

**BEST PRACTICES MANUAL**  
.....  
FOR SAFETY IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS

**CORAL  
GABLES**<sup>®</sup>

PRESS ESCAPE KEY ( ESC ) TO EXIT FULLSCREEN MODE

# CORAL GABLES PRIVATE SCHOOL TASK FORCE MISSION STATEMENT

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To analyze, prepare, and develop a Best Practices Manual with the goal of enhancing private school and community safety within Coral Gables in the wake of the deadly massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

# TASK FORCE MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS

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# INTRODUCTION

The Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting occurred on December 14, 2012, in Newtown, Connecticut, when a 20-year-old subject fatally shot 20 children between six and seven years old, as well as six adult staff members. As first emergency personnel arrived at the scene, the shooter committed suicide by shooting himself. The incident was one of the deadliest mass

shooting at either a high school or grade school in U.S. history. On February 14, 2018, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting took place, which resulted in the death of 14 students and three teachers. Another 17 students and teachers were injured as a result of the gunfire and many others will carry emotional scars for the rest of their lives. This event brought the topic of school safety to the forefront across our nation.



On February 14, 2018, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting took place, which resulted in the death of 14 students and three teachers.

The threat of gun violence in schools necessitates attention across the spectrum of emergency management to enhance safety, address emerging issues, prevent violent situations, and mitigate circumstances in the event of an active shooter incident. As a result, the City of Coral Gables created

a task force consisting of professionals from many different city departments, including legal, development services and public safety, to develop a Best Practices Manual to address security in our schools. Since public schools are under the jurisdiction of Miami-Dade County Public Schools Police, the focus of the task force was security in private schools. Safety in our public schools, however, is also paramount. That's why the City is collaborating with the school district to bolster the campus presence of police officers when schools are in session. Coral Gables

is in full support of the school district's safety and security protocols to reassure the sanctity of public schools located within our boundaries.

The task force visited several private schools in the City of Coral Gables, researched Miami-Dade County Public School recommendations and other relevant literature. Based on the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, Safe Haven International, a global non-profit campus safety center, identified the following overarching themes, key points and safety measures:

## 1

# ACTIONS BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL SAVED LIVES

Although loss of life was extensive, some actions by school staff clearly reduced the number of school fatalities. Of considerable importance is the fact that staff in the school office took actions to protect themselves. This allowed them to survive so they could call 911. Despite some delay in this being done, this action prompted a faster police response. As the report concludes, the shooter killed himself shortly after police arrived, ending the killing. Had office staff

either frozen at their work stations or unsuccessfully attempted to attack the heavily armed killer, police response would have been slower, which would have likely resulted in additional deaths or injuries.

## 2

## LOCKING INTERIOR DOORS WORKED

As in the vast majority of K-12 school shootings in the United States, not a single student or staff member was killed behind a locked interior door. Although many people have stated that staff and students should have evacuated, the report indicates that where lockdown was accomplished fast enough, no student or staff member was killed.

Despite the fact that the locked front entry door was breached, the report indicates that no interior doors were breached by force. Keeping in mind that most of the staff and students in the school survived, this affords additional evidence that lockdown is still one of the most effective tools to prevent death in mass casualty school shootings.

## 3

## LOCKDOWNS MUST BE IMPLEMENTED QUICKLY

While prior incidents demonstrate the value of the lockdown concept, it also demonstrates the failure of the quick application of the lockdown concept. While the lockdown procedures taken in the building protected the majority of occupants, most of the deaths in the school occurred in the two classrooms

where the doors did not get locked in time — with 20 of the victims being killed in two unlocked rooms. This incident demonstrates the need for all school personnel to be properly trained, specifically empowered, and practiced in making independent decisions to implement a lockdown, evacuation, or sheltering without waiting to be instructed by anyone to do so.

The report does not offer any findings related to why the lockdown application failure occurred. There could be a variety of reasons for this. For example, one of the teachers that was murdered was a substitute teacher and likely not well trained. Also, in some past incidents, substitute teachers were not issued keys and could not lock the classroom doors.

