises* in schools.

Incidence of violent events in schools. While significant research has been written highlighting the psychology of the school terrorist, or the angst of adolescent development, very little research has focused on these factors in a rural school setting. In many studies, detailed demographic data for each district is not disclosed to protect the identity of the districts (Kano, Ramirez, Ybarra, Frias, & Bourque, 2007). As a result, little distinction is made between urban and rural educational environments. While the general consensus is that small towns and rural schools are safer, the fact remains that the recent rash of rural shootings has brought national attention to the need for safety and security procedures in rural schools (G. D. Evans & Rey, 2001).

Studies indicate that locale is not a major factor when comparing students involved in non-fatal crimes at schools across the nation. Sixty-four of every 1000 students in an urban setting reported a crime against them, whereas fifty of every 1000 students in a rural setting reported. In fact, theft in the rural setting was reported as 29 incidents per 1000 students, whereas

theft in the urban setting reported 30 incidents per 1000 students. Reports of violent crime in rural schools actually exceeded the suburban setting, though incidence is still smaller than urban schools, but not significantly (Dinkes, et al., 2007). In addition, Dinkes and associates asserted the percentage of public and private school teachers who reported being either threatened with injury or attacked by a student (2003-2004 school year) showed little significant difference between urban and rural settings. In fact, when rural is combined with suburban, these statistics are almost equal.

The Department of Education indicated a small decrease in school violence in the 2007 government school crime and safety report (Dinkes, et al., 2007). However, a number of school personnel surveyed only a few years earlier indicated they saw approximately a 25% increase of violence at the preschool level while seeing a whopping 53% increase of violence at the elementary level and 69% increase of violence at the middle and high school levels (Petersen, 1998). Statistically, the homicide rate at schools is very low, but other violent behaviors including bullying and general incivility have detrimental psychosocial consequences that could be considered a public health risk (Mayer & Furlong, 2010).

The Departments of Education and Justice worked in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and commissioned a study examining school-related violent deaths. They found that nearly three quarters of those killed were students and that most of those deaths were firearms related. Children fear attending school as a result. When children do not feel safe, they achieve less academically and are more likely to engage in disruptive behaviors (Modzeleski, 1996). No Child Left Behind legislation requires reporting on persistently dangerous schools, yet with no standardized reporting requirements, only a few schools nationwide were classified persistently dangerous (Mayer & Furlong, 2010).

While documentation regarding students who carried guns to school a decade ago was scant, it was discovered such information was virtually nonexistent for rural schools. In that ten-year period, findings continue to be severely limited. Part of the claim is that communities tend to believe that gun-related crimes are an inner city problem, and have yet to accept the fact that these problems have moved into rural settings. The focus has shifted from minority youth to white students, thus dispelling the theory of minority gang actions, urban blight, and failing urban school systems. This shift in focus has created a new set of problems for school leaders in rural educational settings, including hitchhiking, crack and cocaine use, a lack of instruction on ways to avoid fighting and violence, and assault. The prevailing attitude appears to be that schools need to be protected from gun-carrying students. Measures taken to protect the general student body, including stronger security measures and stiffer penalties for such a crime, have essentially been the extent of the public's involvement, thus the safety and security needs of the students and school personnel have remained unmet (Kingery, Pruitt, & Heuberger, 1996).

In 2000, 700,000 U.S. students between the ages of 12 and 18 were victims of violent crime on school grounds, at school events, or near school property, yet there was a 46% drop in student violent crime between 1992 and 2000. However, violent crimes are more lethal and the antisocial behavior displayed by many adolescents is seen as a national health care issue. Reasons that influence this type of behavior are delinquency, substance abuse, depression, teen pregnancy, and failure to complete school. Underlying causal factors can be inadequate parenting, unresponsive schools, and academic underachievement (Edwards, Hunt, Meyers, Grogg, & Jarrett, 2005). School violence has been a problem throughout history with multiple attributing factors and solutions are complex, far beyond zero-tolerance policies (Cornell & Mayer, 2010).

It has been argued that because No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has placed a greater emphasis on academic progress and deemphasized social development, student alienation and violent tragedies continue even though NCLB has a provision for school choice with regard to a school's safety performance (Lindle, 2008). High school students are generally left behind and NCLB may provide an alternative route for some students, but has provided no answer for relentlessly hazardous schools (Lindle). The data collected over the last decade describes a decline in violent events at school, yet significant concerns remain and likely will for some time (Mayer & Furlong, 2010).

Terrorism. One security threat for schools very difficult to predict and equally as difficult to prepare for is an act of terrorism. There are multitudes of academic definitions for terrorism due to the heterogeneous groups perpetrating such actions. Two common themes permeate the widespread definitions; 1) non-combatants are often targeted and 2) the goal is political in the hopes that a target audience will be influenced and change its behavior (Victoroff, 2005). Another similar definition describes terrorism as using violence or the threat of violence to constitute a political change (Hoffman, 2006). Law enforcement agencies may utilize intelligence gathering to thwart terroristic acts, but unless locally initiated, it is unlikely schools have the capacity to duplicate that capability. There are a multitude of theories behind the psychology of terrorists and even more definitions of terrorism. A terrorist's goal is to change the behavior of a target group and his or her actions are usually against innocents (Victoroff). A potential student or parent terrorist in a school may act out his/her aggression because of frustration as described above.

On April 20, 1999, two American high school students in suburban Denver attempted to make history: They wanted to blow up their own school and murder

everyone inside. When the explosives failed to detonate, the improvised shooting

spree by Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold still managed to leave 15 people dead in

what became the deadliest high school gun rampage in American history.

(Frymer, 2009, p. 1387)

Was this an act of terrorism? The intent to cause widespread fear and to make an

infamous statement was accomplished. Though there was no political end in mind, other than to

make a personal statement of superiority, the intent was that hundreds should have been killed in

the first minutes of the attack. Comparisons to other domestic terrorist events were made in the

personal journal of Eric Harris and he had hoped to surpass the carnage of events like the 1995

Murrah building bombing in Oklahoma City (Cullen, 2009).

Chechen rebels, rooted in religious extremism and a desire for independence from the

Russians, attacked and seized a middle school in Beslan, a relatively small town of 40,000

citizens. Vehicles drove up to the school and other terrorists were already in a crowd near the

school due to the opening day festivities. Despite Russian intelligence indicating an attack might

take place somewhere near the Chechnyan border, the Russian government had no idea where.

Only one guard was on duty at the school at the time of the assault. Within 15 minutes of the

initial assault, terrorists took 1181 hostages, most of them children. After a counter terrorist

assault ended along with a well planned execution of the terrorists' operation, 338 people were

killed, including 172 children and another 700 were injured during the horrific catastrophe

(Giduck, 2005). Another accounting indicated the end result was 331 hostages and Russian

soldiers were killed along with 31 terrorists (McEvers, 2006).

―According to a survey by the National Association of School Resource Officers

(NASRO), fifty-five percent of respondents said schools were ‗very or somewhat' vulnerable to

terrorism" (The George Washington University, 2003, p. 4). Giduck (2005) describes the vigilance needed by all Americans in their fight against potential terrorist attacks at schools. Giduck agrees with Dudley (2003) that law enforcement needs to work together with schools to develop identification, prevention, and response tactics including diagrams, communications, and video systems, but he further develops security strategies to include lockdown drills, counter-intelligence, and even suggests arming school employees. Giduck believes that extremists are ready to attack our schools and only a *realistic* assessment by parents and school officials can prevent it.[1]

Even if the schools themselves are not attacked, other high profile targets already have been. In addition to the physical scarring, there is a profound psychological scarring of people, particularly youth, after a terrorist strike (Comer & Kendall, 2007). Americans feel less secure than they once did, and children who were closest to terrorist attacks tend to display significant psychological disorders such as post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD). In fact, up to 75% of students defined as —proximal" to the event (loss of a loved one, friend, or were in a locale near the attack) displayed at least one symptom of PTSD a year later. Ten percent displayed enough symptoms to be clinically diagnosed with PTSD. Media also played a role with the psychological issues of youth as repeated airing of events such as the attacks of 9-11 and the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City can have similar clinical outcomes. Finally, terrorism achieves its goals often, as the assaults are politically motivated and intended to —shake" a designated

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[1] It is important to note that Giduck may not be considered an empirical academic source, yet he regularly provides anti-terrorism training to law enforcement agencies and owns an anti-terrorism consulting business. Another concern is his anti-Muslim views I ascertained after reading his book and attending his Beslan presentation in Wichita. However, his accounting of events at Beslan is difficult to replicate from my search for an empirical source and Giduck claims his written account led to his expulsion from Russia.

population. Youth are especially vulnerable and their fears can go on for years (Comer &

Kendall).

Medical emergencies, student, or staff deaths. Mortality in rural populations occurs at a

rate one and one-half to nearly two times higher than urban populations when acute traumatic

events such as car accidents, work-related injuries, drowning, fires, or suicide attempts occur

(Peek-Asa, Zwerling, & Stallones, 2004). The delay in receiving medical care is a major factor in

this disparity, but additional risk factors such as a refusal to engage in safe practices, such as

wearing a seat belt, in rural communities is also a factor (Peek-Asa, et al.) According to a study

done by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety regarding emergency medical service

(EMS), all aspects of EMS services including notification, arrival at the scene of accidents, and

the arrival of patients to the hospital, took twice as long in rural locales as it did in urban areas

(Horan, McCabe, Burkhard, & Schooley, 2005). Additionally, only 25% of emergency medical

services (EMS) and 6% of hospital emergency rooms have the necessary pediatric equipment

(National Commission on Children and Disasters, 2010).

Bomb threats. Fifty-five percent of schools across the nation provide drills to respond to a

bomb threat (Nolle, Guerino, Dinkes, & Chandler, September 2007). For many years, bomb

threats were one of the greatest causes of school disruptions. Regardless of whether the threat is

a hoax or not, it has to be taken seriously and procedures must be in place and followed

(Beauford, 1971).

Natural Disasters

Natural disasters can include, but are not limited to tornadoes, flooding, or other severe

weather, fires, and earthquakes (Hull & Olathe District Management Team, 2005). Natural

disasters occur on a frequent basis worldwide and can cause a great number of deaths, injuries,

and destruction of property. The large tornado that struck Oklahoma City in 1999 destroyed over 11,000 buildings including two schools. A year later, another tornado struck a rural school in Oklahoma and 230 students in kindergarten through 12th grade had to relocate to a neighboring community. Since watches and warnings in tornado-prone states occur often and the disaster rarely develops, precautions are not always taken (L. Evans & Oehler-Stinnett, 2006).

Fires caused by lightning and fueled by dry plants and wind has caused havoc historically. Though everyone has heard of the great fire of Chicago in 1871, very few realize that same day another fire swept through small timber towns in Wisconsin near Lake Superior. The scope of the fire was actually much larger destroying 2400 square miles, several small communities and up to 2400 people lost their lives (Doherty, 2004). Rural wildfires have increased in some western states in the past few years due to a culmination of factors such as drought and windy conditions. The destruction of the landscape, wildlife, cattle, and loss of human life along with the many buildings devastate the rural economy and psyche of its people (Doherty).

In 1993, the Midwest saw unprecedented flooding that affected all aspects of life in nine states. Transportation and all businesses were affected as over 50,000 homes were damaged by floodwaters and 50 people lost their lives. The effects were not only economic, but psychological trauma was rampant as well following the disastrous floods (Doherty, 2004).

Physical Plant/Technological Hazards

Crises discussed in this section include explosions, downed electrical wires, gas leaks, hazardous material releases, power outages, and other emergencies that may necessitate dismissal of school, sheltering in place, or other mitigation (Hull & Olathe District Management Team, 2005).

People may tend to underestimate or overestimate the risks of technological disasters depending on how slowly or rapidly the disaster evolves. Issues include how much their daily life is impeded, how quickly they can return to normal activity, and are generally correlated to the duration of the event and its aftereffects (Levi, Kocher, & Aboud, 2001). Technological disasters can happen due to a failure of someone to recognize or mitigate the potential danger of an event. Despite hazardous cargo being carried on barges along the Mississippi River, very little has been done to improve the waterway navigation, and these barges regularly navigate through populated areas. Prevention through regulation is often not done due to the financial and political costs endured and an assumption that technology will take care of problems (Gramling & Krogman, 1997). Increasing amounts of chemicals are transported through population centers, yet an increase in resources to respond to a potential catastrophe has been limited. It may take a major crisis event before more resources are allocated to prevent and respond (Harrald & Wallace, 1988).

Media Coverage

Media coverage plays a large role in a community's perception of crisis events. In comparisons between media coverage for both urban shootings and rural shootings, for example, analyses of ―rural occurrences‖ revealed that newspapers first sought to capture the attention of their audiences and elicit sympathy for those involved. Second, subsequent articles attempted to generate sympathy for the survivors and finally, newspaper media offered insights into why such tragedies happened. However, shootings in larger cities and urban areas tended to be reported in a shorter and more concise manner, based upon the theory that urban crime is a reality: a part of our society at all levels; thus, there was no reason to shock the reader (Menifield, 2001).

There is a perception that with every violent occurrence at a school, there is a pandemic of fear that permeates the media and creates a phenomenon known as ―moral panic.‖ Moral panic comes more from publicity than from reality and is due to the sensationalism of the situation. Threats are a breeding ground for moral panic because it is generally accepted that students are safe for six to eight hours per day while at school (Lindle, 2008). There are two specific categories of concern: security and safety. Security issues can be defined as anything that can be breached such as access to the premises or behaviors of students or staff. Safety issues are more clearly definable since they take into account health threats, working conditions, maintenance and cleanliness of the facility, and reduction of campus hazards. It is the security issues that trigger the ―moral panic‖ button rather than safety issues and media hype on security issues is the cause for the panic (Lindle).

Readiness

The governors of all 50 states and President George H.W. Bush met in 1989 to discuss the state of American education and from that meeting developed state and federal initiatives that later became the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. From this, safe and drug free schools became part of the national framework. The philosophies underlying the Educate America Act were that education is a key to success and that crime, violence, drug use, and threatening behavior all affect student learning. The Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 required all local school districts adopt a policy of referring students who bring guns to school to law enforcement agencies for prosecution and a mandatory expulsion (Modzeleski, 1996).

Schools can implement programs that teach social skills as one way to reduce school violence and numerous programs have been implemented across the nation. However, few have been evaluated and even fewer have published results even though the research could be

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invaluable. Local research is necessary, as no social skills program will fit the needs of all schools and their students' social deficits. Furthermore, most social skills programs have only been implemented in urban settings and research regarding elementary and preschool students in any setting is rare. Yet, initially, there has been success with these programs in the elementary level (Edwards, et al., 2005).

Bullying has been found to be a worldwide problem that can lead to a number of issues for both the bully and the victim and aggressive school climate. Bullies often become delinquents, are unable to develop appropriate problem solving abilities and may become active in criminal behaviors. Victims of bullies tend to have attendance problems, low self-esteem, and demonstrate low academic achievement. Both bullies and the victims of bullying demonstrate suicidal tendencies as well. Many schools have now implemented anti-bullying programs with mixed results anywhere from little to substantial improvement in the climate of the school (Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt, & Hymel, 2010).

When schools are impersonal, there is a greater risk for violent behaviors, thus the impersonal practices of school personnel can increase the risks for school violence. The biggest deterrent to antisocial or criminal behavior is visible teachers. The presence of a school resource officer perhaps increases safety, but often erodes personal relationships between teachers and students. An increased visibility of security measures can increase fear in the school community. It then becomes important for school personnel to support academic and civil development of students and recognize collective student achievement. This ecological approach to student safety can reduce school crime and violence, as school support mechanisms extend beyond school walls, beyond the expertise of school personnel and involve the greater community (Lindle, 2008).

Many urban schools have a high level of security that includes private security protection, multiple administrators, and partnerships with police who regularly patrol and investigate criminal behavior. Part of the reason for the higher level of security is the problems associated with a multi-cultural makeup in concentrated areas of poverty. That combination is often closely associated with criminal activity. On the other hand, many suburban areas are made up of affluent teens with a low crime rate within the school and community. Yet, heinous crimes can and do occur in the suburban setting despite reliable predictors such as previous criminal behavior. It takes a multi-layered, comprehensive approach to understand and accurately predict violent behaviors (Sullivan, 2002). The problem of school violence is not the school's alone, but is a reflection of a wider societal issue (Huff & Trump, 1996).

A number of ―strategic approaches" have been taken by schools that improved safety and security (Rossman & Morley, 1996). The first was modifying and limiting the physical plant entrance points, improving lighting, and installing security fences. The implementation of prevention and awareness curricula, community collaborative projects, and reorganization efforts were also described (Rossman & Morley). However, the most effective counter-violence programs are making teachers visible, introducing conflict resolution programs, before and after school programs, and uniform discipline policies (Petersen, 1998).

Most school buildings are safe as there are requirements for the types of glass that can be installed, playground equipment must pass standards, and even flooring has to meet certain safeguards. School security, by definition, implies students and staff are free from deliberate injury. To accomplish this task, NCLB requires schools to have a crisis plan where school staff is trained and law enforcement and other rescue agencies have been involved in the plan's development (The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001). In fact, outside rescue agencies are

expected to work with schools to flesh out protocols, consider response times, have access to school maps, and define pre-established roles in case of a crisis. Outside agencies can even conduct security audits of schools. Often, there is a view that ―those things don't happen here" or ―in schools our size," but they do and it is vital that schools have plans in place for prevention and response (Dudley, 2003).

The National Commission on Children and Disasters issued a report in 2010 noting the lack of emergency preparedness especially for the most vulnerable citizens; children. The report cited the lack of supplies to treat child victims even though children represent 25% of America's population and 67 million children are in schools or childcare facilities daily. A government accounting office survey of public schools in 2007 found that 56% of schools had not addressed how to continue educating students if schools were closed for an extended time. Furthermore, few schools trained with emergency responders and had little if any coordination with emergency responders. School personnel have not been properly trained to assist students who have experienced crisis situations and the commission is recommending basic training to be included as a licensure requirement (National Commission on Children and Disasters, 2010).

Resources/Constraints

Financial resources play a large part in the effectiveness of crisis plans designed to deal with rural issues not as relevant to urban settings. Issues such as school resource officers, emergency vehicle response times, community attitudes and awareness of danger issues in their area all shape the concerns of suburban and rural schools. For many schools the only source of finance for prevention and planning is the Safe and Drug Free Schools program. The Safe and Drug Free Schools Act provided financial assistance to 97% of all school districts in the U.S. and was distributed to schools based upon Title I populations. There was great latitude on the use of

those funds, but the funds alone did not suffice to develop a comprehensive school readiness program (Modzeleski, 1996). Budgeting, scheduling, and resource constraints force administrators to deal with school violence bit by bit. Underfunding is seen as a major issue for hiring security personnel, staff training, purchase of security equipment, and being able to provide violence prevention and education programs (Petersen, 1998).

Competitive funding for emergency management has replaced safe and drug free schools title money in the past couple of years. The Readiness and Emergency Management (REMS) grant has provided an average award of $253,000 to individual schools that develop and coordinate plans with emergency management and train school personnel. Since 2003, only a small number of schools (815 school districts out of 14,200) have received the award. The commission recommends REMS monies be re-routed to state agencies that develop pioneering models of school safety and security and that the Department of Homeland Security work with the Department of Education to pool resources to assist local school districts in emergency preparedness. Furthermore the commission recommends permanent funding for schools to prepare for and recover from disasters (National Commission on Children and Disasters, 2010).

Further studies indicate that Fourth Amendment rights of students must be considered to prevent inappropriate forms of discretion. The Fourth Amendment rights of privacy essentially guarantee all citizens ―to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures" (Torres & Callahan, 2008, p. 379). However, the courts‘ fourth amendment interpretation was clarified for school districts and it provides far less privacy rights to students in school. The courts‘ interpretation while students are in school clearly benefits administrators. While this issue is not limited to suburban and rural school students, it is an issue which has been largely ignored in the smaller school settings (Torres & Callahan). It is

feasible to develop safe school environments without infringing upon the rights of students or teachers (Modzeleski, 1996).

Teachers are affected by involvement of violence at schools as much as anyone who has experienced violent episodes. Teachers themselves could be victims or they could be witnesses to school violence and often display symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Teacher and student relationships are affected by violence where often the teacher is more withdrawn from students as teachers may fear for their own or students' safety. Besides a high teacher turnover rate, the education of students can suffer as a result of violence in schools (Ting, Sanders, & Smith, 2002). Peterson (1998) concurs when his findings indicated 27% of professional staff members representing all geographical areas of the country were concerned about personal safety.

All of these factors—rising incidents in the urban and rural school setting, financial constraints, media hype and coverage, and student 4th Amendment rights—play a significant role in the research and development of information regarding the safety of rural educational environments. Yet very little research currently exists which fully examines the scope of the problems in this area. A recent quantitative study discussed school districts' crisis responses (Klinger, 2009). By surveying Ohio superintendents Klinger determined correlations existed between comprehensive crisis programs and the number of crisis events. The comprehensiveness of the crisis plan of a district correlated to the effectiveness of the plan.

Model Practices and Terminology

Following the September 11th terrorist attacks of 2001 and the immense flooding following hurricanes in 2004 and 2005, the president sent directives to Homeland Security to develop a set of principles that could be utilized during crisis situations. A template was developed to identify common language and structure that could be used from the national level

to local emergencies. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) was created so federal, local, and state governments and private firms could work together during crisis events and to identify key infrastructure elements to protect. There are several components of NIMS such as preparedness, flexibility, command structure, and communication, and NIMS utilizes an all-hazards approach to handling crisis situations. NIMS is the standard for emergency management in any disaster situation under the auspices of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2008).

Another component that came out of NIMS was the Incident Command System (ICS) that expands upon the concepts of NIMS to identify how disaster type incidents or crises should be structured. Common terminology is used in ICS such as Incident Commander (IC) when one person is in charge of a disaster event or Unified Command (UC) when numerous people collaborate to handle a crisis. Other terms are utilized to describe people in the incident command structure as well such as Public Information Officer (PIO), Safety Officer (SO), and others deemed necessary by the command staff (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2008). Though there are a number of abbreviations and terms used, interestingly enough, one of the major directives that came out of the NIMS/ICS system was to use ―plain" language when implementing the NIMS/ICS practices. An example would be, ―There is an intruder in the building. Lock your doors."

Recently published by DHS and FEMA is the CPG 101 or Comprehensive Preparedness Guide. CPG 101 provides a framework for developing an emergency operations plan (EOP) for governmental or private agencies. The guide is designed to conceptualize and develop an emergency operations plan that is easily usable, covers the components of prevention, mitigation,

response, and recovery and provides numerous resources for the development of the plan. One

such resource is a list of acronyms commonly utilized by emergency responders. By using the

guide, comprehensive emergency operations plans often known as crisis plans can be developed

with the NIMS/ICS structure in mind (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2009).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

I focused on one school district in rural Kansas for this study. As such, the research

design implemented was that of a qualitative case study. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) describe

qualitative research as naturalistic when the study takes place in the setting being studied. The

observations and data collected in that setting provide a context for understanding the research

topic of study. Rather than numbers, qualitative studies describe through words the setting and

the context of the study. Data were collected through observations or by describing what was

obtained via interviews. Qualitative research is concerned with how people make meaning with

the events of their lives. Doing qualitative research at a rural school district provided data from

the people in the school district on their views of the security and safety issues they face.

Furthermore, I acquired insight on how safe and secure they perceive their district. I secured

information on how prepared they feel personally if a crisis occurred and how prepared they

believe their district is to handle a crisis. I discovered that the staff's perception on their

preparedness is based on their understanding of their own district's crisis plan. Data acquired

through document review provided comparative insight into my observations and how the staff

actually viewed their safety and security circumstances. What may be written in a crisis plan or

observed in daily operations was compared with district personnel views as well.

Qualitative research begins with a theoretical perspective or view on how the world is

seen (Creswell, 2007). Since the researcher is an integral part of the research in naturalistic

inquiry as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985), it is important to understand the thinking of

the researcher. My longtime experience immersed in the study of natural sciences provided a

strong belief that the world and events can be objectively described. Natural sciences tend to

identify theories only after repeated observations with similar results or when a particular model applies well to explain observed phenomena (Crotty, 2003). That, too, is why I believe the theoretical framework of the protection-motivation theory explains well what the literature identified with regard to security issues. Natural scientists negotiate truth as a process of making claims based on observational evidence and data, but truth is never perfect. Scientific research is examined for bias and scientists try to explain the situation of concern (Creswell, 2003).

As a researcher, I navigate my worldview under these influences, and in that context, it appears to me that PMT follows the logical sequence that I followed in this study. I believe a naturalistic inquiry study served well to help me research and understand the safety and security issues at the school district studied.

Research Site

Merriam (1998) defines a case study as having a real-life context that is bound by certain parameters. The research plan began with my own concern for safety and security issues in the rural schools of Kansas. I identified and defined the rural schools for the purposes of this study earlier and determined the research site to be Paige Allyn Memorial School District (KSHSAA 3A High School Classification) (Kansas State High Schools Activities Association, 2009) for this study. Paige Allyn is the pseudonym used for the actual school district to protect any identifying attributes. Paige Allyn meets the definition of rural as, the district is located near major thoroughfares and railroads, and other potential issues, such as response time, could raise a concern for the district's potential safety. Additionally, the Paige Allyn superintendent welcomed the study and stated his own concern for crisis planning and readiness in the district.

All Paige Allyn school district buildings are located in the city limits of the community in Kansas where Paige Allyn is located and served as the site for this study. Paige Allyn is located

in a rural county in Kansas and the community has an estimated 2009 population of 2613 (Population finder, 2010). It is far enough outside a city to not be considered suburban. All research was done on district property, except for a focus group with emergency responders, an interview with the state director of safe and prepared schools, and a brief interview of two other district administrators of similar sized districts. Consistent with the emergent nature of qualitative research and recognizing that the district is just part of a larger system, additional data gathering took place with those other agencies and persons related to school safety and security to get a more thorough analysis from a different perspective and provide a more complete report. The interviews of the district administrators outside of Paige Allyn, the state safe and prepared schools director, and the emergency responder focus group took place in locations mutually convenient and away from Paige Allyn District property. The process that identified additional sources is known as snowball sampling (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

All school district interviews were held at the convenience of building administrators at their respective primary duty site. Two exceptions were the district superintendent who participated in the interview at a commercial establishment in Paige Allyn's community and the athletic director who was interviewed at an athletic event. The state director of safe and prepared schools participated in a phone interview, as did one of the district administrators from another school district. The other district administrator (outside of Paige Allyn) was interviewed in person at a safe schools summit. The emergency responders' focus group took place at a conference room located in the city's operations building.

A total of 39 individuals participated in the study. Participants for the interviews consisted of all building and district-level administrators. The facilities/transportation director and the district nurse were interviewed as well. The safety and security personnel outside of the

district including the county emergency manager, county sheriff, police chief, and fire chief all participated together in a focus group. The EMS director was invited to that focus group as well, but declined to participate. Licensed teachers, other licensed staff, and classified personnel participated in focus groups too. The observations made by the researcher were passive as described by Spradley (1980).

The selection of participants interviewed, put in focus groups, or observed had a distinct reasoning for their selection or purpose. Erlandson, et al, (1993) described this process as purposive sampling. The number selected to participate in focus groups or interviews was sufficient to get an appropriate amount of data and once data got redundant, the sampling ceased (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Patton (1990) believes that participants should have substantial data to provide to the study when selecting them for interviews or focus groups. The building and district administrators, teachers, and classified staff all have a stake in the district's safety and security and were able to provide good insight into their beliefs on that subject. The data collection process is outlined in the following section.

Data Collection Plan

There were several data collection strategies typically associated with qualitative inquiry employed in this study, and included interviews, observations, document reviews, and focus groups. The plan used for each strategy is detailed below.

Interviews

Interviews allow study participants to tell their stories in their own words, but are guided by the interviewer and the types of questions asked. Interviewees are sometimes known as informants because they have a perspective on the culture and can provide to the researcher a position on what is going on in that culture (Merriam, 1998). Since the interviewer is often the

researcher as well, he/she must be careful to analyze his/her role in the process (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997). Having questions as a guide, being polite, non-hypercritical, and working to become a skilled interviewer through practice leads to positive interactions during the interview (Merriam). The interview can be conversational in nature as well. Interview data can be used with other data such as documents and observations and is appropriate for this study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Erlandson and others (1993) portrayed interviewing as purposeful conversation where the interviewees get to tell their story in their own words. The guided interview approach as described by Patton (1990) was used for this study as it allowed the question protocol to be followed, but it also allowed the interviewer flexibility in the order and allowed for follow up questioning. It allowed the participant to tell his or her story.

For this study, I interviewed all of the district's administrators including the superintendent, principals, and athletic director; a total of five. I also briefly interviewed two additional district-level administrators as a follow-up to data collected in the initial interviews and focus groups to provide insight on crisis plan comparisons. Each administrator was interviewed once. In addition, the district nurse and the facilities/transportation director were interviewed. Because the study used a variety of data gathering methods, administrators' views were triangulated with views of other staff members, documents, artifacts, and observations. Paige Allyn interviewees were asked to describe their crisis plan, share their perceptions of how safe and secure they felt their school and district is, and to respond to scenarios to determine what they would do if faced with a crisis. The director of safe and prepared schools was asked similar questions when interviewed, but was asked to describe ideal or common practices based on state and national data as he knew it. See Appendix A for sample interview questions.

Observations

One technique easily employed was observing the schools in the district during various times. Monitoring students and staff, nearby roadways, and entrances to the various buildings was easily accomplished. Watching staff and student interactions and their cognizance of an unknown visitor could also have been beneficial, but was limited to my presence only and all staff were alerted to my attendance. Caution was used so the observations were not considered covert and openness was provided regarding the purpose of the observations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Determining to be a participant or non-participant observer, taking accurate fieldnotes, and other issues can make observations controversial (Creswell, 2007), so great care was taken as observations were included as part of the qualitative study. Spradley (1980) identified a continuum on the degree of participation by observers. Observers could be highly involved on one end or non-participants on the other end of the continuum.

One observation of approximately two hours duration for each building in the district was achieved while waiting for focus group participants or interviewees. The purpose of the observation was to observe movement around the buildings, determine how accessible the buildings were, and to observe interactions amongst students, staff, and others who may enter the building at various times. Every precaution was taken to garner observations as unobtrusively as possible. Permission to access the site was necessary and was gained by the appropriate authorities prior to entering into any of the observation activities. What areas and people who were observed and the protocol for recordkeeping was completed prior to the observations (Merriam, 1998). The observations made included outside views while driving around the district's buildings that included a view of all of the buildings' entrances. Each of the principals gave me a tour of each building as well and pointed out distinctive issues and locations of some

of the video surveillance equipment. An observation of the community, its roads, sidewalks, and the immediate area surrounding the district's schools was made as well.

Documents and Records

Examination of documents and records can be used to gather data the same as interviews, focus groups, or observations. Documents can provide a voice from the past or provide expertise in a particular area not gleaned from other sources. Documents and records can be public or personal in nature, developed by the researcher, or gained from online resources (Creswell, 2007). Furthermore, many documents or records can be considered an established source of information and can be evaluated and studied far more easily than re-interviewing a participant. Documents and records are an excellent source for triangulation of data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The district's crisis plan and associated documents were reviewed for this study. Part of the NCLB legislation required all public schools to have a documented crisis plan (The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001). These plans are supposed to be shared with law enforcement and other rescue agencies (Dudley, 2003; Giduck, 2005) along with training of the entire staff. Therefore, reviewing the district's crisis plan allowed me to determine how knowledgeable staff members were of the plan and its contents.

Records of incidents such as most recent data on suspensions, expulsions, violent conduct, and criminal behavior were obtained from the Kansas State Department of Education website. Records such as response time for first responders and advanced rescue response along with law enforcement response time were not made available. Staff perceptions of safety and security were examined in relation to records of incidence of student violent conduct. Pictures of the site and safety and security plans are documents that were studied for applicable data.

Reviewing the plans listed above helped determine if the staff's perception of safety and security were aligned.

Focus Groups

Focus groups are a way to gather data from a group of people who, when they talk together, can foster ideas from one another and from the questions being asked in session (Merriam, 1998). Ideally, focus groups are diverse and bring in as many ideas as possible. Morgan (1996) describes this idea generation as the ―group effect.‖ To accomplish the ―group effect,‖ Merriam explains that participants must feel their opinions are valued and the focus group moderator makes sure everyone has an opportunity to share his/her ideas. Consensus, however, is not the goal. Effective focus groups have well-developed questions that guide the conversation. Questions are organized so they appropriately engage the participants, but are non-threatening (Krueger, 1998a). Krueger (1998b) also discusses the role of the moderator of a focus group. The moderator is not a participant in answering questions, but is prepared to handle difficult situations and ask follow-up questions if appropriate. The researcher will serve as the moderator for this study.

Five focus groups provided an adequate amount of sampling from among the district's licensed and classified personnel. Four focus groups of five to six teachers from each of the three buildings for a total of 19 were sufficient and some of the groups were mixed with instructional paraprofessionals. Three classified staff, including a food service worker and other district office staff participated in a focus group too. The one group of classified staff was sufficient to get needed data and demonstrated redundancy. The number of participants in the classified focus group was similar in size to the teacher focus groups. Focus group questions are located in Appendix B.

As with most school districts, both classified and licensed staff makes up the personnel of the district. Both groups participated as members of focus groups at the chosen school district. Groups were chosen so that supervisors generally did not participate in the same focus group, though one administrator did participate with his staff even though he had already been interviewed, as his staff desired that he stay. Administrators were chosen to be interviewed individually rather than participate in a focus group, but the one administrator still participated though he tried to encourage his staff to answer the questions. The researcher invited all licensed teachers and classified staff of each school to participate in a focus group. Each focus group session lasted approximately one hour and took place on the school district property at the site where the teacher was assigned with the particular room determined by the building's administration. Each focus group ended with the moderator doing a member check (Krueger, 1998b).

Data Analysis

A number of analyses can be made in the field during the actual gathering of data (Merriam, 1998). Examples of these include making observer comments, determining initial themes, and exploring literature. After the data collection was completed, codes were developed and data were classified into various categories. The purpose of the analysis was to make sense of the data so it can be written up making it understandable to readers of the research. Observational data and data gathered from document review were merged with information gathered from focus groups and interviews.

Data gathered from focus groups and interviews was separated into units using the constant comparative method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The first step of this method is to compare the data constantly and determine what themes can be made. As each piece of datum is

analyzed, pieces that are alike in some way are categorized together. According to Ryan and Bernard (2003), themes are very abstract and difficult to link together. As a result, the researcher looked for repetition among pieces of data. Furthermore, searching for similarities and differences allowed the researcher to determine themes and categories. Lincoln and Guba (1985) also state that theory should be related to the themes and categories using the constant comparative analysis. Lincoln and Guba refer to the process of breaking data into units to be sorted into categories as unitizing.

Having a great amount of data after completing the focus groups, interviews, document reviews, and observations created a challenge to organize data well. After initial determination of themes and categories, the data were placed into Filemaker Pro for further analysis and organization. Units were placed into the organizing program after data had been transcribed and unitized (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Developing codes for interviewees or focus group members and tying them to categories and themes, sites, and other pertinent data allowed the researcher to group data in a number of ways (Meyer & Avery, 2008). By developing different fields and looking in a number of ways, clear themes began to emerge.

Delimitations

The parameters of the study were chosen due to initial review of the location, size, and potential lack of preparedness for crisis situations. A small town or rural district that is located near major highways, but distanced from sophisticated urban safety and security response departments, were the parameters used to help determine that the school district chosen was a good selection for the study. Crotty (2003) describes Kuhn's definition of a paradigm as it relates to science where the boundaries of scientific inquiry are set and the research follows within those

boundaries. Information garnered in the literature review also emphasizes that rural schools are generally viewed as safer, but that notion is not necessarily true.

Ethics and Research Quality

Ethics. A high level of professional behavior was exhibited when the research was conducted and the findings were reported. The following section describes the techniques used to ensure high quality research by providing examples of validity, reliability, trustworthiness, ethical behavior, and, steps to taken to protect human subjects. Each participant was assured of confidentiality and was presented with a letter allowing the participant to leave the study at any time without any harmful consequences or retaliatory action. Each participant read and signed an informed consent letter. See Appendix C for a copy of the informed consent letter.

