

Crisis Management Plan for Diocese of Davenport Schools of Clinton and Scott Counties

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Critical Incident Emergency Phone Numbers

EMERGENCY/FIRST RESPONSE PERSONNEL

	Emergency	<u>Non Emergency</u>
Bettendorf Police Department	911	344-4015
Bettendorf Fire Department	911	344-4052
Davenport Police Department	911	326-7979
Davenport Fire Department	911	326-7906
Clinton Police Department	911	243-1458
Clinton Fire Department	911	242-0125
DeWitt Police Department	911	659-3145
DeWitt Fire Department	911	659-3000
Clinton County Sheriff	911	242-9211
Scott County Sheriff	911	326-8628
Ambulance	911	
Genesis West	421-1000	
Genesis East	421-1000	
Trinity North	445-4020	
Mercy Hospital (Clinton)	244-5555	
DeWitt Community Hospital	659-4200	

UTILITIES

BUILDING	ELECTRIC	GAS	WATER
Assumption High School	Mid-American Energy 1-800-799-4443	Mid-American Energy 1-800-595-5325	Iowa American Water 1-886-641-2108
Holy Family	Mid-American Energy 1-800-799-4443	Mid-American Energy 1-800-595-5325	Iowa American Water 1-886-641-2108
J F Kennedy	Mid-American Energy 1-800-799-4443	Mid-American Energy 1-800-595-5325	Iowa-American Water 332-9276
Lourdes	Mid-American Energy 1-800-799-4443	Mid-American Energy 1-800-595-5325	Iowa-American Water 1-886-641-2108
Sacred Heart - Davenport	Mid-American Energy 1-800-799-4443	Mid-American Energy 1-800-595-5325	Iowa-American Water 1-886-641-2108
St. Alphonsus	Mid-American Energy 1-800-799-4443	Mid-American Energy 1-800-595-5325	Iowa-American Water 1-886-641-2108

St. Paul The Apostle	Mid-American Energy 1-800-799-4443	Mid-American Energy 1-800-595-5325	Iowa-American Water 1-886-641-2108
Prince of Peace - Clinton	Alliant Energy 1-887-740-5050	Alliant Energy 1-887-740-5050	Iowa-American Water 1-886-641-2108
St. Joseph's – DeWitt	Alliant Energy 1-887-740-5050	Alliant Energy 1-887-740-5050	City of DeWitt 659-5324
Diocese Office	Mid-American Energy 1-800-799-4443	Mid-American Energy 1-800-595-5325	Iowa-America Water 1-886-641-2108

SUPPORT PERSONNEL/OTHER HELPFUL NUMBERS

AGENCY

Animal Control (Scott Co. Humane Society)	388-6655
Clinton Humane Society	242-2457
Department of Human Services – Clinton County (DHS)	243-6132
Department of Human Services – Scott County (DHS)	326-8794
Mississippi Bend AEA	359-1371
Clinton County Health Department	659-8148
Scott County Health Department	326-8618
Poison Control Information Center	1-800-228-9515
Poison Control Center – University of Iowa	1-800-222-1222

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent	Mary Wieser	324-1912 ext. 263 (W) 563-320-0972 (C)
Curriculum/Media Coordinator	Robert Pilcher	324-1911 ext. 264 (W)
Superintendent Secretary	Virginia Trujillo	324-1911 ext. 256 (W)

ASSUMPTION HIGH SCHOOL

Principal	Carmine Draude	326-5313 ext. 248 (W)
Dean of Student Services	Lynn Day	326-5313 (W)
Dean of Students	Wade King	326-5313 (W)
Principal Secretary	Mindy Silver	326-5313 (W)

Holy Family

Principal	Mike Morgan	324-3205 (W)
Principal Secretary	Barb Anderson & Nancy Osborne	324-3205 (W)

J F Kennedy

Principal	Chad Steimle	391-3030 (W)
Principal Secretary	Myrna Brehmer	391-3030 (W)

Lourdes

Principal	Barbara Herter	359-3466 (W)
Principal Secretary	Celie Grothus	359-3466 (W)

Sacred Heart - Davenport

Principal	Denise Tatoian	326-6278 (W)
Principal Secretary	Rose Miller	326-6278 (W)

St. Alphonsus

Principal	Lewis Betts	323-3204 (W)
Principal Secretary	Pam Querin	323-3204 (W)

St. Paul The Apostle

Principal	Dan Ryan	322-2923 (W)
Secretary	Ann Van Winkle	322-2923 (W)

Prince of Peace – Clinton

Principal	Nancy Peart	242-1663 (W)
Secretary	Jean Wolf	242-1663 (W)

BOMB THREAT POLICY

Although the majority of bomb threats are hoaxes and the work of pranksters or the mentally disturbed, the seriousness of this type of threat should never be underestimated because:

- There is always the possibility that **the threat may be legitimate.**
- Information concerning the presence of a bomb will **usually be received from an anonymous telephone caller.** Note caller ID number if available at your phone station.
- If the location of a bomb is pinpointed in the facility, it can probably be assumed that the individual has some knowledge of the facility.
- The following are some of the actions to be taken:
- *The person receiving the call should attempt to refer it to a supervisor or other person and try to keep the caller talking on the phone.*
- Do not alert the entire staff at the time of a bomb threat call.
- The building administrator or his/her designee will determine when to notify the entire staff. The building administrator maintains administrative policies that provide specific steps to follow.
- The building administrator will announce that we have a **LEVEL ONE EMERGENCY** and that all teachers **should take a class roster** and accompany their classes to the evacuation site. All faculty will understand that a **Level One Emergency** is an indication of something like a bomb threat. Prior to leaving the classroom, the teacher should make a quick visual check and notify the building principal of any suspicious items in their room. Any faculty and staff not assigned students during this time should assist in moving students from common areas (locker bays, hallways, lunchroom, etc.) to the evacuation site.
- Because most bomb threats are received by telephone, the person answering the phone should remain calm and ask questions. Please complete a bomb threat checklist located near your phone. *A copy is included at the end of this section.
- It is important that the caller be engaged in as **lengthy a conversation** as possible to determine:
 - The **building or area** in which the bomb device is planted.
 - The **exact location** in that building or area.
 - **When** the bomb is **scheduled to detonate.**
 - The **type of bomb.**
 - If the call is a **hoax or legitimate.**
- Be sure to take notes to determine:
 - The **exact language** used.
 - **Accent, sex of caller, time** of call.
 - **Background noises.**
- Do not hang up the phone. Leaving the phone off the hook may allow the call to be traced.

***Questions to Ask:**

1. When is bomb going to explode?
2. Where is it right now?
3. What does it look like?
4. What kind of bomb is it?
5. What will cause it to explode?
6. Did you place the bomb?
7. Why?
8. What is your address?
9. What is your name?

EXACT WORDING OF THE THREAT:

Sex of caller: _____ Race: _____

Age: _____ Length of call: _____

Number at which call is received: _____

Time: _____ Date: _____

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR ONE PLAN TO COVER ALL TYPES AND CONDITIONS OF OPERATION, SO ALL SHOULD EXERCISE GOOD COMMON SENSE.

BUILDING LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES/LEVEL TWO ALERT

A level two alert requires that teachers and students remain in classrooms.

- Intercom system will announce that “**A LEVEL TWO ALERT EXISTS**”.
- Office/administration staff will call Superintendent and Police Department (**secure an outside line and then dial 911**).
- Keep all students in the classroom.

- Check halls for wandering students (students in restroom should go to the nearest supervised classroom).
- Continue working/teaching.
- If possible, close and lock classroom doors.
- Stay away from windows and out of hallways.
- Bells designating period changes will be shut off or disregarded.
- PA system will announce "THE LEVEL TWO ALERT HAS BEEN CANCELED".
- Debriefing will take place at an appropriate time after emergency.
- All staff not supervising students must call the office for directions.
-

BUS EMERGENCIES

School Bus Accident

Bus Driver

- Secure vehicle and display appropriate warning devices.
- Survey all individuals involved in the accident for extent of injuries.
- Contact the appropriate transportation provider.
 - Report the location of the accident, the bus number, and the route number.
 - Report the school which students attend.
 - Report any injuries and whether an ambulance is needed.
 - Report whether a bus is needed to continue the route.
- Keep all students on the bus unless safety conditions warrant their removal.
- If a threat of fire, move children and others to a safe location, at least 100 feet from the side of the roadway, if possible.
- Administer critical first aid.
- Recruit assistance to flag approaching vehicles.
- Do not move vehicle until instructed to do so.
Account for all students and record extent of injuries on proper form.
- Give your name, address, driver's license number, insurance carrier, and vehicle information to others involved in the accident and obtain the same information from others.
- Get names, addresses, and phone numbers of all witnesses.
- Make no statements to the media or bystanders.
- Give information to investigating officers and school officials only.
- Upon returning to the transportation department, assist in completing all necessary accident reports.

Transportation

- Receive the emergency call from bus driver and write down all accident information.
- Call 911 for ambulance, police or fire, if needed.
- Give location of accident and all known information regarding possible injuries.
- Notify the Diocese Superintendent of the accident and continue to inform as new information becomes available.
- Obtain the names of students on the bus from the bus route files or the school if accident involves class trip or athletic event.

- Obtain a list of injuries as soon as available.
- Provide another bus and driver, if needed.

Principal's Office

- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Collect emergency health information from student information sheets for all students on the bus.
- Appoint a staff member to go to the accident site and to report any special health considerations to the medics on-site.
- If an ambulance has been called, the staff member should accompany the ambulance to the hospital with the emergency health information, and should act as a liaison between hospital and school.
- In the event of a serious injury or fatality, the principal or designee will go to the accident site and to the hospital.
- Appoint staff to contact parents and, as the information is available, inform them of the following:
 - That their child is uninjured or injured, and to what extent.
 - The medical facility to which student has been taken.
 - To contact the hospital.
- Refer incoming media calls to the superintendent.
- Inform staff.

Director of Transportation

- Go to the scene of the accident ASAP with guidelines and forms, camera, radio, and/or cellular phone.
- If medics have not arrived, assist in first aid.
- Get a list of students involved in accident and injuries incurred, if possible.
- Report new information to dispatch.
- Take pictures of the accident and gather information
- Compile a seating chart at time of accident.
- Assist the bus driver in any way possible, including caring for the students.
- Complete accident report and forward to transportation department and superintendent's office.

Central Office/Superintendent's Office

- Contact the insurance carrier to authorize treatment at the hospital.

Weapon on School Bus

Bus Driver

As students enter bus screen students for bulging clothing or suspicious behavior. Be aware of conversations and comments on the bus and notify Transportation Director as soon as possible. Be prepared to identify students by name, gender, clothing, etc. Do not attempt to search students yourself. Follow Transportation Director's orders.

If weapon is visible at bus stop:

- Do not stop.
- Go to safe location and call Transportation Office.
- Give location and description of person with weapon.
- Follow directions of Transportation Office.

If gunman is on the bus and shots have been fired:

- Announce to passengers "get down and take cover".
- Do not raise your voice or challenge the intruder.
- Do what you are asked to do.
- Try to stay calm.