In other cases, staff was not properly prepared to find their key, get to the door, and secure it fast enough. School security assessment crisis simulations have found that many school employees have unrealistic expectations about how much time they will have to lock a door. For example, under the slight stress of a school safety expert asking them to find their key<sup>1</sup> and lock the door, it took the employee more than a minute to do so. Therefore, training and simulations are important in increasing staff's ability to act swiftly and lock the door. Schools should also consider having a plan for training and preparing substitute teachers.



## 4

# ALL SCHOOL STAFF MUST BE TRAINED AND EMPOWERED TO ACT

The same report indicates that staff in the office never ordered a lockdown. The office staff accidentally activated the intercom, and did not intentionally lock down the school. While there could be a viable reason for this, none was identified in the summary report accentuating the need for all school staff to be trained, empowered, and practiced in implementing a school lockdown as appropriate and without being directed to do so by a supervisor.

The report also indicates that numerous phones in the school could have been used to access the intercom system. This finding serves as a reminder that staff should be trained and empowered to use these tools to order a lockdown when appropriate. In addition, schools should expand the number of areas from which they can make school-wide announcements.

## 5

# STAFF AND STUDENTS MUST BE TAUGHT HOW TO RESPOND UNDER STRESS AND “ON THE FLY”

Although the majority of the casualties were suffered in the unlocked classrooms, the report does point out that 10 students were able to flee the unlocked classrooms and therefore, survive the attacks. This finding

demonstrates the importance of staff and students being trained not to remain passive when they encounter an active aggressor in an enclosed area. The research on how the human brain functions supports the importance of teaching people to be prepared to change responses when a situation dictates.

6

## SANDY HOOK'S PRINCIPAL PROBABLY DID NOT HAVE A CHANCE TO FIGHT BACK

While early media statements indicated that the school principal attempted to disarm the shooter, buying precious time and saving lives of students and staff, no such information is included in the report. The report states that the principal and two other staff members went into the hall to investigate where they were quickly shot.

# THE CORAL GABLES PRIVATE SCHOOL TASK FORCE

The Coral Gables Private School Task Force was created to develop a best practices manual to address security in private schools located in the City. The task force visited private schools in the City of Coral Gables and spoke to administrators and staff personnel.

Private school personnel were very open and receptive to the recommendations made by the

task force that would make their schools safer. Even though the security of the private schools that were visited by the task force was satisfactory, the task force has outline recommendations which are listed in this manual to harden campus security and keep the students safe. It is important to note that most of the recommendations made by the task force are already being followed by the private schools visited.

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## **The Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act (MSDHSPS Act) (2018)**

Under the 2018 MSDHSPS Act, law enforcement has new tools to protect individuals and the community from violence. Under the Risk Protection Order (“RPO”) provision of Florida

Statute Section 790.401 et seq., when an individual is a significant danger to themselves or others by possessing a firearm or ammunition, law enforcement is empowered to petition the court for a temporary and/or long term RPO. The temporary RPO allows for immediate surrender and to prohibit future purchase, possession, custody, or control of firearms and ammunition. The long-term RPO will prohibit, for up to 12 months, the purchase, possession, custody, or control of any firearm or ammunition.

The law provides for due process, including strict requirements for filing a petition and timely hearings. If a judge finds that requirements are met, the individual must surrender to local law enforcement all firearms and

ammunition owned by the individual in the individual's custody, control, or possession, and any license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm held by the individual. If the individual does not cooperate, law enforcement may seek a search warrant. Any individual subject to the RPO who is later found in possession of or who purchases a firearm or ammunition commits a third-degree felony.

The MSDHSPS Act also amends Florida Statute Section 836.10 and makes it a second-degree felony for any person "who makes, posts, transmits a threat in writing or other record, including electronic record, to conduct a mass shooting or an act of terrorism, in any manner that would allow a person to view the threat."

# THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, identifying and evaluating any known threats to a given facility is a key component to a security assessment. A security assessment assists with the develop-

ment of a security plan. The purpose of a security plan is to address a threat by reducing a school's vulnerability to threat. While not all of the vulnerabilities listed below apply to all schools, they have been identified as priority focus areas:

## PREVENTION OF ATTACKS

Predictable school schedules and well-publicized school holidays allow individuals to conduct surveillance at times when they will be less likely to be detected either because no one is present at the school or because there are so many people present that the individual would be able to blend into a crowd. In addition, the perception that schools are "soft targets" and have little security may make them a more attractive target for individuals looking to carry out an attack on a large group of individuals.



## DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Since schools are centers of community life, members of the community may intentionally or accidentally expose a school community to an infectious disease. It is imperative that educators and administrators work with state and local health officials to establish health policies and procedures to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a potential pandemic.



## MASS CASUALTY EVENTS

The unpredictability of natural disasters and threats to safety from outside the school community make it difficult to prepare for them. Effective planning, to the extent possible, and preparedness training for potential natural disasters and other external threats to school safety enables school personnel to identify their roles for evacuation and/or relief efforts that may be necessary.



## RELATIVELY OPEN ACCESS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

All schools require relatively easy access for students and staff during school hours and during large after-school events. Depending on the size of the school and the school population, building and fire codes usually require multiple egress doors in case of an emergency evacuation. In addition, many school buildings in

the United States have been constructed to achieve an inviting and open-to-the-community feeling, with multiple buildings, big windows, multiple entrances and exits, and little opportunities for privacy. These layouts may not lend themselves to simple implementation of many common protective measures. However, many districts and schools have successfully addressed the aforementioned “openness” and implemented substantial access control and monitoring systems.

## PROXIMITY OF SCHOOLS AND NEIGHBORING FACILITIES, ESPECIALLY IN URBAN AREAS

Many schools are located in urban areas in close proximity to homes and small businesses. These surrounding characteristics of a school need to be considered when working to maintain effective perimeter security. Appropriate fencing may lend to more effective perimeter security. Schools need to be able to effectively respond to threatening incidents in the surrounding community that require a school to activate emergency operations procedures, such as lockdowns.

## LITTLE OR NO VEHICLE ACCESS CONTROLS

The layouts of most schools and school grounds permit close proximity of vehicles to buildings and areas where students congregate. These include parking areas, driveways on school grounds (including long avenues of approach for bus access), and nearby streets. Some schools have no vehicle barriers near the main entrances, other vulnerable parts of the buildings, or student gathering areas.



## LACK OF VEHICLE INSPECTION

There are virtually no security controls on the contents of vehicles entering parking areas at elementary and secondary schools. A potential perpetrator of an attack could transport many types of weapons or explosives to the school grounds in a vehicle.



## LACK OF CONTROL OF VENDOR AND CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL

Individuals who deliver parcels, food supplies or stock vending machines are often given unescorted access to schools and the contents of the packages they carry are not inspected.



## LACK OF INSPECTION OF STUDENT ARTICLES

Except for schools that experience significant gang, drug, and other criminal activity, there is generally no routine inspection of parcels, book bags, or other items that students bring into schools.





## UNPROTECTED UTILITIES

HVAC units and other critical building utility supply components (e.g., water, electric power, natural gas service) that are easily accessible can make the school vulnerable.

# THREAT ASSESSMENT

The security practices ultimately developed should target the threats deemed most likely to occur. Potential threats to elementary and secondary schools often originate from disaffected individuals associated with the school, such as students and teachers, but can also originate

from individuals from outside the community. A behavioral threat assessment team would be staffed with a combination of faculty, staff, and administrators, including a guidance counselor, and mental health professional.

# POTENTIAL ATTACK INDICATORS

Attack indicators are observable behaviors that may precede an attack. Such indicators may include witnessing a potential perpetrator engage in suspicious surveillance, training, or other pre-attack planning

activities. Potential indicators can be grouped into the following categories: individual behavior indicators, surveillance indicators, imminent attack indicators, and surrounding area indicators.

## INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR INDICATORS

Individuals internal to a school community who threaten to carry out some attack may engage in a number of behaviors that raise concern in others who know the individual. These behaviors should be evaluated in the context of an individual's life and current situation, such that an individual who displays several of these concerning behaviors and is also dealing with a negative life event that may be of concern and warrant some level of intervention.

