

# Emergency Operations

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## Developing a Safety Plan for Schools

Instructional manual for school emergency preparedness planning including basic procedures, functional and hazard specifics for use in developing and establishing an emergency operations and safety plan for your local ministry complete with a sample template to assist with the overall design structure.

DEVELOPING AN EMERGENCY OPERATIONS  
SAFETY PLAN FOR SCHOOLS

# School Emergency Preparedness Planning

## A. Knowing What to Do

School emergency preparedness planning is knowing how to respond quickly and efficiently in a crisis. It is critical to ensuring the safety of a school and its students. An emergency operations quick-reference notebook should be in the school office and crucial instructions readily available to and regularly reviewed by key personnel. While in the midst of a crisis is not the time to start deciding who ought to do what. Children and youth rely on and find great comfort in the adults who protect them. A school staff must know how to help their students through a crisis and return them home safely. Knowing what to do when faced with a crisis can be the difference between calm and chaos, between courage and fear, or between life and death. There are thousands of fires in schools every year, yet there is minimal damage to life and property because staff and students are prepared. This preparation needs to be extended to all risks schools face. A school needs to be ready at all times to handle crises whether large or small.

## B. Considerations Before Writing a Plan

Recognize that school crises are a reality. School crises have become a part of our world. The first line of defense is to admit that there is a possibility that terrorism, violence, or a natural disaster could strike the school.

Avoid a "that-would-never-happen-here" mentality. A school prays that it will never have to deal with a crisis, but it is much better to have planned in advance how to handle one if it occurs.

It is not necessary to "reinvent the wheel." When beginning to craft an emergency preparedness plan, a school should investigate existing plans by visiting different websites. Some resources include:

- Local public school system
- Government Department/Ministry of Education
- Emergency Response Agencies
- American Red Cross

### 1. Hazard Analysis Criteria (Hazard Threat Specifics)

There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to emergency preparedness. Each community and each school has its own history, culture, and way of doing business. Schools are at

risk for different types of crises depending on their location and have their own definitions of what constitutes a crisis. Define what a crisis is for the school based on vulnerabilities, needs, and assets i.e., the location of your school would determine inclusion of tornado or hurricane or both. Wildfire may not be a consideration in a large urban area and gang-related terror would probably not be an issue in remote rural areas.

Plans need to take into account children or staff with physical, developmental, or mental challenges, as well as children with limited language proficiency. A range of events and hazards with both natural and human causes need to be addressed.

Following is a summary of potential hazards that could threaten your area. Your emergency preparedness and operations plan should cover those items that would be typical to your situation and circumstances. This listing is not ranked according to probability:

**a. Natural Hazards:**

- Drought
- Extreme heat
- Earthquake
- Fire/Explosion
- Floods: flash, rain, river, and urban
- Hurricane/typhoon
- Landslide
- Lightning
- Public health epidemics
- Severe winds/weather
- Tornados
- Wildfire: brush, grassland, and woodland
- Winter storms (severe): blizzard, extreme cold, ice storm, heavy snow

**b. Technological/Man-made Hazards:**

- Abduction
- Bomb Threat
- Civil disorder
- Criminal Act
- Dam failures
- Death(s) at school
- Disruptive citizens/parents
- Energy shortages
- Escaped prisoners
- Fallen aircraft
- Hazardous Materials

- Fixed facility incidents
- Transportation accidents (air, highway, pipeline, and rail)
- Spills (gas leaks)
- Chemical Accident (offsite)
- Chemical Accident (onsite)/Threat of Explosion
- Nuclear Attack Risk Conditions
- Air Pollution Episode

Hostage situation

Medical emergencies

Pathogen Risk (Blood/Body Fluid Exposure through percutaneous injury) – skin penetration and exposure by any method/object including bites (human & animal)

Power failure

Radiological Incident: fixed facility incidents

Radiological Incident: transportation accidents

Radiological Incident: wartime

Riots/Civil Disorders (inside)

Riots/Civil Disorders (outside)

School shootings

Stranger/Intruder on campus

Subsidence

Terrorism

Threatening Individuals

Transportation crash: air, bus, and rail

Urban fire

Water outages

A school's emergency preparedness plan must be comprehensive in scope but simple in execution.