- Do not try to be a hero, await police rescue.

If gunman is on the bus and no shots have been fired:

- Notify Transportation Office ASAP and advise whether a weapon is suspected or visible.
- Try to calm the students under your care.
- Do not approach gunman or attempt to confiscate the weapon.
- Ask the gunman in a calm voice for permission to evacuate the bus.
- Evacuate quietly, if allowed.
- If evacuation is not allowed, keep talking with the gunman until police arrive.

Transportation Director

- Notify Police and Superintendent.
- Radio bus driver to return to Transportation Center as soon as possible.

School Bus Taken Hostage

Bus Driver

- Call 911 for police and Transportation Office.
- Work with police officers as directed.
- Work to maintain as much calm as possible.
- Calmly communicate any special needs the children may have.
- If contacted by media, refer all questions to superintendent’s office.

Transportation Director

- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- When police arrive, escort them to scene, but stay out of view of gunmen. Rescue of the hostages will be the responsibility of law enforcement.
- If contacted by media, refer all questions to superintendent’s office.

Building Administrators

- Follow-up at hospital, if needed.
- If contacted by media, refer all questions to superintendent’s office.
- Announce counseling services and document students and staff receiving counseling.
- Visit with parents or victims.
- Facilitate investigations by civil authorities.
- Keep staff informed.

Superintendent’s Office

- If students are injured:
 - Notify insurance carrier to authorize medical care at the hospital.

CAMPUS EMERGENCY PLAN CHECKLIST

- _ Floor plan of the building showing the primary and alternate evacuation routes.
- _ Site plan of building showing primary and alternate assembly areas outside of the building. Copies of these should be given to the superintendent and all district administrators.
- _ Floor plan showing the interior shelter areas.
- _ Emergency Alarm System.
- _ Tornado Drill sound.

- _ Fire Drill sound.
- _ Building intruder.
- _ Develop your own “Secret Code” and ensure that all teachers and substitute employees understand it.
- _ List of available security equipment: fire extinguishers, hand-held radios, intercoms, bullhorn, metal detectors, flashlights, cellular phones, etc. Also include their location.
- _ Emergency Personnel List. Include names and home numbers of all specially appointed responders, including office staff, nurse, counselors, FRC director, transportation director, food service director and maintenance director.
- _ Make sure responders know and are trained in your plan.
- _ Primary and alternate responders should be appointed to assist during a disaster, to act as a bomb search team, to assist handicap students during an emergency, to act as weather watchers, to load buses during a site evacuation, act as crowd control, etc.
- _ Each principal should assign specific staff members, the authority to call 911, so that no time is wasted in an emergency.
- _ A checkout system for an early dismissal during an evacuation.
- _ A system for loading buses quickly during an evacuation to another site.
- _ Be prepared during a hazardous material release to gather enough information in order to make a decision on whether to shelter in place or evacuate.
- _ If a decision is made to evacuate, principals should understand: “Go cross-wind and/or upwind to evacuate away from a hazardous release”.
- _ Be prepared to make a decision based on this understanding whether to use primary or alternate evacuation routes and assembly areas and to advise staff with that information.
- _ Principals should conduct regular fire and tornado drills, safety drills and evacuation drills.

CHEMICAL/BIOLOGICAL/RADIOLOGICAL RELEASE

Personal Safety Considerations

When approaching a scene that may involve Chemical/Biological/Radiological (CBR) materials, the most critical consideration is the safety of oneself and those for whom you are responsible. Be aware that the presence and identification of hazardous agents may not be immediately verifiable, especially in the case of biological and radiological agents.

Actions to be Considered:

- Immediately report the incident to the Superintendent who in turn will make contact with the proper authorities.
- If the event is outside, approach or evacuate upwind of the suspected area of contamination.
- If the event is outside, don protective mask and clothing if available. Cover all exposed skin surfaces and protect the respiratory system as much as possible. Overcoats, boots, gloves, hats, self-contained breathing systems, and organic vapor respirators will help provide protection.
- If the event is inside, evacuate while minimizing passage through the contaminated area. Keep windows and doors not being used closed.
- If you are inside and the event is outside, stay inside. Turn off air conditioning, close vents, and close windows and doors.
- If radiological material is suspected, remember to minimize exposure by minimizing your time around the suspected site, maximizing distance from the site and by placing some shielding (e.g. buildings, vehicle, land feature such as a hill, etc.) between you and the site.
- Deploy CBR detection equipment, if available.

CLOSING SCHOOLS

Procedures for making decision to close school:

Superintendent

Confer with the following:

Transportation Director

- Review available data and reports pertaining to the conditions of the roads and the expected duration of those conditions.
- Be responsible for making the final decision to close schools.
- If unavailable, responsibility is delegated to the following in the order listed:
 - (List next in chain of command)
 - (List next in chain of command)
- Ensure that the media is notified of your decision.
- Notify media of your decision if time permits.
- Start the phone tree, notifying administrators and other district personnel.

Closing of schools:

- Parents, students and staff members are asked to tune in to radio and television broadcasts for information in the event of inclement weather conditions or other emergencies that may necessitate the closing of schools. In the event that schools must be closed, the superintendent will make the decision and the information disseminated as soon as it becomes available. Radio and television stations will be immediately informed and will be asked to broadcast the decision and the procedures to follow.
- The public school Superintendent's office will notify all media of the decision to close.
- SCHOOLS WILL BE CLOSED.
- All students are excused.
- Most employees are excused.
- Certain employees may be asked to report to their building.

CONTAMINATION OF FOOD OR WATER

In the event that there is actual contamination or suspicion of contamination of food supplies or food being served, immediately notify the Director of Food Services. The Director of Food services will notify the Superintendent and a determination will be made as to the appropriateness of contacting the County Health Department for assistance. Should food service patrons become ill as a result of contaminated food, call 911 for medical assistance and notify the family of the person(s).

Actual contamination or suspicion of contamination of the water supply must be reported immediately to the Superintendent at 324-1912 ext. 263. The Superintendent will in turn contact the appropriate water provider and the County Health Department for assistance.

In the Event of Food Poisoning:

Principal's Office

- Call for nurse.
- Appoint a staff member to pull all appropriate emergency health information from student information sheets.
- Notify the director of food services.
- Notify parents or those listed on emergency release form to collect ill students.
- Call the superintendent's office who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Assist school nurse with management of ill students.

- Follow any further directions from public health agencies.
- File appropriate reports with district and public health agencies.

Cafeteria

- Close the cafeteria.
- Secure items used in food preparation for examination and tests.
- Store samples of suspected menu items for examination.
- Remain available for interviews and examinations by public health personnel.
- Follow any further directions from public health agencies.

School Nurse

- Determine severity of illness and how widespread.
- If Severe Problem:
 - Call 911 for an ambulance.
 - Administer first aid until medics arrive.
 - File appropriate reports with district and public health agencies.
- If Not Severe Problem:
 - Administer first aid until parents arrive.
 - File an incident report ASAP.

Crisis Communication Management

Hierarchy of whom to contact:

A crisis can have an impact on a single building or an entire district. The most important considerations in dealing with a crisis are the health, safety, and welfare of the students and staff and keeping parents informed.

The **building administrator** will be the person in charge, until the superintendent arrives, when a crisis affects just **one building**. The Superintendent will be informed at the onset of the emergency.

The **Superintendent** will be the person in charge when a crisis affects **multiple buildings or the entire District**. The Superintendent will be assisted with any needed district or community resources.

The following is a hierarchy of whom to contact should a crisis arise:

- Call **911** if there is eminent danger or injury.
- The **Building Principal** will be notified immediately in an emergency situation. He/she will then notify the Superintendent.
- The **Superintendent** will then be responsible for notifying:
 - The **Bishop**
 - The **Pastor**
 - The **media**

Precautionary Action:

High School: Should the building principal be out of the building, the _____ will be in charge of the building during a crisis in the principal's absence.

Elementary schools: Should the building principal be out of the building, a designated staff member will be in charge of the building during a crisis in the principal's absence.

Superintendent: In the absence of the Superintendent, Dan Ryan, followed by Barb Herter, will assume the Superintendent's responsibilities and make decisions during a crisis.

Persons in charge, when the Superintendent and/or Building Principal is away, shall have copies and be familiar with the Crisis Management/Emergency Response Plan and understand what to do in crisis situations.

Staff should be informed as to who will be in charge when the Superintendent and/or Building Principal is away.

The First 30 Minutes:

What is done in the first 30 minutes of a crisis is crucial in handling it effectively and determining peoples' perceptions of the crisis. The following is a checklist of how to handle the first 30 minutes. (The checklist should be reviewed numerous times during the year)

- Have the appropriate person handle the situation. The administrator (principal or superintendent) should take charge of the situation, implementing the crisis plan.
- Understand the circumstances and define the problems.
- Consider the options; act decisively to ensure the health and safety of students and staff.
- Communicate with the staff.
- Update students periodically in their classrooms. Avoid having large group meetings.
- Depending on the circumstances, inform parents by a letter, to be sent home via student courier at the end of the day, explaining what occurred and what action has been taken.
- The community will be interested too. To alleviate fears and demonstrate competence in handling the situation, get accurate information out to the news media through the Superintendent.

Media Policy

Any crisis or disaster becomes a matter of public record as soon as local emergency personnel arrive. Such events are newsworthy, and the news media have a right and an obligation to report them.

- The media spokesperson will be the Superintendent/designee.
- In a crisis, all formal statements to the news media should come from the Superintendent or designee. (see attachment – Possible Questions & Media Statements).
- Calls from the media should be routed to the Superintendent's office.
- In any building-level crisis situation, it is possible that the news media will contact the school building involved before calling the Central Office. Building Principals should confer with the Superintendent before releasing any information.
- If the Superintendent/designee is unavailable to talk with the media, person taking incoming call should get the name, number and media affiliation and inform them that someone will return the call as soon as possible (see attachment-Standby Media Statement)
- A **Pressroom** will be established in the central office at the discretion of the superintendent/designee. The Pressroom will always be located at an off-site location.
- Arrangements will be made with students/faculty for interviews at the discretion of the superintendent/designee.
- **Parental permission will be required for students to be interviewed.**

The components of a media statement or communication to parents and the community should include the following:

- Brief details of the event itself.
- Concern for the health and welfare of our employees, students and the community must clearly be communicated as top priority.
- The statement that the school is prepared for such events in advance and has specific policies and procedures for such occurrences.
- The action(s) taken to date.
- A telephone number for concerned parents to call for additional information, if needed.
- Notice of assembly for parents, community, etc. if needed.

The official spokesperson will only respond to questions for which they have firm answers. The spokesperson will avoid elaborating on the situation beyond what is necessary to answer a reporter's question. In the event that the question cannot be answered, the reporter will be told why (i.e., we do not have sufficient details at this time, etc.) or advise them that you will get back to them as soon as that information is available.

The spokesperson will appear as responsive and cooperative as possible to media inquires without volunteering more information than is being asked.