With respect to active shooter situations, investigations and analysis show that many active shooters were described as socially isolated, harboring feelings of hate and anger, and/or having some reported contact with mental health professionals. Mental illness is commonly referenced as a potential contributing factor, but its causal impact on the attack can only be speculated upon. Common catalysts or triggers that have been observed include: loss of

significant relationships, changes in living arrangements, major adverse changes to life circumstances, and/or feelings of humiliation or rejection on the part of the shooter. Other indicators that could apply to faculty or staff include changes in financial status and/or loss of job.

Some individual behavior indicators include:

- **Socially isolated,**
- **Threats of violence against others,**
- **Unsolicited focus on dangerous weapons,**
- **Unstable emotional responses,**
- **Intense anger and hostility,**
- **Loss of significant relationships,**
- **Feeling either arrogant and supreme, or powerless,**
- **Expressions of paranoia or depression,**
- **Increased use of alcohol or drugs,**
- **Depression or withdrawal,**
- **Talk of suicide,**
- **Increased absenteeism.**

## SURVEILLANCE INDICATORS

Individuals may also engage in behaviors that indicate they are conducting surveillance. Indications of potential surveillance include reports of persons in the vicinity of an elementary or secondary school inquiring about the facility, its operations, and/or its protective measures.

Some indicators that an elementary and secondary school may be under surveillance include:

- **Persons attempting to gain access into the school or who are located in the school building with no legitimate purpose,**
- **Persons using or carrying video/camera/observation equipment in or near the facility over an extended period,**
- **Persons parking, standing, or loitering in the same area over a multiple-day period with no apparent reasonable explanation,**
- **Persons excessively inquiring about practices pertaining to the school and its operations or the school's supporting infrastructure (e.g. telecommunications, electric, natural gas, water),**
- **Persons observed or reported to be observing school receipts or deliveries,**
- **Threats by telephone, mail, or e-mail and/or increase in reports of threats from known reliable sources,**
- **A noted pattern of false alarms requiring a response by law enforcement or emergency services.**

## IMMINENT ATTACK INDICATORS

These indicators may demonstrate that an attack is imminent and immediate action needs to be taken. Indicators of an imminent attack include people or vehicles that demonstrate unusual or suspicious behavior, or unattended suspicious packages that require an immediate response. If an attack seems imminent and immediate action is required, call 911 (local law enforcement) and activate the school EOP.

Some potential indicators of an imminent attack include: <sup>2</sup>

- **Reports from students about a classmate(s) threatening violence that**
- **includes specific dates/times/locations/targets,**
- **Suspicious persons in crowded areas wearing unusually bulky clothing that might conceal explosives,**
- **Unexpected or unfamiliar delivery trucks arriving at the facility,**
- **Unattended packages (e.g., backpacks, briefcases, boxes) or suspicious packages and/or letters received by mail,**
- **Vehicles approaching the school at an unusually high speed or steering**
- **around barriers and traffic controls.**

## SURROUNDING AREA INDICATORS

These surrounding area indicators relate to activities in the area or region surrounding an elementary or secondary school and may demonstrate that an attack is being prepared. The indicators might appear at an elementary or secondary school itself, or may appear in the communities surrounding a school. The indicators should be considered and factored into decisions regarding security. The surrounding area indicators are generally identified by or reported to local law enforcement. As stated earlier, an elementary or secondary school can establish communication channels with law enforcement to gain awareness of potentially threatening situations in the area and help piece together information from their facility with information from the surrounding area.

Some surrounding area indicators include:<sup>3</sup>

- **An increase in reporting of buildings being left unsecured or doors left unlocked, when they are normally secured and locked at all times,**
- **Theft or unauthorized possession of employee identification cards, uniforms, or security communications,**
- **Unfamiliar contract workers attempting to access unauthorized areas,**
- **Unusual or unexpected maintenance activities (e.g., road repairs) near the school,**
- **Sudden increases in power outages designed to test the backup systems or recovery times.**

# TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the site visits and research material, the Coral Gables Private

School Task Force recommends the following changes:

## 1 A SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

All of the schools should have a written school safety plan. This plan should be updated every year, prior to the beginning of the school year. Prior to the first day of school, administration and staff should hold a mandatory school safety meeting to discuss the safety plan and any updates.

## 2 SINGLE POINT OF ENTRY

All schools should have a single point entry. This is achieved by fencing the entire perimeter of the campus with a fence of at least 6 feet in height and directing all visitors to the administrative office. Only after checking in with the school administration should visitors be granted access to the campus.