An administrator should evaluate the security and physical condition of the church/school building. Particular attention should be given to door and window locks, smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, sprinkler systems, communication systems, and the heating/ventilation/air conditioning system. Consider reducing the number of open doors and keeping trees and shrubs trimmed to promote natural visibility.

## 2. Preparation of the School Site

The following items are for consideration in establishing your emergency plan. You may or may not need all the items listed according to your individual situation. All lists should be kept secure in an Emergency Operations quick-reference notebook in the school office. Develop lists and/or provide supplies in these areas as your local circumstances would dictate.

- Principal's checklist

- Staff's checklist
- Hazard Assessment of School Site (use reference list provided to help)
- Staff Emergency Backpack
- Individual Student Emergency Kits
- Procedure to Evacuate a School Site

### 3. Important Maps of School Site

Maps should be developed as applicable and posted at appropriate locations around the facilities. Copies of each should be included in the quick-reference notebook.

- Fire Drill Map--to be used to evacuate the building
- Evacuation Map--to be used to leave the building site
- Shelter-in-place Map--to be used during a hazardous materials accident
- Weather shelter Map--to be used if severe weather threatens
- Utility map--to be used whenever utilities must be shut off

## C. Considerations After a Plan Is in Place

1. Assure students that the school is safe, that it has a strong emergency plan in place, that God is in control, and that they do not need to worry or be afraid. However, as students, they need to take emergency matters seriously.
2. The staff will be the ones directly controlling the students through an emergency; therefore, discuss the plan and their role with the staff. If the staff is unclear about the plan and their specific role, that confusion will be magnified in the students.
3. To be effective, a plan must be practiced often.
  - Students respond to adults' emotions and need to see that those in charge have self-control and calmly carry out the emergency plan.
  - Any drills should be practiced in a realistic manner, such as during lunch hours, not simply when it is convenient and least disruptive to the school day. Schools must practice in the times and manner they would experience in a real emergency. Practice various scenarios. For example, block the main exit to see whether students and staff know secondary exits. Arrange in advance for an older student to hide in the bathroom during the drill to see how long it takes staff to notice a student is missing and then how long it takes to find him.
4. Whether a crisis requires an evacuation, a group assembly, or a lockdown, a critical, though often overlooked step is the roll call. Decidedly different from a simple "head count," the roll call involves noting exactly which students are present and which are not. In a roll call, students who are absent that day, students or athletes who have left for a school event or game, visitors to the building, and nonteaching staff must be accounted for as well. When the building is burning, "I think everyone got out" is

not sufficient.

5. Provide police and fire departments with updated floor plans and blueprints for their reference for tactical responses. Should emergency medical personnel need to treat students, an alphabetical list of students listing allergies (bee stings, drugs), conditions like asthma or epilepsy, and a signed emergency medical treatment release for each student would be helpful.
6. Determine the best way to release students once it is safe to do so. Part of the emergency plan needs to include parent-student reunification procedures so students can be released safely and in an orderly manner to their parents' custody.
7. Once the plan is published, make a copy available to parents. When a school talks openly and often about issues of safety, the school establishes parental confidence in school personnel and alleviates fears.

The ultimate irony of crisis management is that even though a school prioritizes, prepares for, and practices emergency responses, the many hours that the school should spend on these steps are all going toward practicing something that, God-willing, the school will never use. If a school only **practices** the procedure for various crises, it is a blessing from God!





# Important Information

Emergency: **Dial 911**(See below for procedure on 911 call)

Local Police Department non-emergency phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Fire Department non-emergency phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

County Office of Emergency Services: \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Pastor Name and phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Red Cross Local Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Red Cross State Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and phone number of principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Nearest hospital and phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Electric company phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Gas company phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Water Company phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Clergy/Counselor's phone numbers (students): \_\_\_\_\_

News Radio Stations: \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Station A: \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Station B: \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Station C: \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Station D: \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Station E: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Procedure to Call 911**

1. State your emergency.
2. Stay Calm.
3. Give your name and address.
4. Listen. Allow 911 employees to direct conversation.
5. Be prepared to answer questions in a clear, calm manner.
6. Remain on the telephone. DO NOT hang up until the dispatcher says to do so.