Validity, as defined by Kvale (1995), implies an unending search for validating the truthfulness of research. When applied to qualitative research, validity implies that the study is really investigating what the study is supposed to investigate and working toward finding answers to the stated problem. Implied in the above statements is the ethical integrity of the researcher. Kvale suggests that to obtain valid results, the researcher must continually check, question, and go back to the theoretical framework. Production of quality research will in itself demonstrate validity because research procedures will be transparent and the findings should be evident so that conclusions would be difficult to argue. Applied to this study, all procedures were presented to and reviewed by professional colleagues, and presented to the chosen rural school superintendent for approval. All documents examined and procedures followed during interviews, focus groups, and observations were made available to participants prior to their participation.

To assist in identifying reliability and validity, data were triangulated: facts were verified by cross-referencing data sources (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The collection of data was from numerous sources and was checked against one another to assure that data were reliable and to determine the different themes that emerged from various sources.

Careful data analysis through triangulation addressed the truthfulness of the findings. Since a significant number of staff members were asked to participate in focus groups and since findings were applicable specifically to the study setting, consistency and applicability issues were addressed. Finally, questions asked of interviewees were critiqued by professional colleagues to assure that they were objective as possible. Yet, it is important to note that as the researcher, personal subjectivity unavoidably entered into the collection, analysis, and reporting of findings as described by Peshkin (1988). Findings were discussed with other doctoral candidates, the committee chair, and the dissertation committee to reduce personal biases.

External validity or generalizability of qualitative research can be achieved in several ways as well. One method is the analysis by the reader of the study as he or she applies it to another setting of which he or she is familiar. In other words, if after reading this study, the reader sees how the findings are applicable to his her locale and background, the findings from this study are therefore generalizable (Merriam, 1995). Even repeating the study in the same location would not assure identical results as the situation and people involved may have changed, but by gathering detailed data, it makes it possible for others to determine the level of transferability to another setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Another method for generalizing qualitative data is that of developing hypotheses that can be utilized in other situations. As long as the data collection methodology is duplicated as closely as possible, it is possible to apply it to another setting (Merriam). Yet another possibility is to consider findings in one setting can

transcend into another venue. What a person learns in one location can also apply to other places and humans regularly make sense of their world by utilizing this practice (Merriam). As people learn in their particular surroundings, they apply what they learn to other locales. For example, a person venturing into the woods at night for the first time at a particular locale may step into a hole and sprain his ankle. When put into a similar venue and circumstance, though in a different locale, he would likely tread carefully to avoid a similar injury.

Qualitative research should be designed to produce high quality reports. Qualitative research historically produced high quality when studies adhered to standards that others in the field consider to be excellent practice, despite the diversity of methodologies (Freeman, deMarrais, Preissle, Roulston, & Pierre, 2007). Following strict guidelines of the IRB, reviews of the proposal, data, findings, and conclusions by the doctoral dissertation committee and university staff assures a high quality study that led to extensive valuable information for the superintendent and school district. By following these strict procedures, even the sample of only one site provided trustworthy results (Merriam, 1995).

All persons involved in the study were assured of confidentiality when reporting findings. Audio tapes of focus groups and interviews were destroyed upon the completion of the study. A rigorous attempt was made to make sure no identification of participants was divulged in observations as well. All identifying documentation was destroyed upon completion of the study. Before conducting the study, an internal review of the proposal was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Wichita State University to assure no harm was done to the human subjects involved in the research.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The data collected via interviews, focus groups, observations, and document review is presented in this section. The research site is described, but is not clearly identified so participants and the district are protected. Descriptions of the data gathered are organized into general themes and categories such as general perceptions, concerns, and model practices.

Research Site: Paige Allyn School District

Paige Allyn School District is in the Midwest United States located in a community of approximately 2600 residents. The community has a small college and a few emergency services including fire, police, and emergency medical service; though sophisticated resources, such as bomb disposal robotics, advanced medical technology, or SWAT teams and the additional manpower with training to operate those resources is minimally 30 minutes away. The closest large town is over 20 miles away and the nearest metropolitan area is 40 miles away.

Paige Allyn has three schools: a kindergarten through fifth grade elementary, a sixth through eighth grade middle school, and a ninth through twelfth grade high school. The middle and high school share a commons area and are connected together to make a one city block campus. The elementary school is only a few blocks away. All schools are located in residential areas. Parking surrounds the middle and high school complex on the street thus creating only a small separation of the schools from homes surrounding the school.

Several additions and modifications to the schools over the years have been made to connect the middle and high school complex, but these modifications have created many more corners and short hallways, making the connection a labyrinth of short hallways in some areas and little open viewing in some areas of the school. One oversight in the modifications in the

buildings was development of a FEMA safe room that could be utilized for multiple purposes. The first area to be described in the findings of Paige Allyn School District is an examination of current safety and security policies and procedures, beginning with the written policies and procedures followed with the staff perceptions of them.

District Crisis Management Plan

The policy in force by Paige Allyn School District with regard to safety and security is the Crisis Management Plan adopted in April of 2000. Various updates were mentioned by administrators and some of the staff during interviews, however no updated version of the plan was provided. Contained in the same notebook with the adopted plan were a crisis plan review PowerPoint handout (not dated), a vulnerability assessment questionnaire, and a community disaster plan dated December 1999. The community disaster plan had listed many local emergency responders' phone numbers along with phone numbers of vital community services. However, some of the phone numbers and corresponding personnel were no longer accurate and the area codes had not been updated. There was one memorandum dated September 2000 describing a pending evacuation drill. A school emergency procedures guide from another school district was also in the notebook along with several documents describing types of bombs and bomb threat regulations. The bomb threat regulation document was dated 1996 and included a floor plan of Paige Allyn Elementary. The remaining documents were pamphlets or documents downloaded from the internet regarding various bomb threat or crisis situations indicating materials may have been considered in reviewing or updating the current district plan. The most recent document was an active shooter guide that was a printed email document sent by local law enforcement and dated November of 2008.

The plan was approved by the district board of education in April of 2000 and begins with a mission statement describing three main tenets: prevention measures, crisis management measures, and long-term follow-up and evaluation measures. Because no updated and approved document was provided, the assumption was made that this document is the official and most up-to-date plan of the district. Various colors of paper divided the different sections and may have signified a level of importance, though that is supposition on the researcher's part, as it was not confirmed by any interviewees. The first part of the plan laid out the expectations of staff at the district level and in each building. Expectations of staff in the district are described first, including regular plan reviews and updates, CPR and first aid training, and instructional and student monitoring efforts to prevent potential crises. The next portion of the general description addresses district and building crisis management teams and their corresponding duties, such as liaison positions with various emergency responders or community support. Additionally, should a crisis occur, the plan states a follow-up evaluation will occur.

The plan then goes on to describe some specific duties and appointments of certain personnel such as the crisis team coordinator, and states these personnel will be appointed by the superintendent should a crisis occur. A crisis management flow chart is provided with names written in, but the copy provided for review was not updated with current personnel. A checklist follows that describes some general duties plus another checklist for each person responsible for a particular position. For instance, the crisis management district coordinator would serve as a media coordinator and would determine if a crisis was to be declared, verify information, and set appropriate responses into motion (a few of the duties on the checklist). Each person designated with a particular responsibility or who is a member of the crisis response team has a similar list

of duties and crisis response checklist. Designated office personnel, counselors, and teachers also have similar duty lists and crisis response checklists.

A description of the responsibilities of the various designated crisis management liaisons follows next and indicates the position normally responsible. For example, the counselor contacts the outside service center crisis team that provides counselors and support from surrounding districts and the law enforcement liaison is usually a building administrator. A more detailed description of each liaison follows along with a crisis response checklist for each. The various liaisons include public information and media, law enforcement, Educational Service center, student, parent, funeral home and clergy, and medical. Some of the phone number prefixes had been updated on the various liaison pages.

The next part of the crisis management plan deals with specific crises and is printed on orange paper as compared to the earlier section that was designated by a beige color. The first crisis situation listed was bomb threat. The plan indicated specific procedures related to bomb threats were kept confidential and shared on a ―need to know‖ basis, but generally indicated that evacuation of students and staff and relocation to a site off campus was the appropriate response. The monthly crisis training schedule was found next, followed by a page regarding several potential crises: reporting suspected child abuse, reporting of unlawful student actions, students with a history of dangerous behaviors, and information on the state‗s school safety hotline. A listing of outside doors to be locked after school begins followed next. As previously mentioned, main entrances near school offices were to be left open during school hours along with ―other entrances as identified by the superintendent of schools.‖

The remaining orange pages were made up of short sections of a few sentences or a listing of information regarding calling trees, media stations providing information regarding

school cancellations, memorials, and funeral procedures. The other procedures dealing with evacuation, relocation, alternate building sites, lockdown procedures, public gathering evacuations, tornado drills, etc. contained one sentence indicating that each building shall establish and practice procedures. No specific building procedures were provided to me and various interviewees indicated that the district plan and building plans were the same with the exception of evacuation sites.

Page 29 of the crisis plan gave more specific information and procedures with regard to hazardous materials spills and explosions. The hazardous material spills addressed that heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) should be shut down and students taken inside the building for sheltering, but the plan also indicated that an evacuation arrangement to another site should be developed and possibly utilized. Only one interviewee described shutting down HVAC and sheltering inside the building. He further explained that a large room in the center of the building could be sealed off allowing students and staff members a safer location. The explosions section indicated that gas and electric should be shut off and that students and staff should evacuate and relocate off-site. That same page also contained a photocopy of a community information card regarding fire and storm warning signals.

A half page finished the orange section by addressing phone service during power outages, dress codes, and student use of cellular phones and pagers. The section was very short and, according to those interviewed, the informal policy for student use of cell phones contradicts the formal policy as the orange section of the crisis plan states, ―Students are prohibited from possessing and/or using cellular phones and pagers in any school buildings or while involved in school sponsored activities.‖

The last section of the crisis plan is the appendix, printed on green paper. The first several pages provide sample public address announcements for emergency evacuation and provides for the selection of several choices as to what statement to use. Furthermore, it addresses the evacuation procedures from various locations within a specific building such as the gym or the auditorium. The pages following building evacuation procedures again address specific locations, such as the gym or auditorium, and procedures for taking shelter in case of tornado, and where students, staff, and event attendees are to shelter depending on their location (gym or auditorium).

The last few appendix pages are comprised of sample statements to be used with students in case someone has been injured or died in the school community. Statements that can be used to allow discussion in those cases of death or severe illness or injury and do's and don'ts are listed. Possible student reactions that can occur and how the staff is to respond to those reactions also are listed. The last three pages of the appendix section contain guidelines for understanding and responding to a crisis (potential student behaviors), a page of information for parents to assist their children during times of crisis, and a page that contains suggestions for parent/community meetings.

Perceptions of District Safety and Security Policies and Procedures

Regardless of which focus group or individual was interviewed, unless members of that group brought the book with them, the teachers and paraprofessionals had no clear idea when the crisis plan was reviewed or updated and had rarely looked at it. Participants confirmed about Paige Allyn what the state director stated regarding some schools' crisis plans, they are ―gathering dust on their shelf.‖ One focus group participant brought the crisis plan with him to the interview, but had very little knowledge of what the crisis plan book contained and had not

reviewed it recently. At least one staff member indicated he had not seen it and had no idea where it was. A focus group of teachers and paraprofessionals responded by saying, ―What crisis plan? We have a crisis plan? Nonexistent!" when asked to describe the district's crisis plan. Another participant interjected, ―I have never seen the [crisis plan] notebook." Several respondents agreed it was ―pretty sad" and the only part of the crisis plan they knew was what to do for tornados and fire, and added regarding the tornado shelter, ―I don't feel safe there."

Since most interviewees did not have the crisis plan with them when being interviewed, they guessed that it might be up to five years old and a few guessed slightly longer. Although nearly everyone interviewed indicated feeling the crisis plan needed updating, they were clearly surprised to learn it was dated ten years back. One administrator expressed that some type of review may have occurred six years ago and several administrators indicated that some of the information such as personnel changes had been updated annually. The state director of safe schools asserted that the entire plan should be reviewed and updated at least annually.

Nearly all school personnel recognized the need to update the crisis plan and practice it using regular drills and staff development. One of the teacher focus groups discussed that some of the counselors and administrators were now attending crisis workshops at the district's educational service center (a place that provides professional staff development and services to school districts). The focus group interviewees shared that discussion was beginning on what were the best practices for various crisis situations. Interviewees indicated they had the desire to know best practices. Furthermore, they recognized even if they were aware of procedures in the crisis plan, the practice could be outdated. ―We should have a plan based on what we should do, not based on instincts, but somebody who has done research on these things," stated one interviewee.

One teacher focus group member described how he was involved in helping write the original crisis plan and how he felt it was good at the time. He went on to describe how elements of the plan were rehearsed and practiced. Other members explained that door locks were changed so they could be locked from the inside. They went on to talk about how at staff meetings crisis plans were discussed regularly, but as time went on, administrators changed, evacuation sites needed to be changed, and best practices had changed; yet the crisis plan was never updated.

A number of procedures are currently in place at Paige Allyn that the researcher observed or were described by the interviewees. Among those procedures was a video surveillance system to which ―all of the principals have access,‖ stated one participant. The researcher never had access to the video surveillance and did not make any video equipment observations, but faculty, staff, and administration interviewed all mentioned video surveillance in the buildings. Furthermore, one staff interviewee noted that one of the administrators ―has the monitor up all the time,‖ implying the principal frequently monitored the video cameras and the administrator confirmed these numerous observations. The video surveillance system is connected to the administrators‗ computers and at least one district staff member monitors the video cameras periodically. Interviewees indicated the system helped with monitoring the buildings and could be used to prevent and/or mitigate crisis situations such as intruders.

Another procedure used in all buildings that presented itself during the focus groups and interviews was a restriction in the number of unlocked doors in each school building. One teacher stated, ―All the doors are locked except the front door.‖ Another interviewee confirmed the practice of locking doors by stating, ―Most of the doors are locked except for the front doors.‖ Efforts had been made to restrict access to each building by locking most entrances throughout the school day. Visitors to the building were to enter near the front office of each

building and sign in at the office before going further. Signs posting entrance sites and check-in procedures were visible. To further assure this procedure was followed, some administrators and office personnel strategically placed their seating so building entrances could be easily monitored. Strategically placed seating was both observed by the researcher and described by administrative and other staff interviewed. One participant added, ―[The secretary's] desk is actually facing the glass…so if she is doing anything, she will see it" (the entrance and questionable activity). Additionally, some interviewees indicated mirrors were placed in some buildings to assist the secretarial staff in viewing the hallways near the office.

Besides having specific entrances for visitors, resources were allocated over a number of years to change all classrooms to lock from the inside. Teachers can lock their classroom doors from the inside simply by pushing a button. One administrator explained the procedure for locking down the building if there was a threat, such as an intruder: ―If we say ‗lockdown', then they (teachers) go to their door, lock it, pull the blinds and then get to a safe area where not seen." No administrator indicated how often the lockdown procedures were practiced yet implied teachers knew what to do. Most interviewees acknowledged lockdown procedures had been practiced in the past, but not recently. Lockdown procedures can be announced via the overhead PA system controlled in the office or there are phones in each of the classrooms, which can be called from other places besides the office. One administrator noted that the staff would in some way try to contact an administrator if there was an intruder and the building immediately would go into lockdown procedures.

Non-teaching district level participants described policies whose purpose was to keep students and staff safe. One such policy illustrated concerned food service and food safety brought up by food service personnel. Procedures follow state guidelines to make sure food is

kept at the correct temperatures to reduce the risk of food poisoning. Furthermore, Paige Allyn is careful to consider from which companies they purchase food and make informed decisions when choosing a company. Paige Allyn investigates vendors to see whether delivery trucks are locked and kept in fenced-in areas at night, whether warehouses are clean, and who might have access to district food. One participant shared that a low risk of food contamination is a priority with Paige Allyn when selecting vendors. She added, ―I would hate, hate to have a food poisoning issue coming from school.‖

Paige Allyn has not employed a school resource officer, but the school district regularly hired police for various school events. Paige Allyn encourages and cooperates with other emergency responders and welcomes them into their buildings. Paige Allyn also employs a school nurse, when other schools have been cutting those positions. The school nurse is concurrently employed as a county health nurse too, which provides a link between emergency responders and the school district and she is conversant in NIMS (National Incident Management System) and ICS (Incident Command System) protocols, whereas the vast majority of school employees interviewed were unaware of NIMS and ICS. A few of the administrators and other participants did describe using ―plain language‖ instead of code words when discussing response to crisis situations, a protocol recommended by NIMS/ICS.

A number of other procedures were described by interviewees, but these were not necessarily consistent throughout the district. Procedures set for students travelling on the bus on field trips were described by some of the staff interviewed. These staff described that bus drivers would go over procedures and expectations with the students before they left for field trips. Interviewees went on to describe that the nurse would make sure all special dietary or medical needs were provided to each sponsor and some administrators and staff indicated that contact

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information was provided about each student. One administrator offered a more detailed description of his procedures when a large group of his students went on a field trip, but added it was not a district policy, but his expectations. He stated, ―Our bus guy had a copy of who was attending that trip and which supervisors each of those kids were to report to.‖

One policy put in place during recent construction in the district was the use of staff identification badges. During recent building improvement construction throughout the district, because so many construction employees were entering and leaving the school buildings, a policy was implemented whereby each school district employee was given an identification badge and expected to wear it during school hours. Following completion of construction, the identification badges were no longer mandatory. The researcher observed a few employees wearing the badges, but the majority no longer wore the ID badges. One interviewee stated, ―I guess it‗s not a pressing need like it once was to be able to identify who is a staff member and who isn't.‖ There were other safety and security procedures utilized, but were not consistent across the district and were either implemented due to personal concerns or determined by individual principals.

The next sections will describe additional findings regarding perceptions of safety and security following interviews of administrators, instructional staff, non-teaching personnel, emergency responders, and the state director of safe and prepared schools.

Perceptions of Safety and Security in Paige Allyn District

There were two general categories found following the interviews of staff. First, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other district support personnel generally felt their community was safe and secure and thus the schools located in the community were safe and secure as well. Second, they recognized they were inadequately prepared for many of the

crisis situations they could face. This section of the findings will focus in those two basic categories.

Paige Allyn School District is Safe and Secure

From the superintendent to paraprofessionals, there was a general feeling among school personnel that the school district was safe and secure. The primary reasons for these feelings of safety and security, which will be discussed here, are a) the orderliness of the school and students; b) the close-knit nature of a small community and rural location; and c) the security measures and precautions the district has in place. Although study participants communicated feeling safe and secure, they also acknowledged feelings of vulnerability, a theme that concludes the section.

The state safe and prepared schools director depicted the moral responsibilities schools had in providing an orderly, safe, and secure ―learning environment‖ for staff and students. A Paige Allyn administrator expressed nearly the same idea when he stated, ―Safety and security translates to my way of thinking into a safe and orderly environment for our staff and students.‖ He went on to describe activities both home and away, being cognizant of school activity throughout the day inside and outside of the building, and precautions for school events such as dances. He added, ―It‘s taking little steps to ensure that our kids are safe all the time.‖

An orderly school environment and well-behaved student body was perceived by many to be a strong factor in the overall safety and security of the schools. An interviewee described another district where he previously worked where the ―kids were allowed basically to be abusive to the teachers …and the faculty did not feel very secure.‖ However, the interviewee went on to describe the Paige Allyn administration as one that ―backs our teachers well…and if there is an issue, it‘s always taken care of…so overall, I feel safe and secure.‖ Yet another

teacher illustrated this view by stating, "You know, we really don't have any real problems. They are dealt with real quick inside." One teacher who had taught in the district for over twenty years described the student body as well behaved. He had worked in other districts of similar size where he felt fighting between students occurred on a regular basis, but had never seen any "knock-down, bloody fight" in this district. The district he was describing was another rural district that was about the same size, but lacked the orderliness he perceived at Paige Allyn. Another participant depicted the high school students by saying:

> The vast majority of their social events are school or church related. The two boundaries are pretty blurred in a lot of cases. When my kids were in high school, I pretty well knew what type of event they were [attending]. I think [our community] in general is safe.

Orderliness and a lack of violence among students were seen as components of safe and secure schools at Paige Allyn. At most, an occasional shoving match occurred that usually dissipated rather quickly. A quick review of the state department of education's crime and violence reports confirmed the orderliness as no crimes were reported for several years (Kansas State Department of Education, 2007).

Recognizing that accidental crises can occur as well, teachers described one incident that emphasized their positive safety perceptions when the carpet did not burn despite the fact that a student who was giving a speech about model rockets accidentally ignited a model rocket in the classroom. As the teachers mused with laughter about the "great" kid who accidentally shot off the rocket, they indicated, "the building is fire resistant," as little actual damage occurred. An emergency responder indicated that the district buildings get annual inspections and district personnel are very responsive to handling any minor issues. He went on to state, "My perception

is that they are very safe. I think that the staff is well-trained. I think they put a high degree of importance on the safety of their students."

Administrators were perceived to be vigilant with regard to safety and security and capable of handling most situations. They were aware of student issues and worked to resolve them. Emergency responders indicated that ―intelligence‖ was the best deterrent if a student was considering a wrongful act, and they felt the administration had a good handle on what kids were thinking and would involve emergency responders to prevent some crises. Another interviewee felt the district was safe because the administrators ―handle issues‖ and ―enforce discipline.‖ Yet, other administrators indicated the safety of students and staff was paramount to their responsibilities and believed they accomplished those tasks well in terms of supervision and safety preparedness.

There are a number of other areas where most interviewees felt Paige Allyn school district was safe, secure, and prepared. All administrators and school personnel indicated they practiced all state required drills such as bus evacuation, fire evacuation drills, and severe weather drills. Several staff members and administrators alike indicated that fire drills even had been modified to practice secondary exits in lieu of using only the primary exit, though one staff member indicated one of those occurred purely by accident. The staff member indicated that students evacuated out the wrong exit during a fire drill, but the teacher used it as a teaching moment to emphasize if the students' regular exit was blocked by fire, students should seek an alternative exit. The students and staff exited quickly and successfully in an alternate exit. The fact that school personnel can easily identify school visitors and that ―everyone knows everybody‖ was also seen as a plus. Administrators and some staff alike indicated they felt they could recognize when someone ―didn't belong‖ or if an abnormal situation was transpiring.

It was noted that fire evacuation drills were completed monthly and run at different times of the day and month, unlike in years back when they were completed the last day of the month. Several staff members were aware that the required bus evacuation drill was completed as well and also noted that several bus drivers went over evacuation and other safety procedures prior to field trips. Evacuation routes for both severe weather and fire evacuations included schematic diagrams posted on the walls in most rooms. Fire, bus, and severe weather evacuation procedures are required by state statute and practiced regularly. Several staff members noted that fire exits were purposely blocked during fire drills forcing them to choose an alternative evacuation in an effort to simulate potential exits being blocked by fire.

Most respondents felt the overall control of accessibility to the schools had improved. There has been an effort in the past few years to limit entrances and lock doors and some interviewees noted they felt the doors were regularly locked because ―Every time I need to get in some door, it is locked.‖ One administrator stated, ―We are trying to make it a place where somebody who is going to try to be an intruder would have to know the exact way to get in and go through all the procedures.‖ Another administrator noted that two-way radio contact was regular and that if he was not available, another person had responsibility for carrying the two-way radio so, if needed, an immediate response could occur. Teachers taking students out to recess also carried two-way radios for communication to the office or an administrator.

Security personnel were used at many different sporting events, though the general feeling was few were needed. Emergency responders felt the school district was always responsive to inquiries or inspections and quickly made mandated or suggested modifications. Teachers, bus drivers, and administrators were often provided with lists of students and emergency contacts when attending field trips although no procedures for such were written into

the crisis plan. The medical needs or special dietary needs of students were accounted for during

field trips as well. There was a general feeling that other school districts had emergency

operations plans in place when athletes travelled to other communities as well and district

administrators and sufficient coaching personnel accompanied student-athletes when travelling.

Communication through the use of a telephone messaging system has also been placed in

operation and successfully utilized to quickly alert parents, staff, and other appropriate personnel

when issues have arisen. The overall perception by most respondents was, "We have a safe

school."

The district has an "alert now" telephone system installed and operational. The system

provides nearly immediate communication to parents or other designated groups. Once a

message is sent, the alert now can send out the same message to all telephones across the district.

Administrators have access to this system and indicated they felt it would be used in a variety of

situations including letting parents know where their children were being sheltered in case of

severe weather and providing instructions to the parents about school expectations in those

situations. Administrators described that during field trips, they could send out a message

regarding the safety and location of their children, although no such policy was written into the

crisis plan. Alert now is not only used in emergency situations, but is a communication tool used

frequently for other announcements sent to parents or other groups.

Numerous interviewees were aware of district measures in place in the case of death of

staff member or student and commented that the district had experienced these situations. The

state school safety director indicated that fairly common crises most schools face are those where

a staff member or student death occurs. In small communities, this type of crisis may extend

beyond the staff members or students themselves to parents of students or other members of the

community. Interviewees indicated that Paige Allyn has experienced this crisis and have been well prepared. The school district belongs to a consortium of school districts that participate as crisis response teams. Once a death is confirmed, the district will contact the consortium and a response team of counselors is sent to the district. Nearly all staff members were aware of the response, though many were not aware of specific intricacies of the district's response, such as communication responsibilities. Several interviewees indicated that since the community was ―close-knit,‖ churches would offer their help in these types of crisis situations. Most of the staff and administration indicated that the general response of the school district was very good. Paige Allyn has experienced the deaths of staff members and parents of students. As a result, all but one interviewee indicated the district was well prepared for this type of event. The one exception mentioned was where a staff member died over a school break and the decedent's role was that of support personnel. The interviewee indicated very little condolences or support was given for the decedent's co-workers.

The size and makeup of the community played a big role in the perception that Paige Allyn was a safe and secure school system. Many school personnel believed living in a small town where everyone knows everyone else gave them a sense of feeling safe and secure. To illustrate, one member of a combined teacher and paraprofessional focus group stated,

> I feel secure. We're never in danger and because we are small, I think we can identify people who don't belong in our building or who we question whether they should be and we're comfortable enough stopping to say, ―Hey, can we help you?‖ I feel safe in our building.

District support personnel made up one focus group and it consisted of food service personnel and non-teaching central office staff. District support personnel described feeling very safe and

secure. Some of these personnel are the first to arrive in the morning or the last to leave at night. Yet, regardless of time of day, they indicated they generally feel safe and secure due to the small size of the community and the attitude that everyone looks out for one another. One support person in the group stated, ―You know I feel comfortable any day. It doesn't bother me to walk in the building when it's dark in the morning.‖ Others in the group reiterated their feelings of safety even though doors may be left unlocked or lights supposed to be left on are not. Yet, members of the support personnel group recognized that ―no major incidents‖ had occurred and that fact could lead to ―naïve thinking.‖ One member put it this way, ―Perhaps the biggest threat we have is that we don't perceive a lot of threats.‖

Other teachers and paraprofessionals indicated the relative size and location of the community was a plus when it came to feeling safe. One teacher who grew up and attended school in the nearest metropolitan area talked to his friends who now teach in the metro area and pointed out security personnel, metal detectors, or other devices were not used in Paige Allyn School District. His friends found it difficult to believe. A local emergency responder agreed with the staff‗s perceptions by stating, ―My perception is that [the district] is secure, but I think that has a lot to do with the area and the mindset of the student body and the public. I think we have a pretty safe little community here.‖ Though metal detectors are not used, one staff member indicated the use and monitoring of a nighttime intrusion detection system that is connected to the police department.

Administrators also perceived their community to be safe. One described how he felt perfectly fine when his children walk to school or to other areas of the town. Another administrator described the clientele and values of the community as being generally well educated, ―culturally passive‖ (i.e., it is primarily populated by members of a religious sect that

promotes pacifism), and, until recently, few were of low economic means. However, he indicated the relatively low tide in the national economy could play a role in altering the socioeconomic demography.

Community support of the schools is another key factor for the feelings of safety and security participants expressed. They talked about the presence of a strong school-community relationship. One administrator described the volunteer work that students regularly did and that churches were very active in the community. Another administrator reiterated that by stating, ―We have a community that supports us." One teacher described the closest thing he's ever received as a threat was a parent's sarcastic comment of ―I'm sure you have," in response to the teacher's effort to help a student. The teacher went on to describe the staff and students like this: ―I'm not personally concerned about any staff members posing a safety issue or really no students posing a safety issue for me." Another staff member summed it up this way when asked about his perceptions of safety: ―Relatively high because our people care. I think our people and our kids care. And so for that reason I think we have a relatively good level of safety." The previous section discussed perceptions of why interviewees felt Paige Allyn was safe and secure. The next section will describe interviewees' perceptions of vulnerability.

Feelings of Vulnerability and False Sense of Security

Though the size and makeup of the community had a great deal to do with the general perception the school district was very safe and secure, personnel did recognize that ―nutcases," terrorists, or other intentional acts could wreak havoc on their school district. Often, while citing the perception staff had of safety, they recognized feeling safe and secure itself could lead to a lack of preparation or lull the district into a perception of safety and security that may be misguided. Many staff members indicated the community members knew each other and school

visitors were often easily identified by sight alone and thus did not always follow the protocol of obtaining visitor badges or checking in with the office. One staff member said she felt the district was ―fairly safe" and that communication was good with emergency responders, yet she also recognized that ―can also be a bad thing because we can take things for granted… thinking something will never happen here." Other staff members nodded in agreement when one stated, ―I don't think we want to be a real closed environment" and that notion is typical of the ―mindset of a rural district and sometimes that can leave you a little vulnerable."

All of the administrators, emergency personnel, and most of the staff recognized vulnerabilities despite their overall feelings of being safe and secure. One administrator indicated the current crisis plan was drawn up based upon the crises Paige Allyn school district had experienced, noting, ―We haven't had many crises." Several administrators expressed concerns about how small community size and perception of safety and security can almost be a detriment to preparedness. One administrator commented, ―I think we have a natural false sense of security that is inherent in most small communities." Another administrator's description was, ―Small communities are notorious for being trusting of people in general…very, very trusting of all of our students even when we know kiddos who live on the edge." Emergency responders recognized that unless several school resource officers were present, greater entrance barriers were put up, and a much greater amount of vigilance was accomplished, it would be impossible to completely secure the buildings and as one stated, ―It might not be feasible to make it as secure as it needs to be."

There are a number of issues that clearly were communicated by all district staff and emergency responders interviewed. Though there are many categories where these can be placed, having a well-documented, up-to-date crisis plan that was regularly reviewed and communicated

appropriately was clearly lacking according to all school participants interviewed. Recognizing the vulnerabilities, participants elaborated further with regard to crisis prevention, mitigation, and response.

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Concerns about Preparation for a Crisis

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Essentially all participants interviewed indicated the crisis plan was out of date, seldom referenced, and practiced only concerning required drills. Participants also had received little communication on how to respond to crisis situations. As referenced earlier, procedures have been installed to limit accessibility to the schools and control visitor entrances, yet accessibility was a big issue among participants. Participants recognized and were concerned about having an up-to-date documented crisis plan that is regularly practiced and communicated appropriately. Finally, participants realized that accountability of students is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Accessibility of Schools

One of the most common concerns raised by all interviewees was the accessibility of the school by outside people. All schools had identified specific doors to enter near school offices, which were always open during school hours and other entrances were to be locked. The identified, unlocked entrances were near the administrative office of each school and visitors were supposed to sign in at the administrative office before going further into the building. However, all schools had unsecured secondary entrances as well and this issue seemed to be most prevalent at the middle/high school complex. Nearly all groups and individuals interviewed indicated doors were regularly propped open where they were supposed to be locked. One teacher wryly observed, ―There are like a 1000 doors in this building" and several others also indicated the number of doors to the middle/high school complex were abundant. A few

responses from focus groups revealed, ―All the doors are locked except the front door,‖ but these individuals were quickly rebuffed by others in the group who made statements such as ―When [high school students] go to lunch, they prop the doors open‖ and the ―locker room doors are always propped open.‖ Another staff member remarked, ―As long as they have open lunch, all of the doors are open so the kids can come and go as they please.‖ One teacher opined about the accessibility issue by saying, ―I'd bet a $100 bill that a person could get in here anytime he wants to.‖

Accessibility due to doors being propped open was one trouble, but other problems also emerged. One teacher stating a worry about accessibility said, ―I can't put my students anywhere where they are not accessible to a door or window.‖ An administrator reiterated accessibility was a concern by saying, ―There are some rooms in here that really scare me.‖ The administrator indicated these rooms had an easy line of sight from the outside and it would be very easy for a potential intruder to see into those rooms and gain entrance. He also implied it would be nearly impossible for students to hide in some ground level rooms. Although several staff noted secretaries generally had a line of sight for building entrances, they also acknowledged that line of sight varied between buildings and the office personnel may not see who enters the building. One staff member indicated that when she came early in the morning, she could easily walk anywhere in the building and not be seen. One staff member noted, ―Once you go in the front doors of that school, you are in the school‖ even when secondary entrances are locked. Administrators generally ceded to that observation and one simply stated, ―We would be a pretty easy target, ‗cause they can walk right in.‖

Activities and overnight accessibility are also a worry. When athletic events are held, access to certain rooms from the outside is common and those doors are left unchecked for long

periods of time providing easy access. One person noted that access to the roof was not difficult and that unauthorized access had been an issue at one time. An accessibility apprehension other than the schools themselves was also described. The buses are parked in a lot that has no security and no fencing. The buses are vulnerable to vandalism or could easily be made inoperable or unsafe according to one interviewee. Numerous people are invited and attend special events at the school as well and despite being asked to stop by the office on these special days and sign in; many simply do not and are not properly identified. A time where the high school complex is especially vulnerable is during lunch. The high school students have open lunch and can leave campus and in some cases can be gone for quite some time. Lunch is also a time when more doors are opened, making the campus especially accessible.

The issue of accessibility and its greatest threat relates to potential intruders or those who gain access for the purpose of inflicting harm, disrupting the school day, or the most likely scenario according to both administrators and instructional staff; a noncustodial parent who plans to abduct a child or make an unlawful contact. One teacher stated, ―If there were ever a ... [problem], I would think it would probably be between parents in a divorce situation, a custody issue." The noncustodial parent situation has arisen a few times according to both administration and other interviewees. One interviewee explained when the administration becomes aware that a noncustodial parent is not supposed to have contact with his/her child, administration tries to put a picture of the noncustodial parent out to the staff and make them aware of the circumstances. One administrator further described how he and staff ―lied" to a noncustodial parent when he came up to the school until the custodial parent could be contacted and come to school herself to persuade the noncustodial parent to leave. The administrator remarked, ―It made for an uncomfortable situation." One interviewee indicated anytime an unknown adult

approached the playground that teachers would see it as a ―red flag" and immediately contact the office or an administrator. Another positive statement regarding child custody made by a teacher group was, ―We know who belongs to whom."

The other issue leading to concerns about accessibility clearly communicated by all respondents was that of identification. Due to construction in the past, identification tags were developed and required to be worn by all district staff, yet beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, these ID tags were no longer required. Many respondents felt the ID tags helped identify school staff, visitors, and a person wearing neither would potentially raise alarm. Emergency responders also felt ID's were a good policy and were surprised to find out many of the staff no longer wore them and they were no longer required. Emergency responders indicated that when they responded to any emergency, it was immediately helpful to identify who was a member of the staff. One staff member interviewed claimed he did not necessarily know all of the school staff, especially new staff members. ID tags helped him identify staff and it helped the staff in the schools identify him since they would not necessarily know who he was.

Another issue with identification that came out during the interviews was procedures were not always followed. If office staff knew the person entering the building, it was likely that person would be waved on and not required to sign in and receive a visitor's badge. This could include deliverymen, parents, volunteers, or students from the college. One participant acknowledged, ―We don't lock the door either because we have deliveries…and until they tell me I have to lock it, I'd rather leave it open."