- **The point of entrance should be equipped with a “Buzzer System” that gives the school staff control over the access.**
- **Access to the interior of the school should be restricted during the changing of classes, assembly or school lunch.**



3

## INSTALLATION OF WINDOW COVERING

All windows should be covered in order to conceal the students in the classroom in the event of an active shooter situation. This may be done through the use of magnetic coverings, blinds, or other materials.

4

## LOCKED DOORS

All classroom doors should be locked at all times. The doors should be equipped with door scopes that will enable the teacher or staff to clearly see who is on the other side prior to opening it.

5

## MONITORING ENTRY AND EXIT POINTS

During arrival and dismissals, school staff should monitor all of the entry and exit points. They may be equipped with point-to-point radios, which will enable them to quickly relay information to each other.

6








## EMERGENCY CODE SYSTEM

All schools should develop and implement an emergency code system that will help the students and teachers respond to an emergency situation. The program should center on several color codes that distinguish the level of potential

threat and informs the staff and administration of the proper response. These codes should be discussed at the mandatory school safety meeting prior to the start of the school year. When a code red is initiated, it alerts the teachers and staff that there is an imminent threat and the following actions should be taken:

1. **Teachers and staff should account for their students,**
2. **Teachers and staff should verify that classroom doors are locked,**
3. **Teachers, staff, and students should move away from windows,**
4. **Individuals that are outside of the classroom should find a place to hide,**
5. **Everyone should remain in the classroom until the all clear sign is given.**

Example Emergency Codes:

	<b>CODE RED</b> Threat — Incident to the facility: Lockdown
	<b>CODE YELLOW</b> Threat — Activate SAFE team: Lockdown
	<b>CODE BLUE</b> Medical Emergency — Activate SAFE Team
	<b>CODE BLACK</b> Bomb Threat
	<b>CODE ORANGE</b> Evacuate
	<b>CODE GREEN</b> All clear
	<b>CODE BROWN</b> Threat — Incident in the facility: Shelter-In-Place

The foundation of the program begins with the establishment of a safety plan at every school. The safety plan should outline key directory information about the school, its emergency resources available on campus, and delineate critical information about specific processes for responding to a variety of potential emergencies. Following staff training each year, teachers should relay the information to their students and review the appropriate responses to each of the code scenarios.

## 7

### CAMERA SURVEILLANCE

The campus should be equipped with video surveillance cameras that have the capability of being monitored from a central location. All public areas should be monitored, including fields and parking lots.

## 8

### INTERCOM SYSTEM

All classes should be equipped with an intercom button as well as a landline phone to alert the administrative office and/or police department of any critical incident.

9

## EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

All schools should have an emergency notification system to effectively communicate with parents in the event of a critical incident. This will be used to keep parents updated on relevant and important information.

10

## IDENTIFICATION BADGES

It is advisable that all staff and students wear picture identification badges. They should be visible at all times and worn with a lanyard.

11

## ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAINING

Teachers and school administrators should undergo scenario-based active shooter training once a year. This training should instruct teachers and staff on how to respond effectively to an active shooter situation. It is highly encouraged that the Coral Gables Police Department and the Coral Gables Fire Department oversee and participate in this training. The City will oversee and participate at no cost to the schools and the training should be scheduled through the Police Chief's Office.

12

## ACTIVE SHOOTER DRILLS

All schools should conduct active shooter drills at least as often as other emergency drills, but never less than once a year.

13

## DEFIBRILLATOR AND “STOP THE BLEED” KIT(S)

All schools should be equipped with a defibrillator and “Stop the Bleed” kits. These items should be placed together in a visible area and be available to everyone.

All teachers, school administrators, and staff should be CPR certified and properly trained in the use of a defibrillator and “Stop the Bleed” kit(s).

14

## “SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING”

All schools should initiate “See Something, Say Something” protocols for teachers, students, and staff. The “See Something, Say Something” campaign benefits everyone by bringing suspicious behavior to the attention of law enforcement.

Reporting suspicious behavior could potentially stop the next terrorist incident.

“Even if you think your observation is not important, it may be a piece of a larger puzzle.” (State of New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness).