# Basic Plan

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CRISIS SITUATIONS**

### ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

This section establishes the operational organization that will be relied on to manage incidents and includes the kinds of tasks to be performed by position and organization along with an overview of who does what. *<sample data below – add to or remove as local situation dictates; multiple titles listed – select the one that best fits your situation>*

#### **A. PRINCIPAL/BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR/TEACHER IN CHARGE**

May serve as incident commander or delegate that authority to a qualified individual. At all times, the principal still retains the overall responsibility for the overall safety of students and staff. However, delegating the authority to manage the incident allows the principal to focus on policy-level activities and interfacing with other agencies and parents. Specific responsibilities of incident commander (whether the principal or other designated individual) include:

- Assume overall direction of all incident management procedures based on actions and procedures outlined in this EOP.
- Take steps deemed necessary to ensure the safety of students, staff, and other individuals.
- Determine whether to implement incident management protocols (e.g., Evacuation, Reverse Evacuation, Shelter in Place, Lockout, Lockdown, etc.), as described more fully in the functional specifics of this document
- Arrange for transfer of students, staff, and other individuals when safety is threatened by a disaster.
- Work with emergency services personnel. (Depending on the incident, community agencies such as law enforcement or fire department may have jurisdiction for investigations, rescue procedures, etc.)
- Be sure the entire Custodial Team has assignments communicated to them prior to all emergencies.
- Maintain communication and be sure radio communications are “open” throughout the emergency situation.
- Provide support and be alert to the needs of staff and students.
- Keep pastor, school staff, and other officials informed of the situation.

#### **B. SECRETARIAL/OFFICE TEAM MEMBERS:**

As directed by building administration, take an active role in:

- Communication – Maintain radio and/or phone contact. Alert appropriate agencies and school district personnel.
- Information – Provide information to staff as directed; ensure that enrollment/medical emergency cards are available to proper school officials and/or rescue personnel.
- Assistance – Assist teachers/supervisors or other colleagues as directed.
- Check-out “Safety Zone” – Office personnel establishes and implements a procedure for checking-out students to parents/guardians/adults. Also, set-up an “Office” in the “Safety Zone,” if this area is activated.

### **C. TEACHERS/SUPERVISORS (CLASSROOM/LEARNING CENTER STAFF)**

Classroom or learning center teachers/supervisors shall be responsible for the supervision of students and shall remain with students until directed otherwise.

Responsibilities include:

- Follow the procedures as outlined and any verbal instructions from school administration, law enforcement, and/or other emergency personnel.
- Remain calm and in control.
- Do not allow your students to leave the area or classroom until instructed.
- When instructed, evacuate students from your classroom in an orderly manner. Follow the “fire drill” exit procedures, unless instructed differently. (Prior to evacuation, should you hear gunshots, you and the students should assume the “duck and cover position.”) **DO NOT PULL THE FIRE ALARM!**
- Remind students to exit in a calm, orderly manner.
- Take your Goal Check/Attendance book, car keys, and any personal belongings.
- Lead your class/group to the designated student relocation area.
- Await further instructions at the relocation site.
- Remain with your students at all time.
- Do not dismiss students until you receive official word from administration. Disregard bells or normal time schedule until instructed differently.
- If a student leaves, record their name and time.
- Take notes, names, descriptions, and document any unusual events that occur. **(THIS IS IMPORTANT!)**
- Teachers/supervisors or other staff should not make statements to the media or parents unless instructed to do so. This will prevent rumors or misinformation. If necessary to respond, please say the following: “We are following our emergency procedures” and direct them to the Superintendent or Building/Incident Administrator(s).
- ***Trust those in charge of the crisis situation.***

### **D. MONITORS/INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS**

Responsibilities include assisting supervisors/teachers as directed.