Under no circumstances should the phrase "no comment" or "off the record" be used.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED BY MEDIA

Before confronting reporters during a crisis situation take a few moments and write down the kinds of questions the media may be asking (WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY AND HOW)

- What happened?
- What was the cause?
- What are you doing about it?
- Was anyone injured (type of injury), killed? What are their names, conditions?
- What type of product/chemical was involved?
- How dangerous is it? How dangerous could it have been?
- Is the situation under control?
- How could you let this happen?
- Don't you have systems to prevent this kind of thing?
- Who is responsible (blame)?
- What are the long-term effects?
- When will it be safe?
- Can it cause cancer?
- Can it happen again?

TYPICAL QUESTIONS/SUGGESTED RESPONSES

Q. Can you tell me what happened?

A. At this time, we have very little information available to us, but we have confirmed that at least NUMBER of our workers has been injured/killed during an accident at our LOCATION.

Q. Have you identified victims?

A. Yes, but we want to make sure the families of those injured are notified before any names are released.

Q. Can you tell us how it happened?

A. We don't have all the details yet. Right now our main concern is to assure that our employees/students are safe and receive the attention they need.

Q. What was the cause?

A. I wouldn't want to speculate, but I can tell you it will be thoroughly investigated. We want to do whatever we can to prevent this type of accident from happening again.

Q. Is your school taking responsibility for the incident?

A. We're certainly taking responsibility for making sure the situation is brought under control and thoroughly investigated.

Q. If you have nothing to hide, why did you instruct your people not to talk to reporters when we first got on the scene?

A. We have designated people who are instructed to cooperate fully with the news media because we want to make sure that the information we release is accurate and as reliable as possible and not simply speculation.

Q. How dangerous is the situation?

A. We have obviously had a very serious incident, but we have trained people on site and we are working with local authorities to bring the situation under control. Our primary concern right now is for our workers and those people who live near the school.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT/EMERGENCY INCIDENT

All I can tell you right now is that about 30 minutes ago (WHEN), an explosion took place (WHAT) in an area adjacent to the High School Gym (WHERE).

We don't have much information at this time, but we know at least two people were injured in the explosion. We have no word yet on their conditions. Both are being treated at (WHERE).

(WHO)The _____ Police Department and the _____ County Sheriff's department have been called in and we are fully cooperating with them.

Right now, our main concern is the safety and welfare of our students, staff and those who were wounded or in any way impacted as a result of the explosion.

We have no idea yet as to the cause of the explosion, but I can assure you the incident will be fully investigated.

We will provide you with additional information as soon as it becomes available.

EXAMPLE of STUDENT DEATH

"John Doe", a freshman, according to the coroner's office, died from (incident). This certainly is a shock and tragedy for all of us. Our Trauma Response Team is well trained in helping both students and staff with their reactions. We are meeting with students and staff as needed and as often as necessary.

On _____ we will hold a meeting for parents and the community where we will address your questions and concerns and provide information about the reactions that can be expected following a tragedy.

If parents or others wish to contact us they can call _____. We will respond as soon as possible. If you have an emergency please call _____. Please call only for emergencies.

When an incident occurs at school that involves a violent or shocking death(s) parents will often hear about it on television or radio. Whenever possible use the media to inform parents:

- Of the location (predetermined) where they can be reunited with their child.
- NOT to call the school as phone lines are needed to deal with the emergencies created by the incident.
- That the school has a trauma team in place and has established a command center with police and local hospitals (if appropriate) and will keep parents informed of details as they are received.
- That staff will be available and with students as long as needed for recovering and healing.

Traumatic Loss Teams Guide for Teachers/Parents

Explaining the Death of a Classmate/Teacher/School Staff Members to Children

Children should be told about the death in a quiet, direct manner.

Use age-appropriate language. (That means concrete explanations, not euphemisms like "sleep" or "went away") Build your explanation on what the children know and move to new information (Remember how _____ came to school after he lost his hair and we explained to *you* that his body was sick with an illness called cancer."... "Remember how _____ started to miss more and more school because he needed to stay in the hospital?"... Well sadly, _____ was so sick that neither the doctors and nurses nor the medicine could cure him and he died last night." Then (if very young) Does everyone here understand what it means to be dead?"

Format - Classroom: do not use an assembly or the public address system.

After the announcement, children should be allowed to:

- Ask questions.
- Express their thoughts and feelings.
- Produce a response in art, poetry, cards, etc.
- Collect their memories of the deceased in a memory book to be shared with the family.
- Decide on a school project to appropriately memorialize the deceased.

One of the most effective modeling behaviors a teacher/counselor can do in the classroom setting or in a small group setting to further the discussion is to inquire about the children's memories of the deceased person.

Teacher says, "One of the nicest memories of _____ I have is when he _____." "

Then asks,

- "Would some of you like to share with the group some of the memories you have of when ___ was in or taught our class?"
- "What was one of the funniest things you remember about _____?"
- "What was one of the nicest things _____ did for you?"

Teachers/counselors may also want to ask open-ended questions to help children express any residual concerns brought to consciousness by the death.

- "Have people said or done anything that worries you about _____'s death?"
- "Do you have any worries about _____'s death that you'd like to discuss in the group or privately?" [You are looking for concerns that they may have "caused"]

Children may want to attend the wake or funeral service.

- Explain to child what happens in a funeral home.
 - physical set up,
 - range of adult emotional reactions.
 - ideas on what to say to the deceased's family,
- Encourage parents to accompany children to funeral home and service
- Suggest that children return to school after service for continued support.

Adapted from article in American Funeral Director, May , 1999, by Dr. Alyson Lefkowitz, School Psychologist, Baltimore County Public Schools

Considerations

Do not forget the mourning **needs of the school staff**, especially present and previous teachers. They may need time to deal with their own grief reactions before they can be in a position to help the children. Involve the services of EAP.

Adults need to understand the self-protective mechanisms children have which allow them to be intensely sad and upset for a short period of time and then become involved in play minutes later. This ability should not be interpreted as "not caring." It

Remember, to send a letter home to parents informing them of the loss experienced in your school what services the school system provided to children information about funeral arrangements, and how parents can assist their children deal with the loss at home.

Death within the Classroom

The death of a classmate can be as devastating to a student as the death of a family member. The teacher must remain sensitive to the needs of each class member to grieve on an individual basis as well as, as a member of an ensemble of students. The following are suggestions for grieving as a class of students:

“The empty chair”- It is a difficult decision when deciding to remove a student's desk. Leaving the desk for a few days can help young students accept the death and some students might want to leave personal statements of farewell at the desk. However, at times, it might be best to rearrange the classroom, or remove the desk at the end of the day.

Share the announcement of the death truthfully and factually. Allow the students to ventilate their feelings and memories, and affirm all expressions. Some comments might seem inappropriate or unfeeling, but these comments might be reflective of a student's awkwardness experiencing the grieving process.

Allow the students to describe a positive memory of the classmate. Some students might prefer to write this experience or draw a picture describing the experience. Some students might want to share, these pictures or writings with the family. Of course, the teacher might want to screen these documents prior to delivery to the family. Some students might want to express their feelings through individual play or share their concerns with a toy or pet.

If students will be attending the funeral or memorial service they might have questions concerning the proceedings. They might not know how to ask for assistance in this matter.

Watch for trouble signs among students such as increased aggression, withdrawal, at-risk behaviors, clumsiness or regression. Students might not be aware of positive means of channeling their anxieties and depressive feelings.

THE CHILD'S REACTION TO DEATH

The child's major reactions to death are fear, guilt, anger and confusion. By examining the various layers of feeling, as well as the variety of influential experiences that are a part of the child's world following a death, the caretaker can cope better with the child survivor's needs.

Fear After Loss During Childhood:

- Fear of losing the other parent
- Fear of going to sleep
- Fear of being separated from a parent or sibling
- Fear of being unprotected
- Fear of sharing his or her feelings with others

Guilt After Loss During Childhood:

- "The death is a punishment to me for misbehaving"
- "I wished the other person dead"
- "I did not love my brother, sister, friend, teacher enough"
- "It is not right for me to live when my sister, friend, mother, father is dead. I should be dead instead"

Anger After Loss During Childhood:

In addition to anger growing from guilt, it can grow from any of the following beliefs which may be held by the child survivor:

- "I have been abandoned. Now I must cope with life on my own, and with little help"
- "I am unimportant. That is why my loved one could leave me"
- "My future has been taken away from me. I don't have anything to look forward to"
- "I have to fight forces that are bigger than I am; they are very powerful and I am inadequate. A feeling of helplessness prevails; sometimes there is also a loss of trust"

Confusion Resulting from Loss during Childhood:

- Confusion about God and religion
- Confusion about others' expectations
- Confusion about perceptions and memories
- Confusion which results from depression

Gender Differences in Mourning and Bereavement Behaviors

There have been some noticeable differences in the grieving behaviors of males and females. The following overview is offered for consideration. However, grieving is a personal matter and might be experienced differently depending on many factors such as age, culture, family traditions and values and previous experience.

MALES

internalizers
covert mourners
externalize anger
active
searching behaviors

FEMALES

externalizers
overt mourners
internalize anger
passive
nurturing behaviors

In general, for grieving males, thinking often dominates feeling and grief manifests as anger/guilt. Males tend to make internal adjustments to loss through activities, and may focus on problem-solving rather than expression of feeling. Males frequently need to withdraw to grieve privately. It is useful to assist males in problem-solving and to encourage a return to meaningful activities.

UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING THE SPECIAL NEEDS AT EACH DEVELOPMENTAL PHASE

PRESCHOOL AGE

The child does not understand the possibility of permanent destruction. They believe death is not permanent and is reversible. For example, the child whose pet has died may continue to act as if the dead pet is still alive. He or she may ask to feed it or look for it under the bed. Because most preschool children are not able to make a clear distinction between life and death, they see death as a deep but temporary sleep or abandonment or rejection.

AGES 5 TO 9

One of the major perceptions is that of death coming from an external source. Death is a bogeyman, a monster, a ghost, a skeleton, or an angel who comes to take people away. It comes from outside, and in that sense, it is not a person. Children think that by being clever and trying hard, they can escape death as they could escape an assailant. The majority of children think that death can be reversed or outwitted. Children in this age group also show an interest in burial as shown by "final rites" for pets.

AGES 9 TO 12

The majority understand that death is the end of life, that it is irreversible and that all things die eventually--even they may die someday. Death is no longer a bogeyman, but a biological process. They may also think that dying may be painful, and they begin to fathom the idea of death as obliteration or an after life. Some will consider abstract concepts, such as death is a vast darkness. There is also serious concern with the consequences of death and what changes will be necessary as a result of death. Anger and fear are often felt and verbalized with such statements as "It is not fair."

ADOLESCENTS

Death is understood as an abstract concept. Death is supposed to be distant. At the same time that they try to set themselves apart from death, they also fear it. Because of this fear, they may try to prove themselves more powerful than death. It is a teenagers' first realization of mortality, and some are moved to test their mortality. There seems to be some "magical" thinking among adolescents that death may not be permanent, and that after their own death, they may become observers of those activities and persons left behind.