The school should provide the parents with safety protocol and prevention information so that they are included as part of the security team.

15

## FIRST RESPONDER ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL

The Coral Gables Police and Fire Departments must have 24-hour access to all areas of the campus in the event of an emergency. This may be accomplished with access to a traditional key or code.

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## IN-TELLIGENT APP

By downloading and registering with the In-telligent app, you will receive public safety alerts from the Coral Gables Police Department. The app can be downloaded from the Apple iTunes Store or Google Play Store:

- <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/in-telligent/id984017211?mt=8>
- [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.sca.in\\_telligent&hl=en](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.sca.in_telligent&hl=en)

# SAFE SCHOOL TEAMS

Each school should develop and maintain an active SAFE Team. Its primary responsibility is to maintain the school's safety and security plan, and serve as the school's leadership

team in responding to any emergency. There are six key roles on each SAFE Team. The six key roles are identified below:<sup>4</sup>

## SCHOOL INCIDENT COMMANDER (IC):

The School Incident Commander (IC) is usually the school principal or their designee. The IC is typically the first responder when an emergency occurs at a school. The School IC acts to contain the situation and provide for the safety of all students, visitors, and staff. The School IC has the full authority to make personnel assignments and to make the decision to evacuate and relocate students and staff to preserve life and property.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Determine the level of emergency response needed.**
- **Activate the emergency response system by:**
  - o **Calling 911,**
  - o **Activating the school SAFE Team,**

- o Deciding whether to stay in the school building or to evacuate,
- o Making an appropriate announcement to the students and staff,
- o Accounting for all students, staff, and visitors,
- o Establishing the Command Post, per the school crisis plan,
- o Meeting with the Emergency Responders upon arrival,
- o Activating a plan for releasing students to parents, if necessary, based on the situation,
- o Documenting all activities on the After Action Report, Victim Log, etc.

## FIRST AID COORDINATOR (FAC)

The First Aid Coordinator (FAC) will direct triage and the administration of first aid to injured students and staff. The designated FAC should have formal first aid training.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Until emergency medical services arrive, the FAC will:

- Establish a first aid station in a safe area,
- Provide basic life support and care for the injured to the extent of abilities,
- Use supplies in the school emergency backpack or clinic,
- Maintain records of the injured persons,
- Provide ongoing updates to the incident commander,
- Document all related activities.



## STUDENT SUPERVISION COORDINATOR (SSC)

The primary role of the Student Supervision Coordinator (SSC) is to coordinate the supervision of students by teachers. In an emergency, teachers will account for and supervise all students. The SSC will collect attendance sheets from all teachers, monitor student and teacher needs, and report to the IC.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Account for all students,**
- **Report the extent of injuries in each class,**
- **Provide ongoing checks of students, staff, and visitors well-being,**
- **Coordinate evacuation of students,**
- **Assess and report emergency needs of students,**
- **Ensure students are occupied with activities,**
- **Coordinate with the Student-Parent Reunion Coordinator,**
- **Provide ongoing updates to the Incident Commander,**
- **Document all activities.**

## FACILITY AND MATERIAL COORDINATOR (FMC)

The primary role of the Facility and Materials Coordinator (FMC) is to coordinate the security of the building and provide material support for the School Incident Commander. The FMC will be called upon to turn off the ventilation system, lock

school doors, if necessary, and move equipment and supplies to where they are needed most.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Secure the school building by:**
  - o **Locking doors, turning off ventilation, gas, as indicated,**
  - o **Assisting in moving students, staff, and visitors to safe locations,**
  - o **Moving equipment and materials to areas where needed,**
  - o **Providing ongoing updates to the Incident Commander,**
  - o **Documenting all activities.**

## STUDENT-PARENT REUNION COORDINATOR (S-PRC):

The Student-Parent Reunion Coordinator (S-PRC) has the primary role to coordinate the reunion of students with parents or legal guardians. In an emergency, bus schedules may be disrupted or students may be evacuated to a new location. All students must be accounted for and reunited with their legal caretakers in an orderly manner. Each parent or legal guardian must sign out their child on an official record, which is managed by the S-PRC.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coordinate reunion of students and parents,
- Set up a reunion location in an appropriate space,
- Ensure parents/guardians sign out for each student,
- Make sure all students are accounted for,
- Maintain sign-out sheets and other records,
- Provide ongoing updates to the Incident Commander,
- Document all activities.