A couple of teachers recalled a time they entered the library and found a man standing there with a package along with a few students recording a video. The librarian was not present and the unknown man had no identification. The teachers admitted they left the library without

asking him who he was or whether they could assist him. Yet, administrators generally felt that staff in the building would contact anyone in the building they did not know and ask if the person needed help or direct them back to the office. One administrator stated his expectations that teachers would —ifhey were not comfortable asking them to get a nametag, at least call." Some participants indicated they and many staff would confront visitors/others who were in the building and were not clearly identified; yet others stated they would not. One participant admitted, —We probably have too many people who would ignore him." This individual went on to clarify the school frequently has repairmen in the building, stating, —We've got bell problems; we've had so many guys walking in on that. We've had clock problems. We've had guys/strangers in, so probably we'd ignore them because it happens so frequently." Some participants indicated they would determine whether they would confront an unknown visitor based upon his/her appearance. They implied if the unknown visitor did not appear threatening and clothing seemed to fit into the norms of the community they were less likely to confront said individual. If participants felt he/she belonged, it would be unlikely the staff member would ask the person if he/she needed help, but if he/she looked otherwise, staff members may ask if they could help him/her or, at the very least, the staff member would contact the office.

Actual intruders who intended harm could be a problem although many interviewees indicated they did not worry about it. Yet others indicated they worried about dangerous intruders greatly. Nearly all interviewees conceded an intruder would generally have easy access if he/she was determined to get in. One teacher reiterated, —Like I said, from the outside we are not secure at all."

Response to Crises

There were many different answers provided by participants as to how they would respond to a variety of crises, such as intruders, active shooters, bomb threats, evacuations, and hazardous material releases. All participants were asked their perceptions as to how they believed they should respond to several hypothetical crisis scenarios. Participants raised questions about how prepared they really were for a crisis and what they believed they would do if confronted with one.

Most discussion centered on the scenario of an intruder who gained access and they were notified. One teacher said, ―We would know if there was an intruder, in our minds, what to do.‖ Yet, that same respondent acknowledged that protocol changes have been made by emergency responders regarding their response and that many issues had not been addressed regarding the school‗s own protocol. Most teachers were not aware of what code words would be used or how they would be informed that an intruder was in the building. Responses by administrators varied as well. Even though most administrators indicated they would confront an intruder, all acknowledged they were absent from their buildings at times and their responses varied as to how they would let the occupants of their buildings know about an intruder and what methods they might employ to confront an intruder. To illustrate, one interviewee stated,

> If we did have some maniac get in, and we have clientele in our community that
>
> definitely are capable of that (being a maniac), I don‗t know how we stop them and I
>
> have had kids over the years that wound up committing heinous crimes.

Emergency responders indicated they did ―active shooter training‖ when asked about the emergency operations plan they had for the school district. Active shooters are people who are using a weapon and inflicting injuries upon students or staff in a school district. The police

response to active shooters is to get a small team of officers who immediately enter the building and will stop at nothing until the shooter is stopped. School staff stated it would take ―at least five minutes for an officer to respond.‖ The emergency responders indicated that two officers would likely be on the scene ―almost immediately‖ and they would request additional officers from other agencies who would respond as quickly as possible. One staff member stated he was aware of how law enforcement responded to active shooters, but felt most of the staff was not aware. If it was not an active shooter, emergency responders still would like to see the ―administration try to track this individual‖ and remain in contact with law enforcement as they would consider the intruder ―dangerous‖ and at least two officers would respond within minutes. They suggested that administrators monitor the intruder, if possible, and direct the officers to the approximate location of the intruder. If the intrusion became an active shooter scenario, they would seek additional officers before entering the building and estimated that could take up to ten minutes. The emergency responders reported they had ―school intruder guidelines,‖ but also shared it had been some time since they had completed training; although they also indicated they were about to do so soon.

According to the state director of safe schools, there are three drills required by statute (fire, tornado, and what else?), but several other drills should be practiced as well in case of a crisis situation. One of those is evacuation and reunification with one site being within walking distance and another site further away that would require bus transportation. Paige Allyn has practiced an evacuation to another site in the past, but has not done one recently and respondents indicated they had never done an evacuation using a bus. A response that often came up regarding evacuation was a church where one of the schools was supposed to evacuate to and reunify in had burned to the ground. Respondents were aware that their reunification site had

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burned, however not a single respondent knew if a new site had been identified. Respondents from the elementary school knew their reunification site was at a different church, but also admitted they had not practiced in a while. One person stated, "We practiced it for a year…right after the Columbine thing." There were numerous responses about where to evacuate to and many of the staff did not know. One staff member commented, ―I used to laugh at the evacuation drill. It's usually done on the next to the last day of school. That just cracks me up." The same staff member did comment that the evacuation drill was done in the fall this year, however.

Other responses related to crises that would require evacuation were bomb threats, suspicious packages, hazardous material release, gas leaks, and explosions. Most respondents said they would evacuate the building if a bomb threat was made and contact emergency responders. Emergency responders stated,

> We've never discussed whose decision it would be to evacuate… that is normally up to
> the school. And they [national and state emergency response experts] have changed the
> school of thought now as far as evacuations. Now they are saying hold in place. I am not
> sure that we have the current training.

The state safe schools director clarified, ―First of all I think the immediate response should not be to automatically evacuate the facility." One administrator stated he was concerned that if evacuation did occur to an off-campus site and it was common knowledge, the actual bomb could be planted there. The school staff and local emergency responders are not necessarily aware of the most up-to-date protocols and there is no communication to either's response. When emergency responders were asked about a bomb threat, there was some disagreement among them, as some emergency responders specified the schools should evacuate, yet others were aware of other protocols where a bomb or potential bomb is first located before an evacuation is

called. When the emergency responders are called, they indicated they would call for outside departments to respond with bomb dogs and sophisticated bomb robots.

Beginning evacuation procedures was the same response given by nearly every respondent for the other situations as well. The hypothetical situation given to interviewees regarding a hazardous material release on a nearby highway generally received a response that evacuation procedures should be implemented. One respondent stated he did not know if that would be the best practice and another said that heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems should be considered and moving students to a centralized sealed room may be a good protocol. Emergency responders would check the wind direction for a vapor cloud and noted the school would be on a ―call list, but so would everybody else.‖ They further stated, ―Start to follow evacuation procedures.‖ Emergency responders indicated ―schools would be on the call list if a vapor cloud headed toward them.‖ Emergency responders felt the appropriate protocol for schools was to evacuate. One reason given by one of the emergency responders was that no shelter in place had been practiced and she felt the school had not obtained the necessary supplies and was not able to seal itself and its occupants in safely enough. The other emergency responders concurred.

School participants generally had no idea how to handle a suspicious package or even how to identify a suspicious package, though some administrators said their secretaries would notify them. The only centralized mail sort is in the district office where mail is sent. The general response from most school participants was a suspicious package would not be recognized, would be sent on to whomever it was addressed, and that person would open it, as one participant stated, ―I‗d just cut it open and see…I really wouldn‗t know what a suspicious package looked like honestly.‖ If a package was recognized as suspicious, some respondents

would look at it as a potential bomb and thus would evacuate. Most school personnel would let superiors or emergency responders know and likely evacuate the premises.

Emergency responders would try to identify more detail on a suspicious package to determine if it was a bomb or a biological agent. In general, unless they saw something leaking from the package, they would treat it as a bomb and contact the regional bomb agency. If the emergency responders identified a biological or chemical agent was in the package, they would contact the appropriate agency and isolate the package as much as possible. In any of the above cases, emergency responders would expect the school to evacuate if a suspicious package was found. Emergency responders indicated the school had been sent information on identifying and handling suspicious packages.

Nearly every school respondent believed the proper response to a gas leak in the school or an explosion would be to evacuate the building. Emergency responders felt the schools should immediately evacuate as well. The emergency responders went on to say it was their job to ―control the scene" should a gas leak occur.

Most school staff said they know what to do in case of severe weather. They would go to the designated shelter in case of tornado, though some staff questioned the safety of the shelter. The local emergency responders pointed out they would likely be busy in rural areas watching approaching storms and would expect the schools to monitor the storms themselves. Emergency responders noted that all schools had been provided with weather radios and were on a call list if the severe weather was headed toward the schools and town. Other than that, emergency responders denoted their response would likely be ―post incident."

Many participants interviewed would contact administrators or have expectations that the school principal would handle any or all crisis situations. Often times, teachers and classified

staff suggested they would contact the principal and he would handle the situation from there. However, principals themselves admitted various meetings took them away from the buildings. Although they usually could be contacted, numerous participants mentioned there were times when all of the administrators were absent from their buildings at the same time. One focus group responded, ―We'd follow our leader‖ to various hypothetical crisis situations, but when asked what they would do if their leader was gone, participants simply said, ―We'd go the second leader or third.‖ Several administrators acknowledged their absences and one described his frequent absences led to the fact he was not present when crisis planning was discussed. Another participant stated, ―It doesn't happen very often that everyone [administrators] is out,‖ but added, ―It is probably not all that unusual to have the high school and middle school [administrators] gone.‖ Finally, another participant asked, ―Who is the person that is supposed to take charge if an administrator is not there?‖

Emergency responders recognized the difficulty they would encounter at various times of the day. They were most concerned with evening sporting events as they felt crisis situations would be the most difficult to control. Somewhat tongue in cheek, emergency responders indicated they preferred summer, but next to that about 2 a.m. Paige Allyn has some of the same issues as other rural school districts the state director described with regard to response to emergencies. These problems include a fire department not staffed with full-time, professional firefighters. There likely are only one to two police officers on duty within the community at a time, though occasionally more when the sheriff's department is included. The fire and sheriff's departments may be well equipped for their size, but they lack the sophisticated resources of larger emergency departments. To follow some of their own protocols, such as active shooter, emergency responders will have a slow response time and, if advanced technology, sophisticated

equipment, or additional manpower is needed, the response time is slowed even more. According to the state director, rural school districts normally have a delayed response time and must plan another way to compensate, but Paige Allyn's crisis plan, preparation, and perceptions of participants did not indicate alternative planning had been accomplished.

Accountability for Student Safety during a Crisis

Closely tied with evacuation procedures were those of accountability for students' safety, staff, and visitors should it become necessary to evacuate. Again, one of the foremost issues brought to light here was that of the open lunch at the high school. Many respondents outside of the high school, including emergency responders, believed that high school students signed in and out for lunch if they left, yet other interviewees recognized that was not the practice, an opinion confirmed by administrators. Emergency responders were quite concerned about the lack of accountability for high school students during lunch stating, ―So you could have a fire alarm and you wouldn't know if you have the building successfully cleared. You wouldn't have accountability for the people you were looking for.‖ Other staff interviewees indicated high school students could have as long as one hour away from the building if they were not required to attend a ―learning support‖ time just prior to lunch. One respondent said he would know who was supposed to be in the building again, ―when the next bell rings.‖

Students moving to and from learning support (LS) were also an issue as some respondents were not sure where students were to report during LS time and the responsibility was put upon the student carrying passes. When talking about a possible evacuation during that time, one respondent recounted, ―The kids don't know to go to report to their LS instructor and then meet with that group.‖

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Issues regarding accountability for student safety also arose when discussing athletic or other events at the schools. The emergency responders referred to a study completed to seek the number of people populating the building at any given time and found ―sporting events is the peak every single time. And you have total no control. And you have no idea who is there or who you are looking for." This same concern was expressed by the administration when they noted that during some tournaments, there is not an empty seat. Though the administration stated the fire marshal checked on the building's capacity and they stayed within that number, administrators were still concerned about evacuating and accounting for large crowds should an emergency occur during an event.

Other potential problems with student accountability raised were after-school tutors, athletic practices, and activities that occur outside normal school hours. Several respondents indicated the nearby college operates tutoring times with college students as the workforce in the schools. Some participants noted if the college students' appearance did not raise suspicions, most seemed to move to the area where tutoring was held without any check-in or checkout procedures, although other college students did check in. There was clearly no standardized check-in or checkout procedure. Administrators generally would stay until the tutoring was completed, but few other staff members remained through that time and a concern was raised by an administrator whether the college students or other volunteers for after school programs would know what to do in case of an emergency. One respondent remarked, ―Right now, it would be chaos." The volunteers after school do not have keys, would not be able to lockdown, and would not know what procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. During lockdown, all staff and students are to report to or stay in their assigned classroom and lock the doors. Staff should also move students away from windows and doors and thus, in essence creating a

protective barrier from the hallway and/or outside and themselves. Lockdown is a standard protocol for intruders in school buildings, but may be used in other situations as well.

A concern was raised regarding accountability of student-athletes or others during athletic or field trips. One respondent shared how Paige Allyn's procedures were less stringent when compared to other districts,

Our district is much more relaxed on some of that than where I came from. The sponsors of each trip were to provide the transportation director with a sheet of who was attending… a roll sheet each time they went out. Obviously basketball games…generally it was usually the same list. What we asked the coaches there to do was to take roll and if there is a kid sick that day or they're not on the bus that day; your roll sheet needs to notify that. You'll take a copy of that and leave it in the transportation director's mailbox before the bus pulls out. We don't do that here.

The respondent went on to say the transportation director did provide cell phone numbers of the bus drivers and he felt that would be ―helpful.‖ Other respondents indicated the school nurse always made sure sponsors had appropriate medical information and supplies and that, even though it was up to the teacher to determine what contact information, supplies and specific requirements for field trips were needed, teachers normally had their cell phones, possibly radios, and contact information on each of the students. Those respondents also had a list of who was attending and completed a headcount.

Another concern raised was that some students would get into their cars and leave if an evacuation to another site was deemed appropriate, making it difficult to account for them. When asked about a gas leak or explosion, respondents felt that teachers would move students to an identified evacuation site and do their best to account for kids. Other descriptions regarding

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evacuations were kids sprinting to get out of there, and also prevalent was how parents would respond.

Questions raised by respondents during the interview were with regard to releasing students to parents. There were a variety of responses from staff who did not see how they could prevent releasing students to their parents during a crisis. Yet others felt school personnel would not release students to parents until the situation was under control. The district had experienced a situation during a tornado warning issued shortly after school was dismissed for the day and several respondents described how one parent actually pulled a bus over as it was returning to school for shelter and took her child off the bus, thus creating an extremely dangerous situation by delaying the bus' return to shelter.

Communication of the Crisis Plan Before and During a Crisis

As the last scenario demonstrated, communication of appropriate segments of the crisis plan to parents was not extensive enough, or the parents' reaction did not demonstrate an understanding and the decision to stop the bus also pointed to a lack of crisis expectations by the bus driver, although not all involved in the incident were interviewed for this study. Communication between emergency responders and the school district's emergency operations plans are lacking as well. When asked about various crises, one emergency responder declared, ―don't think we have ever sat down with them and gone over what is going to happen." The staff of the district also lacks communication and understanding of the crisis plan and the appropriate response. The overall planning, training, review, and distribution of pertinent information to staff, emergency responders, parents, and to the community as a whole is absent. One emergency responder stated, ―would like to see more planning with outside disciplines." Currently, much responsibility is placed upon the administrators and numerous respondents

indicated administrators are often absent due to meetings and other responsibilities. One administrator did have another designated ―person in charge‖ when he was absent but also observed, ―If both were out of the building, well, that would be a problem because I'm not sure who would take charge.‖

There were mixed messages sent by interviewees regarding cell phones. Teachers indicated they had cell phones available when attending field trips and all administrators carried cell phones so they could be reached when they were off campus, out of the district, or when they were in other parts of the building. The district‗s crisis plan states students are prohibited from having or using cell phones on school grounds, however, participants described a ―liberal cell phone policy‖ that allows students to use cell phones during certain times of the day. The student cell phones were seen as both a hindrance and possible aid in case of an emergency and there was no policy with regard to their use by students in various crisis situations. Since students had the cell phones, they could be used to quickly get emergency help if needed, yet in a crisis situation requiring a lockdown or sheltering, many respondents felt students would call their parents who would immediately show up to the school or call their children during the crisis situation. There was some concern that cell phones could also trigger an explosion in case of a bomb threat or gas leak, although the emergency responders felt there were other more likely ignition sources.

Emergency responders and the state‗s safe schools director indicated that not all of the crisis plan should be communicated, yet some aspects were important to let parents and the community know. Even though the emergency responders felt the current crisis plan was well understood by the school district, emergency responders received very little communication as to what that plan contained and felt it lacked specifics and was too general. The emergency

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responders all agreed they were the ones to respond to the school district in most crisis situations, but did not know Paige Allyn's crisis plan and the school district personnel were unaware of the emergency responders' emergency operations plan. One emergency responder stated, ―Right now there is kind of a perception that they perceive what we will do and we perceive what they will do, but we haven't actually joined that together and explained how, what the differences would be."

The emergency responders discussed that ―detail planning in conjunction with local emergency responders" would be key to crisis preparation. As one emergency responder indicated, ―I think we need to know each other before the event." Emergency responders described the local emergency planning committee (LEPC) that met regularly and indicated that someone representing Paige Allyn had not attended for some time. The committee meets at least monthly and works on emergency operations plans with all emergency responders throughout the county and school districts are invited. Emergency responders went on to say, ―You can't just assume someone is going to take an active role in your plan. It has to be communicated and agreed upon." Emergency responders also pointed out they would like to have a copy of the district's crisis plan, and floor plans uploaded to their web-based emergency operations plan, which would make them easily accessible in case of emergency.

The school district recently underwent various improvements and additions to its buildings. While planning these improvements, the district was informed that part of the county plan known as a ―mitigation plan" included funding for a hardened shelter that provides protection from severe weather. The state safe schools' director defined mitigation as ―steps that could be taken to eliminate the hazard or soften the impact of the blow." The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides funds for the hardened shelters, but the school district

never completed the necessary paperwork according to emergency responders. One emergency

responder said, ―They got the paperwork twice and it didn't go through… I mean to say they

didn't pursue it. It would have paid for 100% of it [a hardened shelter] and they are still eligible."

Emergency responders went on to say the school is a part of a number of people's plans for

sheltering, but the school is not really a hardened shelter and as one stated, ―It is a lot of

population to figure out what to do with." Emergency responders also indicated that schools

were part of the community and county's emergency operations plan in case of a pandemic or

other emergency medical situation. One stated, ―That's where we are to send the sick in our mass

dispensation plan for the county."

<center>Model Practices</center>

―A model crisis plan is one that takes the all hazards approach addressing three broad,

general categories: human caused incidences, natural disasters, and technological or physical

plant failures," stated the state director of safe and prepared schools. He went on to explain that

crisis plans needed to be compliant with NIMS (National Incident Management System) and ICS

(Incident Command System) and those responsible for carrying out the plan needed ―sufficient

training to understand the plan." He further added the plan needed to be shared with educators

and emergency first responders. The state director also described the FEMA (Federal Emergency

Management Agency) document CPG 101 Comprehensive Preparedness Guide recently

published that is the standard for developing emergency operations plans (EOP) or crisis plans.

He went on to say specific criteria schools should follow are in the guide and the state template

for school crisis plans is aligned with CPC 101. Not everything in the Comprehensive

Preparedness Guide applies to schools, but it serves as the foundation for writing school crisis

plans and it was ―referenced and used" in development of the state template.

When asked about minimum standards a crisis plan should have, the state director expressed several points. The plan should allow for a ―smooth and helpful coordination of resources." He went on to state,

It [the crisis plan] needs to be the all hazards approach. All schools should practice and be conversant in six different drills and skills: 1) fire evacuation; 2) severe weather sheltering; 3) lockdown; 4) shelter in place; 5) evacuation and reunification; and 6) bus evacuation. I think if all schools practiced those it would help them respond to a variety of crisis situations that they are likely to face.

The researcher provided several hypothetical crisis situations to the state director and asked him to respond as to what he felt was the appropriate protocol to be followed. The order they were given were 1) bomb threat; 2) potentially dangerous intruder; 3) death of a staff member or student; 4) suspicious package; 5) severe weather; 6) hazardous material release; 7) gas leak; and 8) explosion.

The first situation provided was that of a bomb threat. The state director expressed that an immediate evacuation was no longer the standard protocol and evacuation procedures should be based upon the degree of credibility. Instead, staff should be notified to search their immediate area of responsibility (e.g. classroom) and report back if something suspicious had been found. Other areas could be searched by a custodian, teacher, administrator, or other staff member, and they too could report back if anything suspicious was found. Some of the local emergency responders were aware that updated protocols did not suggest immediate evacuation as well. If there was a ―high degree of credibility" or a suspicious package was found, then evacuation of the building was the appropriate protocol. The state director emphasized, ―That is critical to be done after the

intelligence is gathered so you know you are evacuating to a safe destination." After the initial intelligence is gathered, which includes gathering data from a phoned in bomb threat, emergency responders should be contacted, but the state director emphasized ―no one has a better working knowledge of the school facility than educators that are there every day" and thus they would be in the best position to do initial searches.

The state director stated that a lockdown would be the logical response to a potentially dangerous intruder. He said it was important ―to provide some form of protection to students and staff." The state director emphasized training and drilling for a lockdown situation. Part of the NIMS protocols is to use plain language as opposed to code words, thus the state director indicated an announcement to lockdown would be appropriate.

When the state director was asked how school staff should respond to the death of a student or staff member, he said, ―First, make sure and verify the information." He also indicated that procedures should be in place to notify staff and to inform students. Grief counseling should be available for students and staff as well. He felt most schools handle this crisis fairly well as most schools have experienced this type of crisis.

If a suspicious package was found, the state director indicated that authorities should be called. He noted, ―A suspicious package could be anthrax or something other than a bomb." He also stated, ―If you have to evacuate the building and you know the location of the package, it gives you a clue about how to evacuate." The state director referred to previous experiences with anthrax and hoped suspicious packages would be identified and treated accordingly.

The state director indicated that severe weather drills were required and schools should be fairly adept at conducting them, but he raised a concern for how safe the sheltering areas were in schools. A question the state director asked was ―what technical knowledge or training‖ did school staff use to select sheltering sites? The state director felt schools had a ―good handle‖ on the drilling itself, but felt ―schools could do a lot better job providing storm proof shelters‖ and schools should consult ―someone with the technical expertise to review sheltering sites.‖ Sheltering in place would, ―in most cases, be the appropriate response.‖ Schools should also have evacuation procedures and ―be careful not to further contaminate.‖ The state director indicated ―that hopefully a hazmat team or [responders would] have technical expertise‖ to handle hazardous material situations.

The last two questions involved a gas leak and explosion and in both cases, the state director suggested evacuation would be proper and that evacuation routes would need to be known. He further pointed out ―you must make sure the evacuation destination is also safe.‖ The state director reiterated that protocols needed to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

How does the crisis plan of Paige Allyn compare to other school crisis plans? The next section will look at a sampling of crisis plans of rural school districts and a template of a school plan available from the state‗s safe schools center. One of the plans is from a school district identified by the state safe schools‗ director as being a ―good‖ plan.

Crisis Plan Comparisons

The state director explained the state legislative joint committee on security asked every school district in the state to provide them with a copy of their district‗s crisis plan. It took

several attempts and a promise from the security committee that they would keep the plans and their findings completely confidential before all plans were provided to the committee by school districts. Readers of the districts' crisis plans had to provide their findings only to the legislative security committee. Since the state director was a reader of crisis plans, he could not provide specific school district information regarding what he felt would be a good plan, average, or a plan that ―gathered dust on the shelf." The purpose of obtaining crisis plans was to compare Paige Allyn to a broad array of crisis plans currently in use across the state and make comparisons to plans that were characterized as good, average, and poor. Instead, a sample of crisis plans from five similar sized rural school districts were obtained for comparison purposes. One of the rural school district's plans obtained was identified by the state director as a good plan. The state director was allowed to share the ―good" plan due to the fact permission was granted by the school district outside of the director's work with the legislative security committee, thus it did not violate the confidentiality with regard to review of crisis plans. It is significant to note the school district whose plan was identified as ―good" went to the national emergency management institute for a week-long training on emergency operations planning for school districts.

Crisis Plan Template

The state director provided a building crisis plan template available for use by state schools, which is included in Appendix D. The template garners the NIMS and ICS protocols and takes an all hazards approach to crises. The most up-to-date copy of this plan template was May 2010 as of this writing. An organizational chart explaining the incident command structure and their responsibilities follows the general overview and purpose of the template crisis plan. The general overview describes FEMA's all-hazards approach along with the four phases of

emergency management; prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Each section is tabbed with identifying titles and is put together in a 3-ring binder for easy updating of pages.

The response section contain only three pages; one that outlines crisis management for three categories of crises. The first is people crises such as assault, bomb threats, student or staff deaths, intruders or similar disruptions, field trips, medical emergencies, and poisoning. The next category includes natural disasters such as pandemics, earthquakes, fires, lightning, and other severe weather emergencies. The third category addresses physical plant and technological hazards such as utility outages, gas leaks, explosions, and hazardous materials. The page that follows provides universal emergency procedures in response to the crises mentioned above such as evacuation and sheltering actions.

The next section of the template plan provides the school's floor plan with specific markers that identify important crisis tools such as fire extinguisher, automatic external defibrillators (AED), fire exits, utility shutoffs, and sheltering areas. An aerial view of the school and its surrounding neighborhood is also included in the facility plans section. Sections that follow and their contents include emergency phone numbers, calling trees, equipment supply lists, identification of personnel with skills needed in crises, and has more detailed information for specific crises to assist responders. The template plan with all appendix pages included would be about 90 pages, but its design made for easy reference and immediate response for crises was contained in only two pages.

Paige Allyn's Crisis Plan Compared to the Template and Other District Plans

Paige Allyn's crisis plan was similar to the template in that it began with a general description and command structure referred to as a ―flow chart.‖ Duties of each crisis team

responder were outlined similar to the incident command structure as well. However, instead of one page identifying the incident command structure as in the template, sixteen pages at the beginning of the plan explained roles in detail in the Paige Allyn plan. The immediate response plan in the template was only two pages whereas the Paige Allyn plan was spread out over many pages and details were in the appendixes.

The plan identified by the state director as being ―good‖ is from a larger rural school district outside of the parameters identified as being rural for this study. The definition of rural school district for this study was one with a high school of 3A or smaller as set by the state activities association and size is based upon student census. The population size of the high school takes it outside of the parameters, but the town where it is located and the district‗s distance from big towns or urban areas would meet the parameters of rural used in the study. The district with the ―good‖ plan contains a single high school classified as a 4A school by the state activities association, which is only one activity class size larger than Paige Allyn and is located approximately 275 miles away. Since the state director could not compromise confidentiality with regard to crisis plan evaluations from the legislative security committee, he was limited in what he was able to recommend. The other ―good‖ crisis plan recommendations the state director made were of larger school districts and one school district of a similar size, but located nearer to a large city.

The crisis procedures of the district with the ―good‖ plan contained a district emergency management plan, emergency procedures handbook, and a detailed death response plan. The district emergency management plan was of similar length to the state template at 95 pages. Emergency phone numbers were at the very front of the plan, but then listed its mission and purpose. The plan was divided into sections and was designed to be placed in a 3-ring binder for

easy updating like the state template. It defined terms and responsibilities, however, unlike the building plans, it referred to expectations of various school buildings and was truly a district plan that included all individual building plans. Section one provided the general information and the next section identified a partial or full response to a crisis followed by a section on the emergency procedures handbook. The emergency procedures handbook essentially was an alphabetized listing of potential crisis situations beginning with bleeding and first aid going through weather emergencies and the appropriate response to each. The next sections outlined district personnel responsibilities in crises followed by school site personnel and their responsibilities. Other sections that followed included site specific evacuation procedures, sample forms, and ―supportive references.‖ There were similarities in this plan to the state template with regard to incident command structure, responsibilities, and organization. The state template is a school site plan and this plan was a district plan and Paige Allyn, too, did not have a district plan different from their school site plan. Paige Allyn‗s plan‗s last recorded update was in April, 2000, but the plan from this district included an emergency operations plan last updated in October, 2007 and an overall district plan including the emergency operations plan last revised October, 2009.

The superintendent of the school with the good plan was interviewed with regard to his district‗s motivation for having such a comprehensive plan. The superintendent stated he was unaware of any significant event that motivated the district to develop a comprehensive crisis plan. However, he felt there was a ―slight uptick in gang behavior‖ and the county where his district is located had a ―very active‖ emergency manager. Once in place, the superintendent described how well it was implemented when a crisis occurred over lunch a couple of years later.

Four students were killed in a car accident and the well-defined plan allowed for a smooth response and recovery.

Three other rural school crisis plans were examined from various parts of the state and were requested with no known evaluation regarding their quality. District A was nearly the same size, but located 160 miles from Paige Allyn. District B was slightly larger and located about 90 miles from Paige Allyn. District C was slightly smaller than Paige Allyn and located 40 miles away. Districts B and C, like Paige Allyn were approximately 40 miles from an urban area and about the same distance as Paige Allyn to a large town.

The three plans all lacked the organization and depth of either the state template or the ―good" plan described above. They varied in length from District A's nine standard pages to District C's twenty-one pages, but District C's plan also contained a six-page student transportation section of the overall twenty-one pages. District A's nine-page plan was very difficult to follow, but included lockdown and evacuation procedures along with a page that outlined specific teacher responsibilities. District A's plan also referred to items such as a red/green card and student rosters, but were not described extensively in the plan. Interestingly, District A did have a recent update. District B and C were similar in identifying various crisis situations and the response to them analogous to the emergency operations guide of the ―good" plan or response section of the state template. In fact, both were very similar in content, although organized differently and, without the transportation section, were equal in length. Both identified contact numbers and specific people who would have explicit responsibilities for incidents, though the specific incident command structure was not spelled out. One difference from District A and District C from Paige Allyn was that both had been revised and updated

recently; one in August 2010, the other October 2007 respectively. The last plan, District B, had no adoption or revision date listed.

The intent, when comparing crisis plans to Paige Allyn, was to see how Paige Allyn's plan would compare to other rural school crisis plans and a model plan. The attempt was made to seek one ―good‖ plan and at least one ―middle of the road‖ plan, and one ―poor‖ plan. Since the state director could not identify school districts that corresponded with the last two, a sampling was made by asking rural school superintendents from different areas of the state for copies of their district's plan. Interestingly, District A's nine-page plan lacks an all-hazards approach, is shy on numerous emergency operations procedures, and is poorly organized. It fits the ―poor‖ category. The other two are similar to Paige Allyn's crisis plan in makeup, but both are more up-to-date, though, as mentioned earlier, one lacks any date on it.

A former assistant superintendent of District A (now a superintendent in a new district) was interviewed to determine why his former district (A) lacked motivation to write a good plan. He described a new superintendent who had come into District A and liked to have her ―i‖s dotted and her t's crossed.‖ She was determined to create a crisis plan to make sure the district was compliant with state requirements. He felt the county emergency manager was aware of the plan in District A, but was unaware as to what extent and did not feel the emergency manager participated in its formation. The next section will depict statewide issues regarding safety and security as described by the state director of safe schools.

Statewide Safety and Security Issues

The state director emphasized the importance of school safety and security in the state by stating:

[Safety and security is] the moral, ethical and practical responsibility that educators and

public schools in [Midwestern state] to provide a safe learning environment for their

students and staff and also that everything that can be done, be done so that students and

staff return from the school site in a safe manner every day they participate in learning

activities.

The state director discussed vulnerabilities and preparedness in the schools throughout

the state. He said in a matter of fact way, ―All schools are vulnerable.‖ The state director further

expressed there was no way to stop ―all harmful or potentially harmful situations or actions.‖ He

added there was a great variance on how prepared the state‗s schools were due to a number of

factors. Decisions made locally with regard to resource allocation, training, and preparation

varied greatly throughout the state. He illustrated how some school districts were well prepared,

spent a great deal of time developing ―emergency operations plans‖ or crisis plans that were very

―comprehensive‖ and some schools ―just do an excellent job.‖ The state director also portrayed

other school districts that simply copied someone else‗s plan, do little or no training, and expend

minimal resources. Some plans are ―gathering dust on their shelf,‖ he added.

When questioned more on this topic, the state director also responded he could not give

―factual percentages,‖ but estimated that a quarter of the state‗s schools had ―really good, solid

plans, training, and resource allocation.‖ He additionally said about one-half had done some

work, though their plans could be outdated, but asserted another quarter of the state‗s schools

―have done very little, if anything.‖ He was further asked if the preparedness was connected to

whether the district was rural, suburban, or urban. The state director‗s response was that

―resource allocation rather than size‖ or location was a greater indicator.

When speaking specifically about security issues, the state director said, "In excess of seventy-five percent of the time, if a person wanted to get into a school, he or she could." He felt strongly that the majority of schools had "security type issues." He elaborated that one key reason was "lack of statute authority or responsibilities requiring schools to address safety and security issues." The state director also addressed funding. Though some school districts had allocated significant resources to safety and security, budget issues and a lack of funding played a substantial role in why school districts did not do more. Budget cuts worried him as schools throughout the state reduced school resource officers, nurses, counselors, social workers, and other personnel or resources for school safety and security. He referred to the personnel as a "positive asset" who "are rapidly being unemployed."

The state director explained the state's standards "are only a couple of resolutions" that encourage schools to have crisis plans, but "don't have the force of law." He added that other states had more stringent requirements, but those varied significantly. Additionally, he expressed the federal level "Homeland Security Directives Number 5 and 8" had an expectation schools and other organizations develop plans, "but no follow-up or statute laying out specifics." Homeland Security Directive 5 addresses the development of the National Incident Management System and the protocols to be followed for the efficient and effective handling of domestic emergencies. It covers the all-hazards approach of prevention, preparation, response, and recovery and outlines the responsibilities of government entities to adopt the "national response plan." Homeland Security Directive 8 addresses an all-hazards preparation goal for domestic disasters to improve the delivery of response and preparedness by the federal, state, and local entities. He also depicted that NIMS and ICS have an "expectation that schools are conversant in operational concepts." The state director also indicated a joint legislative committee in his state

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requested a copy of crisis plans from every school district. He revealed some school districts failed to comply with the request even though their crisis plans and subsequent legislative report remained confidential.

The state director explained some states decided to mandate and fund school preparedness programs and mentioned Kentucky as a state that ―allocates $10 million every two years.‖ The state director expressed hope that his state would receive funding to assist and require improvements in school safety and security, but ―its the explicit desire and practice that what we do [in his state] is not perceived as an unfunded mandate.‖ He illustrated alternative funding sources such as grants had been utilized and encouraged school districts to consider those options. He also indicated that ―private and public partnerships‖ could be sought. Additionally, the state director described a competitive federal grant known as the ―Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools‖ (REMS) grant whereby schools could seek funding. The grant could provide between $150,000 and $600,000 to a school district depending on the size. The state director explained school districts should work with their county emergency management and first responders to apply for the grant, but his office could serve as a technical advisor.

The state director was asked about differences he perceived between rural, urban, and suburban school districts‗ preparedness. He responded by noting the ―obvious difference is a reality in response time.‖ He pointed out that rural school districts would need to recognize and thus plan differently due to their isolation. He added that ―most urban and suburban communities would have professional, full-time fire department‖ who would act as first responders. He also suggested rural communities ―typically have fewer resources than an urban area, particularly advanced technology or higher level equipment.‖ The state director summarized by specifying a

slower response time, access to sophisticated equipment, and resources were generally typical in rural areas.

No school desires to experience crises of any ilk, but a relationship exists between the preparation schools take and the occurrence of crisis events (Klinger, 2009). Paige Allyn has not experienced violent or other substantive crisis events. The last recorded update of the crisis plan correlated closely with the tragedy at Columbine. As Columbine, the terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, and other violent events faded from the memory, complacency took a front seat. Other school districts may take similar paths to contentment of the status quo. The next section will explain the findings through the theoretical framework of Protection-Motivation theory, compare findings to the literature review, provide recommendations, and present implications of the findings.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The probability that some type of crisis will occur in rural schools is high, but the

probability that high profile crises such as school shootings or many other types of events

covered in an all-hazards crisis plan is relatively low (Borum, Cornell, Modzeleski, & Jimerson,

2010). Situations happen outside of school, during school, or at school-related events that affect

students or school personnel, such as car accidents, athletic injuries, or deaths of students'

parents, and may necessitate an outside response. Tragedies of various types do occur and it is

accepted or viewed that little can be done to change, prevent, or mitigate natural deaths and

accidents. The perception that schools were unsafe did not match the facts as 17 students were

murdered at school, yet 2500 children were murdered outside of school and another 9700 died in

accidents the year Columbine occurred (Borum, et al., 2010).

This section will relate the research findings to the protection-motivation theory and

provide possible explanation as to why some precautions and crisis planning have taken place,

and why some have not. It will further posture an explanation to various viewpoints related

during the study. Findings from the study will be compared to the literature reviewed and

indicate whether the literature supported or did not support the findings of the study. Identifying

issues from the study, possible resolutions, and how the issues from this study may have a

broader impact will be discussed.