UNDERSTANDING THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

The Special Education Student will most often follow the same developmental stages of the grieving process as that of the regular education student. It is possible, however, that he or she may or may not go through all the stages and the time involved in each stage could vary considerably. Significant factors which attribute to this difference are as follows:

- Perceptual, cognitive and emotional deficits.
- Language capabilities, both receptive and expressive.
- The ability to think abstractly and/or concretely.

Any traumatic experience that creates sudden change in the routine of the handicapped student is likely to influence how that student responds to that trauma. The following examples are to assist you in developing a plan of action in an attempt to reduce the stress and maximize the success of the handicapped student's ability to deal with his or her grief following a crisis:

Student's Reaction	Teacher's Responses
Anger	<p>“It’s OK to be angry.”</p> <p>“This is what you do when you are angry and it gets you into trouble.”</p> <p>“This is what you can do which will NOT get you into trouble.” (Give specific examples which are age-appropriate.”</p>
Aggression	<p>Repeat techniques recommended for anger and substitute appropriate ways to release aggression.</p> <p>During a crisis, manipulate the environment rather than the student to prevent potential student/staff injury.</p>
Listlessness	<p>Keep the routine going as smoothly as possible with or without the student’s participation. (Periodically let the student know that they may join in when he or she is ready.)</p> <p>Don’t beg for participation.</p> <p>Be supportive and remain non-judgmental. Interject instructional material that is highly motivating to the student.</p>

GRIEF IS NOT A SIGN OF WEAKNESS

Grief is not a sign of weakness. It is rather a healthy and fitting response to a loss; a tribute to one who has *died*. Running away from grief postpones sorrow; clinging to grief prolongs pain. Neither approach leads to healing. Allow grief to have its way for a while; then gradually and gently, you can release yourself from its grip. Recognition of the appropriateness and value of grief is the first step in accepting the reality of the loss. The acceptance is the first sign of recovery.

Each of us is different, but for most people grieving follows a pattern, proceeds through stages. We do not all experience every phase. Nor do we move through grief at the same pace or with equal intensity. The following characteristics constitute the basic elements of the grief experience. Reviewing them might help you to identify your own pattern, determine where you are in the process and anticipate what you have *let* to go through.

SHOCK

A period of numbness usually follows the event of death. One feels stunned, or like in a trance. Shock could last only minutes, or persist for days or even longer. The stage of shock allows a person time to absorb what has happened and to begin to adjust. People sometimes use alcohol, tranquilizers, or other methods to extend this period. There's also a tendency to leave decision-making to others. Yet, it is important to face the reality of the death and to regain control and direction of one's life.

EMOTIONAL UPHEAVAL

As shock wears off, grief gives rise to a variety of emotions. When such feelings seem overwhelming, we do well to defer major decisions. Other grievers, our family, counselors, or members of the OSM team can help us interpret and deal with these feelings. As we come to understand what we experience, we can find appropriate ways to ventilate our emotions and to channel them to our advantage.

PHYSICAL DISTRESS

The mental and emotional upset of a loss can cause physical distress and make us vulnerable to illness. Grief sometimes causes us to neglect healthy nourishment and exercise, or to over indulge ourselves in drinking, smoking, or medication. We might need a professional's advice in regard to our symptoms, their causes, and their treatment.

PANIC

A death can often make the future seem uncertain. We might panic in the face of the unknown. Panic prevents concentration and defers acceptance of the finality of death. It tempts us to run from life, to avoid, and refuse to try. Patience with ourselves and a willingness to accept help from others will enable us to subdue panic and outgrow its confusion.

GUILT

Many people fault or blame themselves in the event of a death. We have all made mistakes, and sincere regret is the best response if a mistake has been made. However, unwarranted self-reproach can impact our mental health and impede our recovery from our grief. Since guilt is a common manifestation, help from family, friends, a counselor or the CISM team may be needed to help us gain a better perspective and to aid us in dealing with guilt feelings, whether justified or exaggerated.

HOSTILITY

People in grief naturally ask "Why?", "Why him?", "Why now?" and "Why like this?". Most of these questions have no answers. The resulting frustration causes us to feel resentment and anger. We want someone to blame. If we can accept the lack of answers to "Why?", we might begin to ask, instead, what we can do now to grow through what has happened. It is then we have started to move beyond anger and toward hope.

DEPRESSION

Grievers, typically, but in varying degrees, experience loneliness and depression. This pain too, will pass. Reaching out to others is a key way to lessen loneliness and overcome depression.

AIMLESSNESS

At times in the grieving process, a kind of drifting occurs. Mourners find it difficult to return to familiar, even necessary, activities. Once we can begin to assess our potential for the future we will be able to move ahead in the process.

HOPE

In time and with effort, hope grows. We can express emotions without embarrassment or apology_ We can feel concerned for and show interest in others and our jobs. We can make decisions and assume responsibility for ourselves. The example of others who have experienced a similar loss and affect can serve as resources and a signs of hope for ourselves.

Adapted from the writings (of the same name) with permission of Jeffrey Kaufman, LSW

Lynn Kennedy-Ewing, M.A. Delaware County Pennsylvania CISM Program
Delaware County Emergency Services Training Center

ADOLESCENT GRIEF: Common Counseling Factors

SHOCK/DENIAL

Death offends their magical beliefs that people for whom they care are not *supposed* to die. If the person who dies is young, it upsets their sense of control over life. It may also take the form of apparently remaining "above it all".

ANGER

The rebel against the "unfairness" of death. They are intensely interested in determining who or what was at fault. They are surprised at the anger they feel for the deceased.

GUILT/BLAME

Their egocentricity causes them to feel that they may have indirectly caused the death of another. They ruminate about how they should have guessed what was wrong or could have treated another better when he/she was alive.

DEPRESSION become saddened LONELINESS will no

They may feel *drained* by the loss or *hopeless*. They by the increasing realization that a person they have known longer be an active presence in their lives. This may be their first permanent loss.

HOPE

They need to be encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings with others. They are old enough to take a leadership role in the mourning process. They must be reminded that this is probably the worst they have ever felt,

but that they will survive.

- INTELLECTUALIZING** Adolescents are often fascinated on an intellectual level with the existential questions which death raises for them. Their own mortality may be an issue for them to consider. They also may begin to ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life if it is something which can end so fast.
- MARGINALIZED** They may complain to the counselor that they feel excluded in the family mourning process. They need to assert this need to be included in the mourning rituals.
- OVERCOMPENSATION** **They may feel the need to act "grown up" and take on too many responsibilities when a parent is at his/her worst. This may be a mask to avoid their own feelings of helplessness and disorganization.**

HELPING A CHILD THROUGH GRIEF

DON'T:

1. Don't underestimate the child's grief.
2. Don't try to protect the child from feelings of pain and loss.
3. Don't assume the child will respond to the loss as you have.
4. Don't worry about saying the "right" words. You can't hide feelings from children, no matter what you say.
5. Don't find something "good" about the death, i.e., "Aren't you glad brother doesn't hurt anymore?"
6. Don't associate tears with grief. Some children cry, some don't. Both may be equally affected.
7. Don't push the child to "talk about it." A child will tell us how he feels in the way he is able, which is usually through his behavior.
8. Don't be afraid of losing control or crying in front of the child. Tears give the child permission to be real, too.
9. Don't shut the child out by sending him to the babysitter. Include him in the family sadness.
10. Don't be overly simplistic about death, i.e., put all the focus on heaven and none on the feelings of loss.
11. Don't allow the child to assume the role of emotional caregiver to the parents.
12. Don't worry about the child's poor appetite. Give plenty of drinks.
13. Don't tell the child he will feel better in time. "Time heals all wounds" is a lie. Some

wounds get infected.

14. Don't use abstract language to "soften" the death. Children are concrete thinkers. Instead of saying, "Sister passed away," say, "Sister died."

15. Don't promise YOU won't die. You can say, "I think I will live until I'm very, very old, but no one knows for sure."

16. Don't be afraid to initiate talking about the death. Mention the child's name who died, i.e., "I know your brother died and I'm sure you miss him very much."

17. Don't assume a child will always want to talk about the death. Children can only handle "bits and pieces" of grief at a time.

18. In a church or school setting, don't single out a grieving child for special privileges. He needs to feel he is treated as his peers.

SIGNS WHEN A CHILD'S GRIEF NEEDS OUTSIDE SUPPORT

1. If a child persists in pretending that nothing has happened.
2. If the child's school work takes a dramatic decline or school phobia sets in.
3. If information about the death was kept from the child for a long time or the child was told lies about the death.
4. If the child makes suicidal threats.
5. If the child panics frequently.
6. If the child begins to physically assault others or becomes cruel to animals.
7. If the child had a difficult relationship with the deceased or behaves poorly with family members.
8. If the child becomes involved in drugs or alcohol.
9. If the child begins to commit serious delinquent acts.
10. If the child is unwilling or unable to socialize with other children.

ADOLESCENT GRIEF: Common Counseling Factors

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GUILT/BLAME

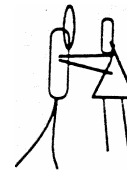
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TEACHERS' INFORMATION SHEET - Adolescence/Grief

ADOLESCENCE AND GRIEF

Adolescents are close to an adult understanding of death but may not fully accept that it will happen to them. Since their focus is on living, they can have a great deal of anger about death. They are most comfortable expressing anger because expressing hurt and sadness would show childish behavior, and this is not what our society permits adolescents to express. Adolescents want to be in control. Death belies that fiction of control.

Normally, adolescence is a time of heightened and intense emotion. Death and grief add to their emotionality, and adolescents try on different identities that hide and confuse their emotions. While loss through death brings out the child in all of us, adolescents find it particularly hard to acknowledge these feelings.

Death can also be seen by adolescents as a **THREAT**. They would like to live life without the cloud of possibility that they might lose their future- by a premature death. The death of an age-mate confronts their personal myth of immortality and belies their magical thinking about a life free from unpredictable losses.

Too often adults in a family "marginalize" teenagers when a death occurs. It is not uncommon that if you or your school provides any training on death education or offers group counseling on loss issues, this may be the first opportunity for some teenagers to express how they about a death in their family,

as well as a chance to process some of their questions about death in general.

CLASSROOM ANNOUNCEMENT

(Actual Sample Announcement which was Read and Discussed by Teachers at an Elementary School)

Something has happened over the weekend that we need to talk about. Early Sunday morning, one of our students, XXXXXX XXXXXX, died in a fire. We do not have all the details, but this is what we know so far ... a fire started in the middle of the night. Everybody in the house except x:xxxxxxxxxxx was able to survive the fire. Some others were hurt, but xxxxxxxx was hurt too badly and died at the hospital.

We are all upset and it is important to help our friends deal with this sad death. We need to talk to each other, 'with me, your teacher, to our families, and perhaps with friends like Mrs. xxxxxx, our counselor. Our counselor has invited some of her friends from nearby schools to talk with you if you feel the need to.

"When we get more information from xxxxxxxx's family, we will let you know. Please keep xxx in your prayers and also his/her family in our prayers today.

POSSIBLE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS:

Do some of you have questions you would like to ask me about the fire or about XXXXXX? (*Answer with the facts you have; curb their tendency to speculate on graphic details. Shut down any effort to assign blame.*)

Did any of you see the fire? Did you see it on TV ? How did you react?