## SCHOOL-BASED SAFE TEAM COORDINATOR

The School-Based SAFE Team Coordinator will coordinate a response to students or staff who displays significant emotional distress. This person will coordinate the assessment of students and staff's needs and provide resources as indicated.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coordinate recovery services at the emergency site,
- Triage students, visitors, or staff in need of emotional support,
- Provide information to parents, staff, and students,
- Link with the District Crisis Team,
- Make referrals for appropriate counseling services,
- Develop a plan to help students return to learning,

- Provide ongoing updates to the Incident Commander,
- Document all activities.

The SAFE School Team should complete the FEMA Courses under IS-360 and IS-907 provided by the Emergency Management Institute which is listed below:

**IS-360: Preparing for Mass Casualty Incidents: A Guide for Schools, Higher Education, and Houses of Worship**

<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-360>

**IS-907: Active Shooter: What You Can Do**

<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-907>

# RECOVERY

The goal of recovery is to return to learning and restore the infrastructure of the school as quickly as possible. Focus on students and take as much time as needed for recovery. School staff can be trained to deal with the emotional impact of a crisis, as well as to initially assess the emotional needs of students, staff, and responders. One of the major goals of recovery is to provide a caring and supporting school and community environment.

## ASSEMBLE A CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM (CIT) AND ASSESS EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF STAFF, STUDENTS, FACILITIES, AND RESPONDERS

A Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is composed of individuals at either the district or school level involved in recovery. Service providers in the community may want to assist after a crisis. With prior planning, those with appropriate skills and certifications may be tasked to assist in recovery. Assess the emotional needs of all students and staff, and determine those who need intervention by a school counselor, social worker, school psychologist, or other mental health professional. In addition, available services need to be identified for families who may want to seek treatment for their children themselves.



## KEEP STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND THE MEDIA INFORMED

Be clear about what steps have been taken to tend to student safety after the crisis has occurred. Let families and other community members know what support services the school and district is providing or what other community resources are available. Messages to students should be age appropriate. Create a Joint Information Center (JIC) where information sharing is centralized.



## RETURN TO THE “BUSINESS OF LEARNING” AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

Experts agree that the first order of business following a crisis is to return students to learning as quickly as possible. This may involve helping students and families cope with separations from one another with the reopening of the school after a crisis.



## PROVIDE STRESS MANAGEMENT

Trauma experts emphasize the need to create a caring, warm, and trusting environment for students following a crisis. Allow students to talk about how they felt and what they experienced during the traumatic event. Younger children,

who may not be able to fully express their feelings verbally, may benefit from participating in creative activities, including drawing, painting, or writing stories. Engage older adolescents in group discussions, and address any issues of guilt. In addition, provide on-site counselors after the incident.

## RESTORE INFRASTRUCTURE

Restoring infrastructure is essential to the restoration of the teaching and learning environment. Restoring damaged infrastructure after an emergency incident is a positive, tangible sign of recovery for students and staff. Restoring infrastructure after an incident provides an opportunity to evaluate incident response and implement new and effective protective measures if necessary.

## EVALUATE

Evaluating recovery efforts will help prepare for the next crisis. Use several methods to evaluate recovery efforts. Conduct brief interviews with emergency responders, families, teachers, students, and staff. Focus groups may also be helpful in obtaining candid information about recovery efforts. Evaluate what worked, what did not, and how operations or Emergency Operational Plans (EOP) can be improved. Update and strengthen the EOP so that in a crisis, no child is left behind. It may also be prudent to conduct a community briefing within 48 hours of the incident. In addition, it may be helpful to conduct after-action reports with

school district personnel and first responder commanders within one week of the incident.

The safety of our schools is a very important issue across our country. While no school principal wants to face the challenges of violence, they must plan and prepare to deal with critical events. This is done through proper planning and effective training. Only by creating a partnership between law enforcement and our schools we can safeguard our children against violence.



# REFERENCES

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8. United States Secret Service — Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model — An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence

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