### **E. SCHOOL NURSE/HEALTH ASSISTANT**

Responsibilities include:

- Administer first aid or emergency treatment as needed.
- Supervise administration of first aid by those trained to provide it.
- Organize first aid and medical supplies

### **F. CUSTODIANS/MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL**

Responsibilities include:

- Survey and report building damage to Administration/Officer in Charge
- Control main shutoff valves for gas, water, and electricity and ensure that no hazard results from broken or downed lines.
- Provide damage control as needed.
- Assist in the conservation, use, and disbursement of supplies and equipment.
- Keep incident commander or designee informed of condition of school.

## **G. FOOD SERVICE/CAFETERIA WORKERS**

Responsibilities include:

- Use, prepare, and serve food and water on a rationed basis whenever the feeding of students and staff becomes necessary during an incident.
- Execute assignments as directed by the person in charge.

## **H. BUS/VAN DRIVERS**

Responsibilities include:

- Supervise the care of students if disaster occurs while students are in the bus or van.
- Transfer students to new location when directed
- Execute assignments as directed by designated incident commander

## **I. OTHER STAFF (e.g., Itinerant Staff, Substitutes, etc.)**

Responsibilities include reporting to the incident commander/principal.

## **J. STUDENTS**

Responsibilities include:

- Cooperate during emergency drills and exercises, and during an incident.
- Learn to be responsible for themselves and others in an incident.
- Understand the importance of not being a bystander by reporting situations of concern.
- Develop an awareness of natural, technological and human-caused hazards and associated prevention, preparedness, and mitigation measures.
- Take an active part in school incident response/recovery activities, as age appropriate.

## **K. PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Responsibilities include:

- Encourage and support school safety, violence prevention, and incident preparedness programs within the school.
- Provide the school with requested information concerning the incident, early and late dismissals, and other related release information.
- Practice incident management preparedness in the home to reinforce school training and ensure family safety.
- Understanding their roles during a school emergency.



# Functional Specifics

## **1. DROP, COVER, AND HOLD PROCEDURE**

### PURPOSE, SCOPE, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND SPECIALIZED PROCEDURES

In cases of an incident requiring drop, cover, and hold, the following procedure should be adhered to by students and staff. They are designed to prevent injury or death during an incident whether located indoors, outdoors, or in a moving vehicle.

To implement this procedure staff and students participate in routine drills and when called for, specific instruction as needed for special needs students.

The following procedures will be implemented by staff/faculty when directed by the principal or when deemed appropriate by the situation.

### INDOOR PROCEDURE

When indoors, students/staff should:

- Drop to the floor.
- Cover by getting under a sturdy table, desk, or other piece of furniture. If there is no suitable furniture nearby, cover their face and head with their arms.
- Hold on to the table or desk until directed to stop.
- When directed by the principal and/or when it is safe to do so, staff members will evacuate students to pre-assigned locations.

NOTE: Under no circumstances should staff/students use elevator(s) to evacuate.

### OUTDOOR PROCEDURE

When outdoors, students/staff should:

- Move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires.
- Drop to the ground.
- Cover their face and head with their arms.
- When directed by the principal and/or when it is safe to do so, staff members will evacuate students to pre-assigned locations.

### MOVING VEHICLE PROCEDURE

When in a moving vehicle, drivers/staff should:

- Stop as quickly as safety permits.
- Instruct all students/staff to stay in the vehicle.
- When it is safe to do so, proceed cautiously or evacuate the vehicle.

## **2. PRECAUTIONARY/FULL LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES**

The Principal or designee will notify adults in the building by using the PA to say the following:

***“Attention all staff, precautionary lockdown is in effect at this time.”*** Or, for response to an actual emergency situation: ***“Attention all staff, full lockdown is in effect at this time.”***

- a. Clear the hallways of all students. Bring any students in the hall, near your room, into your class whether they are part of your official class or not. Students in restrooms are to report to the nearest classroom.
- b. Make a list of these students and their regularly assigned teacher/classroom.