Did any of you know XXXXXX? What do you remember about him? (*Attempt to guide conversation into making the deceased real and their memories of him / her personal.*)

Can anyone tell me a happy memory they have of XXXXXXXX from class or the playground or the neighborhood that they would like to share with the class?

Sample Letter Sent Home Announcing Death of Student

St. Paul the Apostle Elementary
1007 E. Rusholme St.
Davenport, Iowa 52803

Date

Dear Parents,

On Sunday, xxxxxx, one our students, XXXXX xxxxxx, died at his home during an early morning fire. He \vas a fourth grade student at xxxxxxxx School. He had made many friends in his four years here and we are all saddened by his untimely death.

Today we have had the outstanding services of the Archdiocesan Response Team at our school to assist students and faculty members. These team members are helping professionals from several archdiocesan schools. They have been trained to consult in times of crisis, conduct bereavement counseling, and to assess if any student is in need of further counseling support. They, along with the school staff, have nlet \with and provided comfort and counsel to students, staff, and parents. These Response Team members will be available on an "on call" basis to aid the school support staff for as long as necessary.

One of the members of the team reminded me that when elementary school age children experience a trauma such as this, it often reminds them of other loved ones who have died. It is not unusual for them to want to talk about those loved ones or ask about death in general. I include this item for your consideration and am enclosing a handout on talking to children about death.

We have been told that various groups in the community have offered support in many different ways to the family. At this time we are not aware of the funeral arrangements. We will inform you as soon as they are known.

Please join with us in extending our sympathy and prayers for the xxxxxx family.

Sincerely,

Principal of School

Sample Letter Home When Child was Injured in a Bus Stop Crossing

Date

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

We had some upsetting news today. One of our students was struck when crossing the street in front of a bus and was seriously injured. We have checked with the hospital and the student is having x-rays and is talking with his mother. His known injuries at this time are a broken ankle, a bump on the head, and minor scratches.

Members of our Diocesan Response Team were brought in and met with the students on the buses who witnessed the accident and addressed their concerns. The children on the buses handled themselves beautifully and in a mature manner.

Our school counselor has met with the children in the injured student's classroom.

The classroom teachers talked with the children and reminded them of bus safety procedures.

As the days progress, we hope to learn how soon the student will return to school.

I know you join with me in your support of the child and his family. Let us continue to be a support through our prayers and good works.

Sincerely,

Principal of School

Sample Letter Announcing Death of a Staff Member

Date

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Yesterday afternoon, Mr. xxxxxx., Department Chairman, here at xxxxxx was involved in an automobile accident near xxxxxxxx, Virginia. Mr. xxxxxx sustained fatal injuries as a result of this accident and died at the scene at approximately 3:00 PM. Our school mourns the loss of Mr. xxxxxx who served as a student advisor, chess club sponsor, and a member of our football coaching staff. He has been a part of our school family for the past 25 years. Mr. xxxxxx will be greatly missed by the faculty, staff, and students here at xxxxxxxx.

Members of the Diocesan Response Team will be present at our school to assist students and faculty members. These team members are helping professionals from several diocesan schools. They have been trained to consult in times of crisis, conduct bereavement counseling, and to assess if any student is in need of further counseling support.

We encourage you to discuss Mr. XXXXXXIS death with your children. Such traumatic deaths often remind young people of similar unresolved deaths of loved ones in their lives. I have enclosed a handout prepared by our team to assist you in a discussion of death.

We will have a prayer service _____.

Sincerely in Christ,

Principal of School

Sample Announcement to Students about a Traumatic Incident Witnessed by Elementary Aged Children

Boys and Girls, I have some sad news to share with you this morning.

Some of you may have heard that there was a shooting in this area last night. It was the terrible end to what started out as an argument between two people. The police were called and arrested the person who did the shooting. Unfortunately the man who was shot died.

Some of our students saw the police cars as they came to school this and might be feeling upset or worried. As your teacher, I wanted to stop my regular classwork for a few minutes to find out whether or not some of you have any worries about what happened.

Typical Processing Questions:

Did any of you see the police cars in the Big Trees apartments this morning?

Did any of you see anything else about which you may have questions?

What are some of the thoughts you have about this sad thing?

What could we do if we saw two people arguing or someone waving a gun or knife ?

Note: Process the children's concerns about their own safety. If they have questions about the facts of the case, tell them that we are interested in their feelings and their safety. Explain we do not have information about the police investigation of the shooting. Tell them that there probably will be something on the news tonight.

SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please read the following announcement to students in your first period class/home room. Feel free to make what you say personal and in keeping with your own feelings. Invite students to discuss the loss and the meaning it may have for them with you.

Announcing a Teacher Death

As some of you may know, one of our teachers, Miss Brown, died yesterday. Although the exact reason for her death is not clear at this time, it was by natural causes. I know that this news may be very upsetting to some of you (as it is to me). If you need to talk now with a counselor, you should let me know. If you need to speak as a class, we can. What are some of the thoughts and feelings you are dealing with right now?

Announcing an Accidental Death

A 10th grade student, Maria _____ died as the result of an automobile accident that occurred shortly after midnight Friday. Another student, Lori _____, was seriously injured and is in Medical Center Hospital. We are all saddened by this news. If anyone needs to talk with a counselor, please let me know.

The accident happened on _____ Road. Apparently the car in which these girls were riding tried to avoid a car that approached them with its headlights off. Their car veered off the road and struck a large tree. The driver of the car and Lori were thrown from the car and seriously injured. Maria was trapped inside the car, where she died shortly after the crash.

Announcing a Suspected, but Unconfirmed, Suicide Death

We are saddened to learn of the death this weekend of one of our students, _____ . He died this past Saturday afternoon as a result of a gunshot wound. The complete details of his death are not available at this time. I know that this news may be upsetting to some of you. If you need to talk to someone about your concerns, please let me know. There are several crisis counselors in our school in addition to our regular counseling staff I will give you a pass to go to the counseling office where there are people who are trained to help you.

If you know that it is common knowledge among the students that it was in fact a suicide and if the family has given permission that this information can be shared, you may want to substitute the following phrase in the announcement of a self inflicted wound.

TO: Staff
FROM:

RE: Weekend Tragedy

By now most of you are aware that a tragic automobile accident claimed the lives of three students over the weekend. xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx were members of the senior class in our high school; xxxxxxxx was a sophomore at xxxxxxxx School. We are all deeply saddened by this horrible event.

The weekend's events will still be most disturbing to many of our students. Our neighboring schools are providing us with an diocesan crisis intervention team. This team will be available in the guidance area to assist students in need of immediate assistance. It would not be unusual for staff members who taught these students to also experience difficulty coming to grips with such a tragedy. The team is also available to all staff members. If you need time to visit with a team member, just let me know and I will see that your classes are covered.

While we need to let students know that we are available to them in this difficult time, large assemblies or public announcements are not really the appropriate means to share such feelings. At the conclusion of the regular announcements, I would ask each homeroom teacher or advisor to please read the statement below and offer students an opportunity to discuss their concerns with you.. If you wish to paraphrase the statement, please feel free to do so. Thanks for all of your assistance in helping our students cope with what promises to be a most difficult time.

HOMEROOM ANNOUNCEMENT

AS MANY OF YOU ARE ALREADY A WARE, OVER THE WEEKEND A TRAGIC AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT CLAIMED THE LIVES OF THREE YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY. THEY WILL BE GREATLY MISSED BY THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR MANY FRIENDS. I KNOW THAT MANY OF YOU KNEW XXXXXX, XXXXXX, AND XXXXXX AND ARE ALSO SADDENED BY THEIR LOSS. I WANT TO LET EACH OF YOU KNOW THAT MR. , MR. XXXXXX, AND ALL OF YOUR TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS ARE HERE TO HELP YOU DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME. THERE WILL ALSO BE SOME ADDITIONAL SPECIAL COUNSELORS WHO WILL BE AT OUR SCHOOL TODAY. IF AT ANY TIME DURING THE DAY YOU NEED TO SEE AN ADMINISTRATOR, TEACHER, COUNSELOR, OR ONE OF THE SPECIAL COUNSELORS, JUST TELL ONE OF YOUR TEACHERS AND THEY WILL SCHEDULE YOU FOR AN APPOINTMENT AS SOON AS THERE IS AN OPENING. I KNOW THAT YOU JOIN ALL OF US IN THE SCHOOL FAMILY IN EXPRESSING OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS TO THE FAMILIES OF ALL THREE YOUNG PEOPLE. LET'S SPEND SOME TIME SHARING HOW WE'RE DEALING WITH THIS.

Sample Letter Announcing Death of a Staff Member

Date

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Yesterday afternoon, Mr. xxxxxx, Department Chairman, here at xxxxxxxx was involved in an automobile accident near xxxxxxxx, Virginia. Mr. xxxxxx sustained fatal injuries as a result of this accident and died at the scene at approximately 3:00 PM. Our school mourns the loss of Mr. xxxxxx who served as a student advisor, chess club sponsor, and a member of our football coaching staff. He has been a part of our school family for the past 25 years. Mr. xxxxxx will be greatly missed by the faculty, staff, and students here at xxxxxxxx.

Members of the Diocesan Response Team will be present at our school to assist students and faculty members. These team members are helping professionals from several archdiocesan schools. They have been trained to consult in times of crisis, conduct bereavement counseling, and to assess if any student is in need of further counseling support.

We encourage you to discuss Mr. xxxxxx's death with your child. Such traumatic deaths often remind young people of similar unresolved deaths of loved ones in their lives. I have enclosed a handout prepared by our team to assist you in a discussion of death.

Sincerely in Christ,

Principal of School

Helping Students Cope with a National Tragedy

Some ideas to share with teachers and parents

The following are some emotional responses students may continue to demonstrate , following witnessing the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C,

Fear: Fear may be the predominant reaction of many students - fear for the safety of relatives and friends living in the affected cities or fear for their own safety. Their worries may seem unreasonable, but to them, they are quite real. Students may hear many rumors at school and let their imaginations run wild. Help students put their fears into a realistic perspective and gain mastery over the geography of the distance.

Loss of Control: Statistically the chance of anyone student being a victim of terrorism is very remote. Feelings of loss of control can be overwhelming. Blame is the most common straw they cling to, In order to feel safe, they want the bad people caught.

Anger: Students who are old enough to have some understanding of concepts of national security may be angry at adults who "let" this happen, who were unable to prevent terroristic acts.

Loss of stability: National disasters interrupt the natural order of things. Life, as they know it, is disrupted,

Isolation: Students who have a family member directly involved in these tragic events may experience feelings of isolation as well as grief and loss.

What Can I Do as a Teacher?

- Help students put their fears in perspective.
- Help students to feel personally safe.
- Help students to feel a sense of control by involving them in coping strategies. Students often have practical and creative ideas for coping.
- Be careful not to stereotype or demean the people or countries or religions thought to be connected to terrorists, Children can easily generalize negative statements and develop prejudice.
- Identify support services for students and families needing assistance beyond what can be provided in school.