Protection-Motivation Theory and Paige Allyn's Readiness to Respond to Crises

As discussed in a previous chapter, the theoretical framework of this study was

protection-motivation theory (PMT) (Rippetoe & Rogers, 1987; Rogers, 1975; Sturges &

Rogers, 1996). When enough fear develops, people are motivated to protect themselves in some

way provided the protective measures will likely be successful and can be reasonably implemented. Once a person recognizes a significant threat, he or she will change behaviors, relocate away from the threat(s), or implement a reasonably achievable shield from the threat. Before significant improvements to school readiness can be attained, a significant catastrophic event would have to have occurred or a threat that such an event might occur would have to be understood. The three components of PMT are: 1) there must be a sufficient amount of fear that a catastrophic event could occur; 2) there must be a high probability that a catastrophic event could occur; and 3) some type of protective response is required and can be successfully implemented (Rogers, 1975). An analysis of PMT as it applies to the findings from Paige Allyn will follow.

The Columbine Effect

From school board member Andrew P. Kehoe blowing up a school full of children in 1927 (Ellsworth, 1927; Lindle, 2008) to the worst secondary school shooting in American history at Columbine High School near Littleton, Colorado (Cullen, 2009; Lindle, 2008), crises can and do occur. The reaction at Paige Allyn may have been related to the Columbine tragedy as the safety and security policies officially adopted by the Paige Allyn school board, including the official crisis plan, were dated April of 2000. There had been a number of high profile shootings in the 1990's and schools generally reviewed and adopted stringent new security plans and policies as a result (Borum, et al., 2010). The difficulty for schools is to offer a balanced and sensible policy that provides safety, security, and order for students while also providing a climate that is supportive of educational openness (Borum, et al., 2010). It appears that many crisis plans are developed post facto—after the tragedy has occurred and prevention is no longer an issue. Paige Allyn was motivated to protect itself in the wake of the 1999 Columbine incident as that tragedy near Littleton, Colorado resulted in a heightened awareness of what might

happen. It is not surprising that Paige Allyn's official policy and crisis plan were dated April of 2000, just one year after the Columbine school shooting climaxed a number of high profile shootings in the 1990's. Policies limiting access to schools and identifying specific entrances was begun at about the same time as the crisis plan. Furthermore, participants of the study indicated evacuation and lock-down drills were regularly performed in past years, particularly after the updated plan was put into place, but most participants in the study indicated drills and crisis plan training did not occur recently and no longer occurred with regularity. Paige Allyn recently discontinued its requirement for staff to wear ID badges. Columbine motivated Paige Allyn to protect itself, but that need to protect appears to have worn off over time.

The ‒Columbine effect" makes it appear that fear was sufficiently higher at Paige Allyn and personnel at Paige Allyn may have generally felt the probability that a school shooting would occur was high, even though there was no history of shootings or other significant forms of violence in the district, with the exception of a pushing match between students. Following Columbine, students, parents, and a strong majority of the American public felt a similar incident could happen in their community (Borum, et al., 2010) The policies, the crisis plan, the additional non-required drills were all introduced shortly after Columbine at Paige Allyn. Protection-motivation theory explains these protective behaviors. There was a sufficient amount of fear and perception that school shootings were imminent. Even if a school community was not motivated by the fear, legislative agendas and public pressures drove a renewed emphasis on school security, because they were motivated to ensure schools took measures to protect themselves (Borum, et al., 2010).

What happened since the plan, policies, and practices at Paige Allyn were implemented ten years ago? There have been school shootings (some high profile as well) and other types of

crises, but new administrators and school board members have come on board and time has passed since Columbine captured the nation's attention. More recent school shootings have not generated the kind of media attention and response that happened after Columbine. More than 10 years after Columbine, the plan has not been updated and Paige Allyn staff members indicated they knew little about the current crisis plan and non-required drills no longer occurred with regularity. These changes in behaviors are again explained by PMT. The fear of catastrophic events such as school shootings may still be real, but with fewer high profile shootings since Columbine, Paige Allyn has lost the motivating fear over time and the community members now consider Paige Allyn safe and secure.

There has been no official update of the crisis plan at Paige Allyn since it was approved in April 2000. The district follows state statutes regarding crisis drills, but has not continued drills not required by law, such as lockdowns. Long-time employees of the district recounted receiving regular training through faculty meetings, but those same participants indicated faculty meetings rarely included consideration of crisis events recently. Only a few employees had attended crisis training workshops in recent years and what they learned was not shared widely with other staff members. There simply has have been no motivating factors lately.

Paige Allyn Perceived as Safe and Secure

The Paige Allyn schools are considered orderly and little fear exists that students or community members pose a great threat to other students and staff. When perceived, the probability that a catastrophic event like a shooting will occur is low; the motivation to intervene with protective measures is less likely. When asked, participants repeatedly stated they felt the school and community were safe and secure. Parents, staff members, and administration lacked motivation to prepare much with regard to security precautions because ―everyone kind of knows

everyone else." Participants referred to the community as ―pacifist-like" and unlikely to have inhabitants posing a threat. Students were perceived as nonthreatening as well and, if someone was perceived even mildly threatening, it was assumed that administrators would handle the situation. Even emergency responders felt administrators and staff had a handle on the pulse of the student body. When both the community and the students were considered non-threatening, little stimulation existed to work toward improved security measures. The biggest threat most participants relayed was Paige Allyn's vulnerability due to the perception of the safe, secure community.

Severe Weather Protection

Paige Allyn is also motivated to protect itself from severe weather, because it is located in an area where severe weather of various magnitudes occurs somewhat regularly. Therefore, Paige Allyn routinely follows one of the required drills for Kansas schools: moving to a protective shelter. Though destructive tornadoes are infrequent, within the past three years, two school districts in Kansas were essentially wiped out (Jones, 2009; Nadel, 2007) and other tornadoes destroyed schools in Oklahoma a few years earlier (L. Evans & Oehler-Stinnett, 2006). Furthermore, severe weather issues have a reasonably high probability where Paige Allyn is located and Paige Allyn has experienced tornado warnings as students were released from school. A few years back, a tornado warning was issued shortly after school was let out for the day at Paige Allyn. When that happened, potentially disastrous decisions were made when a parent stopped a school bus as the driver attempted to return students to the safer confines of the school building. Numerous participants were aware of this debacle and motivated to raise concerns about the dangerous circumstances. Details of how that situation was addressed were not provided, however, the researcher felt administrators did tackle the concern. The researcher

believes Paige Allyn staff changed protocols due to the parent interference, though he saw no evidence to support that hypothesis. Evidence at Paige Allyn suggests regular drills do take place (they protect themselves) and there is genuine fear of the potential destruction of tornados where Paige Allyn is located. Enough warning of severe weather and its potential effects upon the school district exists that Paige Allyn is motivated to protect itself and make appropriate changes.

Concerns were raised with regard to the shelters at Paige Allyn and some modifications were made; yet, no request was made by the district to acquire federal revenue to build safe rooms. According to participants, recent changes were made following the tornados that destroyed various school districts. Modifications were made regarding where students and staff were sheltered during tornado drills motivated by the sheer destruction seen at the other districts' school buildings struck by the tornados. Students at Paige Allyn were previously housed in hallways for tornado drills, but an adjustment had recently been made to move students to basement areas where possible. Concerns were still raised by some participants due to gas pipes and boilers located in the basement areas. Local emergency responders felt basement areas or internal rooms were deemed safer than some above ground locations such as hallways.

Why was Paige Allyn not motivated to build safe rooms? No participant described those reasons, yet the researcher believes Paige Allyn sought and passed bonds without seeking the safe rooms due to the fact the tornados that destroyed school district buildings in the state had not struck yet. Several years are necessary to plan for building modifications and additions, pass bond elections, and for construction to be completed. The researcher believes safe rooms would have been added into the plan at Paige Allyn had the tornados already exhibited their destructive abilities prior to the near completion of the bond construction at Paige Allyn. When the bonds

were originally sought, the devastating tornados previously described had not struck the school districts and the work to obtain those FEMA funds was likely seen as greater than the benefits to be gained and thus viewed as unnecessary. Common practice at the time by schools for their tornado/severe weather drills was to place students and staff in hallways, which were believed to be solid enough to withstand tornado-strength winds. Emergency responders and other school participants alike raised concerns after the bond work was completed and the massive destruction the tornados wrought was evident. Furthermore, other school districts completing bond work after the tornados included safe rooms in their construction plans and some of those school districts had firsthand experience of tornados thus having an impetus to construct safe rooms.

Programs and Policies in Place

Paige Allyn has implemented some policies and programs that have continued to be practiced to varying degrees. Video surveillance and limited numbers of entrances are, by policy, in force. These measures are relatively easy to maintain and likely to provide some protection, again supported by PMT. Protection-Motivation Theory works from two premises: 1) assessment of the danger; and 2) the ability to cope with the danger (Sturges & Rogers, 1996). Video cameras provide a sense of security by providing a sense that a crisis event might be prevented simply because cameras are present. Beside the deterrent effect, surveillance might act as an aid in response to a crisis event. Many new digital video systems can be accessed through the internet and easily uploaded to emergency responders.

Schools have in place programs and policies to deal with the deaths of students, potential fires in the school, or severe weather because it is viewed those events have a rather high likelihood of happening. Fires in schools are rarely deadly due to statutes requiring fire drills and stringent egress options, thus the safety measures are successful. Schools regularly practice

severe weather drills, have safe rooms, or other sheltering areas for severe weather. Deaths due to medical reasons and accidents do occur to students, their parents, and to staff members. In all of the above cases, Paige Allyn is well prepared as they have experienced death issues and regularly practice statute required drills. Beyond those types of safety concerns, no programs are in place and again, the focus shifts back to probability. The view is the probability is low that shooting events, dangerous intruders, terrorists, hazardous spills, or other crisis events will occur and thus motivation is low for changing behaviors.

It Won't Happen Here

It further appears that the administration and staff of Paige Allyn have cocooned themselves in the philosophy that such tragedies simply will not occur in their school district and logic would dictate that schools across the nation have adopted the same philosophy. With the exception of the required drills or the first hand experiences at Paige Allyn, evidence indicates there is little motivation to spend intensive amounts of time and efforts to situations unlikely to happen. The facts are clear: the probability that such tragedies as Columbine (Cullen, 2009; Lindle, 2008) or the Westside Middle School shootings near Jonesboro, Arkansas (Newman, et al., 2004) would occur in other rural districts is rare (Borum, et al., 2010). This fact appears to be the basic reason schools do not have adequate crisis plans, and the formulation of such is placed on the ―back burner.‖ The spiral is created: because of the ―it won‗t happen here‖ attitude of the educational personnel and the community members at large, crisis plans are often developed in piecemeal form—steps are taken as specific issues arise. This procedure, a ―band-aid mentality,‖ creates two very distinct issues: (1) the plan is incomplete and encompasses only those safety and security issues which are seen as probable; and (2) while minor issues are resolved, the focus on the bigger picture is lost. Ultimately, nothing is changed until something happens.

Other District Crisis Plans and Motivation

A comparison was made of Paige Allyn to the state template, a well-prepared district (District X) that utilizes a good plan, and a district where the crisis plan lacks a comprehensive, all-hazards approach (District Y). The superintendent from the district with good crisis plans in place suggested no significant event played a specific role in moving toward a comprehensive, all-hazards approach crisis plan. Yet, he did describe two significant events that played a role in moving toward an excellent plan. The first was there was ―slight uptick in gang behavior.‖ The second event occurred when the county hired a full-time, ―active‖ emergency manager who had a desire to work with schools. Both of these factors likely motivated that school district to update its plan. The ―uptick‖ of gang behavior was perceived as a security threat by some and raised fears of community members. Coupled with the access to a motivated, full-time resource (County Emergency Manager), the likelihood of success in preparing a comprehensive crisis plan was inviting.

The superintendent of District X described how helpful it was to have a good plan in place as two years later; four students were killed in a car accident during their open lunch period. Having the plan in place led to a well-organized response and recovery to that tragedy. District X also participated in a school preparedness activity at the national emergency preparedness center. Their participation at the national emergency preparedness workshop for schools took place after the car accident that claimed four lives and corresponded with its access to a supportive emergency manager. Observations of success when District X's crisis plan was activated motivated the administration and staff to participate in a national crisis preparedness workshop at the Emergency Management Institute. Fear no longer may have been as motivating as the success garnered in the actual implementation of the crisis plan. It was clear to this district

that crises happen (sufficient fear) and those best prepared were likely to be successful in some

prevention, but certainly in mitigation and response, and District X experienced this success.

The former assistant superintendent (he is now a superintendent in another district) of the

school which lacked a good plan (District Y) stated he was not aware of any crisis type event that

motivated District Y into writing a crisis plan. The joint committee on security of the state

legislature asked that all school districts submit crisis plans for their review as explained earlier.

Additionally, statutes exist requiring school districts to have crisis plans, also described

previously. The only motivation District Y's former assistant superintendent could describe was

District Y's superintendent at the time ―liked to have her i's dotted and t's crossed.‖ District Y's

former assistant superintendent stated the county emergency manager was aware of the plan, but

did not participate in its development. District Y's former assistant superintendent was unaware

of any event or action other than the directive of District Y's superintendent that motivated any

part of the crisis plan in District Y. The former assistant superintendent was unaware of the main

author, but did say District Y sought sample plans from other districts to form District Y's plan.

The plan was written several years ago, but was updated with current personnel and had a current

date on it implying it had been reviewed. Several key issues that drove District X to write a

comprehensive, all hazards crisis plan were lacking in District Y. District Y's low level of fear

and thus lack of motivation resulted in a less comprehensive crisis plan.

Success Untenable

Another plausible but less likely explanation could also be supported by PMT: a lack of

preparation due to a feeling that the efforts are fruitless and successful prevention or response

efforts useless. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, fear existed among children that

they could no longer look at adults to adequately protect them and feared they or their loved ones

would be killed or injured. Media portrayals may exaggerate the probability of terror attacks and further raise high fear levels (Comer & Kendall, 2007). Numerous shootings, continual terror warnings, and what may have seemed like a multitude of crises, may have overwhelmed Paige Allyn staff and the community into doing little or nothing as the task was daunting and little could be done to steer clear of all the threats. Fear awakening may arouse protective behaviors in some, but ―adaptive" behaviors are most effective and are taken when it appears success is inevitable (Rippetoe & Rogers, 1987). It is possible that success in protecting Paige Allyn against the many threats did not seem feasible.

Paige Allyn Findings and Existing Literature

Literature was reviewed prior to the research conducted at Paige Allyn School District covering a variety of topics relevant to rural school readiness for crises. The literature review also purveyed what types of crises could affect school districts. The following will provide what findings are consistent with or differ from the existing literature.

Slow Response Time: Mixed Bag

Emergency responder participants indicated their response to a number of different events would require additional manpower the community where Paige Allyn is located could not provide. Response time of emergency responders such as police, fire, and medical personnel is of grave concern in rural areas across the country (Holzheimer, 2008). Mortality in rural populations occurs at a rate one and one-half to nearly two times higher than urban populations when acute traumatic events such as car accidents, work-related injuries, drowning, fires, or suicide attempts occur (Peek-Asa, et al., 2004).

Emergency Responders for Paige Allyn are limited in the scope and timing when they respond to emergencies. Paige Allyn is in a community with a police and fire department,

emergency medical service, and is within a few miles of receiving additional responders from neighboring communities. Local emergency responders can and do handle events requiring a few responders and emergency responder interview participants declared a reasonable response time for most events. If events are of a greater scope requiring sophisticated equipment or significant manpower, the abilities to handle such a crisis in a timely manner diminishes. Bomb squads, hazardous material response teams, or additional law enforcement officers are more than a few minutes away as the nearest community with additional manpower is twelve miles from Paige Allyn. Most rural schools are in a similar position (Holzheimer, 2008). Paige Allyn is one of the largest employers in the community and likely contains the greatest concentration of residents in the community like so many other schools, at least while school is in session or during school activities.

Emergency responder participants said that in most situations and during the time school was generally in session, their response time to any of the schools would be within a few minutes. If a dangerous intruder or suspicious person were in the building, law enforcement personnel described how two officers could be at any of the school buildings in a short time (2-5 minutes). Emergency Medical Services did not participate, but based upon data provided by the other emergency responder participants, EMS would likely be able to respond to the schools in a short time (no specific time frame given) as well. Emergency responders, however, also described that more difficult situations requiring additional manpower or sophisticated equipment (like bomb robots) would take significantly longer. Existing literature seems to support the possibility of higher mortality rates due to a slower response time in some situations and a possible need for sophisticated equipment. On the other hand, since the initial response time is quite short, many interventions can be rendered by the quick response. Paige Allyn

district is in a small town that does have emergency services, but the types of service and response times may vary considerably in other rural school districts. Considering the significance of the slow response time in certain situations, Paige Allyn should consider the fact when the district updates and designs its plan and works with local emergency responders.

Complacency

The general consensus is that small towns and rural schools are safer (G. D. Evans & Rey, 2001). A complacent attitude is fostered somewhat by the perception that Paige Allyn is safe and secure, no updated crisis plan exists, and there is a lack of training and drills. Other descriptions provided at Paige Allyn illustrated a lackadaisical attitude in following protocols and accountability. The complacent attitude described in the literature is clearly demonstrated at Paige Allyn. A number of participants indicated they felt the school and community were both safe and secure while many of those same participants recognized their vulnerability and false sense of security. Yet, the ―it won't happen here" attitude often prevailed. The literature supported the findings as evinced by the fact that popularity of rural schools in Kansas seems to remain stable and rural residents often view the tribulations of cities and bigger towns negatively. The attitude among those in the ―wheat state" is that rural communities tend to be more closely knit (Gray, et al., 2000) and neighbors look out for one another. Such a belief has fostered the popular notion that events like Columbine or Goddard Junior High just do not happen in rural districts (Fatah, 1979; Staten, 1995; Wallace, 2008). Teachers and administrators are routinely trained to handle a variety of crisis situations, yet often there is a perception that ―it won't happen here" and this notion seems especially prevalent in rural and suburban settings (Menifield, 2001).

Violence Literature

Urban schools tend to record a significantly higher level of violence than their rural or even suburban counterparts (Dinkes, et al., 2007; Mayer & Furlong, 2010), yet casualties are often greater per incident in the rural setting (Menifield, 2001). Paige Allyn participants related their concern for violent occurrences, but Paige Allyn has not experienced any extreme violence such as shootings, weapon violations, or physical threats. The view is students at Paige Allyn are respectful and do not engage in violent behavior. Furthermore, participants described an administration who does not tolerate violent and disorderly conduct and is supported by the community. Participants further stated their perceptions of the safe and secure community and school could lead to vulnerability. Emergency responders also indicated Paige Allyn administrators regularly gathered intelligence and shared it with law enforcement if a concern of violence was raised. The existing literature explained how certain criminal behaviors occurred at a rate similar to urban counterparts, but violent behavior is lower than urban schools. Participants at Paige Allyn described a district of very low crime and almost no violent episodes. It appears existing literature description of criminal behaviors in rural districts was not supported by the findings at Paige Allyn, at least not fully. The community's overall pacifist orientation might make it an exception compared to other small rural communities. With no violent incidents and a low crime rate, the general feeling of safety and security is not surprising.

Terrorism

The only school district described in the literature review that could possibly been viewed as an act of terrorism was Columbine, though there is some question as to whether it fits the definition. The reviewed literature described the preparation of schools in case terrorism was to occur and generally found most schools were not ready. Paige Allyn is no exception to a lack of

preparedness against terrorist attacks. Nearly all participants recognized Paige Allyn's weaknesses to withstand an attack by ―crazies‖ as they described them. With no School Resource Officer present, current ease of accessibility there, and proximity to major highways, Paige Allyn is certainly vulnerable to acts of terrorism or other similar attacks as described in the literature. Bomb threats and suspicious packages would likely fit as a related category. Paige Allyn also lacked preparation or even recognition knowledge of suspicious package. Clearly, Paige Allyn is not secure from a terroristic type attack as illustrated in the existing literature, even though the probability of an act of terrorism is relatively low.

Readiness

Existing literature described how threatening behaviors affect learning; a view taken very seriously at Paige Allyn. Participants of the study depicted a student body that was orderly and respectful. Observations made by the researcher confirm those descriptions. Students at Paige Allyn seemed to have appropriate social and civil skills. Participants also expressed the high level of church involvement in their students' lives. Because of the strong, supportive community, school violence is very low. Literature reviewed portrayed the need to have social skill programs, and support of the community. All of these factors (good social skills, supportive community, and respectful student body) were prevalent at Paige Allyn.

Additional items illustrated in the literature were the necessity of clear discipline policies that were followed in preparation of safe and secure schools. The need to have administrators who defined and enforced the policies and a visible and supportive staff was portrayed. Repeatedly, participants expressed Paige Allyn's administration as supportive and did not tolerate inappropriate behaviors. Administrative participants in turn depicted a supportive, visible, and involved faculty, staff, and community.

Existing literature stated the need for a well-defined crisis plan was of great importance for safe and secure schools. The literature reviewed also expressed the need for involvement with police and rescue personnel when writing such a plan. As described earlier, Paige Allyn was not ready in that area.

Resource Constraints

One reason school districts were not as prepared as possible, particularly in the rural setting, was the lack of available resources. The existing literature told of a lack of funds to support school resource officers, safety and security programs, and technology that could help with safety and security. Paige Allyn, like all school districts in the state, sustained significant budget cuts. The state safe schools director even shared his concern of further reductions of SRO's, counselors, and nurses across the state. Paige Allyn made their share of cuts, although no cuts of administrators, counselors, or nurses had taken place as shared by participant interviews. No SRO had ever been hired and was not planned for in the future. Paige Allyn would have difficulty securing finances to implement new programs, security devices, and possibly even training, however.

There are concerns at Paige Allyn that need to be addressed. The next section will highlight issues at Paige Allyn that may exist in other school districts too. Suggestions to consider are offered that could improve the safety and security situation.

Recommendations for Paige Allyn District

Paige Allyn sits in a serene setting and participants in the study recognized their vulnerability lies in the fact they are not well-prepared for disasters. Participants recognized they were vulnerable due to their inaction on updating their crisis plans and their overconfidence regarding the safety and security of their community and school. They recognized they were not

motivated to update their crisis plans or follow through on basic security protocols and really saw little need to do so. Paige Allyn epitomizes a number of school districts in failing to keep updated crisis plans, follow through on training and drills, and conform to basic security protocols. Based upon findings at Paige Allyn and the existing literature, the following describes possible improvements for Paige Allyn to consider, and other school districts that lack a similar compliance to safe and prepared school protocols.

Crisis Plans or Emergency Operations Plans

First and foremost, it is important to update a crisis plan and develop a plan to continue crisis plan updates, training, and communication on a regular basis. It appears several issues led to updating the district crisis plan, including but not limited to high profile shootings at schools and an emphasis by the administration with regard to safety and security. Administrative changes occur and there should be a continuity built into crisis planning regardless of who is left in charge. Statutes require drills for fire, severe weather, and bus evacuation. Prior to a statute change, board policy could require regular updates to the crisis plan. Agendas for board meetings often address recurring issues for updating on an annual basis. Requiring an annual update and board approval of a crisis plan could be included.

The state safe and prepared schools office has prepared a template (appendix F) that should be considered for use as the district updates its plan. Paige Allyn's current crisis plan was last updated in April 2000. Numerous changes and improvements have been made to crisis plans since April 2000 and regardless of what choice is made by the district (using the state template or another), the new plan should be aligned with the NIMS and ICS protocols, and should include a floor plan that identifies key sheltering areas, fire extinguishers, and escape routes. An aerial photo of the school grounds and the immediate surroundings should be contained in the plan.

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Working with emergency responders to develop and review the plan would make it locally most effective and the plan should be reviewed and updated at least once per year.

Accessibility Controls

One of the most prevalent findings at Paige Allyn was the concern of accessibility coupled with procedures for identification. Paige Allyn already has specific entrances identified for access. Communicating to students and staff that only those entrances are to be used and regularly checking that only those select entrances are available will reduce accessibility. Check-in procedures currently exist, but could be strengthened by requiring exchange of keys or identification. The designated entrances could be further improved by adding access control doors where doors are locked until either office personnel recognizes and unlocks doors or the person gaining entrance has an access entrance device (magnetic ID card or FOB). Other doors, required for fire safety, could be made egress only by removing exterior handles and key slots.

Staff and student identification badges and lanyards would help with recognition. There are many identification systems currently available and many of them can provide essential information via a magnetic strip. Furthermore, most can be connected to the school district's administrative software system and identification badges have been used in the past at Paige Allyn for staff when there was a concern during construction. Most identification badges are now worn with breakaway lanyards, so if grabbed, will break away and prevent injury. Requiring staff to wear identification badges would assist with recognition by visitors and emergency responders. Expanding identification badges to include students would assist with appropriately recognizing students and a plethora of important information could be contained with each badge such as library or lunch information, but emergency information could also be contained in a magnetic strip.

Access controlled doors operated by office staff was a consideration mentioned earlier. Designated entrances should be located close to the office areas and a check-in and check-out procedure should be instituted for all staff, students, and visitors. Should a person be granted entrance or gain access to the school in some way and it is discovered he or she is potentially dangerous, a simple device, known as a panic button, can be installed in the office to alert assistance from the principal or selected personnel. A panic button would be analogous to a silent alarm. Dependent upon the level of sophistication desired, the panic button could simply be wired into the principal's office or be used as an alert to the police department. The level of sophistication can be decided at the local level.

Staff should be trained to assist all visitors to the building. For example, should a person enter the building and be seen by a staff member, the staff member can politely ask to help the visitor find his or her way after he or she has checked into the front office. If he/she has not checked in, staff members should politely direct visitors to the front office. Should the person be belligerent or considered dangerous, it is imperative to let additional staff such as administrators know as soon as possible and to keep an eye on the person. If designated entrances are properly limited, access controlled entrances installed, and check-in and check-out procedures implemented, it is unlikely a person will get too far into the building without being properly identified or that lock-down or other cautionary steps are initiated. Most people with a legitimate reason for attending the school would be appreciative of the assistance of the staff.

Improve Accountability

Students and staff are not currently aware of their responsibilities when it comes to the crisis plan and have not communicated about it. Paige Allyn has specific doors that are supposed to be accessible and all visitors and students are supposed to use. Yet, students and staff prop

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doors open regularly or doors are left unlocked. There are seminar periods where students are supposed to go to assigned classrooms, yet those whose grades are high enough may instead earn a lengthened lunch outside of the building and there is no checkout process. Staff members must know what their roles are when accounting for students and also letting students know why particular precautions are taken, such as keeping doors locked. Staff members should determine how cell phones and other communication devices students have and use should be handled were a crisis to occur. Students need to be informed that safety and security depends upon everyone and their responsibility is to inform adults if doors are left open or if they see something out of the ordinary. Students should supply adult staff members with information if they know another student is in danger, bullying occurs, or some potentially dangerous situation arises. An open line of communication should be developed to explain to students what to do and what not to do in case of crisis situations. The communication line should not only explain responses, but should encourage students to help prevent crisis situations by safe practices.

Very few entrances are supposed to be accessible and students and visitors are directed to use those areas, yet participants repeatedly stated the easy accessibility to the school through numerous access points. Students who have an open lunch period do not sign in and out. There was no indication staff members followed a similar procedure when leaving or arriving in district buildings. Visitors are supposed to check in at the office areas, but that procedure is not always followed either. There is a general lackadaisical approach to what should be done to account for people in the buildings and that has a potential impact on providing a safe and secure environment. Emergency responder participants also indicated a concern as they may put themselves in harm's way to rescue victims. If a person or persons are unaccounted for,

emergency responders will attempt to locate any missing person and may enter dangerous or hostile situations to do so.

Teachers should work with each other to help account for students and other staff members and teachers should assist each other when it comes to training and preparation. There is also a lack of communication between administrators and teachers, thus administrators should share their expectations of teachers should a crisis occur and what they believe should be accomplished. Administrators have not addressed issues should they be absent and crises occur and teachers generally indicated a heavy reliance on administrators should various crisis situations occur. Administrators need to communicate their expectations of teachers should a crisis occur, drill with the teachers and students, and practice various situations while removing themselves (administrators) from the situation. There is a gap between the perceptions of what teachers believe they understand with regard to crisis training, what they should or should not do, and the extent of their knowledge of the crisis plan.

Additional Communication

Communication is a vital component of any successful operation such as the smooth operation of a school district. The breakdown or lack of communication can cause many issues for schools, and when it comes to the prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery to crises, dire consequences could result. Paige Allyn has issues that need to be addressed by communicating appropriate aspects of the crisis plan to all.

Administrators did not agree on how they would handle various crisis situations either. Administrators are in charge of different buildings, but two of the buildings are adjoined and it is critical that administrators are aware of how each would respond, what expectations they have of their respective staff, and actions by which they could support each other in response to a crisis

situation. They should communicate with each other regularly and come to a consensus that can be written into a crisis plan and must realize that operating independently can cause a situation to worsen.

At least one administrator or a designee should meet regularly with emergency responders. The easiest way to accomplish this task would be to attend the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) monthly meetings where members of each emergency department of the county and other vital county entity representatives attend. The purpose of the LEPC is to consider hazards and potential disasters and the prevention, mitigation, and response to the crises. The school district and county currently share a staff member (nurse) who attends the monthly meetings, but the nurse needs to share with the district and building leadership information garnered at the LEPC meetings. Some LEPC meetings may include crisis scenarios and school staff should actively participate in those exercises and encourage emergency responders to utilize scenarios that involve the school district. Joint planning of the district crisis plan with emergency responders would make them intimately aware of the district's plan and the emergency responders' input should lead to a good crisis plan. At the very least, emergency responders should have access to the district crisis plan and should review it at least annually.

The crisis plan should be communicated appropriately to all constituents. It is not necessary or advisable to share the plan in its entirety due to privacy and security issues. For instance, floor plans and access routes should not be shared outside of emergency responders and school personnel, but should be included as part of the overall plan. Identification of off-site relocation areas should be held as confidential as possible, though evacuation and relocation drills could possibly identify those sites. It is important to communicate to parents where their children can be picked up should an actual off-site location be used. However, it should also be

communicated to parents that showing up to the school during a crisis situation could be detrimental to the safety of the students and staff and ask parents for their cooperation. It can be explained that identification information would be carried to the site and students would only be released when it is considered safe and then only to a parent, guardian, or other identified emergency contact. The community should be informed in general terms of the various procedures that are contained in the school district's crisis plan, but not specific information that ultimately could be used by someone with ulterior motives if the plan's specific information was widely distributed. Students would need to recognize their responsibilities in a crisis situation, but again, the plan's specific contents should be limited to those with the need to know; generally school staff and emergency responders. Essentially, students should be told their importance in preventing crises, safe practices such as keeping door access to designated entrances, and in following directions in the event of an emergency. Even emergency responders would not necessarily have immediate access to specific information about students or personnel unless a crisis would occur and school personnel should be able to share that information as quickly as needed.

Drills and Training

By definition of this study, a crisis situation would require responders outside of the school community. The findings showed emergency responders and the school community are unaware of each other's emergency operations plan. The emergency responders did not have a copy of the school's plan, did not know how school personnel would operate during crisis situations, and the school personnel were unaware of emergency responders' actions as well. School personnel did attend Local Emergency Preparedness Committee (LEPC) meetings in the

past, but had not done so for a number of years. There was a general lack of communication when it came to crisis planning and preparedness that needs to be remedied.

Emergency responders need to explain to school district personnel how they will respond to crisis situations and their needs of the school with regard to community crisis situations such as sheltering needs. The school district should work with the emergency responders to do crisis drills jointly as well.

Working with the county emergency manager and other emergency responders, joint drills and planning could be completed. As mentioned earlier, the emergency responders could assist in numerous planning activities and scenarios, but also would be a good source for the newest thought on prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery. The emergency responders cited the availability of funding for FEMA safe rooms at the schools. It was stated that a safe room could get up to 100% of funding where Paige Allyn was located. The school district should pursue the option of building a multi-purpose safe room at each school location. The safe room could be utilized for many purposes and several participants believed their current shelters were inadequate. Structural engineers or architects could analyze current shelters and determine their relative safety, but since funding of an additional space could be paid for by funds outside of the district's budget, it would be worthwhile to pursue a safe room or at least determine its necessity.

The state safe schools director suggests regular training and drills and cited the monthly fire drills, severe weather drills, and bus evacuation as required by statute. He also suggested sheltering in place, evacuation and relocation, and lock-down drills. It would be beneficial to review procedures with staff and students and practice each of these drills regularly. Lock-down drills should be practiced minimally once a year and an alternate safe room location should be identified. Students should be made aware the alternate safe room is an option should they not be

in their classrooms during a lock-down. Practicing communication to office areas during a lock-down is essential to account for all students as well. Fire drills are currently practiced monthly, but additional components where local emergency responders participate in the drill, blocking of primary escape routes, and fire drills during lunchtime could all be included. Paige Allyn had a significant contingent of non-staff members after school for tutoring purposes and training them in crisis procedures should be included.

Sheltering in place should be practiced at least once per year as well. This drill should include practicing shut-down of HVAC systems and shutting down all access to the building as could be the situation with a hazardous chemical release. A different type of sheltering is the severe weather sheltering. As severe weather sheltering is one of the statute required drills, at least one new component could be added to one of the three required severe weather drills, such as an escape route blockage or drilling at the very end of school as severe weather, such as tornadoes, would be more likely to occur at that time of day (Tornado climatology: Where and when do tornadoes occur?, 2010).

Two separate evacuation and relocation drills should be practiced at least once per year. The first would require students to walk to a nearby site from their school. The middle and high school complex is within a few blocks of the elementary and vice versa. If an evacuation was necessary and it did not require too significant a separation, each school should use the other school's campus for an evacuation and relocation to another site. Each site is already set up for bus and car pickup, thus each of the two campuses should work well for an evacuation to another site within walking distance. The second evacuation and relocation drill should be to a site that is a safe distance from the school and wherein buses would be utilized. This drill should be

practiced at least once per year and the site should be at a location several miles away. Secondary sites should also be considered.

An annual bus evacuation drill is also required by state statute. Bus drivers who run their normal school route practice these early in the school year usually, but some components could be added. Reviewing bus evacuation procedures with students who are on an activity bus or field trip bus is suggested. Students who do not ride the bus route to school daily may still ride an activity bus at times, but never be exposed to an evacuation drill. The bus drivers and/or sponsors could review bus evacuation procedures with their students prior to each field trip or at least once per activity season.

Monthly staff trainings are key to success in implementing any crisis plan, but limitations and response time can be a great concern in rural district, though at Paige Allyn, most participants shared the response time for most crises (not too large in scope) is relatively short, unlike many rural schools. It is still suggested that key staff members be trained in CPR, first aid and AED (automatic external defibrillator) usage. If each school building does not have an AED, an application for grants or purchases of an appropriate number of AED's is recommended.

Crisis Kits

Development of school building and classroom crisis kits is suggested. The suggested contents of each of the kits are in the state template. The crisis kits provide first aid supplies, emergency water supplies, note taking supplies, blankets, and a host of supplies to respond to various crises. Should a class or group be isolated for a period of time, the crisis kits would contain supplies to assist until additional supplies and support becomes available. In addition to the supplies of the crisis kits, keeping class rosters with student contact information and the crisis plan handbook all with the kit is suggested. Communication devices such as an emergency

whistle, laminated signs indicated missing students, medical help needed, and staff identification vests should be included. One component of the building kit would be a bullhorn so the administrator or other incident commander could communicate to large groups.

Crisis Teams

The district and each building should develop crisis teams and some of the members will be the same in a rural district such as Paige Allyn. The crisis teams should follow the NIMS and ICS guidelines and identify who will act as backups in various positions. For instance, the incident commander initially in a given building would likely be the principal, but as described in the findings at Paige Allyn, the principal could be away due to various job responsibilities. It is important to identify who will fulfill roles when one or more persons is missing and absences are likely. Leaders of the building are identified to fulfill crisis team roles, but leaders also fulfill numerous other roles in schools as well, thus taking them outside of the school building, possibly making them unavailable during a crisis. It is therefore important crisis team members and alternate members be identified, cross-trained, and adept at NIMS and ICS protocols. Members of crisis teams in buildings usually involve the administrators, nurse, counselor, building secretaries, custodian, and key personnel capable of taking a leadership role should a crisis occur. District team members, who will likely participate in a building crisis depending upon the scope of the event, include the superintendent, district coordinators such as transportation and maintenance, finance manager, district secretaries, and administrators. Paige Allyn had a reasonable response time for many crisis situations, but should the scope increase in size, it might be advisable for the district to consider advanced training for medical emergencies and provide the necessary equipment. It would be prudent to train a significant number of staff members in CPR, first aid, and AED usage.