- c. School staff will secure all exterior doors.
- d. Close and lock your classroom door. Shut all blinds. Keep one blind partially open for outside communication. **Turn OFF lights during a full lockdown.** Clear student desks of all materials.
- e. Inform students that a “lockdown” is underway and reassure students the situation is under control. Keep students away from all doors, all windows, and off cellular devices. Teachers/supervisors may continue instructing students in their assigned area for a precautionary lockdown. Otherwise, place class in lockdown position:
  - 1. Lie or sit on the floor against the wall.
  - 2. Make sure students and staff are away from doors and windows.
  - 3. Be quiet.
- f. Answer questions and inform students their cooperation and patience will make a positive difference in the situation.
- g. No one is to leave the classroom or area.
- h. Remain in place if the fire or tornado alarm system rings. Fire evacuation will be signaled by intercom announcement, if needed, during the lockdown.
- i. In all emergency situations, administration and/or law enforcement personnel will come to your classroom and will instruct evacuation procedures. If this occurs, follow the instruction given by administration and/or law enforcement.
- j. Take your Goal Check/Attendance book if your class is evacuated.
- k. No one will enter the class/area except law enforcement and/or administrative personnel.
- l. Lockdown concludes only with notification from administration and/or law enforcement.
- m. Students and teachers/supervisors report back inside the building for a precautionary lockdown and secure themselves in the closest secure area. For a full lockdown, teachers/supervisors and students should attempt to hide themselves in outside buildings or low areas around the building and remain quiet.

### 3. EVACUATION PROCEDURE

During some lockdowns, an evacuation (or reverse evacuation) may be necessary. When necessary, a law enforcement official (sometimes a sheriff or city officer) will come to your classroom to initiate the evacuation.

- a. Evacuate only if you are instructed to do so by law enforcement and/or administrative personnel.
- b. **NOTE:** The law enforcement official will provide specific instructions to conduct the evacuation. Follow all of these instructions carefully. Assist the official with communications and ensure students understand the instructions given.
- c. Follow the evacuation route established by law enforcement. This may or may not be the “Fire Drill” route for your classroom.

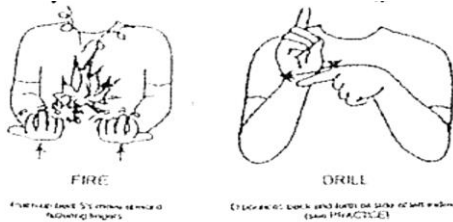


- d. Take your Goal Check/Attendance Book, keys, and personal belongings with you. **NO ONE** is to return for any items. When you arrive at the “Safety Zone,” keep your class/group together.
- e. Further instructions will be given in the “Safety Zone” as soon as possible. Wait and reassure students. Remember, law enforcement officials are dealing with a very volatile situation and may have to ask questions, or in some cases, double-check to ensure no perpetrator is within your group masquerading as a student/teacher in order to escape. Authorities may order all individuals to have hands up or be wrist-cuffed until all suspects are in custody.
- f. Departure from the school site may be necessary. School buses may be used to transport students and teachers/supervisors to alternate sites. Listen for instructions.
- g. **DO NOT** dismiss any students until the official word is given to do so.
- h. Review suspect information as needed:
  - 1. Is the suspect known to anyone?
  - 2. Compile a list of suspect names.
  - 3. List addresses and home phone number(s), if known.
  - 4. Why are they a suspect?
  - 5. What is a detailed physical description?
  - 6. If the suspect was visible, describe as fully as possible from hair to shoes.
  - 7. Does the suspect have a relative in the building?
    - If yes – collect information on all.
  - 8. Is anyone aware of any recent personal issues with the suspect or their relatives in the building?

#### 4. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING STUDENTS

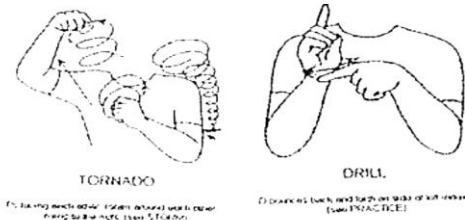
**FIRE** – The student and teacher will follow classroom evacuation procedures.

