

SCHOOL CRISIS, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, AND MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

In order to maintain the safety and order that is needed for a positive learning and working environment, the Mansfield Public Schools must clearly delineate expectations for crisis prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery activities, and ensure that the staff is prepared to meet these expectations. Therefore, as part of the District's overall efforts toward school safety, the Superintendent or his/her designee will develop and implement a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan for crisis and critical incident prevention and response, threat assessment, and continuity of operations, which will comply with and enforce all applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations.

Crisis management (preparedness and response) is a central component of comprehensive school safety. The most important consideration in both crisis management and safe schools efforts is the health, safety and welfare of our students and staff.

I. Definitions

“Mitigation/Prevention” — Means what schools can do to reduce exposure to risks and hazards and lessen the potential impact of an emergency situation. Mitigation efforts can occur both before and after emergencies or disasters.

“Preparedness” — the roles and responsibilities of the school emergency response teams and the actions, exercises and supplies needed for various emergency scenarios. These activities develop readiness and response capabilities.

“Response” — detailed procedures for implementing appropriate actions for most types of emergencies that may be encountered in a school setting. Emphasis is placed on minimizing the effects of the emergency or disaster and how to mobilize resources needed to address the emergency at hand.

“Crises” — will include but not be limited to situations involving the death of a student, staff member, or a member of a student's immediate family by suicide, substance abuse, illness, or accident. The building Principal will have the authority to determine what is a crisis incident and to convene the school's Crisis Management Team.

“Critical incidents” — will include situations involving threats of harm to students, personnel, or facilities. Critical incidents include but are not limited to natural disasters, fire, use of weapons/explosives, and the taking of hostages. Such incidents require an inter-agency response involving law enforcement and/or emergency services agencies.

“Crisis Management” — is that part of the District's approach to school safety which focuses more narrowly on a time-limited, problem-focused intervention to identify, confront and resolve the crisis, restore equilibrium, and support appropriate adaptive responses.

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“Recovery” — means general strategies for each school to follow after the emergency and restoring affected areas to pre-emergency conditions in order to return to the normal learning environment as quickly as possible. Recovery activities may be both short-term and long-term; ranging from restoration of essential utilities such as water and power, to mitigation measures designed to prevent future occurrences of a specific threat

II. Leadership

Emergency Management Team (District-Level)

The Superintendent will appoint an Emergency Management Team comprised of representatives from Police, Fire, Town Manager, Board of Health, Department of Public Works, Superintendent’s designee, School Lead Nurse, and School Crisis Management Teams.

The Emergency Management Team will provide schools with directives for common safety protocols along with guidance on how to tailor these protocols to a particular school’s needs, including but not limited to modifying procedures for the age and characteristics of the student population; accommodating students and staff with disabilities or other special considerations; and adapting common procedures to fit the specifications of the school’s building and grounds, such as evacuation, shelter-in-place, lockdown, family reunification, etc.

The Emergency Management Team will meet once a year to review training of school district staff, updates school safety plans, and conduct overall review of events and response capabilities.

The Emergency Management Team will prepare, distribute, and annually review the District’s Emergency Management Plan documents to make sure the plan is up to date, to adapt best practices, and to obtain approval of the plan from necessary officials.

School Crisis Management Team (Building-Level)

Each Building Principal will establish an individual School Crisis Management Team to meet the demands of crisis incidents. This team will implement and adapt appropriate action from the district-level Emergency Management Plan to address the specific events of the crisis. The School Crisis Management Team will annually review the school’s Safety Plan, define training needs for individual school site, and provide after-action reports for each emergency response incident that occurs during school hours.

The School Crisis Management team will consist of an immediately accessible core group who have the knowledge and skills to act in any emergency and will include the principal, assistant principal, guidance or adjustment counselor, nurse/clinic attendant, school psychologist, one or more selected teachers, and maintenance staff. Additionally, the Police Department (school resource officer or other person designated by the Police Chief), Fire Department, and Mansfield Emergency Management Agency will be asked

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to consult with the school team. A roster of team members will be posted in each school administration office.