Vulnerability Assessment

The State Department of Homeland Security offers vulnerability assessments for schools in the state free of charge. The vulnerability assessment team (VAT) consists of professional safety and security personnel who provide a report of vulnerabilities they identify at the school to the superintendent and will make suggestions. The team will look at the crisis plan and all facilities where a request has been made. The vulnerability assessment should be repeated once every five years. Private agencies perform safety and security assessments as well, but the expense is often quite high for a similar service done at no cost by the state agency. It is an option for schools where a state agency assessment is not available.

Final Thoughts and Implications

It appears that tragedies or significant fear that a tragedy may occur will motivate school districts to adequately prepare for crisis events. Other motivating factors such as school leaders or active emergency responders will also cause schools to act upon development of crisis plans. The ―it won't happen here" attitude is far too prevalent and is trumped when crises do occur and school leaders are forced to put safety and security factors in the forefront.

However, until a crisis occurs, crisis plans are often developed in piecemeal form, and steps are taken only as specific issues arise. This procedure, a ―band-aid mentality," creates two very distinct issues: (1) the plan is incomplete and encompasses only those safety and security issues which are seen as probable; and (2) while minor issues are resolved, the focus on the bigger picture is lost. Ultimately, nothing is changed until something happens. The greatest threat to the safety and security of our schools today is the attitude that ―it won't happen here‖ (see Figure 1).

Feelings of complacency…
"It won't happen here" attitude

Minimal crisis events over time

Lackadaisical attitude about crisis plan…no real need to update or revise due to false sense of security

Tragedy or change occurs which forces a revision or update to crisis planning

Situation where school is VULNERABLE
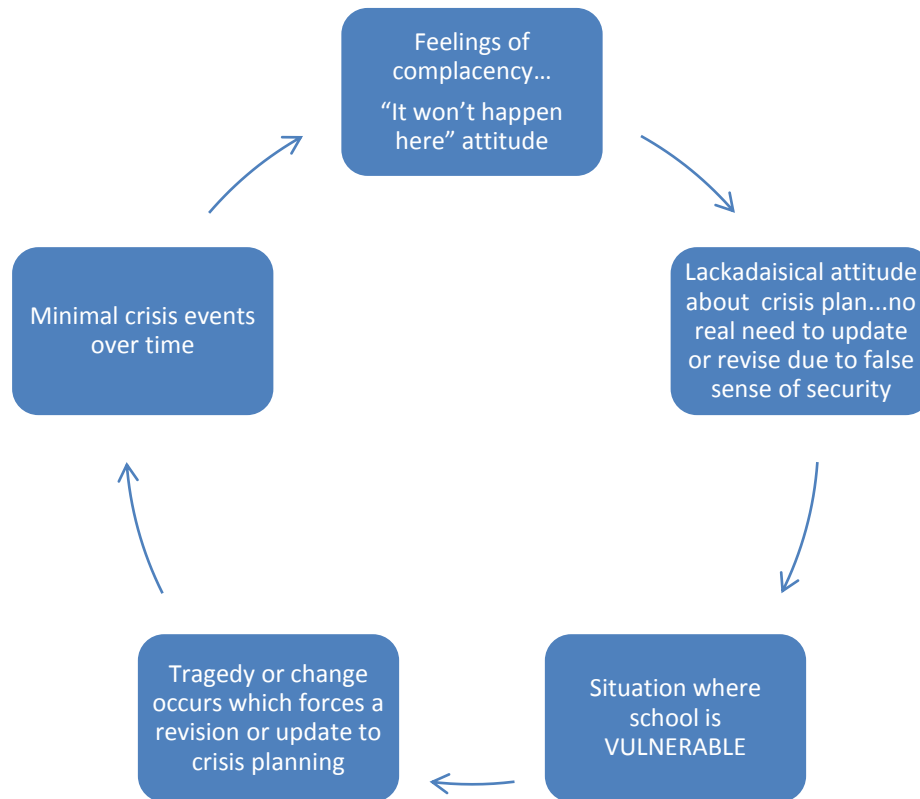
Figure 1. Cycle of Protection-Motivation in Schools

Without tragedies or motivated community members including school personnel and emergency responders, it is too easy to get into a cycle of complacency. The catastrophic events are forgotten as personnel change and time passes. Crisis events that occur near us or are so drastic they leave an imprint on our minds will motivate us to action. However, as the study shows, those events luckily have been rare (Mayer & Furlong, 2010). Layoffs of school resource officers, support personnel such as counselors and nurses, and overburdening of school administrators and teachers may lead to a relaxation of readiness until the next tragedy strikes. Few resources have been dedicated to assist schools for disaster preparedness and as a result, children are at risk (National Commission on Children and Disasters, 2010).

School districts can implement many safety and security measures and must stay vigilant, continue to review and implement best practices to enhance safety and security and ensure

school order to the best of their ability. Schools need to have a balance of security and safety features while providing an open and welcoming atmosphere for students, parents, patrons, and staff. It is important to develop identification and check-in procedures and limit access while still providing a welcoming environment. Open communication of safety and security precautions with the parents and community can accomplish this task. Enhanced security features alone will not accomplish significant improvement of safety and security. Educating students, staff, and community members on security precautions while encouraging open communication of potential problems will accomplish much. Natural events and technological hazards outside of the schools' control must be prepared for as well since schools cannot prevent all crises. In fact, some crisis will occur and if a crisis cannot be prevented, then appropriate mitigation, response, and recovery need to happen. Only through development of a comprehensive crisis plan, training, practice, and ongoing evaluation can a responsible approach be achieved. Students in a safe and secure environment learn better and our students and school staff deserve it.

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APPENDICES

Department of Educational Leadership
Box 142, Wichita, KS 67260-0142

Perceptions of Safety and Security Preparedness in a Kansas Rural School District

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Date of Interview:

Location of Interview:

Participant's Name and Title/Role:

Interviewer's Name: Bob Diepenbrock

A. Introduction and Ground Rules

Thank you for agreeing to talk with me about safety and security in your school and school district. My name is Bob Diepenbrock and I am a doctoral student completing my dissertation research for Wichita State University. I am interested in your impressions about safety and security in your district and/or school site, your knowledge of your crisis plan, and your decisions if faced with a crisis in your district. Although I will ask some specific questions to guide the discussion, this is meant to be a semi-structured interview with possible follow-up questions. Please remember I am interested in your perceptions and thoughts with regard to safety and security in your school and school district.

You were selected because of your position as an administrator/director of this district and your willingness to participate. All perceptions will be of value even if they differ from other interview participants. All responses will be given credibility. Before I begin I would like to share a few procedures for this conversation. Although we will be on a first name basis today, no names will be used when I report the results of this session. You can be assured of complete confidentiality. With your permission I would like to digitally record our session today so that I will be able to more carefully listen to your responses. The recording will only be used for the purpose of note taking and transcription and will be destroyed following the completion of the study.

You can refuse to answer any question or to stop the interview at any time. Withdrawing from the project will not result in any negative consequences for you. You have been provided a copy of the consent form that you signed. I have some extra copies if necessary.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

(Turn on the recorder, identify the interview, location, and date.)

B. Interview Questions:

1. Describe safety and security as it applies to your school/district. What differences are there, if any?

2. How safe do you perceive your school/district to be? Why?

3. How secure do you perceive your school/district to be?

4. If any, what concerns do you have with regard to safety and security?

5. How would you describe your school's/district's crisis plan?

6. Describe how your site's crisis plan incorporates the district crisis plan if different.

7. What types of crises are covered in your crisis plan?

8. What improvements if any, do you feel your crisis plan needs?

9. Describe the crisis procedures/policies you have in place for field trips, athletic contests, etc.

10. I am going to provide several hypothetical crisis situations to you. Describe your perceptions on how the staff would handle the following crises:

    a. Bomb threat

    b. Intruder

    c. Death of student/staff member

    d. Suspicious package

    e. Severe weather; e.g. tornado, floods, lightning, other

    f. Hazardous material release

  g.   Gas leak

  h.   Explosion

11. Describe your perceptions of how the response would change depending on the time of

  day, if at all.

12. Describe anything else I should know with regard to safety, security, and your crisis plan

  and staff responses that I failed to ask.

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Educational Leadership
Box 142, Wichita, KS 67260-0142

Perceptions of Safety and Security Preparedness in a Kansas Rural School District

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Date of Interview:

Location of Interview:

Participant's Name and Title/Role:

Interviewer's Name: Bob Diepenbrock

A.   Introduction and Ground Rules

Hello and welcome to the focus group. Thank you for agreeing to talk with me about safety and security in your school and school district. I am a doctoral student completing my dissertation research for Wichita State University. I am interested in your impressions about safety and security in your district and/or school site, your knowledge of your crisis plan, and your decisions if faced with a crisis in your district. My name is Bob Diepenbrock and I represent the Wichita State University as the researcher for this project. Although I will ask some questions to guide the discussion, this is meant to be a semi-structured interview with possible follow-up questions. Please remember I am interested in your perceptions and thoughts with regard to safety and security in your school and the district.

You were selected because of your position as a staff member of this district and your willingness to participate. All perceptions will be of value even if they differ from other participants. The focus group is not a decision-making process. All responses will be given credibility. Before I begin I would like to share a few procedures for this conversation. Although we will be on a first name basis today, no names will be used when I report the results of this session. You can be assured of complete confidentiality. With your permission I would like to digitally record our session today so that I will be able to more carefully listen to your responses.

The recording will only be used for the purpose of note taking and transcription and will be destroyed following the completion of the study.

You can refuse to answer any question or to stop the interview at any time. Withdrawing from the project will not result in any negative consequences for you. You have been provided a copy of the consent form that you signed. I have some extra copies if necessary.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

(Turn on the recorder, identify the interview, location, and date.)

B. Focus Groups Questions:

1. Describe safety and security as it applies to your school/district. What differences are there, if any?

2. How safe do you perceive your school/district to be? Why?

3. How secure do you perceive your school/district to be?

4. If any, what concerns do you have with regard to safety and security?

5. How would you describe your school's crisis plan?

6. Describe how your site's crisis plan incorporates the district crisis plan.

7. What types of crises are covered in your crisis plan?

8. What improvements if any, do you feel your crisis plan needs?

9. Describe the crisis procedures/policies you have in place if on a field trip, athletic contest, etc.

10. I am going to provide several hypothetical crisis situations to you. Describe your perceptions on how the staff would handle the following crises:

    a. Bomb threat

    b. Intruder

    c. Death of student/staff member

    d. Suspicious package

    e. Severe weather; e.g. tornado, floods, lightning, other

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    f. Hazardous material release

    g. Gas leak

    h. Explosion

11. Describe your perceptions of how the response would change depending on the time of

  day, if at all.

12. Describe anything else I should know with regard to safety, security, and your crisis plan

  and response that I failed to ask.

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Educational Leadership
Box 142, Wichita, KS 67260-0142

Consent Letter

PURPOSE: You are invited to participate in a doctoral dissertation study investigating a rural school's preparedness with regard to safety and security in your district. I hope to learn about the staff's knowledge of the district's and/or schools' crisis plans, staff members' perceptions on how safe and secure they are and, how staff members feel they would respond if faced with different crisis situations.

PARTICIPANT SELECTION: You have been selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a faculty or staff member or administrator that volunteered to participate and would have pertinent knowledge and perceptions with regard to safety and security in your district and/or specific school site.

EXPLANATION OF PROCDEDURES: If you decide to participate, you will be asked to participate in an observation, interview or focus group with questions related to the study purpose. Results of this study will help your district's leadership and teachers better understand safety and security perceptions in your district and may lead to future changes in your safety and security protocols. Findings from the research will be used to complete my doctoral dissertation and may be presented at regional, national, or international conferences and may result in publication in scholarly journals.

DISCOMFORT/RISKS: There are no discomforts or risks expected during this research.

BENEFITS: It is expected that the results of this study will provide your district with information that can be used to improve safety and security efforts.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All information collected in this study in which you may be identified will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission. Any data gathered will remain in the possession of the principal investigator. Participants in the study will remain anonymous. Your decision not to participate will not affect your future relations with your district, school site or Wichita State University.

CONTACT: If you have any questions about this research, please contact Dr. Jean Patterson, Educational Leadership Department Chair at 316.978.6974 or jean.patterson@wichita.edu. If you have any questions pertaining to your rights as a research participant, you can contact the Office of Research Administration at Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas, 67260-0007, telephone (316) 978-3285.

REFUSAL/WITHDRAWAL: Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your signing of this consent letter will be taken as evidence of your willingness to participate and your consent to have the information used for the purposes of the study. You may keep a copy of this cover letter and explanation about the nature of your participation in this study and the handling of the information you supply.

Sincerely,

_____

Robert G. Diepenbrock, Doctoral Student   Date

_____

Signature of subject/participant   Date

Appendix D

Table of Contents

Introduction

There are many events and issues in today's society that present problems and cause stress for our school organizations. Man made issues, forces of nature and equipment failures help to create situations that disrupt normal school operations. School crisis incidents can become community crisis incidents and a community crisis impacts our schools. As we face crisis situations in our schools, we must include education, community partners, first responders and emergency management in a collaborative approach to preventing, planning for, responding to and recovering from school crisis situations.

Purpose of Plan

The purpose of this School Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is to identify and respond to crisis incidents by outlining the responsibilities and/or duties of this school and its employees. Developing, maintaining and exercising this plan assists staff members to respond quickly, appropriately and efficiently to crisis incidents in this school. This plan is designed for immediate response on the school building level based upon the all hazard approach to crisis management.

Plan Concepts

This School Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) underscores the commitment of this school board, administration and staff to provide a safe and prepared learning environment for its students, staff and visitors. This plan is based upon the all hazards approach. This approach means that hazards that may impact this school are generally categorized into people hazards, natural disasters and technological hazards/physical plant failures. This plan is based upon the four phases of emergency management. These phases are:

1. Prevention or mitigation – ongoing activities and measures intending to eliminate or reduce the long term risk from hazards
2. Preparedness – actions (planning) that improve the speed and coordination of a response to an emergency
3. Response – the period of time shortly before, during and after an emergency when activities are conducted to save lives, stabilize the situation and protect property
4. Recovery – the period of time when the immediate threat to life and property has passed. This stage may continue for a long period until there is a return to 'normal operations'.

Universal Emergency Drills

This district will provide and develop skill in the following universal emergency procedures commonly referred to as emergency drills.

1. Building evacuation – an orderly and preplanned exit from a building when conditions are safer outside of the building than inside of the building
2. Bus evacuation – an orderly and preplanned exit from the school bus when conditions inside of the bus require immediate removal of its occupants
3. Lock down – a situation where there is an imminent threat inside the building. Occupants are to immediately take a protective position and go to a protected place inside of the building
4. Off site evacuation and reunification – an orderly removal of students and staff to a pre-determined host location (or a determined safe area) due to unsafe conditions inside of the building. Reunification in the orderly processing of returning students to their family
5. Tornado or severe weather drill – the placement of students and staff in a predetermined interior part of the building that provides protection to the building's occupants
6. Shelter in Place – placement of students and staff in a pre-determined interior area(s) of the building's interior due to a hazardous material release outside of the building

This School Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is part of the policy of this local school district.

In accordance with Kansas House Concurrent Resolution #5018 (1999) this school will *'create and update school crisis plans and to facilitate implementation of such plans by training personnel and conducting regular drills.'*

In addition, this school adopts the concepts of National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS is a result of Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5 which directs the use of a nationwide template that enables federal, state, local, tribal, private sector and non-governmental agencies to work effectively together to prevent, to prepare for, to respond to and recover from domestic incidents regardless of size, scope or complexity.

Review of Plan

This plan shall be reviewed annually by the administration and board of education. Changes in the plan will be shared with staff and implemented as soon as practical. Changes to the plan will be recorded. The following signatures document the review of this plan.

_____   _____

School Administrator   Date

_____   _____

Superintendent   Date

_____   _____

School Board President   Date

Record of Changes Made to Plan

Item or area changed   Authorized Person   Date

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

<u>Demographic Overview</u>

Location and description of the building, lot size, external fields or other features

Reference Building Floor Plan and Site Plan are included in the tabbed floor plan section

Description of the grade levels in the building, number and features of students served

Description of the staff in the building

Identification of and an overview of plans for special needs populations

- Limited English Proficiency
- Visual disabilities
- Hearing disabilities
- Learning & emotional disabilities
- Mobility issues
- Medically fragile health issues
- Others

Crisis Communication Plan

Communication is a critical part of emergency management and must include all stakeholders. Communication is often where the management of a crisis situation first encounters problems. Remember to include the ability to communicate with non-English speakers and those who may be deaf or hard of hearing. In advance of an emergency, the school's emergency operations plans should specify plans and procedures it will use to communicate with:

1. Staff and students
2. First responders
3. Parents
4. Other stakeholders
5. Media
6. Other depending upon unusual circumstances
    - Staff and Students communication methods to consider:
        a. Announcements (P.A. systems, electronic megaphones, whistles, etc.)
        b. Automated phone messages
        c. Telephone trees
        d. Morning/afternoon staff meetings
        e. Social networking (text, twitter, etc.) medium
        f. Others
    - First responders communication methods to consider
        a. 911 calls
        b. Automatic alarms
        c. Interoperable radios
        d. Cell phones
        e. Others
    - Parent method
        a. Automated phone messages
        b. Phone calls
        c. Web-site messages
        d. Public announcements
        e. Parent meetings
        f. Social networking mediums
        g. Mass media outlets
        h. Others
    - Other stakeholders (Board members, Other District personnel, Community leaders, etc.)
        a. Calling trees
        b. Automated phone messages
        c. Web-site messages
        d. E-mail messaging
        e. Social networking mediums
        f. Personal phone calls
        g. Others
    - Media – All school emergency operation communication plans should develop specific communications plans with the media. This is usually a function of the Public Information Officer (PIO) who is a member of the command staff under ICS.

Hazard Analysis Summary

A brief narrative should overview of the results of the hazards analysis conducted for this building. This hazards analysis should have two main components. The first one is for hazard identification and mitigation activities implemented to eliminate or soften the impact of the hazard.
The second component is for a risk analysis of the identified hazards that can't be mitigated.

1. Identifying Potential Hazards in the Neighborhood and Community Checklist
Being aware of the potential hazards in the community can affect your school planning process. Some examples are listed below. Contact your local Emergency Manager to identify other potential major hazards. Look at historical records to determine other potential major hazards.

☐ Facilities containing toxic, chemically reactive, and/or radioactive materials.
   Note: Be sure to include both manufacturers and users (e.g., gas stations).

☐ High-voltage power lines.

☐ Transportation routes of vehicles carrying hazardous materials (e.g., truck routes and railroad rights of way).

☐ Underground gas and oil pipelines.

☐ Underground utility vaults and above-ground transformers.

☐ Multi-story buildings vulnerable to damage or collapse (e.g., unreinforced masonry construction).

☐ Water towers and tanks.

☐ Other hazards from information from local emergency manager

☐ Others from historical data

1. **Classroom and Building Hazard Hunt**

Using information from "Classroom and Building 'Hazard Hunt'" forms, as well as insights from Emergency Response Team members, list below any specific risks or potential hazards needing special consideration and plans to address them (copy form as

Potential Hazard	Action Needed to Mitigate the Hazard	Person Responsible	Date Completed

2. Hazard Analysis

RISK INDEX WORKSHEET						
Hazard	**Frequency**	**Magnitude**	**Warning Time**	**Severity**		**Risk Priority**
	❑ Highly likely ❑ Likely ❑ Possible ❑ Unlikely	❑ Catastrophic ❑ Critical ❑ Limited ❑ Negligible	❑ Minimal ❑ 6-12 hours ❑ 12-24 hours ❑ 24+ hours	❑ Catastrophic ❑ Critical ❑ Limited ❑Negligible		❑ High ❑ Medium ❑ Low
	❑ Highly likely ❑ Likely ❑ Possible ❑ Unlikely	❑ Catastrophic ❑ Critical ❑ Limited ❑ Negligible	❑ Minimal ❑ 6-12 hours ❑ 12-24 hours ❑ 24+ hours	❑ Catastrophic ❑ Critical ❑ Limited ❑ Negligible		❑ High ❑ Medium ❑ Low
	❑ Highly likely ❑ Likely ❑ Possible ❑ Unlikely	❑ Catastrophic ❑ Critical ❑ Limited ❑ Negligible	❑ Minimal ❑ 6-12 hours ❑ 12-24 hours ❑ 24+ hours	❑ Catastrophic ❑ Critical ❑ Limited ❑ Negligible		❑ High ❑ Medium ❑ Low
	❑ Highly likely ❑ Likely ❑ Possible ❑ Unlikely	❑ Catastrophic ❑ Critical ❑ Limited ❑ Negligible	❑ Minimal ❑ 6-12 hours ❑ 12-24 hours ❑ 24+ hours	❑ Catastrophic ❑ Critical ❑ Limited ❑ Negligible		❑ High ❑ Medium ❑ Low

1 – 7   =   Low Risk
8 – 13 =   Medium Risk
14 – 16 =   High Risk

Note: All hazards with a risk priority rating of high or medium should be considered in your school's plan.

Building Crisis Management Team Members

This building has a crisis management team. The team is organized around the concepts of the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS is a component of NIMS. ICS is a standardized on scene emergency management organizational structure designed to meet the demands of the situation regardless of size or complexity without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

The crisis management team members should:
1. Have the ability, commitment, authority and resources to carry out their responsibilities
2. Receive necessary training to carry out their responsibilities
3. Be familiar with all aspects of the Building's emergency operations plan.
4. Be operationally familiar with the ICS structure.
5. Posses or know where to find additional resources related to school emergencies
6. Have the ability to remain calm under stressful conditions
7. Be involve with the planning process of the emergency operations plan
8. Have the trust and confidence of their colleagues
9. Represent all functions of the school
10. Posses good communication and collaboration skills

All staff members should complete the skills survey and inventory sheet. A copy of this is in the appendix section of this EOP. The purpose is to have an inventory on hand of additional skills and resources that could be utilized in a school emergency incident.

Name	Assignment	Office Phone	Cell Phone
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

Using Incident Command System (ICS), this school's team is organized in the following manner:
1. **Incident Commander** (IC) -Establishes Command, directs overall incident management
   a. **Safety Official** – Oversees the safety of carrying out emergency plans and ensures the safety of building occupants (Direct report to the IC)
   b. **Public Information Official** (PIO) – Coordinates media response (Reports to IC)
   c. **Liaison Official** – Contact with responding agencies &/or may be assigned by the IC to be his contact with other agencies (Reports directly to the IC)
2. **Operations Chief** – Responsible for care of students & carrying out response activities
3. **Logistics Chief** – Responsible for internal communication as well as securing and providing needed materials, resources services and personnel related to the incident
4. **Planning Chief** – Collects and analyzes information related to the incident and resources
5. **Administration/Finance** – Responsible for record keeping, cost accounting & payments

On the next pages of this manual, please find an organizational chart of this building's team using ICS as applies to a school setting. Additionally there is a listing of persons, and their alternates, in this building who fill specific crisis management assignments. Please look carefully over these pages.

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Incident Command in School

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In many ways, Incident Command has been in place since the formation of the first modern schools. In an emergency, the Principal assumes control or management responsibility, as required under the laws of most states and activates others as needed. It should be understood that an activation of the school's ICS team/protocols is not necessary or indicated for every day to day incident. Each designated responsibility area under the ICS should have a primary designee with a minimum of two back up personnel. For relatively small incidents, the Principal may perform all the roles of the ICS structure. If an incident grows, he/she may activate other personnel as needed. In turn, once activated, each individual below may activate others needed to complete necessary functions.

The ICS Organization
   The diagram below shows the structure of the Incident Command System organization.