What Should Parents Do?

- Try to help them understand what happened based on their developmental level. Be honest. Convey the facts as we know them. Tell them what is necessary.
- Children will take their cues in how to react based upon how adults are reacting.
- Children will have many different types of feelings. Assure them that all feelings are okay.

- Limit the amount of your child' s viewing of these events on television, radio and the internet
- Maintain structure and stability within your home.
- Make sure your children get appropriate sleep, exercise and nutrition.
- Spend longer tucking your children in bed tonight.
- Have your children spend time with people they care about.
- Consider praying with your children tonight especially for those who died and for all the victims, survivors and their families.
- Children may exhibit behavioral or emotional changes. This is natural. Be aware that children process anxiety, fear and grief in many different ways.
- It may be a good time to take your children to church, synagogue, or mosque.

Source - National Association of School Psychologists

Guidelines for Addressing the National Emergency on September 11, 2001

1. Listed below is information to assist principals in working with students and staff as schools strive to maintain normalcy in a very difficult time.
 2. The first item is a statement approved by the Superintendent that must be read by all teachers to their students. The statement should not be modified. PLEASE DO NOT READ THE STATEMENT OVER THE INTERCOM OR IN AN ASSEMBLY SETTING. Principals may find that because of personal involvement in the nation's tragedy, some staff members will be unable to read the statement and lead classroom discussions. In those situations, please arrange to have another staff member fulfill that responsibility.
 3. Talking points are also included to help teachers lead discussions.
 4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS WILL BE GATHERING INFORMATION FROM SCHOOLS DURING THE MORNING HOURS THAT WILL GIVE DR. HAIRSTON A SENSE OF THE CLIMATE IN SCHOOLS. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT PRINCIPALS OUTLOOK THEIR RESPONSES TO THESE QUESTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS BY 9:45 A.M. ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12. This information will be used to draft a letter that schools will send to all parents/guardians at the end of the day. The letter will arrive in schools by 11:00 A.M. on Outlook in time for morning kindergarten dismissal.
1. Each principal will share a statement with teachers instructing them to conduct a brief discussion during first period class. Teachers will read a prepared statement, and then conduct the discussion. Talking points are included with this statement. It is very important that teachers read the statement as it is written without embellishment. Once the discussion has been completed, students and teachers should resume a normal school day. Teachers need to be sensitive to the fact that some students may need additional time with a caring adult. Please utilize members of the Pupil Service Team to assist these identified students. Principals also need to be aware that some staff members may be very unsettled by the entire situation. In addition to school counselors and nurses, pupil personnel workers, school psychologists, and social workers will be available to schools, recognizing that many of these individuals are assigned to more than one school

Statement to be Read by Teachers to Students

On September 11, beginning at 8:45 A.M., the United States suffered horrible tragedies. The World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. were hit by terrorist attacks. These attacks resulted in explosions that caused injury and considerable loss of life.

We are all feeling shocked and upset by these terrible events. It is normal when we hear of such events to feel afraid for our own safety and the safety of the people we care about.

We may find it hard to concentrate on our daily activities and to understand why this has happened. The police, military, and others are responding with heightened security measures to protect us. Our administrators, as always, are watching carefully to make sure that our schools are safe.

6. Teachers should consider using the following **TALKING POINTS** in the discussions. Please adjust the discussion to the developmental needs of students.

- Maintain a calm demeanor. Your reaction shapes the children's responses.
- You should be aware of your own feelings (shock, anger, sadness, anxiety) while validating the children's feelings. Our role as teachers is to help students understand the impact that a trauma may have on their thoughts and feelings. **IT IS IMPORTANT FOR TEACHERS TO REMEMBER THAT THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO DISCUSS THESE EVENTS FROM A GEOPOLITICAL PERSPECTIVE. IT IS A VERY SENSITIVE TIME; LITTLE IS KNOWN OF THE ACTUAL FACTS SURROUNDING THESE EVENTS.**
- Expect questions that have no answers. (Why?, Will we go to war?, Who did it?) Answer questions as honestly as you can. Be careful that you do not allow blame on any race, culture, or religion. Don't be afraid to say that, "We don't know yet." As we stated above, please resist the temptation to engage in speculation as to the ramifications of these events.
- Move the children through this discussion and return them to school work in order to have children focus on something other than this tragedy. Returning to actual school work will give students a sense of normalcy and control.
- Students need to be assured that their safety is a primary concern of everyone in the Baltimore County Public Schools. You can reassure students that the Superintendent has been working closely with the County Executive and Governor to respond appropriately to this troubling situation.

Parent Letter
School Letterhead

Dear Parents/ Guardians:

As you are already aware, our nation experienced a national emergency caused by a series of terrorist attacks in New York City, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania.

During the school day, teachers discussed the tragedy with their students. School counselors, school nurses, and other Pupil Services personnel were available to help students who were having difficulty dealing with this loss. They will continue to be available to our children. Our school staff also addressed students' concerns about safety as they discussed their fears and anxieties. Teachers stressed the safety measures being taken in all Baltimore County Public Schools. At the end of the classroom discussions, we made every effort to return to a normal school day.

We are aware that you as parents and guardians are trying to make sense of these events and looking for guidance about what you can say to help your children. Your children are looking to you for some answers. We may not have answers to all of your questions, but we do have a few suggestions:

- Expect the following reactions from your children - shock, fear, anxiety, sadness, and, yes, anger.
- It is important to validate their feelings by saying to your children. "These are normal feelings when faced with such abnormal situations."
- Share your own feelings, but be cautious about assigning blame prematurely.
- Monitor your children's reactions to what might be a traumatic event for them.
- Typical trauma reactions may range from distractibility and confusion to a loss of energy, feeling "stuck," and unwilling to return to normal interests. At times, traumatized people feel as if "things don't matter anymore." Encourage your children to become interested again in those things that fulfill their lives.
- Don't be surprised if you or your child may have trouble sleeping. Reassure your child and sit with them to calm them.
- We are aware that students may become frightened again as they relive these experiences. Reassure them that these fears will eventually become less intrusive in their lives. Help them continue their normal activities.

Our school stands ready to help you and your family as we adjust as a nation and a local community to this national loss. Please feel invited to contact our school counselor or other Pupil Service personnel if you feel that your family needs assistance in coping with this situation. As always, thank you for your support as we come together as a school community during a most difficult time.

Sincerely,

Example – Standby Media Statements for People taking Incoming Calls

Media Calls:

“Please give me your name, phone number and media affiliation and someone will return your call just as soon as possible.”

Employee, Student, Parent Calls:

“We really cannot provide you with any information at this time, but if you will tune to your local radio or television station, I’m sure they will report any news as soon as it becomes available.”

DEATH OR HOMICIDE

Teacher

- Notify principal's office and the nurse.
- If perpetrator is in the area, speak calmly with him until police arrive.
- If there is no perpetrator, remove students from area and calm them.
- Isolate witnesses (Do not allow them to talk to anyone).
- Await public officials and administrative personnel.
- Return students to classroom when advised.
- File an incident report ASAP.
- Identify students in need of intense counseling.

School Nurse

- Provide privacy for victim.
- Document approximate time and specific observations regarding ABC, (airway, breathing, circulation) and LOC, (loss of consciousness).
- Provide a copy of the documented information to EMS for hospital personnel.

Principal's Office

- Call 911 for police and ambulance.
- Secure emergency health information from student information sheet for victim and make a copy.
- Assist police in locating any possible perpetrators.
- Principal notifies parent in person if possible.
- Appoint a staff member to accompany ambulance to hospital with health information and to act as a liaison between hospital and district.
- Call the superintendent who will notify the necessary administrators.
- Facilitate investigations by civil authorities.
- Announce counseling services and document students receiving counseling.
- Write an informational note to parents.
- File an incident report.

DISGRUNTLED INDIVIDUALS IN THE BUILDING OR ON THE GROUNDS

This policy speaks to the individual who is angry or otherwise exhibiting behaviors that may be a threat to the safety of students, faculty, or staff.

Procedures include:

- If possible, immediately contact school administrators without letting the person know what you are doing.
- If the individual is in an area where multiple students or faculty are gathered, try to move him/her into a more isolated situation without isolating yourself.
- If possible, introduce yourself using your first name (no titles) and establish a friendly rapport with positive and respectful eye contact.
- First and foremost, be mindful of your own safety and that of others.
- *If it becomes evident that you are unable to deal with this person in any way, leave the area immediately and request help.
- Generally, an administrator will decide whether to call 911.

- If the situation dictates and an administrator is unavailable or is unable, (e.g. they are the target of confrontation), contact 911 immediately and request help.
- In the event of a dangerous intruder in the building, it may be necessary to keep students in classrooms or other enclosed areas. In this event, an announcement will be made that a **LEVEL TWO EMERGENCY** exists. Faculty will understand that a **Level Two Emergency** indicates that all students are to stay in their rooms and that doors are to be locked.

***When such an announcement is made:**

- Physical education teachers should take students to the locker rooms.
- During lunch, students in the cafeteria should:
 - Elementary students should _____.
 - High School students should _____.
- All teachers should keep students away from hallways and exterior windows and not let students leave for any reason.
- In the event that gunshots are heard, follow all procedures above:
 - See that everyone stays as low as possible.
 - Provide as much cover as possible.
 - Turn out the lights in your room.

Drug Selling or Use- Illicit

Teacher

- Notify principal's office if you think you have witnessed a drug sale, usage, or possession.
- File an incident report ASAP.

Principal's Office

- If the student is ill, refer to illicit drug overdose procedures.
- Call police.
- Call the superintendent who will notify the appropriate administrators.
- Have police officer bring the student to the office with backpack, purse, books, and other possessions.
- Ensure that at least 2 adults and police officer are present at the meeting.
- Tell the student what is suspected and ask the student to produce the drugs. If the student denies or refuses, ask the student to empty pockets and all other containers.
- If the search yields nothing, 2 adults, the police officer, and the student go to the student's locker for a search.
- If drug is found or sale is witnessed.
 - Police officer will remove student from campus.
 - Notify parent or those listed on emergency release form.
 - Call the superintendent to provide a progress report of the investigation.
 - Follow disciplinary action according to code of student conduct.
 - Suggest that student enroll in drug counseling program.
- If no drug is found:

- Call for Police who will make an impairment assessment whether student is under the influence.
- Notify a parent or those listed on emergency release form to come immediately to the school.
- Meet with the student, the parent, and a counselor.
- Follow disciplinary action according to code of student conduct.
- Suggest that student enroll in drug counseling program.

Drug Overdose

Teacher

- Notify principal's office and send for the school nurse with name of ill student.
- Keep student as stable as possible.
- Isolate witnesses and do not allow them to talk to anyone or to each other.
- Await public officials and administrative personnel.
- File an incident report ASAP.

School Nurse/Designee

- Conduct an emergency assessment (ABC and LOC): when student is stable conduct an impairment assessment.
- Administer first aid until medics arrive.
- Document findings. If student is alert, obtain name of drug, how administered, and at what time it was administered.
- Provide a copy of the documented information to EMS for hospital personnel.
- File an incident report.