Interpreter/teacher will sign “fire drill.”



**TORNADO**– The student and teacher will follow classroom evacuation procedures.

Interpreter/teacher will sign “tornado drill.”



**PRECAUTIONARY** – The teacher will place a yellow card in the classroom door window.

The student will follow school emergency procedures. Interpreter/teacher will sign “precautionary.”



**FULL LOCK DOWN** – The teacher will place a red card in the classroom door window.

The student will follow school emergency procedures. Interpreter/teacher will sign “full lockdown.”



# Hazard or Threat Specifics

## **1. SEVERE WEATHER**

### **TORNADO WATCH – Conditions are favorable for a tornado or severe weather:**

- a. Office personnel will monitor radio/television for weather information.
- b. The Principal will assign a staff member to watch for signs of a tornado at the southwest corner of the building (or other area of the building based on weather information received.)
- c. Teachers/supervisors are alerted via PA and/or other method of non-PA communication in regards to weather conditions.
- d. All persons need to be brought inside the building.
- e. Teachers/supervisors are to close all windows and blinds.
- f. Teachers/supervisors are to review tornado drill procedures.

### **TORNADO WARNING – A tornado has been sighted in the area:**

- a. Students and staff will report to their predetermined safe areas and follow tornado drill procedures.
- b. Teachers/supervisors are to take Goal/Attendance Book and a writing utensil to record information.
- c. Teachers/supervisors ensure students are in the proper “tuck” position.
- d. Office staff will continue to monitor radio for weather information.
- e. Teachers/supervisors and students are to remain in their designated safe area until the warning expires and the Principal and/or School Administrator issue an all-clear signal.
- f. Remain quiet for additional instructions.

### **TORNADO AFTERMATH**

- a. Move students and staff out of any damaged portion of the building and to an undamaged portion of the structure. If weather permits, the building “Safety Zone” can be used.
- b. All individuals are to report to the “Safety Zone” if the school is damaged severely. Keep your class/group together at all times. All building crisis response team members are to be available in the treatment area for assistance. Teachers/supervisors on the team may shift responsibility of their students to another teacher by giving the teacher their grade/goal check book for attendance purposes.
- c. Request assistance for injuries from building crisis response team members.
- d. Report all injuries to the nurse and/or administration. If you are in the school “Safety Zone,” report the nature of the problem to an administrator and/or rescue official.
- e. Ensure all injured persons are comfortable as possible and keep them warm.
- f. Be sure authorities know if you have injured individuals with you and enlist the support of your students, where possible, to calm fellow students and to help you.

***ALL involved school personnel will complete the debriefing sheet in the event of an actual severe weather situation.***

## **2. FIRE DRILL**

- a. School's alarm sounds.
- b. Take your grade/goal check book and a writing utensil.
- c. Close classroom window(s) and door(s). Turn off all lights.
- d. Lead the class and follow the evacuation route for your room/area.
- e. NO TALKING – Silence will allow everyone to hear emergency instructions.
- f. After exiting the building:
  1. Walk clear of the building
  2. Keep the class/group together.
  3. Take attendance and report any missing student(s) to school administration.
- g. Wait for an "all clear signal" to re-enter the building; or wait for further instructions.
- h. If an alarm sounds during an **unstructured time** (passing time, beginning of day, etc.), **meet the students you are responsible for when the next bell sounds**. Meet the students at your pre-assigned area of evacuation with your grade/goal check book for attendance.

### **IF A FIRE OCCURS:**

- a. Take attendance and keep your class/group with you.
- b. Report injuries to school administration and/or rescue authorities.
- c. Reassure students the outside "Safety Zone" has been selected as the best place for them in this circumstance.
- d. Await instructions for student dismissal.
- e. Keep a list of students who need to leave your group for ANY reason. This includes students who may be picked up by parents/guardians.
- f. Members of the building crisis response team are to report to the treatment center where teachers/supervisors needing assistance may contact them.

***ALL involved school personnel will complete the debriefing sheet in the event of an actual fire.***