<div align="center">

ICS Organization

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```
                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │ Incident Commander  │
                        └─────────────────────┘
   ┌──────────────────┐                    ┌──────────────────┐
   │ Information Officer│                   │  Safety Officer  │
   └──────────────────┘                    └──────────────────┘
                                           ┌──────────────────┐
                                           │  Liaison Officer │
                                           └──────────────────┘
  ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
  │Operations│   │ Planning │   │ Logistics│   │Finance/Administration│
  └──────────┘   └──────────┘   └──────────┘   └──────────────────────┘
  ┌───────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
  │Medical│ │Security│ │Student Coordination│  │Communication │ │Transportation│
  └───────┘ └────────┘ └────────────────────┘  └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘
```
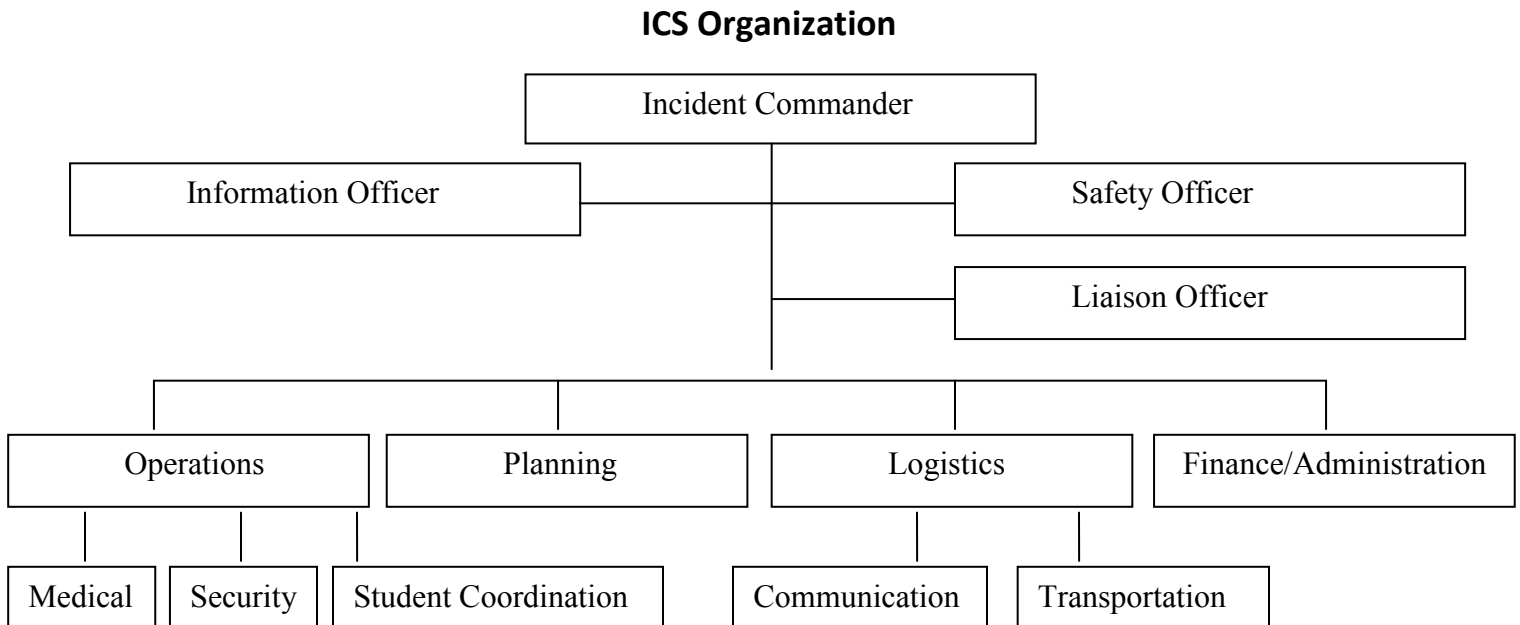
Incident Commander: Establishes command, works to protect life and property, directs overall management of emergency response activities. At the school level the Incident Commander is typically the Principal or hi/her designee. The Incident Command role can be transferred to another individual (example – police office or fire fighter) depending upon the emergency as they arrive on the scene.

Planning: In small emergencies, the Incident Commander (IC) is responsible for planning, but in a larger emergency, the IC establishes a Planning Section. Planning collects and evaluates information as related to the development of an incident and status of resources.

Operations: On a school campus, most staff will be assigned roles under Operations. Operations are responsible for the care of students and carrying out response activities according to established Universal Emergency Procedures and Emergency Protocols.

Logistics: Is responsible for communications, as well as securing and providing needed materials, resources, services and personnel. This section may take on a major role in extended situations.

Administration/Finance: Sometimes overlooked, the Administration/Finance is critical for tracking incident costs and for reimbursement accounting. This is especially important in tracking costs where a state or federal ―disaster area" may be declared.

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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 state and federal agencies when responding to emergencies. The system provides integrated and coordinated management guidelines for all types of disasters and emergencies.

Most Functions necessary for emergency response in the community are also necessary for emergencies within the schools. Incident management functions below are described in the context of a school setting.

Incident Commander (person in charge)	Activates school's emergency response plan; assesses the threat; orders protective measures such as lockdown, evacuation or shelter-in-place; notifies district authorities and provides situation updates; requests resources.
Safety	Responsible for safety and security of the site; stops operations if conditions become unsafe.
Public Information	May be designated site spokesperson; cooperates with the district and other agencies on joint news releases; coordinates media briefings as necessary.
Liaison	Contact person for outside agencies; may represent school/district at city emergency operations center or at emergency responders' on-scene command post.
Operations Chief	Directs actions, i.e., lockdown, evacuation, site security, release of students to parents/guardians, first aid or medical care, cleanup, control of utilities.
Medical	Provides for first aid or other medical car; coordinates with emergency medical services personnel as necessary; activates school's first aid/CPR responders.
Site Security/Facility Check	Responsible for seeing that the school building and grounds are visually inspected and secured.
Student Release Coordinator	Responsible for implementing school's plan for release of students to parents/guardians from relocation sire; takes necessary documents to relocation site.
Logistics Chief	Estimates logistical needs; gets personnel, facilities (relocation sites), services and materials to support operations.
Communications	Responsible for emergency communications systems and equipment; may act as lead or hub for internal communications response.
Transportation	Responsible for arranging transportation for emergency relocations and early dismissal of school; keeps current contact list of transportation providers.
Planning Chief	Assists in assessing emergencies; establishes priorities, identifies issues and prepares an action plan with incident commander.
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.

Emergency Response Team Assignments

In general, Incident Command System (ICS) or Emergency Response Team roles should be a logical, reasonable parallel to day-to-day work assignments. Complete the form below to reflect your school Emergency Response Team assignments.

TITLE	NAME Location and Numbers	ALTERNATE NAME Location and Numbers
Incident Command: Principal		
Safety Official: Security, Law Enforcement		
Public Information Official: Media Liaison		
Liaison Official: Liaison to Outside Agencies		
Planning/Intelligence: Situation Analysis		
Operations: Student Accounting & Release		
Operations: Facility & Environmental		
Operations: First Aid, CPR, Medical		
Operations: Crisis Intervention & Response		
Operations: Food, Water, Sanitation		
Logistics: Communications		
Logistics: Supplies		
Administration & Finance: Documentation		

PEOPLE CRISIS

Assault
1. Confirm information & report to Building Office
2. Assess & report status of victim
3. Provide accurate information on assailant and their location
4. Provide first aid as needed and/or Call 911 as needed
5. Notify District Office

Bomb Threats
1. Notify Building Administration/Notify District Office
2. Call 911 and report the threat
3. Complete the Bomb Threat Checklist
4. Evaluate the validity of the threat. Is the threat credible?
5. Building/area search without evacuation (overt/covert)
6. Evacuate and search if deemed appropriate
7. Upgrade if a suspicious package is discovered by search team

Death of a student/staff
1. Confirm information
2. Call District Office
3. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
4. Notify staff
5. Obtain personal data
6. Secure personal items

Disruptions/Intruder/Missing Child or Abduction
1. Assess (confirm) situation/call 911 as needed
2. Secure building/take attendance
3. Call District Office
4. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
5. Notify staff/use pre-arranged codes
6. Notify parents

Field Trips
1. Assess and confirm information – know precise location
2. Use predetermined, appropriate communication devices and telephone numbers (Call 911 – if needed)
3. Notify Building Administration of situation
4. Locate, refer to & use crisis information and resources on hand
5. Account for all persons on trip

Medical Emergencies
1. Assess situation - Determine if situation affects total school population, small group, or individual
2. Determine if emergency medical personnel are required. If so, call 911 and District Office with crisis information
3. Initiate CPR/First Aid/AED as needed
4. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
5. Notify staff
6. Determine status of students not affected

Poisoning
1. Call 911
2. Call Poison Center Hotline 1-800-222-1222
3. Activate building medical staff
4. Utilize building knowledge (Material Data Safety Sheets)
5. Call District Office
6. Locate emergency contact information of participants

NATURAL DISASTERS

Earthquake

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1. Sound alarms – provide notification
2. Evacuate building or take protective positions
3. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
4. Call Service Center with crisis information
5. Call District Office
6. Activate building crisis plan

Fire
1. Sound alarms
2. Evacuate building
3. Call 911
4. Take attendance at designated place
5. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
6. Call Service Center with crisis information
7. Call District Office

Lightning
1. Take cover inside the nearest safe structure.
2. If outside and no shelter is available, immediately crouch into a ball position with feet on the ground.
3. Stay away from trees or other tall isolated structures.

Pandemic
1. Check with local, county & state health officials for latest info
2. Stay home with flu like symptoms
3. If in school - separate sick students and staff
4. Emphasize hand hygiene & respiratory etiquette
5. Routinely clean areas that students & staff touch
6. Those with high risks seek early treatment

Severe Weather and Floods
1. Confirm information
2. Post observers as warranted
3. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
4. Call 911 (if needed)
5. Call Service Center with crisis information
6. Call District Office
7. Activate building crisis plan for severe weather

Tornado
1. Sound alarms – provide notification
2. Take protective positions
3. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
4. Call 911 as needed
5. Call Service Center with crisis information
6. Call District Office
7. Activate building crisis plan

** When in doubt, call 911 **
Assess situation & Confirm Information
Record Information about crisis incident
** Plan time for debriefing after crisis **
** Refer to crisis manual for additional details **
Any time you evacuate the building, take attendance

PHYSICAL PLANT/TECHNOLOGICAL HAZARDS

Anthrax Threats
1. Become aware of indicators of suspect letters and packages

---

2. If unopened and not leaking a substance:
   - Call 911 and report factual information
   - Call District Office
   - Clear the room and wait for emergency personnel to arrive
3. If opened and substance found (or leaking):
   - Place letter/contents in package and seal in a plastic bag
   - Wash hands immediately with soap and water
   - Call 911 and report factual information
   - Call District Office
   - Remain in the room and wait for emergency personnel to arrive
4. Shut down HVAC unit to impacted area

Chemical/Hazardous Material Release
1. Assess situation use MSDS (material data safety sheets)
2. Call 911
3. If inside, evacuate building. If outside, shelter in place
4. Take attendance – account for all persons
5. Call Service Center
6. Call District Office
7. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
8. Activate Shelter in Place Plan as needed
9. Listen to district, local media or other information updates

Emergency Early Dismissal of School
1. Call District Office and discuss situation
2. Once decision is made for dismissal, activate plan of needed action steps provided in Crisis Management Manual.

Explosion
1. Evacuate building – assess situation
2. Call 911
3. Call Service Center
4. Call District Office
5. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
6. Determine scope of crisis-take attendance

Gas Leak
1. Evacuate building – assess situation
2. Call 911
3. Call Gas Company at _____
4. Call Service Center
5. Call District Office
6. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team
7. If needed after evacuation move students/staff to safe area

Utility Outage (Electric, Water, Phones, Computer, etc)
1. Assess situation – check building to determine any damage
2. Call Service Center
3. Call utility provider
4. Call District Office
5. Locate and check utility shut off valves or switches
6. Assemble Building Crisis Management Team

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Universal Emergency Procedures

In the past many schools used 'universal codes' (i.e. – code red, code, yellow, etc.) that signaled an emergency situation and responding emergency action. In concert with the ICS system, it is recommended to depart from the universal codes and in plain language practice Universal Emergency Procedures. Universal Emergency Procedures are a set of standard, clear directives that can be implemented across a variety of emergency situations. When the emergency begins, the Principal or his designee, as the Incident Commander will decide upon the Universal Emergency Procedures to implement.

There are six Universal Procedures to respond to various emergency situations:

1. Evacuation 2. Severe Weather 3. Lock Down 4. Shelter in Place 5. Off-site evacuation & reunification 6. Bus Evacuation

---

1.**Evacuation (Fire)** – An orderly and preplanned exit from a building when conditions are safer outside than inside.
Signal – loud continuous blast from alarm horn and pulsating strobe lights
* Take closest & safest planned route out of building
* Be familiar with 2nd route as needed
* Teachers take attendance –take classroom kits
* Office staff ensures evacuation destination is safe
* Office staff take building crisis kit & megaphone
* Office staff account for itinerant staff & visitors
* Assist those with special needs
Drill to be held monthly – Record all drill results

---

2. Tornado or Severe Weather Shelter – Placement of students and staff in a pre-determined interior part of the building where damaged due to weather will be less
Signal – Clear speech announcement via intercom
*Students take duck and cover positions
*Remain quiet for further instructions
*Teachers take attendance – close all doors & windows
*Teachers take classroom crisis kit (if have one)
*Pre-determine communication methods between office staff and shelter areas
*Remain until all clear is given
*Assist those with special needs
Drill to be held 3 times annually – Record results

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3. Lock Down – A situation where there is an imminent threat inside of the building. Students and staff are to immediately go to a protective place and position inside of the school
Signal – intercom announcement (if possible) pre-determine a secondary communication method for each building
*Clear all hallways – report to nearest available classroom
*Close, cover and lock all windows and doors – shut off lights
*Move away from doors and windows drop to floor in designated place – usually with backs against interior walls
*BE QUIET! – Wait for further instructions
*Take attendance – use red/green card system if part of plan
*Assist those with special needs
Drill to be held once each semester – Record Results

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4. Shelter in Place (SIP) – Placement of students and staff in a pre-determined area of the building's interior due to an external gas or chemical release.
Signal – Clear speech announcement via the intercom
*Move students and staff to designated area(s)
*Open and use items from SIP kit to seal off area
*Shut down HVAC - close , lock & seal doors & windows
*Take attendance
*Do not allow anyone to leave area
* Wait for further instructions
*Assist those with special needs
*Teachers take classroom kits to SIP area
Drill to be held annually – Record Results

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5. Off-Site Evacuation & Reunification – An orderly removal of students and staff to a pre-determined host location (or a safe area in building) due to conditions inside the school building.
Signal – Clear speech announcement using the intercom. If the intercom is unavailable a pre-determined method will be used
*Find and use pre-determined evacuation & reunification procedures
*Staff will escort students to safe area
*Method of transporting to safe area may be either by walking or bus transportation
*Teachers take attendance and account for all their students before leaving school
*Teachers take their classroom crisis kits
*Office staff take building crisis kit and account for itinerant staff and visitors
*Upon arrival at host site, teachers retake attendance
*Upon arrival at host site, additional instructions will be given for reunification
*Assist those with special needs
Drill to be held annually – Record Results

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6. School Bus Evacuation – An orderly removal of bus occupants due to an emergency situation
Signal – Verbal directions given by the bus driver, adult aid, sponsor or designated student helper
*Assess the need to evacuate & recognize the hazard
*Safe exit of students (passengers) is first priority
*Indicate type of evacuation (i.e. – front door, rear floor emergency, side door or combination, etc.)
*Assist younger students or those with special needs
*Use radio or other communication systems to obtain help and notify dispatch of situation and precise location
*Direct passengers to a safe area 100' from bus
*Take fire extinguishers, first aid kits & other safety items
*Take attendance & stay together
Drill to be held once each semester – Record Results

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The (fire) evacuation, severe weather sheltering and bus evacuation are required drills

Kansas Center for Safe & Prepared Schools
Building Crisis Kit – Suggested Contents

A building crisis kit is an organized kit that contains helpful items to building staff and emergency responders during a crisis event in their local school. The following is a suggested list of items usually placed in the Building Crisis Kit:

a. Container – often a large duffel bag or backpack that can be carried
b. Building crisis plans and procedures
c. Recent yearbook
d. Current student roster
e. Current staff roster
f. Current visitor roster
g. Vests or hats or some means of identifying crisis team members
h. Whistles
i. Emergency phone number list
j. Building Walkie-talkies
k. Interoperable radio with first responders (if possible)
l. Cell phone
m. Pens, pencil and markers
n. Special needs of students and staff – marked confidential
o. Campus and site maps
p. First aid supplies
q. First aid instructions
r. Water
s. Flashlights
t. Extra batteries
u. Battery operated radio (NOAA weather radio)
v. Blankets
w. Sanitary items (Paper towels, TP, Moist Towlettes)
x. Work gloves
y. Disposable plastic gloves
z. Electronic megaphone
aa. Clipboard and paper
bb. Basic hand tool
cc. Utility turn off procedures
dd. Plastic drop cloths
ee. Breathing masks
ff. Hand sanitizer
gg. Duct tape
hh. Disposable camera
ii. Binoculars
jj. Other as needed

Kansas Center for Safe and Prepared Schools
<u>Classroom Crisis Kit (Suggested) Contents</u>

A classroom kit is intended to be a 'grab and go' organized kit that contains helpful items to the classroom teacher, students, building staff and emergency responders during a crisis event. The following are suggested items with each school adding items as needed:

a. Grab and go container (usually some type of canvas bag)
b. Building Crisis Plans
c. Flashlight
d. Water
e. Clipboard
f. Writing paper
g. Pens, pencils & markers
h. Whistle
i. Note cards
j. Small first aid kit
k. Plastic drop cloth
l. Class roster & photos – current attendance
m. Emergency student phone information – marked confidential
n. List of classroom medical needs – marked confidential
o. List of classroom special needs-marked confidential
p. Hand sanitizer
q. Building emergency plans and procedures
r. Disposable gloves
s. Student activities
t. Hat, vest or some identifier for teacher
u. Other as needed

geview Elementary

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Sunflower Middle School Site Plan

77 Academic Way – Pleasant City, Kansas

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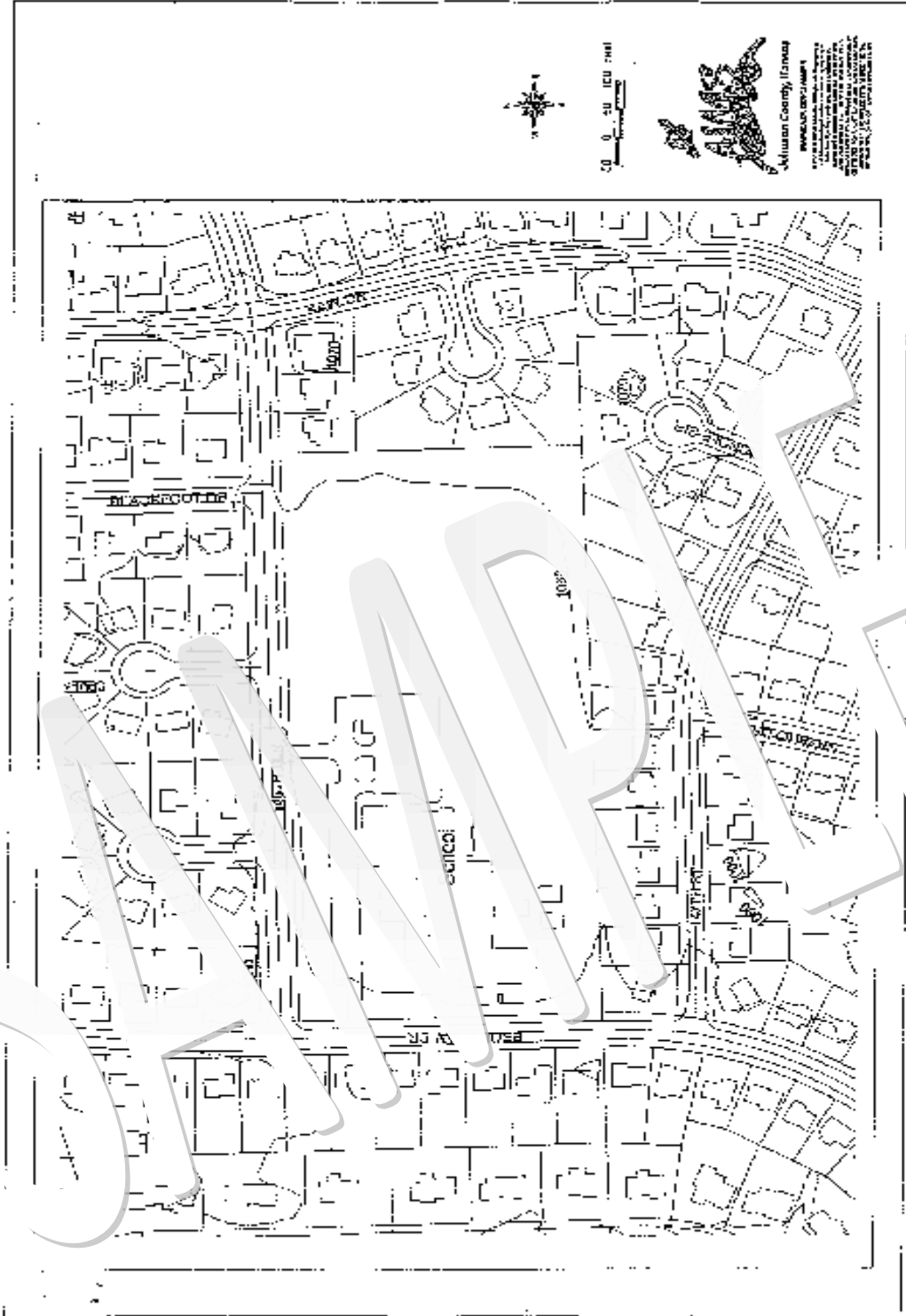
People Crisis – Additional Information

The following bullet points are suggestions to consider as you respond to the emergency situation. Remember each situation is unique. Please consult and use additional resources as appropriate. In advance of these situations, convene building crisis team and discuss and prepare for additional response actions and resources.

1. **Assault** – An assault is a violent physical or verbal attack.
   - Report information about the assault immediately to school officials or the office
   - Make sure scene is safe before entering
   - As possible provide accurate information about the assailant
   - If known, give location of assailant
   - If assailant has left area provide as much accurate information as possible
   - Render aid to the victim; get building medical help and/or call 911 as needed
   - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press.

2. **Bomb Threat** – A bomb threat is the expression of the intent to cause physical harm or damage by use of an explosive device. Bomb threats are usually delivered by using the telephone but they also may be delivered by use of mail, email, graffiti, a gesture or face to face conversation.
   - All bomb threats must be taken seriously
   - As soon as threat is received notify building administration
   - If threat is taken over the phone prolong conversation as long as possible
   - Use the ATF Bomb Threat Checklist to record known information about the threat
   - As soon as possible the Administrator and/or Building Crisis Team must:
     ** Analyze the Bomb Threat
     ** Search the building and then evacuate depending upon search results and other factors
     ** Search the building and if reasonable assurance from search results, resume normal activities
     ** Evacuate the Building
     ** Call 911 for additional resources or directions
   - Remember to search inside and the outside perimeter of building
   - Make sure building search is consistent with recommended search guidelines
   - If evacuation is used make sure the evacuation destination is safe
   - If building is evacuated take crisis kits (building and classroom) to evacuation destination
   - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press

3. **Death of Student or Staff Member** –The sudden loss of life in a school setting is always a difficult and delicate situation. The death may be due to one of several causes that will impact the situation.
   - Always confirm information first regarding the death
   - Notify school administration
   - Notification of staff is helpful whether it is during or outside of the school day
   - Consider having a staff meeting to review response plans to the death
   - Obtain personal information about the deceased
   - Secure the personal items of the deceased
   - Establish time for grief counseling and appropriate follow up activities for students & staff
   - Determine if any changes to the normal schedule or after school activities are needed
   - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press

4. **Disruptions/Intruder/Missing Child or Abduction** – This group of emergencies usually requires immediate defensive action (Lockdown) for the school facility.
   - Assess (confirm) the information and call 911 and school authorities as needed
   - Isolate students from area of emergency to a safe area and secure the building
   - Take attendance
   - If in lockdown, stay in safe area until the all clear is given
   - Convene Crisis Team (as necessary) to determine the next action steps
   - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press

5. **Field Trips** – Field trips are school sponsored activities with staff supervision away from the school.
   - In advance of the trip make sure portable communication devices and their numbers are establish with building administration, office personnel and trip sponsors
   - In advance of the trip make sure trip sponsors know who and what number(s) to call for emergencies
   - Trip sponsors when calling in an emergency situation, must provide clear and precise information as to the nature of the problem, the exact location and status of students and staff on trip
   - Take attendance and account for all persons on trip
   - Trip sponsors provide information on whether emergency services have been called from their location or if school personnel at the school need to make such calls
   - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press
6. **Medical Emergencies** – Medical emergencies will come in a variety of forms but will require some form of intervention or assistance to aid the victim(s)
   - Determine whether situation involves the total school population, a small group or an individual
   - Contact appropriate building personnel – call 911 as needed
   - Provide accurate information on the victim and precise location
   - If EMS is called send Building Crisis Team Member to doorway to escort EMS responders
   - Care for victim(s) until EMS arrive
   - Call parents/guardians as soon as possible
   - If victim is transported to hospital and parents are not available, consider sending staff member
   - Call District Office as needed
   - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press
7. **Poisoning** – Contact or ingestion of a substance that causes harm to a living organism
   - Call 911 – seek additional medical assistance
   - Call the Poison Center Hotline 1-800-222-1222
   - Administer first aid & medical attention as directed by the Poison Information Center or EMS
   - Notify building personnel
   - Utilize building knowledge of poisonous substance (MSDS Sheets, Computer, Label Information)
   - Notify parents or family members
   - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press

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General Reminders

1. Know all Building Crisis Team Members
2. List all Building Personnel trained in CPR, First Aid & Defibrillator
2. Know where the First Aid Kit is located
3. Know where Defibrillator is located
4. Know where fire extinguishers are located and how to use them
5. Know where all breaker boxes are located
6. Know where utility shut off is located
7. Know where Building Crisis Kit is located
8. Know what to do for all Universal Emergency Procedures
9. Remember to provide assistance for persons with special needs
10. Keep classroom crisis kits updated
11. After the crisis event, plan time for debriefing
12. When in doubt about a crisis situation, call 911

Assault

An assault is a violent physical or verbal attack.

Staff Actions:
- Report to school principal the type and number of injuries and if assailant is still in area
- Give a good description of the assailant (clothing, height, etc.)
- Give location of the assault
- If assailant has left eh building on foot give direction of travel
- If assailant leaves in a vehicle, give description of vehicle, license number and direction of travel
- Administer first aid, and get medical attention if needed

Principal, Team:
- Call 911 if warranted, or notify school law enforcement
- Give type and number of injuries
- Advise if assailant is still in building or on the property
- Give description of assailant
- Give direction of travel and type of vehicle
- If threat still persists determine whether to initiate Lockdown
- Notify District Support Team, Central Office as appropriate
- Document actions and complete incident reports

Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Bomb Threat – School Report

A Bomb Threat is the expression of the intent to cause physical harm or by the use of an explosive device.

Date _____ Time of call _____

Bomb threat was received on telephone number _____

Exact language/wording used by the caller_____
_____

Record the following information as provided:

What time is it set for? _____ Where is it? _____

What does it look like? _____

Why are you doing this? _____

What is your name? _____
Additional Information (check/fill in)

Gender: ___Male   ___Female   Describe_____

Age: ___Adult   ___Child   Describe/Estimate age_____

Speech: ___Normal   ___Excited   Describe_____

Speech: ___Slow   ___Fast   Describe_____

Did the caller have an accent? Describe_____

Did you recognize the caller's voice? Describe_____

Background noises: ___music   ___traffic   ___machine   ___voices/talking
                         ___airplanes   ___typing   ___children   ___TV/radio
                         ___other _____

Other Notes: _____
Person receiving call:
Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____

Notification:
School Principal _____ Time _____

Police _____ Time _____

Classmate Tragedy

The following section is designed to assist the teacher or counselor in preparing the class to help a student who has experienced a tragedy prior to their return to the class.

Example: Death of a friend or family member
- Explain what is known of the loss
- Ask if other students have experienced the death of a friend or family member?
- Are there things people said or did that made you feel better?
- How do you think our classmate might be feeling?
- What could you say that might help him/her know you care? Guide student's responses towards helpful comments and away from less helpful comments.
- What would you want someone to say to you if you experienced the death of someone close?
- Are there things you could do that may help them feel better?
- We can take our cues from the person that will guide our actions. What might some of those cues be?

When a Grieving Classmate Returns: (First Words)
- The classmate probably feels like he/she is from a different planet when returning to school
- At least say, "hello," "welcome back," I'm glad to see you," or something similar
- The brave might even say: "I'm so sorry to hear about your _____'s death."
- Even braver friends might make statements like, "It must be incredible tough to have your ___ die."
- Other options include: write a brief note or card, call, etc
- If you classmate cries, this is okay; you did not cause the grief; offer comfort and a tissue

Helping the Classmate Adjust to the Class:
- Offer to provide past notes from missed classes
- Offer to provide notes for comparison for the next week or so (your classmate's attention span will probably vary for several weeks)
- Give the classmate your phone number to call if having problems with homework
- Ask your classmate if you can call to check on how homework is going
- Offer to study together in person or over the phone; this might help with both motivation and with concentration; grieving students frequently do not feel like doing school work

Some Don'ts:
- Don't shun the student, speak to them
- No cliché statements (e.g., "I know how you feel" when nobody knows the unique relationship the classmate had with the deceased_
- Don't expect the person to snap back into the "old self"
- Don't be surprised if classmate seems unaffected by the loss, everybody has his/her own way of grieving
- Don't be afraid to ask appropriate questions about the deceased, like "what did you and your _____ enjoy together?" (people often like to talk about the people they grieve)
- Just because the classmate may seem to be adjusting to school again, don't assume the grieving has stopped, nor the need for comfort and friendship

<u>Death or Serious Illness</u>

Death is the permanent cessation of all vital bodily functions.

In the event of a reported death or serious illness outside the school setting:

Staff Actions:
- Notify Principal

Principal, Team:
- Call 911, when death/illness is verified
- Protect the privacy of the family; the school neither gives nor confirms information to the media or others without consent
- Notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Notify teachers prior to school by using a phone tree or during school prior to notification of students
- Schedule a faculty meeting as soon as possible to: share the details that are know, review procedures for the day, and discuss the notification of students, availability of support services and the referral process for students needing assistance.
- Contact the family or visit the home to offer help, condolence and support
- Allow students to meet in guidance office or other appropriate place; students should be encouraged to report any other students who might need assistance
- It may be necessary to designate multiple areas for crisis team/grief counselors to meet with affected students
- Notify the bus driver of the students who will not ride home on their bus
- Students who are extremely upset should have parents contacted to determine appropriate support needed after leaving school
- Offer assistance to parents of impacted students
- If deemed necessary by building principal, at eh end of the day a faculty meeting may be called to disseminate additional information

Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Guidelines for Student/Staff Sudden Death

Following a traumatic death, people can feel a sense of loss for at least 2 years. Frequently, after effects are felt as a pervasive sense of malaise among students and school staff. School staff can be devastated well into the next school year, and there may be a change in attitude toward teaching. Some staff may increase their emotional distance from students. Students tend to be fearful of getting close to one another, fearing the loss of another classmate or friend. The need to cope adaptively is necessary. These guidelines are written to help deal with these concerns and to establish procedures for the student sudden death.

Day of a Sudden Death
- Upon notification of the sudden death of a student or staff member, the building Principal will notify the Director of Student Services or the Administrative Assistant for Guidance and Counseling. One of these individuals will notify the Superintendent and the Assistant to the Superintendent for Communications.
- The Principal will initiate a "call tree" to all faculty and support staff, informing them of the sudden death and requesting their arrival at school 30 minutes earlier to attend a special faculty meeting.
- Telephone conferences with the district's crisis team will be held to plan tentative activities for the next day (the day after the sudden death).

First Day after a Sudden Death
- The school Principal meets with the crisis team 30 minutes before meeting with faculty to plan the aftermath of the sudden death.
- The Principal reviews the available facts of the case with all faculty and support staff to dispel rumors, to discuss the plan of the day, and to allow for faculty and support staff to express feelings. Faculty/Staff are encouraged to lend support to one another.
- A member of the district crisis team describes some of the feelings the students may e experiencing following the death of a classmate: disbelief, anger, denial, sadness, and loss. Suggestions are reviewed on ways to handle expressions of grief in their classes.
- A crisis center will be established in the school building. Additional Student Services staff from other buildings may be called in to assist with the crisis. A member of the crisis team will make phone calls to parents of students who are particularly upset or may be at risk. The crisis center may be kept open after school hours and into the evening to assist students, parents, and staff.
- Peer helpers may be assembled to work through their feelings, and the crisis team will offer them some guidelines for helping troubled students.
- A letter from the Principal may be sent home with students notifying parents of the sudden death and providing them with information regarding the stages of grief and listing reading materials that are available in the school media center on the subject death.
- School staffs are assembled at the end of the school day. The Principal or his/her designee conducts the meeting and does the following:
    a. Allows for expression of feelings and mutual support.
    b. Reviews the events of the day.
    c. Reviews the characteristics of high-risk students (those who seem especially upset or depressed or show other signs of not coping well) and complies a list of staff observations of distressed students' reactions during the day.
    d. Announces the funeral arrangements. Staff may be encouraged to attend if they feel a special need or to provide support to students and their families.

Day following a Sudden Death

Crisis team members continue crisis intervention, answer phone calls of anxious parents, and meet with concerned staff as necessary.

Guidelines for Developing Policies and Procedures

Youth suicide will not decrease without community prevention and intervention efforts. School districts are positioned to provide leadership programs. The following guidelines for creating policies and procedures to address suicide are offered to school districts in the hope that they will lead to the development of operational procedures which can be followed by school district personnel.

In developing policies and procedures, several important principles should be remembered.

- **Parent contact.** Parents should be contacted whenever their child is presenting a danger to him or herself or to others.
- **Screening.** School personnel should be available and accessible to students needing to communicate personal concerns. School personnel should be trained to screen for suicidal ideation. Substance abuse, psychiatric illness, chronic running away and physical or sexual abuse can place children at-risk for suicide.
- **Home-school-community communication system.** A contact person at the school should set up a home-school-community system to monitor the activities of students identified as potentially suicidal.
- **Referral.** Students who have serious problems or make suicidal threats or attempts should be referred to psychiatrists, psychologists or counselors who are trained and licensed to treat suicidal youth.

While it is not the responsibility of either the special education staff or the school officials to provide treatment, it is the responsibility of schools to protect children when they are at school. The procedures describe below may help to prevent suicides and to protect schools from liability if a suicide does occur.

Steps to Follow

Step 1: Community Involvement

Suicide is a social problem. Consequently, it requires cooperate social solutions. For schools to effectively intervene with suicidal students, a concerted effort must be organized among teachers and others in the caring professions, both inside and outside the school system.

The community group should develop suicide prevention policies and procedures. Involvement of a broad cross section of the community will increase commitment and create a network of professionals seeking a solution to the suicide problem.

Before writing policies and procedures, the school district should gather information about available community resources, including the names and addresses of contacts to which schools can refer students and families in times of crisis. The referral network might include mental health centers, private hospitals, psychiatrists or psychologists in private practice, churches, and local law enforcement agencies.

Having many agencies involved in the suicide-prevention program will expedite training of suicide-prevention staff and will guarantee the availability of a range of support services in the event of a suicide threat, attempt or completion.

Various agencies working together should be better able to identify and solve community problems that may increase the risk of youth suicide than any one agency working alone.

The school district should develop a network among the schools and other public agencies to exchange information about suicidal students who need support services. The challenge in establishing such a network will be to exchange significant information while protecting the student's right to confidentiality.

Step 2: Develop Written Policies

The school district should write suicide-prevention policy based on an analysis of community needs and careful study of the role of the schools in the community. The policy should be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure continuing responsiveness to community need.

The following is an example of a possible board policy:

The board has committed itself to providing the leadership within the community to act in concert with other organizations and agencies to develop a community-wide approach to dealing with the problems of youth stress, depression, and suicide. The board feels it is imperative that cooperative planning and action be taken among all agencies and persons involved with youth in identifying, preventing and intervening in stress, depression and suicide among our youth.

The board's concern is reflected in the district's stated goal —to increase community awareness of the needs of at-risk youth and to improve the district's ability to educate and assist those students." The board supports the cooperative community-wide development of specific administrative procedures and training strategies to assist youth in crisis and their families.

Step 3: Develop Written Procedures

Policy statements should be refined into specific procedural guidelines that prescribe specific action to be taken in the event of a suicide threat, attempt, or completion. The procedures outlined below are applicable to four kinds of situations that may arise:
1. Suspected suicidal ideation
2. Suicide threat
3. Suicide attempt
4. Suicide completion

The sequence of actions described in the four situations below should be adapted to the existing circumstances and/or procedures in individual school districts.

1. Suspected Suicidal Ideation
Staff must be trained to recognize a suicidal ideation, understand what their responsibilities are when an ideation occurs, and know what action to take.

2. Suicide Threat
In the event of a suicide threat, the following actions should be taken:

a. Have an appropriately trained staff member such as a school psychologist or counselor trained in suicide assessment evaluate the risk and provide immediate crisis intervention services to the student. Threats of suicide should never be taken lightly.
b. Remove the student from any area containing any dangerous substances and/or implements, and remove any dangerous substances or implements from the student.
c. Do not leave the student alone until either it is determined that the student is no longer in danger, or until that student has been referred to appropriate treatment.
d. Notify the parents.
e. Have the contact person at the school set up a home-school-community communication system and notify other school personnel about the need to monitor the student.

3. Suicide Attempt

In the event of a suicide attempt (defined as any behavior or gesture that indicates intent to take one's life) the following actions should be taken:

a. Treat it as a medical emergency. Call Emergency Medical Services, if necessary.
b. Have a staff member stay with the student at all times.
c. Remove all dangerous substances and/or implements from the student and from the area.
d. Notify the parents immediately.
e. Have an appropriately trained staff member assess the situation and provide crisis intervention services.
f. Involve psychological or consultation services through the community referral system.
g. Have the contact person set up a home-community communication system and notify other school personnel (school administrators, counselors, nurses, and teachers) about the need to monitor the student. If appropriate, the school could develop and implement an Individual Assistance Plan with the student, school, family, and other involved agencies.
h. Urge parents to seek immediate treatment for the student. The district should document any such encouragement and the parents' response. If the parents do not respond, the student should be referred to Child Protective Services.

4. Suicide Completion

If a suicide is completed, the following actions also appropriate to a suicide attempt should be taken:

a. Treat it as a medical emergency and call Emergency Medical Services.
b. Have a staff member stay with the student.
c. Notify the parents immediately.
d. Notify staff members.

In addition, the following actions should be taken:

a. A school crisis team meeting should be called. The crisis team should be organized prior to a crisis and should include school and/or district administrative, counseling and psychological services staff, teachers, and nurses. Professionals from outside the schools also may be included, such as psychiatrists or psychologists, community mental health professionals or emergency response mental health personnel. After a suicide completion, the crisis team should identify students who are at the highest risk for suicide, including students who were close friends of the victim, students who seem particularly

troubled by the suicide, students who have themselves made suicide attempts, or other high-risk students with poor coping skills.

b. The Superintendent's office should be notified about the suicide and the post-suicide plan should be implemented.

c. All building personnel should be notified about the suicide and the post-suicide plan should be implemented.

d. Factual information about the suicide should be communicated to school staff and to the students. Rumors should be dispelled. General announcements of the suicide are not recommended, unless accompanied by counseling and educational support in all classes.

e. Parents of any students expressing strong emotional reactions or suicidal ideation should be notified. Those parents should be urged to seek treatment for their children.

f. Members of the crisis team should make presentations to each class in which the student was enrolled and discuss the facts of the student's suicide and the futility of suicide. All students who want to discuss the subject further should be urged to see the school counselor or other specially trained staff. If any students are experiencing strong emotional reactions, their parents should be notified and the students should be referred for treatment.

g. All teachers should set aside time for students to discuss their reactions to the tragedy, and students who seem very upset should be referred to the counseling team.

h. Counseling services should be made available to those students who have been identified as at-risk for the length of time that the crisis team deems necessary. Referral for treatment to community agencies or hospitals should be made, if appropriate.

i. School in-service sessions and counseling time should be made available to all school personnel to help them deal with their own reactions to the suicide.

j. Neither the student nor the suicidal act should be glorified or memorialized in any way.

While the procedure should clearly state that the special education assessment process should not be used in lieu of immediate parental notification or as the initial resource in assessing risk when more immediate steps are obviously indicated, provisions should be made for the referral of a suicidal student for special education assessment.

The teaming process used for determining eligibility for the seriously emotionally handicapped area can be helpful in determining which staff and resources are available to intervene with a student, who, while not determined to be immediately at risk, may evidence behaviors that suggest a high-risk profile for suicide. The procedures also should suggest that during the assessment process, interventions should be implemented that diminish suicidal risk, for example, parental contact or involvement, use of school staff who offer a safe and supportive environment, and disciplinary approaches that do not increase the student's sense of failure. It is extremely important to secure the cooperation of family, friends, school personnel, neighbors, and others who will assist in providing support and supervision for the student. Parents must be warned that a suicidal student should not be left alone.