Principal's Office

- Call 911 for police and ambulance.
- Appoint a staff member to secure emergency information from student information sheet, to accompany student to hospital, and to act as liaison between hospital and school.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.

EARTHQUAKE SAFETY RULES

Earthquakes strike without warning and may provide individuals only seconds to react. Intensity varies from slight tremors to great shocks. Duration can be from a few seconds to several minutes. Shielding yourself from debris and falling objects should be your first concern since this is the cause of most injuries and deaths.

A general rule is to stay where you are when the shaking starts. If you are indoors, remain indoors. If you are outside, stay outside. Most injuries occur as people are entering or leaving buildings.

DURING AN EARTHQUAKE:

Inside:

- Take cover under a sturdy desk or table, in a kneeling position while shielding the face with one forearm and the back of the head with the other. You may also move to an inside wall. Stay away from glass windows and outside doors.
- Safest areas also include the center of the building along an inside wall and away from glass and high stacked items. Areas designed for disaster drills should be utilized if possible. The auditorium and gym should be evacuated.
- Remain quiet and listen to verbal instructions which will be given over the intercom.

- Do not evacuate until evacuation routes have been checked and are determined to be safe. Then follow the teacher to a safe area moving carefully and quietly.
- Staff members shall take a head count to ensure that all students are accounted for.
- Staff members shall provide necessary assistance to physically disabled students.
- A custodian shall turn off all utilities immediately.

OUTSIDE:

- Move away from buildings, utility wires and poles, trees, debris, and areas subject to falling glass.
- If threatened by falling debris, cover face with one forearm and back of the head with the other.
- The most dangerous place is a sidewalk subject to falling debris such as glass and masonry.
- Students shall stay together, be silent, and listen quietly for instructions.
- Staff members shall take a head count to ensure that all students are accounted for, and administer first aid as necessary.

IN A CAR:

- Stop the car and remain inside.
- Do not stop near overpasses, wires, high structures, or anything that could fall on your car.

AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE:

- Be prepared for aftershocks.
- Do not use matches, candles, or other open flames.
- If you smell gas, open all windows and leave the building.
- Do not use the telephone except to report an emergency.
- The building shall be evacuated using the fire evacuation procedures. Teachers should be sure to check the evacuation route for safety.
- Staff members shall account for all students, help check for injuries, administer first aid as necessary, and report injuries and/or absences to the principal or designee as soon as possible.
- A custodian shall report any utility failures or maintenance problems to the principal or designee immediately.
- The building shall be thoroughly re-inspected for safety before occupancy is permitted.
- If necessary, arrangements shall be made to transport and relocate students to designated evacuation centers.

Emergency Alarm System

P.A. announcement of lockdown:

- Principal will make a plainly spoken announcement, such as “We have a security situation inside/outside the building”.
- Clear all corridors into classrooms.
- Lock classroom doors (if you feel you can safely do so).
- Move everyone away from windows and doors.
- Allow no one outside the classroom until the all clear signal is given by the principal (All clear signal is 2 short bell rings).

P.A. announcement - any need to shelter:

- Hazardous Material Release: Decision is made to shelter.
- Chemical truck overturning.
- Chemical train derailment.
- Chemical plant accident.
- Pipeline rupture.
- Outside gas leak.
- Tornado Watch is in place: be prepared to move shelter area.

Evacuation

Teacher

- Evacuate when you hear (insert signal for evacuation)
- Be aware of pre-designated primary and alternate evacuation routes.
- Take roster sheet and grade book with you.
- Close classroom door and turn out lights as students leave.
- Leave the building in an orderly manner without rushing or crowding.
- If the situation warrants, vehicle evacuation will be used to transport students to another site.
- If the emergency calls for an evacuation without the use of vehicles, walk from the building in the stated course.
- Always evacuate cross-wind and/or upwind away from any emergency by a safe route.
- **Students should be evacuated at least 300 feet from building and out of the way of emergency vehicles.**
- Reassemble the students and check roll to ensure that all students are accounted for.
- Report any missing students immediately.
- Note on roster any students who are released to parents.
- Return to your room when you are instructed that it is safe to do so.

Principal's Office

- Use PA announcement if alternate evacuation route or alternate assembly area is to be used.
- Call 911 for police or fire department.
- Advise whether ambulances are needed.
- Advise nurse and staff to administer first aid as necessary.
- Evacuate all staff and students to pre-designated evacuation routes.
- Ensure that appointed caretakers assist handicapped students.
- Office secretaries should search all areas of building for stragglers.
- Ensure that custodian and cafeteria have turned off all motors, fans, and other power-driven equipment.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Advise whether primary or alternative assembly area will be used.
- Advise whether students need to be transported by bus to another location.
- After total roster is collected, staff members should search building for any missing students.
- If students are to be evacuated to another site, or they are to be dismissed for the day, organize a system for loading the busses as quickly and safely as possible.
- If students are to be dismissed for the day, a check-out area should be established.
- Students should only be released to parents or those listed on emergency release form.
- Signal "all clear" and return to class when appropriate.
- File an incident report.

FIRE AND EXPLOSION

In the event of a Major fire or explosion:

Teacher

- Evacuate when you hear signal.
- Be aware of the pre-designated primary and alternate evacuation routes.
- Take roster sheet and grade book with you.
- Close classroom door and turn out lights as students leave.
- Leave the building in an orderly manner without rushing or crowding.
- If the situation warrants, vehicle evacuation will be used to transport students to another site.
- If the emergency calls for an evacuation without the use of vehicles, walk from the building in the stated course.
- Always evacuate cross-wind and/or upwind away from any emergency by a safe route.
- Students should be evacuated at least 300 feet from building and out of the way of emergency vehicles.
- Reassemble the students and check roll to ensure that all students are accounted for.
- Report any missing students immediately.
- Note on roster any students who are released to parents.
- Return your room when you are instructed that it is safe to do so.

Principal's Office

- Sound alarm to signal evacuation.
- Use P.A. announcement if alternate evacuation route or alternate assembly area is to be used.
- Call 911 for police or fire department.
- Advise whether ambulances are needed.
- Advise nurse and staff to administer first aid as necessary.
- Evacuate all staff and students to pre-designated evacuation routes .
- Ensure that appointed caretakers assist handicapped students.
- Building secretaries should search all areas of building for stragglers.
- Ensure that custodian and cafeteria have turned off all motors, fans, and other power-driven equipment.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Advise whether primary or alternate assembly area will be used.
- Advise whether students need to be transported by bus to another site.
- After total roster is collected, pre -appointed staff members should search building for any missing students.
- If students are to be evacuated to another site or they are to be dismissed for the day, organize a system for loading the buses as quickly and safely as possible.
- If students are to be dismissed for the day, a check out area should be established.
- Students should only be released to parents or those listed on emergency release form.
- Signal "all clear" and return to class, if appropriate.
- File an incident report.

In the event of a minor fire:

Teacher

- Immediately evacuate class to hall area.
- Notify principal's office of possible need to evacuate entire building.
- Use a fire extinguisher.
- If fire cannot be extinguished:
 - Notify principal's office to evacuate entire building.
 - Follow fire evacuation procedure.
- If fire is extinguished;
 - Notify principal that fire is extinguished.
 - Retain class outside classroom until the fire department declares that it is safe to return.
 - Restore calm and resume education process as quickly as possible.
 - File an incident report.

Principal's Office

- Call 911 for fire department.
- Use good judgment on when and whether to activate alarm for evacuation.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Call the Director of Maintenance at 659-0703.

FLOOD DISASTER PLANNING

Learn these flash flood terms used by the National Weather Service forecasts and warnings:

- *Flash flood* means the occurrence of a dangerous rise in water level of a stream or over a land area in a few hours or less caused by heavy rain.

- *Flash flood watch* means that heavy rains occurring or expected to occur may soon cause flash flooding in certain areas and citizens should be alert to the possibility of a flood emergency that will require immediate action.
- *Flash flood warning* means that flash flooding is occurring or imminent on certain streams or designated areas and immediate precautions should be taken by those threatened.

When a flash flood watch is issued:

- The Superintendent or designee should listen to local radio or TV for possible flash warnings and flooding progress.
- Be prepared to move from danger quickly if required.
- If you are on a road, watch for flooding in highway dips, low areas, and around bridges.
- Watch for signs (thunder, lightening) of distant heavy rainfall.

When a flash flood warning is issued:

- Do not attempt to cross a flowing ditch or stream on foot.
- Do not attempt to drive through dips of unknown depths. If your vehicle stalls, abandon it and seek high ground.
- Be especially cautious when dark, when it is harder to recognize the flood dangers.

After the flash flood warning-general:

- Recognize that flash flooding may have ended, but general flooding may come later in streams and rivers.
- Know the location of high ground and how to get there.
- Stay out of flooded areas, streets, and intersections.

Hazardous Material Release

A decision must be made to shelter in place or to evacuate during a hazardous material release.

Principal's office

- Contact or receive a decision from the fire department's hazardous material division on whether to shelter in place or to evacuate during a hazardous material release.
- If told to shelter then follow the shelter in place procedures on page ____.
- If told to evacuate then follow the evacuation procedures on page ____.

HOSTAGE SITUATION

If you are a hostage, or if your class is being held hostage, the following actions are recommended:

- Move very slowly. Keep your distance. Attempt to keep some obstacle between you and the person with the weapon (door, desk, wall.) This is for your safety. In hostage situations, front line negotiators do not put themselves in visible contact with the hostage taker. They talk around the corner or through the door.
- If already visible, keep constant eye contact.
- Ask the person to put the weapon down. (They just might!) They might say they may still use it. Agree, but indicate that it will be a little easier to talk, even if they lay it down beside them or put it in their pocket. If they refuse, tell them it is okay.

- Never argue with them. Simply ask questions. Listen.
- Ask them to take a deep breath and relax. Reassure them that you know they really do not want to hurt anyone
- Make no sudden, unannounced moves. If you are going to move, tell them beforehand what you would like to do.
- Do as they say.
- Do not promise something that cannot be delivered. This will only anger them and they will see that as insincerity, or as you thinking they are stupid.
- Ask them if it is okay for the other students to leave. Try to calm the students – the calmer they are, the safer they are.
- Never hold out your hand and ask the person to turn the weapon over to you. Again, ask them to put it down. Giving over their weapon will trigger an intense vulnerability that can trigger a sudden change to regain control and may result in the use of the weapon. If you are close enough to be holding out your hand, you are close enough to be a victim.
- Maintain a non-threatening pose. Keep hands at your sides or folded. Again, do not make any sudden or fast moves.
- Keep talking, asking, paraphrasing, and listening. At some point talk about the fact that no one needs to be harmed and that neither you or anyone else intends to harm them. And they can have some help with what has happened.
- Buy time. Communicating is an effort to buy time until trained help arrives. When they arrive, do exactly what they tell you to do.

This may be a life and death situation: It is not television or the movies. You don't keep walking toward the person who has the weapon when they say, "Stop". You don't hold out your hand for the weapon. You don't intimidate. You don't refuse to do what they tell you to do. You don't lie. You don't joke or make fun. You don't underestimate their impulsiveness and ability to seriously hurt or kill.