In developing a School Safety Plan, the school's Crisis team will work with the district's Emergency Management team, as well as stakeholders in their school community, including but not limited to classroom, special education, and subject specialist teachers; guidance, nursing, secretarial, maintenance, food service and transportation staff; parents and students; and community or religious leaders.

All members of School Crisis Management Team will be trained in the basics of the Incident Command System (ICS) to increase their capacity to work with first responders.

III. District Emergency Management Plan

The Emergency Management Plan will be a district-level written plan with explicit intent to protect and sustain life, reduce emotional trauma, assist in emotional recovery from trauma, and minimize personal injury and/or damage to school facilities.

The Emergency Management Plan will provide guidance for school administrators, employees, students, and parents in responding to crisis or emergency situations, managing an actual or potential emergency, and/or providing support following a crisis or emergency. It will consist of a **consolidated set of procedures for all schools** in the district that incorporate all necessary whole school protocols (e.g. school safety audits, evacuation, shelter-in-place, lockdown, family reunification, post-emergency/recovery, etc.), as developed by the Emergency Management Team, including:

1. School-based **Safety Plans**
2. School-based **Crisis Operations Manuals** (Classroom/Office Guide)
3. School-based **Medical Emergency Response Plans** and **Multi-Hazard Evacuation Plans**, as required under state law. These plans will be considered part of, and will align with, the District's overall Emergency Management Plan.

A. School Safety Plans

The School Safety Plan guides the school's Crisis Management Team with the procedures and protocols to prevent, prepare, respond, and recover from potential hazards and threats to a school, while drawing on the District's Emergency Management consolidated procedures and guidelines.

Each School Safety Plan will include provisions for **Mitigation/Prevention; Intervention/Response**, and **Post-emergency/Recovery** activities, including the establishment or designation of the following:

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Mitigation/Prevention measures designed to:

1. Assess physical and environmental risks.
2. Assess social and emotional well-being of students, faculty, and staff.
3. Assess school culture and climate.
4. Determine mitigation activities and a plan to prioritize those risks that cannot be mitigated.
5. Raise student and staff awareness about school safety and provide appropriate means for reporting concerns about safety. Written procedures to follow in emergencies (such as fire, inclement weather, injury, illness, and violent or threatening behavior) will be outlined in the student/parent handbook and discussed with students and staff during the first week of each school year. Students and staff should also be clearly informed of all disciplinary rules, with particular emphasis on those bearing on safety.
6. Train professional staff to recognize the warning signs that may precede violent conduct and provide a process for referring students in need of help.
7. Make use of community resources, including parents and the local law enforcement departments, in developing strategies for keeping the schools and community safe.
8. Identify and respond to potential safety concerns on the school campus and on field trips or student activities involving travel. Each school within the District will conduct an annual school safety audit, using an item list developed by the Superintendent, in conjunction with the Town of Mansfield Police and Fire Departments. Principals will immediately notify the Superintendent about any safety or security concern in their schools. If the safety issue involves the school facility or grounds, the Principal will also notify the Director of Buildings and Grounds, and if the issue concerns school buses, the Director of Finance.

Response/Intervention Planning, including:

1. Explicit procedures for each crisis incident. Needs of students, staff and parents with limited English language proficiency or with disabilities, and student privacy rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) must be considered when developing procedures and protocols.
2. Crisis headquarters and command post outside the school facility in the event evacuation is necessary.
3. Chain of command in the event a key administrator is not available.
4. Spokesperson to the media. This person will be the superintendent or designee and is responsible for gathering and confirming all pertinent information. The spokesperson will also designate a media reception area when deemed appropriate.
5. Network of key communicators. It is the responsibility of these key individuals to convey approved information to others. This network may include

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phone trees to notify staff of emergency incidents and special meetings which may occur before or after school hours, and various counselors designated to support groups such as students, faculty, and parents.

6. Communication plan within the school and to the community. The best means of communication may vary with the crisis. However, the plan must provide for communicating with teachers and other district employees as soon as possible. When appropriate, well-informed representatives should be ready to go into classrooms. Avoid giving news via assembly or public address systems as results can be unpredictable when giving shocking news to large groups of students. To ensure accuracy and avoid rumor, information to students must come directly from internal memoranda or statements written specifically for that purpose and approved by the principal. News is best given to students in class so they can ask questions of a person they know. Questions from parents should also be addressed from a pre-approved fact sheet.