Another important suggestion is (and should be standard practice for any special education program) to secure written parental permission for the school to communicate directly with treatment providers. The treatment plan and the school intervention plan must work closely together, not at cross purposes.

GENERAL PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Ninety-five percent of youth suicides can be prevented. Only five percent of the adolescents who attempt suicide display psychotic symptoms such as disorientation, hallucinations or thought disturbances and are intent upon self-destruction.

Further, poor school adjustment– including poor grades, truancy and discipline problems at home or school– contributes to a student's level of risk. The school may want to consider implementing preventive measures with school personnel, students and parents as suggested below.

School Personnel

School staff often feels anxious when confronted with a teenager who says he or she is suicidal.
That anxiety often is the result of inadequate training in dealing with self-destructive behavior.
For a school to have an effective intervention program, however, staff members must become involved with troubled youth.

Certainly suicidal young people should be referred for professional help, but equally important is the support they receive in relationships with other caring people, be they teachers, parents or friends. Early intervention by any caring person can be a lifeline to be grasped while other steps are taken. Training school staff to recognize potentially self-destructive students carries little risk and could save lives.

Training and utilization of school personnel should include the following:
1. In-service training on stress in children and adolescents and methods for reducing stress in a school environment.

2. In-service training on recognizing the signs of substance abuse, sexual abuse, physical abuse, depression, and other handicapping disorders that could make a student suicidal. Early identification should be emphasized. Referrals can be made to the crisis team with follow-up memoranda of all referrals. Educators must become better observers of students' behaviors, more supportive, and less prone to labeling of deviant behavior when it occurs in their classrooms.

3. Delegating the leadership for implementing a youth suicide prevention program to a crisis intervention team selected from willing and qualified faculty.

The team may consist of administrators, guidance counselors, school psychologists, nurses, social workers, or qualified teachers. A supportive staff member such as a secretary may also be very effective on a crisis team.

   a. Selecting one member from the team (preferably by the team) to be the team's formal leader.
   b. Educating the team members about crisis intervention techniques, including the philosophy that crisis intervention is not psychotherapy, but is an easy way to restore students to their former emotional and behavioral states.
   c. Emphasizing the importance of follow-up of referrals. A large number of students who may be at-risk never receive help, although help is desperately needed and often desired. Schools should adopt policy concerning students who refuse help or are unable to receive needed help because of finances or lack of parents' cooperation.

4. Developing written policies and procedures for dealing with suicidal or depressed youths. Written policy or procedures on how to intervene with youths suspected of abusing drugs is imperative. The policy can include the following:

- When and how to refer to the crisis team
- When and how to inform parents
- When and how to inform administrators
- When and how to counsel the youth
- How to obtain an assessment of the potential and capability of causing death (lethality)
- When and how to refer the youth to a mental health center

INTRUDER / HOSTAGE

Disruptions/intruder/missing child/abduction – a group of emergencies where school personnel or an individual is placed in a potentially dangerous situation. These emergencies usually require immediate defensive action.

Intruder – An unauthorized person who enters school property:

- Notify Incident Commander
- Ask another staff person to accompany you before approaching guest/intruder
- Politely greet guest/intruder and identify yourself.
- Ask guest/intruder the purpose of his/her visit.
- Inform guest/intruder that all visitors must register at the main office.
- If intruder's purpose is not legitimate, ask him/her to leave. Accompany intruder to exit.

  If intruder refuses to leave:

- Warn intruder of consequences for staying on school property.
- Notify security or police and Incident Commander if intruder still refuses to leave. Give police full description of intruder. (Keep intruder unaware of call for help if possible)
- Walk away from intruder if he/she indicates a potential for violence. Be aware of intruder's actions at this time (where he/she is located in school, whether he/she is located in school, whether he/she is carrying a weapon or package, etc)
- Maintain visual contact with intruder from a safe distance.
- Incident Commander notifies Superintendent and may issue lock-down procedures (see Lock-Down Procedures section)

Hostage: If hostage taker is unaware of your presence, do not intervene.

- Call 911 immediately. Give dispatcher details of situation; ask for assistance from hostage negotiation team. *(Insert the actual sequence to dial 911 from your phone system)*
- Seal off area near hostage scene.
- Notify Incident Commander.
- Incident Commander notifies Superintendent.
- Give control of scene to police and hostage negotiation team.
- Keep detailed notes of event.

  If taken hostage:

- Follow instructions of hostage taker.
- Try not to panic. Calm students if they are present.
- Treat the hostage taker as normally as possible.
- Be respectful to hostage taker.
- Ask permission to speak and do not argue or make suggestions.

Hostage Situation

Disruptions/intruder/missing child/abduction – a group of emergencies where school personnel or an individual is placed in a potentially dangerous situation. These emergencies usually require immediate defensive action.

Staff Actions:
- Notify Principal
- Keep all students in their classrooms until further notice

Principal, Team:
- Initiate Lockdown
- Call 911, Superintendent, District Support Team
- Notify all students outside their classrooms (including those outside the building) to report to the nearest safe area
- Under no circumstances shall the students be evacuated from the building without approval and/or assistance
- If the hostage taker or armed person can be contained in one section of the building, students should be moved from exposed area or classrooms to a safer part of the building
- As soon as possible, and only if it can be accomplished safely, a staff member should be directed outside the building to warn approaching visitors of the danger

Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Bus Accident

Each school should maintain a bus folder for each bus serving the school. This folder should contain rosters, including an emergency telephone number for each student assigned to ride the bus. The teacher in charge of a special activity trip should prepare trip bus folder, one copy of the students manifest should be placed in the trip folder and a second copy should accompany the teacher on the trip.

Bus drivers should have designated procedures for handling emergency situations. The following protocol is intended to outline steps to be taken by school personnel should an accident occur.

In the event of a Bus Accident:

Staff at the Scene:
- Call 911, if warranted
- Call Principal
- School staff at the scene of a bus accident will help to implement basic first aid until emergency medical services and/or law enforcement arrives and takes charge of the emergency
- School staff at the scene of a school bus accident will move all uninjured students to a location that is a safe distance from the accident
- The names of all injured students and the location to which they may be taken for medical treatment will be provided to the school

Principal, Team:
- Notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Ascertain the names of any injured students and the nearest location of any medical treatment facility
- Parents/guardians of all students on the bus will be notified as quickly as accurate information is available
- Designated school staff representative will proceed to any medical treatment facility to which an injured student has been taken to assist parents and to provide support to students, as appropriate
- Complete appropriate documentation

Additional steps for out school/facility (if any):
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Poisoning

Poisoning is contact or ingestion of a substance that causes harm to a living organism.

In the event of the poisoning or suspected poisoning of a student or an employee:

Immediate Actions:
- Call 911
- Call the Poison Center Hotline 1-800-222-1222
- Administer first aid directed by poison information center
- Notify Principal
- Utilize building personnel with knowledge of poisonous materials, first aid training, etc. (Material Safety Data Sheets)
- School official to notify parents
- In the event of a staff member who has been poisoned, school official should notify spouse or next of kin
- Seek additional medical attention as indicated (this should precede notification of next of kin)

Preventive Measures:
- Keep poisonous materials in a locked and secure location
- Post the Poison Control Center emergency number in the front office, school clinic, etc.
- Post the names of building personnel who have special paramedic, first aid training, or other special lifesaving or life-sustaining training
- Provide staff with information on possible poisonous materials in the building
- Make sure that Material Safety Data Sheets are present

Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Natural Disasters – Additional Information

The following bullet points are suggestions to consider. In advance of these situations, convene building crisis team and discuss and prepare for additional response actions and resources.

1. **Earthquake** – although damaging earthquakes are rare in Kansas, schools should be familiar with basic response procedures
   - Provide verbal announcement over the intercom to take protective actions
   - If inside building drop, cover and hold – if possible under a sturdy object
   - If no cover available get inside doorway, crouch against wall & cover head
   - Leave doors open
   - Do not run through building
   - After initial shock, evacuate building and teachers take attendance
   - Convene Building Crisis Team, assess situation and report status to authorities
2. **Fire**
   - Sound alarms and evacuate building (teachers take classroom crisis kits)
   - Call 911
   - Staff take attendance at designated evacuation destination spot
   - Call District Office and maintenance staff
   - Convene building crisis team and assess situation
   - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press
3. **Lightning**
   - Take cover inside sturdy structure
   - If outside & no shelter is available, crouch into a ball position with feet on ground
   - Stay away from large and tall structures
   - Wait 30 minutes after last thunderclap before one goes outside again
4. **Pandemic**
   - Check with local, county and state health officials for latest information
   - Stay home if flu like symptoms are present
   - If at school – separate sick student and staff
   - Emphasize hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
   - Routinely clean areas that are touched frequently
   - If at high risk – seek early treatment
5. **Severe Weather and Floods**
   - Confirm information
   - Be aware of weather warnings for your area
   - Post weather observers as needed – have access to NOAA weather radio, TV or local radio
   - Call 911 as warranted – call District Office as needed
   - Convene crisis team and assess situation
6. **Tornado**
   - Be aware of weather information in your area
   - Post weather observers and access NOAA weather radio, TV or local radio
   - Sound alarms and take protective positions – take attendance
   - Convene Building Crisis Team and assess situation
   - Call 911 and District Office as needed

Weather Emergencies Terminology

Advisories – issued when weather is expected to disrupt normal routines but not expected to be life threatening. Advisory lead times are the same as watches.

Watches – indicates that conditions are right for the development of a weather hazard. Watches usually have a longer lead time of notification.

Warnings – indicates that a weather hazard is imminent. Warnings are usually base upon eyewitness accounts. Warnings usually have smaller lead times than for warnings

The following bullet points are suggestions to consider as you respond to the emergency situation. Remember each situation is unique. Please consult and use additional resources as appropriate. In advance of these situations, convene building crisis team and discuss and prepare for additional response actions and resources.

- **Anthrax threats** – Anthrax is an infectious disease of warm blooded animals caused by spore forming bacteria.
  - Be familiar with the indicators of suspicious packages and letters
  - Review steps in the Crisis Management Action Outline
  - Call 911 and report factual information
  - Shut down HVAC systems
  - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press
- **Chemical/Hazardous Material Release**
  - Notify building administration
  - Assess situation use MSDS and other building sources of information
  - If inside building evacuate to outside of building
  - If outside building activate Shelter in Place plans
  - Take attendance – Teachers take Classroom Crisis Kits
  - Call 911 and District Office as needed
  - Convene Building Crisis team to assess situation
  - Listen to district and local media information broadcasts
- **Emergency Early Dismissal of School** – On rare occasions it may become necessary to have an emergency early dismissal of school while school is in session. It is advisable in advance of this situation to discuss procedures needed for this unusual situation.
  - If conditions are present for early dismissal, call and discuss with District Office
  - Discuss notification of parents
  - Determine plans for student transportation, student drivers and walkers
  - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press
- **Explosion**
  - Evacuate building (make sure evacuation destination is safe) and call 911
  - Notify District Office
  - Take attendance – Teachers take classroom crisis kits
  - Convene Building Crisis Team and assess situation
  - Office staff take building crisis kit – account for visitors and itinerant staff
- **Gas leak**
  - Evacuate building (make sure evacuation destination is safe) and call 911
  - Call District office and District maintenance
  - Call gas company at _____
  - Convene Building Crisis Team and assess situation
  - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press
- **Utility disruption or outage (Electric, Water, Phones, Computer, Etc.)**
  - Assess situation – check facility to determine if damaged
  - Call utility provider
  - Call District office and maintenance office
  - Locate and check utility shut off switches or valves
  - Convene Building Crisis Team and assess situation

Earthquake

An earthquake is a sudden movement of the earth's crust caused by the release of geologic stress along a fault line. Because earthquakes can strike without warning, the immediate need is to protect lives by taking the best available cover. All other actions must wait until the tremor subsides. If persons are protected from falling objects, the rolling motion of the earth may be frightening but may not be dangerous.

If inside:
- Initiate Drop, Cover and Hold
- If no cover is available, get against inside doorway or crouch against inside wall and cover head; stay away from outside walls, windows or other expanses of glass, potential falling objects
- Leave doors open to minimize jamming if the building shifts
- Do not attempt to run through building or outside due to risk of falling objects
- If in a room with no desks or furniture, get against inside wall or inside doorway and crouch
- After initial shock, initiate evacuation and standard student accounting

If outside:
- Move quickly away from building and overhead electrical wires
- Lie flat, face down, and wait for shocks to subside
- Use ‒green card" to indicate when class is all accounted for
- Use ‒red card" to indicate if a child is missing or assistance is needed with your group
- Do not attempt to enter building until authorized to do so
- Do not light fires or touch fallen wires
- Be alert for instructions from principal

Assembly Areas:

- Earthquake safe areas will be away from the building and overhead power lines
- Keep everyone away from underground gas and sewer lines
- Call 911, District Support Team, Central Office
- In the event of aftershocks, students shall be encouraged to remain calm and stay sitting close to the ground
- Administer emergency first aid as needed
- Do not re-enter building until given ‒all clear" from person in charge

Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Fire

A fire is a rapid, persistent chemical change that releases heat and light and is accompanied by flame.

In the event of a fire:
- Sound alarm
- Call 911, Superintendent, District Support Team, Central Office
- Implement evacuation procedures to outside Assembly Area
- Implement plan for any students needing special assistance
- Follow standard student accounting procedures
- Some schools use a card notification system. The universal colors of green and red are used. Green denoted all students are present and all is well and red signifies a problem
- Do not re-enter building until being given the ―all clear‖ to do so
- Determine if arrangements need to be made for transportation to Alternate Building Location or if school is to be dismissed

Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Lightning Safety Tips

Lighting – an atmospheric discharge of electricity accompanied by thunder.

1. **PLAN** in advance your evacuation and safety measures. When you first see lightning or hear thunder, activate your emergency plan. Now is the time to go to a building or a vehicle. Lightning often precedes rain, so don't wait for the rain to begin before suspending activities.

2. **IF OUTDOORS**…Avoid water. Avoid the high ground. Avoid open spaces. Avoid all metal objects including electric wires, fences, machinery, motors, power tools, etc. Unsafe places include underneath canopies, small picnic or rain shelters, or near trees. Where possible, find shelter in a substantial building or in a fully enclosed metal vehicle such as a car, truck or van with the windows completely shut. If lightning is striking nearby when you are outside, you should:

   A. Crouch down. Put feet together. Place hands over ears to minimize hearing damage from thunder.
   B. Avoid proximity (minimum of 15ft) to other people.

3. **IF INDOORS**…Avoid water. Stay away from doors and windows. Do not use the telephone. Take off head sets. Turn off, unplug and stay away from appliances, computers, power tools and TV sets. Lightning may strike exterior electric and phone lines, inducing shocks to inside equipment.

4. **SUSPEND ACTIVITES** for 30 minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder.

5. **INJURED PERSONS** do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. Apply First Aid procedures to a lightning victim if you are qualified to do so. Call 911 or send for help immediately.

6. **KNOW YOUR EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Teach this safety slogan:

"If you can see it, flee it; if you can hear it, clear it."

Pandemic Influenza Planning

Specific Task	Action Plan	Status	Person(s) Responsible
Planning and Coordination			
Establish a district-level planning and coordination committee			
Establish a coordinated district plan that identifies roles, responsibilities, resources and accountabilities			
Identify and establish working relationships with community agencies			
Coordinate with local health agencies assisting with healthcare services for surge capacities, immunizations dispensing and other needs			
Implement and educate specific personnel on the ICS (Incident Command System)			
Incorporate into plans requirements of students with special needs			
Work with community agencies to assist in providing psychosocial and emotional support needs of the community			
Implement an exercise program for the district's pandemic plan and participate in the community's exercise plan			
Communications and Community Education			
Establish a comprehensive communication plan in preparation for a pandemic influenza that includes review, testing and updating of plans			
Develop an information dissemination plan for staff, students and parents			
Establish avenues to advise the school community where to find up-to-date and accurate pandemic information			
Provide educational information to school communities on personal preparation, protection activities and infection control procedures for the pandemic			
Create and disseminate the plan for continuity of instruction			
Create and develop a communication plan for special populations (in-house)			
Create and develop a plan to deal with misinformation, rumors and anxiety			

Specific Task	Action Plan	Status	Person(s) Responsible
Continuity of Core Services			
Develop alternatives to assure continuity of instruction in the event of school closure (Emphasize during opening of school)			
Develop a plan to do with co-curricular activities			
Establish a protocol of who has authority/responsibility to close schools			
Develop a plan to address staff absences due to pandemic			
Develop a plan to maintain business operations of the District			
Develop a plan to handle transportation issues for students			
Develop a food service plan to handle nutrition needs of identified students and potential community needs			
Establish a plan to address facility needs during a pandemic			

Specific Task	Action Plan	Status	Person(s) Responsible
Infection Control Procedures			
Early detection and surveillance			
Work with health agencies in developing infection prevention procedures			
Provide sufficient supplies for infection prevention			
Develop procured for students and staff who become ill at school			
Establish plans for triage and transporting ill students and staff			
Confidentiality and communications			

Specific Task	Action Plan	Status	Person(s) Responsible
Contingency and Recovery			
Establish "gearing back up" procedures for the District			

Recommended School Responses - Pandemic

Stay home when sick:

Those with flu-like illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. They should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs.

Separate ill students and staff:

Students and staff who appear to have flu-like illness should be sent to a room separate from others until they can be sent home. CDC recommends that they wear a surgical mask, if possible, and that those who care for ill students and staff wear protective gear such as a mask.

Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette:

The new recommendations emphasize the importance of the basic foundations of influenza prevention: stay home when sick, wash hands frequently with soap and water when possible, and cover noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or a shirt sleeve or elbow if no tissue is available).

Routine cleanings:

School staff should routinely clean areas that students and staff touch often with the cleaners they typically use. CDC does not believe any additional disinfection of environmental surfaces beyond the recommended routine cleaning is required.

Early treatment of high-risk students and staff:

People at high risk for influenza complications who become ill with influenza-like illness should speak with their health care provider as soon as possible. Early treatment with antiviral medications is very important for people at high risk because it can prevent hospitalizations and death. People at high risk include those who are pregnant, has asthma or diabetes, have compromised immune systems, or have neuromuscular diseases.

Consideration of selective school dismissal:

Although there are not many schools where all or most students are at high risk (for example, schools for medically fragile children or for pregnant students) a community might decide to dismiss such a school to better protect these high-risk students.

Flood Safety Tips

Flash flood waves move at incredible speeds and can roll boulders, tear out trees, destroy buildings and bridges, and scour out new channels. Potentially deadly walls of water can reach heights of 10 to 20 feet. There will sometimes be little or no warning that a flash flood is occurring. When a flash flood warning is issued for your area, or the moment you realize that a flash flood is imminent, act quickly. Your may have only seconds to save your life.

On average, more people are killed by flooding than by any other single severe weather hazard, including tornadoes, lightning, and hurricanes. Most of these deaths occur at night, when it is more difficult to recognize the dangers, and when people are trapped in vehicles.

What to listen for
- Flash Flood or Flood Watch – flash flooding or flooding is possible within the designated WATCH area – BE ALERT!
- Flash Flood or Flood Warning – flash flooding or flooding has been reported or is imminent. Take necessary precautions at once!
- Urban and Small Stream Flood Advisory – flooding of small streams, streets, and low-lying areas, such as railroad underpasses and urban storm drains is occurring or is about to occur.
- Flash Flood or Flood Statement – follow-up information regarding a flash flood/flood event.

What to do
- When a Flash Flood Warning is issued:
- Act quickly to save yourself. You may have only seconds!
- Get out of areas subject to flooding. This includes dips, low spots, canyons, and washes.
- Avoid already flooded and high velocity flow areas. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams.
- If driving, be aware that the road bed may not be intact under flood waters. Turn around and go another way. NEVER drive through flooded roadways.
- If the vehicle stalls, leave it immediately and seek higher ground. Rapidly rising water may engulf the vehicle and its occupants and sweep them away. Remember, it is better to be wet than dead.
- Be especially cautions at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.
- Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams and washes, particularly during threatening conditions.

When a Flood Warning is issued
- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Move to a safe area before access is cut off by flood water.
- Continue to monitor NOAA Weather Radio, television, or emergency broadcasts for information.
- Be alert for rising waters and water over roads.

Remember:
DO NOT drive onto a flooded roadway. DO NOT drive through flowing water.

If you approach a roadway that is flooded, TURN AROUND – DON'T DROWN.

Drive with extreme caution if roads are even just wet or it is raining. You can lose control of your vehicle if hydroplaning occurs, which is when a layer of water build up between your tires and the road, causing there to be no direct contact between your vehicle and the road.

What to Do During a Tornado

If you are under a tornado WARNING, seek shelter immediately!

If you are in:	Then:
A structure (e.g. residence, small building, school, nursing home, hospital, factory, shopping center, high-rise building)	Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.
A vehicle, trailer, or mobile home	Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.
The outside with no shelter	Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested area in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter. Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries.

Tornado Safety

Roger Edwards – Storm Prediction Center, Norman, Oklahoma

There is no such thing as guaranteed safety inside a tornado. Freak accidents happen; and the most violent tornadoes can level and blow away almost any house and its occupants. Extremely violent F5 tornados are very rare, though. Most tornadoes are actually much weaker and can be survived using these safety ideas.

Prevention and practice before the storm: At home, have a family tornado plan in place, based on the kid of dwelling you live in and the safety tips below. Know where you can take shelter in a matter of seconds, and practice a family tornado drill at least once a year. Have a pre-determined place to meet after a disaster. Flying debris is the greatest danger in tornadoes; so store protective coverings (e.g., mattress, sleeping bags, thick blankets, etc) in or next to your shelter space, ready to use on a few seconds' notice. When a tornado watch is issued, think about the drill and check to make sure all your safety supplies are handy. Turn on local TV, radio or NOAA Weather Radio and stay alert for warnings. Forget about the old notion of opening windows to equalize pressure; the tornado will blast open the windows for you! If you shop frequently at certain stores, learn where there are bathrooms, storage rooms or other interior shelter areas away from windows, and the shortest ways to get there. All administrators of schools, shopping center, nursing homes, hospitals, sports arenas, stadiums, mobile home communities and offices should have a tornado safety plan in place, with easy-to-read signs posted to direct everyone to a safe, close by shelter area. Schools and office building managers should regularly run well-coordinated drills. If you are planning to build a house, especially east of the Rockies, consider an underground tornado shelter or an interior ―safe room".

Know the signs of a tornado: Weather forecasting science is not perfect and some tornadoes do occur without a tornado warning. There is no substitute for staying alert to the sky. Besides an obviously visible tornado, here are some things to look and listen for:
- Strong, persistent rotation in the cloud base.
- Whirling dust or debris on the ground under a cloud base – tornadoes sometimes have no funnel!
- Hail or heavy rain followed by either dead calm or a fast, intense wind shift. Many tornadoes are wrapped in heavy precipitation and can't be seen.
- Day or night – Lou, continuous roar or rumble, which doesn't fade in a few seconds like thunder.
- Night – Small, bright, blue-green to white flashes at ground level near a thunderstorm (as opposed to silvery lightning up in the clouds). These mean power lines are being snapped by very strong wind, maybe a tornado.
- Night – Persistent lowering from the cloud base, illuminated or silhouetted by lightning – especially if it is on the ground or there is a blue-green-white power flash underneath.

What to Do

In a house with a basement: Avoid windows. Get in the basement and under some kind of sturdy protection (heavy table or work bench), or cover yourself with a mattress or sleeping bag. Know where very heavy objects rest on the floor above (pianos, refrigerators, waterbeds, etc.) and don not go under them. They may fall down through a weakened floor and crush you.

In a house with no basement, a dorm, or an apartment: Avoid windows. Go to the lowest floor, small center room (like a bathroom or closet), under a stairwell, or in an interior hallway with no windows. Crouch as low as possible to the floor, facing down; and cover your head with your hands. A bath tub may offer a shell of partial protection. Even in an interior room, you should cover yourself with some sort of thick padding (mattress, blankets, etc.), to protect against falling debris in case the roof and ceiling fail.

In an office building, hospital, cursing home or skyscraper: Go directly to an enclosed, windowless area in the center of the building – away from glass and on the lowest floor possible. Then, crouch down and cover your head. Interior stairwells are usually good places to take shelter, and if not crowded, allow you to get to a lower level quickly. Stay off the elevators; you could be trapped in them if the power is lost.

In a mobile home: Get out! Even if your home is tied down, you are probably safer outside, even if the only alternative is to seek shelter out in the open. Most tornadoes can destroy even tied-down mobile homes; and it is best not to play the low odds that your will make it. If your community has a tornado shelter, go there fast. If there is a sturdy permanent building within easy running distance, seek shelter there. Otherwise, lie flat on low ground away from your home, protecting your head. If possible, use open ground away from trees and cars, which can be blown onto you.

At school: Follow the drill! Go to the interior hall or room in an orderly way as you are told. Crouch low, head down, and protect the back of your head with your arms. Stay away from windows and large open rooms like gyms and auditoriums.

In a car or truck: Vehicles are extremely dangerous in a tornado. If the tornado is visible, far away, and the traffic is light, you may be able to drive out of its path by moving at right angles to the tornado. Otherwise, park the car as quickly and safely as possible – out of the traffic lanes. [It is safer to get the car out of mud later if necessary than to cause a crash.] Get out and seek shelter in a sturdy building. If in the open country, run to low ground away from any cars (which may roll over on you). Lie flat and face-down, protecting the back of your head with your arms. Avoid seeking shelter under bridges, which can create deadly traffic hazards while offering little protection against flying debris.

In the open outdoors: If possible, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If not, lie flat and face-down on low ground, protecting the back of your head with your arms. Get as far away from trees and cars as you can; they may be blown onto you in a tornado.

In a shopping mall or large store: Do not panic. Watch for others. Move as quickly as possible to an interior bathroom, storage room or other small enclosed area, away from windows.

In a church or theater: Do not panic. If possible, move quickly but orderly to an interior bathroom or hallway, away from window. Crouch face-down and protect your head with your arms. If there is no time to do that, get under the seats or pews, protecting your head with your arms or hands.

New Wind Chill Chart

Wind (mph)

Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27	26	26	25	25
35	31	27	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	19	18	17
30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13	12	12	11	10
25	19	15	13	11	9	8	7	6	5	4	4	3
20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-3	-4
15	7	3	0	-2	-4	-5	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11	-11
10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15	-16	-17	-18	-19
5	-5	-10	-13	-15	-17	-19	-21	-22	-23	-24	-25	-26
0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29	-30	-31	-32	-33
-5	-16	-22	-26	-29	-31	-33	-34	-36	-37	-38	-39	-40
-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43	-44	-45	-46	-48
-15	-28	-35	-39	-42	-44	-46	-48	-50	-51	-52	-54	-55
-20	-34	-41	-45	-48	-51	-53	-55	-57	-58	-60	-61	-62
-25	-40	-47	-51	-55	-58	-60	-62	-64	-65	-67	-68	-69
-30	-46	-53	-58	-61	-64	-67	-69	-71	-72	-74	-75	-76
-35	-52	-59	-64	-68	-71	-73	-76	-78	-79	-81	-82	-84
-40	-57	-66	-71	-74	-78	-80	-82	-84	-86	-88	-89	-91
-45	-63	-72	-77	-81	-84	-87	-89	-91	-93	-95	-97	-98

Temperature (°F)

Frostbite occurs in 15 minutes or less

Wind Chill (°F) = $35.74 + 0.6215T - 35.75(V^{0.16}) + 0.4275T(V^{0.16})$

Where, T = Air Temperature (°F)
V = Wind Speed (mph)

NWS Windchill Chart

Temperature (°F)

Wind (mph)	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45
Calm																		
5	36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52	-57	-63
10	34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59	-66	-72
15	32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64	-71	-77
20	30	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48	-55	-61	-68	-74	-81
25	29	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	-17	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51	-58	-64	-71	-78	-84
30	28	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67	-73	-80	-87
35	28	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-82	-89
40	27	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78	-84	-91
45	26	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79	-86	-93
50	26	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81	-88	-95
55	25	18	11	4	-3	-11	-18	-25	-32	-39	-46	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82	-89	-97
60	25	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84	-91	-98

Frostbite Times   ☐ 30 minutes   ☐ 10 minutes   ☐ 5 minutes
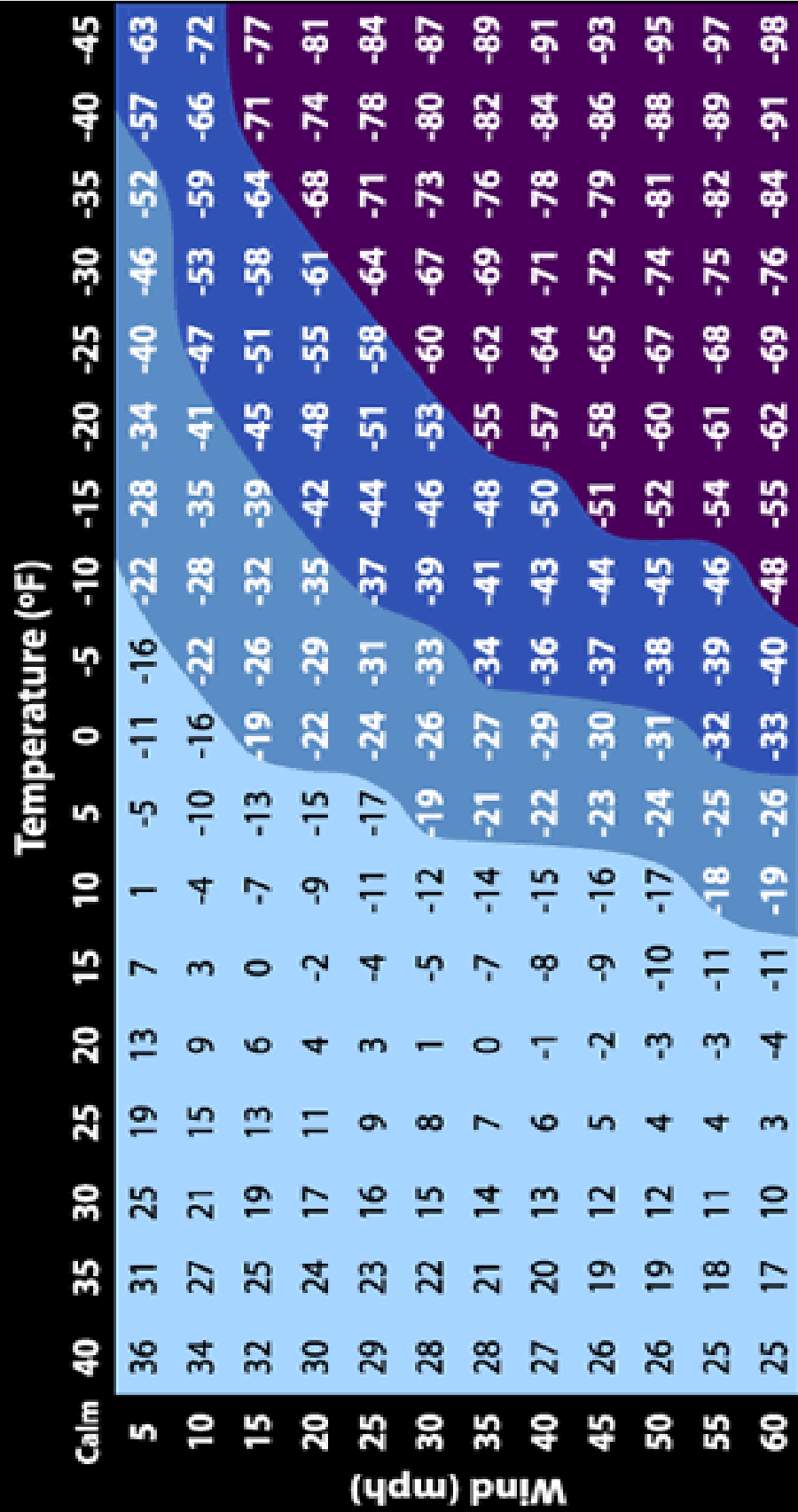
$$\text{Wind Chill (°F)} = 35.74 + 0.6215T - 35.75(V^{0.16}) + 0.4275T(V^{0.16})$$

Where, T= Air Temperature (°F) V= Wind Speed (mph)

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Physical Plant/Technological Hazards – Additional Information

The following bullet points are suggestions to consider as you respond to the emergency situation. Remember each situation is unique. Please consult and use additional resources as appropriate. In advance of these situations, convene building crisis team and discuss and prepare for additional response actions and resources.

- **Anthrax threats** – Anthrax is an infectious disease of warm blooded animals caused by spore forming bacteria.
  - Be familiar with the indicators of suspicious packages and letters
  - Review steps in the Crisis Management Action Outline
  - Call 911 and report factual information
  - Shut down HVAC systems
  - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press
- **Chemical/Hazardous Material Release**
  - Notify building administration
  - Assess situation use MSDS and other building sources of information
  - If inside building evacuate to outside of building
  - If outside building activate Shelter in Place plans
  - Take attendance – Teachers take Classroom Crisis Kits
  - Call 911 and District Office as needed
  - Convene Building Crisis team to assess situation
  - Listen to district and local media information broadcasts
- **Emergency Early Dismissal of School** – On rare occasions it may become necessary to have an emergency early dismissal of school while school is in session. It is advisable in advance of this situation to discuss procedures needed for this unusual situation.
  - If conditions are present for early dismissal, call and discuss with District Office
  - Discuss notification of parents
  - Determine plans for student transportation, student drivers and walkers
  - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press
- **Explosion**
  - Evacuate building (make sure evacuation destination is safe) and call 911
  - Notify District Office
  - Take attendance – Teachers take classroom crisis kits
  - Convene Building Crisis Team and assess situation
  - Office staff take building crisis kit – account for visitors and itinerant staff
- **Gas leak**
  - Evacuate building (make sure evacuation destination is safe) and call 911
  - Call District office and District maintenance
  - Call gas company at _____
  - Convene Building Crisis Team and assess situation
  - Prepare communication statements (as needed) for students, staff, parents and press
- **Utility disruption or outage (Electric, Water, Phones, Computer, Etc.)**
  - Assess situation – check facility to determine if damaged
  - Call utility provider
  - Call District office and maintenance office
  - Locate and check utility shut off switches or valves
  - Convene Building Crisis Team and assess situation

How to Handle Anthrax and Other Biological Agent Threats

Many facilities in communities around the country have received anthrax threat letters. Most were empty envelopes; some have contained powdery substances. The purpose of these guidelines is to recommend procedures for handling such incidents.

DO NOT PANIC

1. Anthrax organisms can cause infection in the skin, gastrointestinal system, or the lungs. To do so, the organism must be rubbed into abraded skin, swallowed, or inhaled as a fine, aerosolized mist. Disease can be prevented after exposure to the anthrax spores by early treatment with the appropriate antibiotics. Anthrax is not spread from one person to another person.
2. For Anthrax to be effective as a covert agent, it must be aerosolized into very small particles. This is difficult to do and requires a great deal of technical skill and special equipment. If these small particles are inhaled, life-threatening lung infection can occur, but prompt recognition and treatment are effective.

SUSPICIOUS UNOPENED LETTER OR PACKAGE MARKED WITH THREATENING MESSAGE SUCH AS ―ANTHRAX":
1. Do not shake or empty contents of any suspicious envelopes or packages.
2. Place the envelope or package in a plastic bar or some other type of container to prevent leakage of contents.
3. If you do not have any container, then cover the envelope or package with anything (e.g. clothing, paper, trash can, etc.) and do not remove this cover.
4. Then leave the room and close the door, or section off the area to prevent others from entering (i.e. keep others away).
5. Wash your hands with soap and water to prevent spreading any powder to your face.
6. What to do next:
   a. If you are at home, then report the incident to local police.
   b. If you are at work, then report the incident to local police, and notify your building security official or an available supervisor.
7. List all people who were in the room or area when this suspicious letter or package was recognized. Give this list to both the public health authorities and law enforcement officials for follow-up investigations and advise.

ENVELOPES WITH POWDER AND POWDER SPILLS OUT ONTO SURFACE:
1. DO NOT try to clean up the powder. Cover the spilled contents immediately with anything (e.g. clothing, paper, trash can, etc.) and do not remove this cover!
2. Then leave the room and close the door, or section off the area to prevent others from entering (i.e. keep others away).
3. Wash your hands with soap and water to prevent spreading any powder to your face.
4. What to do next:
   a. If you are at home, then report the incident to local police.
   b. If you are at work, then report the incident to local police, and notify your building security official or an available supervisor.

5. Remove heavily contaminated clothing as soon as possible and place in a plastic bag or some other container that can be sealed. This clothing bag should be given to the emergency responder for proper handling.
6. Shower with soap and water as soon as possible. Do not use Bleach or other disinfectants on your skin.
7. If possible, list all people who were in the room or area when this suspicious letter or package was recognized. Give this list to both the public health authorities and law enforcement officials for follow-up investigations.

QUESTION OF ROOM CONTAMINATION BY AEROSOLIZATION:

For example: small devise triggered, warning that air-handling system is contaminated, or warning that a biological agent released in a public space.
1. Turn off local fans or ventilation units in the area.
2. Leave area immediately.
3. Close the door, or section off the area to prevent others from entering (i.e. keep others away).
4. What to do next:
    a. If you are at home, then dial ―911" to report the incident to local police and the local FBI field office.
    b. If you are at work, then dial ―911" to report the incident to local police and the local FBI field office, and notify your security official or an available supervisor.
5. Shut down air handling system in the building, if possible.
6. If possible, list all people who were in the room or area when this suspicious letter or package was recognized. Give this list to both the public health authorities and law enforcement officials for follow-up investigations.

HOW TO IDENTIFY SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES AND LETTERS:

Some characteristics of suspicious packages and letters include the following:

- Excessive postage
- Incorrect titles
- Misspellings of common words
- No return address
- Lopsided or uneven envelopes
- Excessive security material such as masking tape, string, etc.
- Ticking sound
- Shows a city or state in the postmark that does not match the return address
- Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
- Titles, but no names
- Oily stains, discolorations or odors

- Excessive weight
- Protruding wires or aluminum foil
- Visual distraction
- Marked with restrictive endorsements, such as ―personal" or ―confidential"

Chemical / Hazardous Material Spill

Chemical accidents may originate inside or outside building. Examples include: toxic leaks or spills caused by tank, truck, or railroad accident; water treatment/waste treatment plants; industry or laboratory spills, etc.

Accidents originating outside the building:
Staff Actions:
- Notify Principal
- Move students away from immediate vicinity of danger (if outside, reverse evacuation)
- Observe wind direction by observing flags or leaves and move students appropriately

Principal, Team:
- Initiate Shelter in Place, shut off HVAC units
- Call 911, notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Do not leave the building unless instructed to do so; if you must evacuate building or grounds, take care to avoid fumes

Accidents originating inside the building:
Staff Actions:
- Notify Principal
- Move students away from immediate vicinity of danger

Principal, Team:
- Check the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) to determine urgency of situation
- Call 911 if warranted, notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Initiate evacuation plan; avoid the area where the chemical accident occurred and any fumes which are present
- Follow standard student assembly, accounting and reporting procedures; modify assembly area if needed to be up wind, uphill, and upstream from the location of the spill
- Wait for instructions from the emergency responders
- Do not take unsafe actions such as returning to the building before it has been declared safe.
- Refrain from lighting matches, candles, or other fires which could cause an explosion or ignite volatile fumes.

Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Gas Leak

All school personnel, including cafeteria managers and custodians, shall immediately report any suspected gas leak to the principal.

Staff Actions:
- Notify Principal
- Move students away from immediate vicinity of danger

Principal, Team:
- If the gas leak is internal, implement evacuation procedures
- Call 911, District Support Team, Central Office
- Notify gas company
- Determine whether to move to Alternate Building Location
- If extended stay outdoors in inclement weather, contact transportation to provide bus to transport students to partner school or shelter students on buses
- Do not re-enter building until being given the "all clear" to do so

Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Emergency Phone Numbers for Crisis Management

The following is a suggested list of emergency numbers that may be needed in an emergency situation. Please add additional numbers as needed.

1. District Office
2. Maintenance Office
3. School Nurse
4. School Resource Officer
5. Electric Utility
6. Gas Utility
7. Water/Sewer Utility
8. Phone Utility
9. Police/Sheriff Department
10. Fire Department
11. Emergency Medical Services
12. Bus Transportation Provider
13. Local/Area Hospital(s)
14. County Health Office
15. Local/County Emergency Management
16. Kansas Highway Patrol
17. Poison Control Center
18. National Response Center/Terrorist Hotline   1-800-424-8802
19. Emergency/Teletype for the Deaf
20. Disaster Alert Message within District
21. Others

Building Calling Tree

Please establish a building calling tree for your facility. Periodically, review all numbers for accuracy and update as needed. List the date these numbers are correctly listed.

Staff Skills Survey & Inventory

Name & School_____ / _____
Room_____

                            Name   School

During any disaster situation, it is important to be able to draw from all available resources. The special skills, training and capabilities of the staff will play a vital role in coping with the effects of any disaster incident, and they will be of paramount importance during and after a major or catastrophic disaster. The purpose of this survey/inventory is to pinpoint those staff members with equipment and the special skills that might be needed. Please indicate the areas that apply to you and return this survey to your administrator.

PLEASE CHECK ANY OF THE FOLLOWING IN WHICH YOU HAVE EXPERTISE & TRAINING.
CIRCLE YES OR NO WHERE APPROPRIATE.

_____First Aid (current card yes/no) _____CPR (current yes/no)
_____Triage_____Firefighting___Construction (electrical/plumbing/carpentry)
_____Running/Jogging_____Emergency Planning _____Emergency Management
_____Search & Rescue_____Law Enforcement___Bi/Multi-lingual (what languages)

     _____Mechanical Ability   _____Structural Engineering
     _____Bus/Truck Driver
     _____Shelter Management   _____Survival Training & Techniques
     _____Food Preparation
     _____Ham Radio Operator   _____CB Radio
     _____Journalism
     _____Camping   _____Waste Disposal
     _____Recreational Leader

DO YOU KEEP A PERSONAL EMERGENCY KIT? _____ In your car? _____
In your room? _____
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 A DISASTER STRIKE WHILE YOU WERE AT
SCHOOL?

Site Status Report

To: _____ From: _____ Location: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Person in charge at site: _____

Message via: 2-Way Radio _____   Telephone _____   Messenger _____

EMPLOYEE/STUDENT STATUS

	Absent	Injured	#Sent to Hosp/Med	Dead	Missing	Unaccounted for (away from site)	# Released to Parents	3 Being Supervised
Students								
Site Staff								
Others								

STRUCTURAL DAMAGE Check damage/problem and indicate location(s).

Check	Damage/Problem	Location(s)
	Gas Leak	
	Water Leak	
	Fire	
	Electrical	
	Communications	
	Heating/Cooling	
	Other (list):	

Message: (Include kind of immediate assistance required; can you hold out without assistance/how long?; overall condition of campus, neighborhood & street conditions; outside agencies on campus & actions; names of injured, dead, missing, and accounted for ASAP.)

Emergency Time/Situation/Response Report

Time	Situation	Response	Initial

Building Crisis Team Reunification Responsibilities

Each Building teams will construct a reunification plan that addresses the following critical components (Check the box when completed):

☐   A. Designate an area or room where location of checkout procedures will occur. The following guidelines should be considered when choosing checkout room or area:
- Capable of hard line phone access (multiple lines would be ideal)
- Capable of computer access (hard wire or wireless)
- Easy access and egress to the outside of the building
- Use of radios without interference
- Large enough to receive and process many people simultaneously
- Multiple electrical outlets
- Access to backup or emergency lighting sources

☐   B. Prepare a process where parents or authorized people can enter the building, proceed to check out area, sign out the student and exit the building. (Map out and show process on Building's Footprint Plan)

☐   C. In advance prepare a student sign out sheet

☐   D. Assign responsibilities and construct job descriptions (or instructions) to staff members in order to fulfill the following check out procedures:
- Sign out administration

     _____

- Sign out coordination with each classroom

     _____

- Transportation coordination
  i. parent parking _____
  ii. bus transportation _____
  iii. student parking _____
  iv. staff parking _____
- Special issues and information coordination
- Internal building communications
- Logistics as needed (situational)
- Building Crisis Team identification and clothing
- Site security

When your building's plan has been completed, send a copy to the District Office.

Student Release Log

School _____

Date _____

Time In	Student's Name	Disposition	Time Out	Name of Person Released to	Signature

Shelter in Place Checklist

1.   What is meant by sheltering in place (SIP)? Shelter in place is the purposeful act of staying inside of a building in a predetermined designated area. In some instances, sheltering in place is the best defense against an accidental release of toxic chemicals or a dangerous situation happening on the outside of the building.
2.   How will you be notified when to shelter in place?
     a.   Directly from fire, police or emergency services
     b.   From live broadcast on TV or radio
     c.   From your School District Officials
3.   What are the major steps of sheltering in place?
     a.   Moving students and staff into predetermined designated locations inside of the facility (remember to take the SIP kit to designated locations)
     b.   Notifying the Education Center of SIP activity
     c.   Closing down all windows, doors and HVAC Systems
     d.   Sealing the room from outside air infiltration
     e.   Turning on radio/TV to Emergency Alert Stations (EAS) for further information or instructions
4.   Key reminders during SIP plan activation
     a.   Monitor the situation with all communication devices available to you
     b.   Remain calm and in charge of your students and the situation
     c.   Engage students and staff in pre-planned activities
     d.   Monitor students emotional and physical conditions for signs of anxiety and stress
     e.   Stay in the SIP room until the all clear is given by authorized officials
5.   Post SIP procedures
     a.   Call Education Center with updated information
     b.   Prepare communications for parents
     c.   Plan for debriefing time with staff
     d.   Update/complete log of the incident
     e.   Restock SIP kit as needed
     f.   Prepare a statement for the press in concert with the community relations
     g.   Review uns3ealed area for maintenance damage
6.   General reminders and suggestions concerning SIP
     a.   Prior to a SIP even, educate and inform parents as to the intended activities and expectations during a SIP
     b.   Instruct staff to take along grade book for attendance
     c.   Bring critical student medications into the SIP shelter
     d.   Bring the first aid kit into the SIP shelter
     e.   Bring emergency 2-way radio, cell phone and hard phone into the SIP shelter
     f.   Prior to a SIP event, work out details for the restroom needs
     g.   Bring the electronic megaphone in the SIP shelter
     h.   Bring the emergency phone numbers into the SIP shelter
     i.   Post on exterior doors, explanation of SIP process and expectations for people who will try to enter the facility
     j.   Prior to a SIP event, determine if someone will be posted in the building's office and what their responsibilities will be during the SIP event

        k.   Generally, SIP events last less than 3 hours

7.   Items for the Shelter in Place Kits

(Assume materials for 150 people for 2-3 hours of time)

Radio; flashlights; extra batteries; towels; items to seal doors, windows and vents; water and cups; snacks, list of activities for students and staff; paper and pens; roster of all people in room (teacher's grade book); pre-arranged restroom needs; 2-way radio; phone – cell or hard-line; whistle or bull horn; first aid kit; list of phone numbers; building crisis plan.

Shelter In Place

Name: _____ Title:_____

Location: _____ Extension/Intercom Number: _____

Name: _____Title: _____

Location: _____ Extension/Intercom Number: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Location: _____ Extension/Intercom Number: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Location: _____ Extension/Intercom Number: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Location: _____ Extension/Intercom Number: _____

Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergency Medical Services _____

Fire Department or Rescue Squad_____

Police Department_____

Hospital Emergency Room_____

Nearest Poison Center_____

Sheriff's Office_____

School Administrator _____

Other: _____

_____

Emergency First Aid Procedures for Severe, Life Threatening Injuries/Illnesses

General Procedures

1. Do not move the student until the full extent of injury or illness is determined.
2. Evaluate the problem and extent of injury or illness.
3. Notify appropriate emergency personnel in the community (ambulance, fire department)
4. Notify the school administration, nurse and parent.
5. Administer emergency first aid. Find the injury or illness within this notebook.

Emergency First Aid Steps
1. Tap or very gently shake and call the student's name to determine level of responsiveness.
2. The student needs to have and maintain an open airway. If there is any chance of neck injury (e.g. fall, twist, head injury), this is best performed by gently pulling forward the angle of the jaw (modified jaw thrust maneuver). If neck injury is not a concern, the unconscious student's head should be tilted back and the chin rose. As long as a student is conscious and can make some sound (meaning that some air motion can occur), allow him/her to adopt whatever position seems most comfortable.
3. If the student is not breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
4. If no pulse is felt, begin giving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
5. Stop bleeding.
6. Prevent or treat shock.
7. Prevent further injury.
8. Call for an ambulance.
9. Notify the school administration, nurse and school emergency first aid people.
10. Notify parent.
11. Stay with an ill or injured student until transferred to a parent.
12. Complete an accident or illness report and document the incident on the student's cumulative school health record.

Do's and Don'ts in Emergency First Aid Care

Do

1. Stay cool and calm; most cases are not life-threatening.
2. Provide care that corresponds with established procedures of your school.
3. Evaluate the injury or illness with special attention to assessment of:
   a. (open) Airway – does the student have noisy breathing (this may indicate a partial blockage)?
   b. Breathing – is the student breathing?
   c. Circulation – is there a pulse, is it fast or slow, and are the fingers and toes cold?
4. If indicated, ask that the school's emergency first aid persons be called.
5. After assessment and initiation of emergency care are completed, check with student, employees and witnesses as to what happened and the circumstances. Carefully document the information on the student's health record.
6. Reassure the student needing first aid.

Don't

1. Do not move an ill or injured person until evaluated.
2. Do not give anything by mouth to an unconscious person.
3. Do not attempt to reduce dislocations.
4. Do not diagnose or try to give medical advice.
5. Do not send a student home before consulting the parent.
6. Protect student privacy and confidentiality. Minimize the gathering of crowds and curious onlookers, and refrain from discussing the incident afterwards.

Abdominal Pain, Menstrual Cramps

Mild Abdominal Pain
1. Allow student to lie down.
2. Take temperature.
3. Do not give anything by mouth.
4. If pain persists more than one hour, notify parent and send student home. Advise medical attention.

Severe Abdominal Pain
1. Do not give anything by mouth.
2. Allow student to lie down.
3. Take temperature
4. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate medical attention, especially if pain is accompanied by vomiting, fever, or bloody stools, or if student received a blow to the abdomen.
5. If student has rapid heart rate and is cool and sweaty, call for an ambulance.

Vomiting
1. Allow student to lie down on side if still nauseated.
2. Take temperature.
3. Do not allow anything by mouth until nausea and vomiting subside and then only clear liquids (e.g. ice chips, tea, and clear soda).
4. Ask about intake of food and liquids, type and time.
5. Determine activity level prior to vomiting.

Menstrual Cramps
1. Mild cramps: encourage regular activities including exercise. Both discomfort and irregularities of flow tend to occur less often in females involved in a regular physical education program.
2. Severe cramps: allow a short period of rest. If prolonged more than one hour, notify parent and send student home.
3. Do not administer any medication.
4. If disabling cramps occur repeatedly, urge medical attention.

Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reactions

Type I Reaction: Anaphylactic Shock

     Type I develops within 2 to 20 minutes following exposure to the allergen characterized by a rapidly progressing rash, itching, "funny feeling", swelling of face, lips and/or airway. This is life threatening. Student may have harsh sounding respiration, hoarseness, or complete obstruction of the airway.
1. Maintain open airway.
2. Administer oxygen by facemask if student has respiratory difficulty.
3. Give CPR if indicated and administer oxygen if available.
4. Monitor pulse, blood pressure, respiratory rate, and temperature if time permits.
5. Follow directions on bee sting kit for administration of Epi-pen.
6. Seek immediate emergency medical care.
7. If bee sting, gently scrape stinger off with tongue blade (see INSECT BITES)
8. Apply cold compress to sting area.
9. Notify school administration and parent. Advise immediate medical attention.

Type II: Accelerated Reaction

     Type II generally appears 20 minutes to 48 hours following exposure to allergens. Manifested as red rash; urticaria (hives); runny nose; red, "watery", itching eyes; and occasionally swelling of the air passages. Vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and respirations) are usually normal. Rarely life threatening.
1. Maintain open airway.
2. Administer oxygen if student is pale, dusty, or blue in color (rarely needed).
3. Obtain history, physical exam, vital signs, and identify allergen if possible.
4. Notify school administration and parent. Advise medical attention.

Type III: Delayed Reactions

Type III develops 3 or more days following exposure. Manifested usually by skin rash and itching. Normal vital signs. Not life threatening.

1. Maintain open airway.
2. Administer oxygen if student is pale, dusty, or blue in color (rarely needed).
3. Obtain history, physical exam, vital signs, and identify allergen if possible.
4. Notify school administration and parent. Advise medical attention.

Asthma

1. Stop any activity student is performing. Rest and calming can avert a major asthma attack.
2. Let student assume a comfortable position with head and chest elevated.
3. Allow student to use inhaler as directed.
4. If student is breathing more that 45 breaths/minute, has abnormal color (pale, dusky or blue), seems less alert, or is unable to speak at least two words between breaths, start oxygen via facemask and have student be seen by a physician as soon as possible.
5. Let student take sips of tepid water if tolerated. Do not force.
6. Have an approved person give medication, if on hand, as prescribed (see local school policy).
7. Follow instructions in health record given by the family physician.
8. Keep student in the health office until there is relief of symptoms or other action is taken.
9. If breathing does not improve in 10 minutes after using inhaler or administration of other medications, call parents and advise physician's care. Depending upon severity or with instruction in health record, parent may need to be contacted sooner. Onset of cyanosis (turning blue) or exhaustion with decrease in rate of labored expiratory wheezing should be treated as a medical emergency with involvement of emergency medical services.
10. Notify school administration and parent of asthma attack and any medication given even if student has returned to class.

Bites

Animal and Human
1. Vigorously scrub area of bite with antibacterial soap and water.
2. Hold under tepid running water for 2 or 3 minutes if not bleeding profusely.
3. Apply clean pressure dressing if bleeding. Apply direct pressure for bleeding if necessary (see BLEEDING).
4. Contact school administration and parent.
5. If an animal bite, report the bite to proper authorities (usually the police department and health department) so that the animal can be impounded and observed for possible rabies.
6. Refer student to physician for follow-up of tetanus and rabies protection.

Snake

Where there is danger of snake bites, a snake bite kit should be part of the first aid supplies. (Also see directions in snake bite kit or Red Cross First Aid book). The snake type should be identified if possible. Be able to provide a detailed description of the snake, unless there is a responsible, qualified person available for identification, look for fang marks (two or sometimes only one surrounded by white areas in the first few minutes after the bite, and with a rapid spread of redness and bleeding into the tissues) or a small scratch on the student.

Poisonous
1. Have student lie down and avoid unnecessary motion – watch closely for fainting.
2. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate emergency medical care.
3. Immobilize limb in lower position; keep bitten area lower than level of student's heart.
4. Wash bite gently with antibacterial soap and water, blot dry, and apply sterile gauze.
5. If more than one-half hour from a physician, use ¾" to ½" wide constricting band just enough to depress skin. Do not use a tight tourniquet.

If the bite is on an arm or leg, apply a constricting band from 2-4" above the bite, between the wound and student's heart. The constricting band should not be too tight; you should be able to slip your index finger under the band when it is in place. Loosen the band if it becomes too tight but do not remove. Periodically check pulse if affected extremity.

Non-Poisonous
1. If unsure whether snake is poisonous, follow instructions for poisonous bites.
2. Wash wound with antibacterial soap and water.
3. Apply sterile dressing.
4. Notify school administration and parent.

Insect Bites and Stings
1. Try to determine type of insect which bit student (mosquito bites itch; bee, wasp, and spider bites hurt).
2. Remove stinger only if it is protruding and can easily be detached without crushing it.
3. Wash bite area gently with antibacterial soap and water.
4. Apply cold compress.
5. Consult physician immediately if there is any reaction such as hives; generalized rash; extreme paleness; weakness; thick tongue or lips; tingling tongue or lips; nausea; vomiting; "tightness" in chest, nose or throat; or collapse.
6. If thick tongue or lips, "tightness" in chest or collapse, seek immediate emergency medical care.

Bee and Wasp Stings
1. If student is known to be allergic to bee or wasp stings, immediate medical attention should be obtained. Symptoms of anaphylaxis usually occur within a few minutes after the sting takes place. (See ANAPHYLAXIS)
2. Highly allergic students should be identified and should provide their own bee sting kits. Closely follow directions for the administration of

adrenalin (epinephrine or Epi-pen) and transport to nearest medical facility. Notify parent.
3. Observe any student with a bee or wasp sting for at least 20 minutes for any possible reaction.
4. Apply ice, if available.

Spider Bites
1. Wash area gently with antibacterial soap and water. Do not squeeze affected area.
2. Try to save spider for identification.
3. If bite area is painful and red or student is sweating, has nausea, abdominal pain or difficulty breathing or speaking, notify school administration and parent and advise prompt medical attention.

Bleeding

After ensuring that student has an open airway, is breathing regularly and has a pulse, control external bleeding. Put on gloves (if gloves are not available, use several dressings or a piece of plastic wrap as a precaution against the possibility of acquiring blood-borne diseases). If gloves or other materials are not available, first aid should still be given in the case of severe bleeding or hemorrhaging. Always wash your hands carefully after administering first aid.

General Oozing
1. Clean area and apply sterile dressing.
2. Apply firm pressure over area with fingers or hand.
3. Notify school administration and parent.

Bright Red Pulsating Bleeding (from an artery and often profuse)
1. Place a thick pad of sterile gauze or the cleanest material available over bleeding area and apply pressure. Reinforce material as necessary, do not remove gauze.
2. Apply firm pressure with fingers or hand over the wound itself and elevate limb.
3. If bleeding doesn't stop, apply firm pressure at "pressure point" between wound and heart.
4. If severed finger or other body part, brush off debris, moisten with water, wrap in a clean cloth and send body part with student for immediate medical care.
5. A tourniquet should be applied only in the event of extreme emergency when severe bleeding cannot otherwise be controlled and emergency medical services are more than 20 minutes away. To apply a tourniquet, use a 2" wide constricting bandage wrapped around the limb 1 to 2" above the bleeding and twist until the bleeding stops. Do not remove tourniquet until advised by a physician.
6. Keep student warm.
7. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate emergency medical care.

Dark, Steady Bleeding (usually from a vein and controlled by direct pressure)
1. Elevate injured part above heart unless there are symptoms of a fracture.
2. Maintain direct pressure on wound while it is elevated. Use sterile dressings if available.
3. Treat student for shock if necessary. (see SHOCK)
4. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate emergency medical care.

Nosebleed (rarely serious)
1. Have student sit with head tipped slightly forward and instruct student to breathe in slow rhythmic breaths through the mouth.
2. Press nostrils together (pinch nose) for up to 5 minutes with enough pressure to stop bleeding.

Bleeding (CONTINUED)

3. If this does not stop the bleeding, have student continue pressing nostrils. Notify school administration and parent and advise immediate medical attention.
4. Check records for any contributing condition and recommendations.
5. If there is any possible injury to nose, there may be a fracture. Apply cold compress to limit swelling and bleeding.

Burns

Heat Burns
    1st Degree (redness without blisters, but produces swelling and pain)
        1. Relieve pain with cool compress.
        2. Clean with antibacterial soap and water.
    2nd Degree (redness with blisters, swelling and pain)
        1. Relieve pain with cool compresses.
        2. Clean gently with lukewarm water and antibacterial soap – avoid breaking blisters.
        3. Cover with padded sterile dressing to avoid breaking blisters.
        4. Notify school administration and parent. Advise medical attention.
    3rd Degree (no blisters appear, but white leathery tissue and clotted vessels are visible)
        1. Treat as 4th degree burn.
    4th Degree (burn has extended through skin into muscle and possible bone; tissue appears blackened and deeply charred) MEDICAL EMERGENCY
        2. Remove smoldering clothing as necessary. If clothing is stuck to skin, soak area in water.
        3. Control bleeding (see BLEEDING)
        4. Loosely cover affected areas with a clean dry sheet or smooth towel.
        5. DO NOT clean area or apply any medications.
        6. Seek immediate emergency medical care.
        7. Notify school administration and parent.

Chemical Burns
1. Flush burn area immediately with large amounts of water for 15-30 minutes.
2. Seek immediate emergency medical care. Notify school administration and parent.
3. Remove clothing and jewelry from the affected area.
4. Cover the burn with loose, dry sterile dressing.
5. Treat for shock as necessary (see SHOCK)

Burns (CONTINUED)

Electrical Burns
1. Disconnect power source.
2. Seek immediate emergency medical care. Notify school administration and parent.
3. Check for multiple burn sites and cover burns with loose, dry, sterile dressing.
4. Treat for shock as necessary (see SHOCK).

Breathing, Stopped

(By way of Electrocution, Drowning or Shock)
1. If electrocution, disconnect source of power before entering scene.
2. Start mouth-to-mouth resuscitation immediately after establishment of open airway. Check pulse. Initiate CPR if no pulse.
3. Seek immediate emergency medical care. Notify school administration and parent.
4. If breathing resumes, maintain airway, administer oxygen and observe closely.

Choking

(Foreign body obstructing the airway)
In partial obstruction, student will have limited air exchange (usually signaled by student grasping throat with hand and gasping for breath). As long as student can make noise, breathing is occurring. If student can cough forcefully, encourage coughing to expel the foreign body. If student cannot make any noise, or becomes blue, a full obstruction has occurred and death can ensue in minutes. In case of full obstruction, perform the abdominal thrust or Heimlich Maneuver (see below).

Abdominal Thrust (Heimlich Maneuver)
Student Standing – if still conscious
1. Stand behind student and wrap your arms around waist.
2. Fist on hand and grasp it with your other hand. Place the thumb side of your fist against student's abdomen, just above the navel.
3. Press your fist into the upper abdomen with 1 to 4 quick upward thrusts. Repeat if necessary.
4. Check student's mouth after each round of thrusts. If object can be seen, try to remove it – taking care not to move it or tongue further back.
Student Lying Down – if loses consciousness, gently lower to floor and position on back
1. Straddle student's hips.

Choking (CONTINUED)

2. Position the heel of your hand between student's breast bone and navel.
3. Give 1 to 4 quick thrust upward until obstructing object is coughed up.
4. If student coughs or vomits, quickly turn head to side. If object can be seen, try to remove it – taking care not to move it or tongue further back.
5. Check student's mouth after each round of thrusts.

If the Student Is A Small Child Under 1 Year of Age
1. Turn child upside down over one arm or knee.
2. Give 4 sharp blows between shoulder blades using the heel of your hand.

Cuts, Abrasions, Wounds and Punctures

Note: Tetanus Toxoid should be a consideration with any open wound.

Bruises

1. Apply cold compresses or ice bag for 30 minutes.
2. If bruise involves a deep muscle or if there is rapid swelling, considerable pain or immobility, or combination of these, notify school administration and parent.

Blisters and Skin Infection

1. Do not open or squeeze affected area.
2. Cover with a clean, dry dressing.
3. If blister is broken, treat as an open wound.

Superficial Wounds

1. Control bleeding with direct pressure (see BLEEDING)
2. Clean gently with antibacterial soap and water. Do not apply medication.
3. Cover with dry, sterile gauze.
4. Notify school administration and parent.

Deep Wounds (more than ½" deep or if there is visible muscle, tendon or nerve exposure)

1. Determine extent of injury.
2. If stitching is required or wound involves muscle, tendon, nerve, blood vessel or bone, seek immediate emergency medical care.
3. Do not wash or clean deep wounds if bleeding freely. Clean off superficial dirt and debris.
4. Control bleeding with direct pressure (see BLEEDING) and cover with sterile gauze. Seek immediate medical care.
5. Notify school administration and parent.

Puncture Wounds (including splinters and slivers)

1. Do not probe or squeeze.
2. Clean around wound with antibacterial soap and water.
3. Cover with clean dressing.
4. Treat as a large open wound if it is deep or bleeding freely.
5. Notify school administration and parent. Advise prompt medical attention to avoid severe infections, especially if it is deep or bleeding.
6. Do not remove impaled objects.

Diabetes

Diabetic students should be listed with school administration, nurses, teachers and other school staff with whom they are involved. Consideration should be given to their lunch time, physical activity schedules and any other specific needs. If unable to distinguish between hypoglycernia and hyperglycemia, give sugar and observe until symptoms have abated. If symptoms don't abate, seek immediate emergency medical care.

Insulin Shock (Hypoglycemia)
     Warning signs are sudden onset of:

- Excessive hunger
- Blurred vision
- Nausea or abdominal pain
- Trembling

- Drowsiness/fatigue
- Confusion
- Crying
- Poor coordination
- General weakness

- Pale skin
- Sweating
- Moist tongue
- Shallow breaths

If student participates in unplanned extra activities or has mild hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) any ordinary food may be given such as milk. With more severe reactions, take the following steps:

1. Check student's health record for diagnosis and physician's orders.
2. Raise student's blood sugar as quickly as possible: give orange juice, sugar or anything sweet to prevent loss of consciousness. Check school health record to see if glucagon has been prescribed. If it has, administer as quickly as possible.
3. Do not allow student to go to sleep.
4. If student does not improve within 10 minutes, repeat administration of sugar.
5. If there is no improvement after second feeding, notify school administration and parent and seek immediate emergency medical care.
6. If student fully recovers, return to normal activities and notify school administration and parent of incident.
7. If student becomes or is found unconscious, treat as a true emergency and call emergency medical services, a physician and notify parent. Do not give anything by mouth to an unconscious person.

Diabetic Coma (Hyperglycemia)
     Symptoms are gradual. Warning signs are:

- Frequent urination
- Skin flushed and dry
- Tongue dry
- Deep respiration

- Rapid and feeble pulse
- Fruity odor to breath
- Drowsiness that leads to loss of consciousness

1. Notify school administration and parent immediately to assume responsibility.
2. If student becomes unconscious seek immediate emergency medical care.

Dental Problems

Cracked Tooth

1. Place ice on face near injury.
2. Notify school administration and parent and advise prompt dental care.

   Tooth Knocked Out or Broken

1. This is an emergency.
2. Recover tooth if possible.
3. If found, place in water, milk or maintain in socket. Do not wash.
4. Notify school administration and parent. Advise immediate dental care.

Dizziness

1. Direct student to lie down and stay quiet.
2. Assess physical condition and determine recent history of the illness, injury or toxicity due to medication or substance abuse.
3. Take pulse and blood pressure and check the size of pupils.
4. If dizziness persists or is severe, send student home. Notify school administration and parent. Advise medical attention.

Drugs, Abuse and Overuse

Identification of Drug Abusers

No one symptom should be considered an indication of drug abuse and conclusions should be based on fact, not assumption. School personnel are encouraged to know signs and symptoms of acute intoxication with various drugs.

General Symptoms
1. Abrupt changes in school attendance, quality of work, grades and discipline. Withdrawal from responsibility.
2. Unusual flare-ups or outbreaks of temper. Evasive behavior regarding actions and possessions.
3. Deterioration of physical appearance and grooming.

Drug Ingestion
1. If drug was recently ingested, treat as poisoning (see POISONING)
2. If student is agitated or has hallucinations, stay with him/her at all times. Restrain gently if necessary to avoid injury to student.
3. If student becomes sleepy or unconscious, keep air passages clear. Administer mouth-to-mouth resuscitation if necessary. Seek immediate emergency medical care if student appears to be in a life-threatening condition (unresponsive or unable to talk).
4. For information on drug over dosage, call the nearest poison control center.
5. Notify school administration and parent. Advise immediate medical attention.

Alcohol Ingestion
1. Let student sleep as long as face is normal in color and breathing is normal.
2. Place student on his/her side to protect the airway. Observe for vomiting.
3. Notify school administration and parent. Send student home with a responsible adult. Do not send student home alone.
4. If student has difficulty breathing or you are unable to wake student, seek medical attention. If student is conscious and a large amount of alcohol is known to have been ingested, treat as poisoning (see POISONING).

Epilepsy and Convulsive (Seizures) Disorders

School Personnel should have a list of students with convulsion disorders.

1. Stay calm – student is usually not suffering or in danger.
2. Allow student to lie down if he/she has fallen. Clear area of objects and onlookers to prevent injury and place student on carpeted floor if possible.
3. Maintain open airway.
4. Loosen clothing around neck.
5. Do not force anything into mouth.
6. Do not restrain.
7. Do not pour any liquid into mouth.
8. Turn face to one side if possible to allow saliva to flow out mouth.
9. When student is calm (may take several minutes), assist to a rest area, cover if indicated. Notify school administration and parent.
10. After a short rest period student may return to regular activities if able.
11. If convulsion is severe, (up to 5 minutes followed immediately by another convulsion, or student fails to return to baseline level of alertness within 15 minutes), notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate emergency medical care.
12. Check with family to see if student has been diagnosed for epilepsy or any other convulsive disorder. Since low blood sugar levels can also cause seizure activity, a history of insulin-dependent diabetes is also important to know. If this is student's first seizure, advise medical attention.
13. If breathing stops check for open airway, tilt head and begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
14. Observation of seizure activity throughout the entire seizure is very important for reporting to student's physician and parent. Note which body parts are involved first, which extremities were most involved, the way in which student's eyes or head were pointing, uncontrolled urination and length of seizure.

Eye Injuries

Always check to see if the student wears contact lenses.

Foreign Bodies
1. Wash hands before examining.
2. Instruct student not to rub eyes.

Embedded Object
1. Do not attempt to remove an embedded object from the eye.
2. Patch both eyes. (It is very important to reassure student.)
3. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate medical attention.

Non-Embedded Object
1. To remove a non-embedded object from eyelid, pull the top lid out and down over the lower one and have student blink.
2. If object is still in eye, open eye and flush it with clear, clean water.
3. If #1 and #2 do not remove object, gently pull upper lid downward, outward and upward, placing gentle pressure on upper lid with a cotton swab. If object is seen on upper lid, remove it with a lint free piece of clean material.
4. If unsuccessful or symptoms persists, notify school administration and parents. Advise medical attention.

Chemical Burns
1. Immediately flush eyelids and eye with very large amounts of tap water (up to 2 liters) continuously for 10 minutes.
2. Flush from inner to outer corner of eye. Turn student's face to side to protect other eye.
3. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate emergency medical care. Acid or Alkali burns are an immediate emergency.
4. Hot metal burns require immediate medical attention. Do not flush an eye with a hot metal burn.

Eye Injuries (CONTINUED)

Blow to the Eye

Sudden blindness or seeing spots following a blow often indicates hemorrhage.
1. Seek immediate emergency medical care. This is urgent.
2. Apply cold compress.
3. Notify school administration and parent.

Cuts, Lacerations
1. A cut on the cornea of the eye is very painful and light is painful to affected eye.
2. Cover affected eye with sterile gauze.
3. Have student lie down and be quiet.
4. Notify school administration and parent. Advise prompt medical attention.

Fainting

1. Symptoms besides brief loss of consciousness are extreme paleness, shallow breathing and slow and weak pulse.
2. Clear area of onlookers.
3. Do not give anything by mouth to an unconscious student.
4. Keep student in lying down position with head slightly lower until fully recovered. Lay student on his/her side to maintain open airway.
5. Loosen clothing and allow student to inhale aromatic spirits of ammonia.
6. If breathing stops, apply mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Fever

1. When temperature elevation is suspected, take temperature.
2. Notify school administration and parent. Send student home if temperature is 99.6° or above and student has headache, sore throat, nausea, coughing and sneezing or other symptoms.
3. A student with a temperature of 100.4° or above should be sent home even when there are no other symptoms.
4. Advise bed rest and medical attention if temperature is 100.4° or above.
5. Inform parent that student should remain home until temperature has been normal for 24 hours.

Fractures, Sprains, Strains and Dislocations

Fractures
1. Look for these symptoms:
- Obvious deformities
- Pain
- Inability to use
- Swelling
- Extremity cool to touch
- Discoloration
- Breaks in skin

2. Immobilize affected part and adjacent joints. Use following:
   a. Arm – simple sling.
   b. Lower leg – cardboard splint or pillow.
   c. Upper leg – leave alone. Seek immediate emergency medical care.
   d. Spine – DO NOT MOVE. Seek immediate emergency medical care.
3. If skin is broken, cover with sterile dressing. Do not clean. Control bleeding (see BLEEDING).
4. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate emergency medical care.

Dislocations
1. Look for these symptoms:

   Minor

- Swelling
- Obvious deformity
- Pain on motion
- Tenderness
- Discoloration

   Major

- Numbness
- Cool to touch
- Weak or absent pulse distal to joint
- Functional impairment

2. Immobilize affected part and apply ice.
3. Elevate hand if fingers or thumb are involved.
4. A dislocated elbow should never be maneuvered. Apply ice.
5. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate emergency medical care. If any of the major symptoms are present, there is great urgency – the survival of the limb is threatened.

Strains and Sprains
1. Look for these symptoms:
- Swelling
- Tenderness
- Pain when moved
- Discoloration
2. Immobilize affected part.
3. If extremity, elevate and apply ice. Do not place ice directly on skin.
4. Do not apply ace bandages – this could cut down blood flow too much.
5. Notify school administration and parents. Advise medical attention.

Head Injuries

Bleeding (will bleed profusely)
1. Put sterile dressing over wound.
2. Apply gentle, direct pressure.
3. Notify school administration and parent. Observe student closely.
4. Refer immediately for stitches if wound is more than 1/8" deep of more than ½" long.

Swelling
1. Apply cold pack.
2. Notify school administration and parent. Observe closely.

Head Injury (as in concussion)
1. Look for these symptoms:

Mild

- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Faintness
- Sleepiness

Severe

- Convulsions
- Confusion
- Extreme paleness
- Staggering walk
- Unequal pupils
- Vomiting
- Depressions in the skull

2. Determine if student is breathing and has a pulse. Keep head and neck immobilized.
3. If there is any change in consciousness, keep student immobilized. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate medical care.
4. Let student rest. If mild symptoms persist, advise medical attention.
5. If symptoms completely disappear, return student to classroom. Advise no resumption of play or vigorous activity and check student periodically. If there is any change in student's level of alertness, send student home and advise medical attention.
6. Advise parent to observe student during off-school hours. Observation needs to continue for 24 hours after a blow to the head.

Headache

1. Look for these symptoms:
   - Head injury
   - Cold
   - Flu
   - Ear infection
   - Sinus infection
   - Allergies

   (Vision problems seldom cause headaches.)

2. Take temperature and blood pressure.
3. Let student rest.
4. Apply ice pack or cold wet cloth to forehead.
5. If mild, return student to classroom.
6. If severe, persistent, or accompanied by other symptoms of illness, notify school administration and parent. Advise medical attention.
7. Do not administer any medication unless prescribed for student.

Heat, Extreme Deprivation

Hypothermia
1. Look for these symptoms:
   - Shivering
   - Apathy
   - Loss of consciousness
   - Decreasing pulse rate and breathing rate
   - Slurred speech
   - Poor coordination
   - Poor memory
   - In later stages, shivering may stop.
2. Seek immediate emergency medical care.
3. Get student out of the cold and into dry clothing.
4. Warm up student's body slowly in a warm – but not hot – environment.
5. Do not give anything by mouth unless student is fully conscious.

Frostbite
1. Look for these symptoms:
   - Slightly flushed skin
   - After flushing, skin changes to white or grayish yellow, then grayish blue
   - Pain early on but goes away
   - Affected body part is very cold and numb
2. Degrees of tissue damage:

Mild	Moderate	Advanced
• Tissue is white or grayish • Skin is hard, but underlying tissue is soft	• Large blisters on skin surface and tissues underneath • Area is hard, cold and insensitive	• Blisters go deeper than skin • Tissue damage is severe and there is a possibility of gangrene

3. Get student into a warm environment.
4. Place affected body parts in a warm (100-105°) but not hot water. Handle student gently. Do not rub or massage affected areas.
5. Loosely bandage affected area with dry, sterile gauze. If toes or fingers are affected, place gauze loosely between them.
6. Notify school administration and parent. Advise medical attention as soon as possible. Medical care is urgent due to swelling and loss of blood flow (especially to fingers and toes) which could result in amputation.

Heat, Overexposure

Heat Stroke
1. Take student to a cool location if possible.
2. Look for these symptoms:
    - Body temperature of 105° or more
    - Hot, dry and pink or ashen skin
    - Rapid pulse
    - Decreased alertness or unconsciousness
3. Seek immediate emergency medical care.
4. Begin rapid cooling of body by sponging with cool water and fanning until temperature is below 102°.
5. Give fluids if fully conscious.
6. Monitor pulse, blood pressure and level of consciousness until body temperature is stabilized below 102°.

Heat Exhaustion
1. Look for these symptoms:
    - Elevated body temperature
    - Pale and clammy skin
    - Profuse sweating
    - Tiredness
    - Weakness
    - Headache
    - Nausea
    - Dizziness
    - Cramping
    - Muscle spasms
2. Have student lie down in cool area with feet elevated.
3. Loosen clothing.
4. Apply cool, wet cloths and fan.
5. If student is not nauseated, give sips of cool, clear liquids (e.g. water, soft drinks, tea). Stop if student vomits.
6. Notify school administration and parent. Advise medical attention for possible fluid replacement.

Poisoning, Suspected

Onset may be sudden with nausea, vomiting, severe abdominal cramps and sleepiness followed by chills, fever and exhaustion.

1. Try to identify the poison. Identify route (e.g. nasal, oral, injection) and amount digested, time of ingestion and condition of student. If container suspected poison was in can be found, give it and its label to parent of emergency personnel. Do not follow instructions on label.
2. Call a poison control center and follow telephone instructions. Do not give anything by mouth until instructed by poison control center.
3. Notify school administration and parent.
4. If student is unconscious, determine whether breathing and pulse are present, institute CPR as necessary and seek immediate emergency medical care. Take a sample of the student's vomit to the emergency room.
5. Do not use ipecac or induce vomiting until you have consulted the poison control center.

Poison Control Center

(800) 222-1222

Salt Tablets

Do not give salt tablets without a physician's order.

Shock

Shock generally accompanies all severe injuries.
1. Seek immediate emergency medical care.
2. Notify school administration and parent.
3. Early and adequate shock treatment is life saving. Do not delay treatment. Look for these symptoms:
    - Extreme paleness or blotchy whitish-blue skin
    - Nausea
    - Weakness
    - Perspiration
    - Rapid weak pulse
    - Increased rate of breathing
    - Confusion or alternation agitation and sleepiness
4. Give immediate first aid and CPR if necessary and provide oxygen by mask.
5. Keep student lying down. Raise feet 8-12" if student did not sustain a head injury and if leg or ankle fractures are not suspected. If in doubt, lay flat.
6. Cover student only enough to prevent loss of body heat.
7. Check pulse and blood pressure frequently.
8. Do not give anything by mouth.

Unconsciousness

1. Determine whether student is breathing normally and has a pulse.
2. If student is not breathing or has no pulse, begin CPR.
3. If breathing is normal and neck injury has been ruled out, lay student on side with head somewhat extended to maintain open airway.
4. Check for major bleeding. If found, control by appropriate measures (see BLEEDING).

Unconsciousness (continued)

5. Give first aid for the underlying cause (e.g. gunshot wound, choking, hyperventilation, seizure, stab wound, diabetes, etc.), if apparent or reported from bystanders.
6. Determine blood pressure, pulse and respiration and treat for shock as indicated (see SHOCK).
7. Notify school administration and parent. Seek immediate emergency medical care.

Resources

FEMA - MultiHazards Emergency Planning For Schools

Kentucky Center for School Safety

Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Olathe District Schools

Arizona School Emergency Response Guide

US Department of Education-Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools

Dr Robert Hull, Director of Kansas Center for Safe and Prepared Schools

NOAA – National Weather Service

Texas School Safety Center