7. Critical Incident Management. Critical incident response requires inter-agency coordination and will be in accordance with the existing Memorandum of Understanding executed between the Mansfield Public Schools and the Mansfield Police Department.

8. Arrangement for support services. One individual from the Crisis Management Team will be designated to contact the Superintendent and to contact, as needed, other community resources. The Superintendent or his/her designee will arrange for assistance as needed from additional school psychologists, school social workers, and other guidance counselors. School arrangements should include the designation of meeting spaces, provisions to request on-call services to meet unexpected demand, and provision of long-term follow-up.

9. Bring closure to the crisis. This activity will vary depending on the crisis. But it is imperative to recognize officially the end of the crisis and the beginning of the healing process.

10. Evaluation of the crisis plan. Response to each crisis incident will be reviewed and evaluated at the conclusion of each crisis.

Post-Emergency/Recovery Planning including measures designed to:

1. Identify types of support and offers strategies for providing follow-up and on-going physical and psychological recovery interventions for students and staff.
2. Provide a damage-assessment protocol for physical assets.
3. Outline procedures and strategies for repair and restoration of physical facilities and infrastructure.
4. Outline financial and logistical protocols for recovery.
5. Establish procedures for making decisions about school closures and reopening.
6. Incorporate a Continuity of Operations Procedure (COOP).

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7. Provide protocols for activating Memoranda of Understanding with other agencies.
8. Provide guidelines for standing and temporary memorials, and the observance of anniversaries.
9. Provide guidelines for screening volunteers and accepting donations in emergency situations.

Each Building Principal is responsible for implementing the provisions of the School Safety Plan, including facilitating regular meetings with their school's Crisis Management Team to practice table-top drills, incorporate feedback from district-initiated drills, and otherwise prepare for situations that may be unsafe for students, staff, and school visitors. The School Crisis Management Team annually will evaluate the plan and its effectiveness and make modifications as needed.

B. School Crisis Operations Manual (Classroom/Office Guides)

The school's Crisis Management Team will develop a written Crisis Operations Manual for each school with protocols to guide faculty and staff in the event of an emergency and will be responsible for disseminating any procedural changes to the manual in a timely manner to all school employees.

Each school must have:

1. Written procedures for responding to emergencies, such as fire, injury, illness, and violent or threatening behavior, including outside threats to safety and security such as bomb threats or threatening conduct by persons not part of the school community. The plan will be acknowledged in the student handbook and discussed with staff and students during the first week of each school year.
2. Written procedures for responding to violent, disruptive or illegal activities by students or others within the school community while on school property or during a school-sponsored activity. Specific procedures shall be established for responding to verbal or physical threats and other forms of threatening conduct.
3. Procedures for responding to medical emergencies. .
4. Written procedures to follow for the safe evacuation of persons with special physical, medical, or language needs who may need assistance to exit a facility.

C. School Medical Emergency Response Plan

Each school must have a written **Medical Emergency Response Plan** to reduce the incidence of life-threatening emergencies and to promote efficient response to such emergencies.

Each school plan will include:

1. A method for establishing a rapid communication system linking all parts of the school campus, including outdoor facilities and practice fields, to the emergency

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- medical services system and protocols to clarify when the emergency medical services system and other emergency contact people will be called;
2. A determination of emergency medical service response time to any location on campus;
 3. A list of relevant contacts and telephone numbers with a protocol indicating when each person will be called, including names of professionals to help with post-emergency support;
 4. A method to efficiently direct emergency medical services personnel to any location on campus, including to the location of available rescue equipment;
 5. Safety precautions to prevent injuries in classrooms and on the facilities;
 6. A method of providing access to training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid for teachers, athletic coaches, trainers, and other school staff, which may include training high school students in CPR; and
 7. In the event the school possesses an automated external defibrillator, the location of the device, whether or not its location is either fixed or portable, and those personnel who are trained in its use, those personnel or volunteers who are trained in its use, those personnel with access to the device during regular school hours and after, and the total estimated amount of automated external defibrillators necessary to ensure campus-wide access during school hours, after-school activities and public events.

The Superintendent will develop each school's Medical Emergency Response Plan, in consultation with the building principal, school nurse, school athletic team physicians, coaches, trainers, and local police, first, and emergency personnel, as appropriate. Discussions at the school and community level will determine the details of each school's plan.

D. School Multi-Hazard Evacuation Plan

Each school must have a building-specific **Multi-Hazard Evacuation Plan**, which will encompass, but not be limited to, evacuations for fires, hurricanes and other hazardous storms or disasters in which serious bodily injury might occur, shootings and other terrorist activities, and bomb threats and will be designed for each school building after a review of each building.

Each school plan will include, but not be limited to:

- 1) Establishment of a crisis response team;
- 2) A designation as to who is in charge of said team and designated substitutes;
- 3) A communication plan;
- 4) Crisis procedures for safe entrance to and exit from the school by students, parents, and employees; and
- 5) Policies for enforcing school discipline and maintaining a safe and orderly environment during the crisis.

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School Drills

Medical Emergency Response Plan: As required by state law, each school will practice the medical emergency response sequence at the beginning of each school year and periodically throughout the year and evaluate and modify the plan as needed. School officials will review the response sequence with local fire and police officials at least once each year and will conduct periodic walk-throughs of school campuses.

Multi-Hazard Evacuation Plan: Building Principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire drills, lockdown drills, evacuation, and medical emergency response drills to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions and to give the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation.

School Facility Diagrams and Plans

All diagrams and plans of school facilities will use standard specifications, such as numbering for doors and exits, gas, electric, water and alarm shut-offs, and parking.

Diagrams of school facility interiors and floor plans will not be made public. School administrators will share diagrams only with emergency responders, except in necessary circumstances such as to assist an electrician or other trades person in an installation. In these circumstances, the recipient of the plan will sign an agreement that the plan will not be shared and will be returned when the plan is no longer needed.

Notice

Building Principals annually will provide students and staff with appropriate information regarding the school safety plan. The plan will be acknowledged in the student handbook and discussed with staff and students during the first week of each school year. Every student in all schools will be advised of the serious nature of fire, lockdown, and other emergency drill procedures and will be instructed as to his/her conduct during such a drill. Building Principals will be responsible for disseminating any procedural changes in a timely manner to all school employees. District employees are responsible for being familiar with district and school safety procedures so that they are comfortable following them in a crisis, critical incident, or medical emergency situation.

Building Principals also will take appropriate steps to educate parents about the school safety plan, its objectives, the need for it, and specific protocols and reasons for them. Such information can be included on the school website, in a letter, student/parent handbook or other informational materials prepared for parents, at parent orientations, or at other informational meetings.

Review

The School Committee will review annually the District's Emergency Management Plan, including Medical Emergency Response and Multi-Hazard Evacuation Plans. The

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School Committee has the authority to withhold or limit the public review/release of documents or discussion concerning security measures and emergency preparedness.

The Superintendent will keep the Committee informed of budgetary needs related to school safety and security as part of the annual operating budget and capital improvement planning.

Medical Emergency Response Plans: The Superintendent will submit Medical Emergency Response Plans once every 3 years to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and to the Town of Mansfield Police and Fire Departments, on or before September 1, or sooner if warranted, as required by state law. Building Principals will update plans in the case of new construction or physical changes to the school campus.

Multi-Hazard Evacuation Plans: Prior to the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent will meet with the Town of Mansfield fire chief and police chief to formulate and review the plan for each school under the Superintendent's supervision.

Adopted: October 6, 2015

LEGAL REFS: - *Multi-Hazard Evacuation Plan:* Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000.
 - *Medical Emergency Response Plan:* MGL C69, Section 8A and as amended by Chapter 284 of the Acts of 2014
 An Act Relative to the Reduction of Gun Violence: Chapter 284 of the Acts of 2014
 - *Meeting of Public Body in Executive Session:* MGL Chapter 30, Section 21
 - *Administration of Government, Statutes, and Definition of Statutory Terms:* MGL Chapter 4, Section 7, clause 26
 - *An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools:* Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010

OTHER REFS: - *Massachusetts Task Force Report on School Safety and Security,* July 2014
 - *Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans,* U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students, 2013.