Intruders

Intruder, suspicious, or unknown person in building or on campus grounds without a Visitor's Pass or who lack visible identification of who they are.

Loitering in a school building, on a school campus, or near a school campus is a misdemeanor and is covered under Education Code 4.23.

Measures preventive in nature and intended to control the access of intruder to the building may include:

- Entrances to the school should be kept locked during the school day to ensure use of main entrances by school visitors.
- Post decals at building entrances asking visitors to the building to go to the office and identify themselves.
- Buildings should be properly marked (by readable maps posted near entrance or by signs) giving directions to office.
- Direct strangers who fail to identify themselves or their business at school to leave the campus immediately.
- Special Note: Loitering on a school campus or in a building or near a school campus is a misdemeanor and is covered by Iowa law.

Procedures to follow when an intruder enters a building:

- All visitors shall sign-in at the Principal's Office, at which time they will be given a Visitors Pass.
- All visitors shall respect school rules, and shall be prepared to provide identification to school personnel if requested to do so.
- Every visitor shall be greeted by a staff member and asked, "May I help you?"
- Visitors who fail to comply with school procedures shall be verbally informed that they are in violation of school policy.

- If the verbal warning fails, the visitor shall be informed that he/she is considered as an intruder and that the principal will be notified. The intruder shall continue to be monitored and continue to be informed that they are in violation of district policy.
- If the intruder does not leave the building/premises, law enforcement officials shall be called immediately. (Call 911)
- If it is determined that an intruder is in the building, the principal or designee shall notify the superintendent or designee and activate the notification plan, whereas all classroom doors shall be closed and locked. Students shall remain in their current location; if in a hallway or washroom, they shall report immediately to the nearest classroom. **(Level II Emergency)**.
- The intruder shall not be chased if he or she flees. The goal is to get the intruder off school property, not to capture him or her.
- Staff members shall make a mental note of the physical description of an intruder to give to law enforcement if necessary.
- The Superintendent/Principal may need to consult with the media spokesperson in the event a fact sheet needs to be sent to media, parents, or staff.

Kidnapping/Unauthorized Removal of Student

School Secretary

Preventative Actions:

- Have a list of those students who are not to be released to anyone except a specific parent or other person.
- Red flag the information sheet and health form.
- Check with the custodial parent/guardian for approval before releasing a student to anyone else.
- Verify the identity of any parent who telephones a request for a student's release, with a return phone call to the parent's number listed on the student's form.
- Record on the information sheet any custodial information that changes and keep a copy of any court documents on file.
- Hold in the office any student who seems reluctant to go with the person picking up the student.
- Ask for the person's driver's license and record their name and number.
- Notify the custodial parent/guardian of the student's reluctance and abide by the parent's wishes.

In the event of an unauthorized removal:

- Notify the principal immediately.

Principal's Office

- Use good judgment in trying to retain abductor while the secretary tries to notify police and guardian.
- Get a license plate number.
- Call police at 911.
- Call the parent/guardian listed on the student information sheet.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Do not release any information to the media.
- Refer inquiries to the superintendent.
- When police arrive, work closely with them.

Medical Problem or Campus Accident

Teacher

- Send for the school nurse or principal with name of injured student or employee.
- Keep the injured person as stable as possible.
- File an incident report ASAP.

School Nurse/Designee

- Secure student or employee's emergency medical health information record and take it with you to accident site.

- Assess severity of injury or illness.
- Call injured person's physician if indicated on student information sheet.

If Serious Problem

- Do not move the injured person.
- Call 911 for ambulance.
- Notify principal's office.
- Stabilize the injured person and administer first aid until medics arrive.
- Obtain diagnosis follow-up and file report.

If Minor Problem

- Move the injured person to nurse's office and assess.
- Administer first aid.
- Call parent, relative, or those listed on emergency release form and give a medical referral, if needed.
- File report.

Principal's Office

- Call parent or those listed on emergency release form.
- Appoint a staff member to secure emergency health information from nurse, to accompany the injured person to hospital, and to act as a liaison between hospital and principal's office.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- File an incident report and send copy to central office.

Neck Injuries

Coach or Teacher

- Recognize the symptoms of a neck injury or cervical spinal injury (CSI).
 - Impaired level of consciousness.
 - Motor or sensory deficit.
 - Pain in the neck or back.
- If a CSI is suspected, the student should never be moved except by medically trained personnel.
- Manually stabilize the student's head immediately by holding the head to prevent any movement of the head or neck.
- Defer all other actions to an athletic trainer, physician, or emergency medical technician.
- Call 911 for medical assistance.
- Notify the principal and/or the athletic director.
- Ensure that the first arriving medical person takes CSI precautions.
 - Check the student to assess consciousness, breathing, and pulse.
 - Do not lift the head to open the airway.
 - Check vital signs and get a complete assessment of motor functions before the student is moved.
- Accompany the injured student to the hospital.
- Assign adult to supervise other students.
- Stay at the hospital until relieved by the parents or guardian.
- Act as a liaison between hospital, principal's office, and the athletic department.
- File a report.
- Make follow-up visits and phone calls to check on the condition of the injured student. Notify the principal and/or the athletic director.

Athletic Director or Principal

- Notify a parent or those listed on emergency release form immediately.
- Appoint a staff member to secure emergency health card from training room and take it to the hospital.
- Call the superintendent's office that will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.

Missing Student or Runaway Student

Teacher

- Report to Principal's Office any student who is missing.

Principal's Office

During school hours after student has been listed as present:

- Obtain registration form and photograph from files.
- Search campus, including an "All Call" on the P.A. system.
- Call parents or those listed on emergency form.
- Advise parents to call the police if student is not located in a reasonable time.
- **Note that PARENT must make this call.**
- Call the superintendent.
- Do not release any information to the media.
- Refer any inquiries to the superintendent.
- When police arrive at the school, work closely with them.
- If student is located, notify parents immediately.

During school hours when student is missing between home and school:

- Check with parent if student does not arrive at school.
- Is student excused/legally absent? If answer is "Yes", stop procedures.
- Could student be lost?
- Is student suspected of being a runaway?
- Is student suspected of being truant?
- Are any of his friends also missing?
- Ask for student's possible route to school and for means of transportation.
- **Advise the parents to call the police if student is not located in a reasonable time.**
- **Note that the PARENT must make this call.**
- If student is a young child, possibly drive the student's route to school.
- Obtain registration form and photograph from files.
- Call the superintendent's office to inform of the situation.
- If the student is a bus rider, call transportation.
- Do not release any information to the media.
- If police have arrived at school, work closely with them.
- If student is located, notify the parents immediately.

After hours when student is missing between school and home:

- Parent or caregiver has called school to advise of missing student.
- Express concern and desire to help.
- Gather pertinent information.
- Advise caller to contact alternate caregiver and friends.
- If caller is a parent, advise to call police if student is not located in a reasonable period of time.
- Ask caller to call if student is located.
- Obtain registration form and photograph from file.
- Contact student's teacher or last hour teacher.
- Search all campus, including calling on P.A. system.
- If student is not found on campus, you may want to drive route from school to home.
- If caller was not the parent, call the parent or legal guardian.
- Advise the parent or guardian to call the police if student is not located in a reasonable period of time.
- Call the superintendent's office to notify of the situation.
- Do not release any information to the media.
- Refer inquiries to the superintendent.
- When police arrive, work closely with them.
- If student is located, notify parent immediately.

Picking Up Children in Crisis – Advice for Parents

Children in crisis often need more nurturing, comfort, and reassurance that they are safe. Help the child share his/her feelings in your supportive presence, and acknowledge his/her feelings. Do not tell the child how to feel, instead respond to their basic needs.

During Normal School Hours:

- Refer to policy in student handbook.
- Reinforce that school is one of the safest places that students can be located during most crisis.
- Students will be kept at school until the crisis is determined to be over.
- **Have an information sheet available of any students who are not to be released to anyone except a specific parent or in accordance to any court or custodial order.**
- Students will be released to parents who sign and document time and date of pickup.
- Only persons identified on emergency cards may pick up students. Verify with the custodial parent before releasing student to anyone else and request driver's license information if necessary.

After Normal School Hours:

- All students must report to the office to be picked up.
- Release student as indicated above and document date and time of pickup.

Sexual Assault

Teacher

- Alert the principal office immediately.
- File an incident report ASAP.

Principal's Office

- Call 911 if necessary for police and ambulance.
- Call the superintendent who will notify necessary administrators.
- Call nurse to pull emergency health information from student information sheet and to administer first aid.
- Call counselor to stay with victim.
- Isolate suspect, if possible.
- Isolate witnesses and do not allow them to talk to anyone or to each other.
- Appoint an administrator or counselor to notify a parent in person, if possible.
- Inform the staff and provide counseling services.
- Facilitate any investigations by district and civil authorities.

Shelter in Place

Shelter in place is the use of any classroom or office for the purpose of providing temporary shelter from a hazardous material release.

Hazardous Material Release:

1. Chemical Plant Accident
2. Chemical Train Derailment
3. Chemical Truck Overturning
4. Pipeline Rupture

Principal's Office

- Receive information and instructions to shelter in place, rather than evacuate, due to a nearby hazardous material release.
- Activate the school shelter in place plan by announcement of the PA system.
- Require all persons in outside areas to go indoors.
- Ensure that appointed caretakers assist handicapped students.
- Ensure that maintenance immediately shuts off all heating, cooling, and ventilation systems for entire campus.
- Instruct teachers to close doors and windows.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Allow no one to leave the shelter during the emergency.
- Use reasonable judgment in allowing outsiders into a shelter during the height of the incident.
- Be in contact with the police department for continuous information and instructions until the incident is under control.
- Announce the current status of the incident at frequent intervals over the PA system until "all clear".

Teacher

- Move all students indoors.
- Close all windows and doors to the shelter.
- Turn off room heating, cooling, or ventilation systems.
- If there appears to be air contamination within the shelter, place a wet handkerchief or wet paper towel over the nose and mouth for temporary respiratory protection.
- Continue to follow the instructions given over the PA system.
- Do not allow anyone to leave the shelter until the "all clear".

Student Walkout

Indications of a student walkout:

- Students inform teachers, counselors or the Principal's Office of their plan for a walkout.
- Student Walkout Leaders or a group of students meet with the principal to present issues and concerns that are causing them to plan a walkout.

Principal's Office

Upon hearing about a potential walkout:

- Identify the issues and concerns that have led up to the walkout.
- Obtain the date and time of the planned walkout and a list of students involved.
- Determine a course of action to avert the walkout.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Meet with the faculty to inform them of the potential walkout.
- Meet with the student leaders and student council to explain the situation, clear up rumors and attempt to gain support to avert the walkout.
- Meet with the parent/community leaders to enlist their support to avert a walkout.

Pre-plan for day of walkout:

- Assign staff members to a supervision schedule for the day of the walkout.
- Pre-plan to have teachers stand at specific locations in the school to supervise if a walkout occurs.
- Instruct teachers to take attendance before the time of the walkout and after the time of the walkout.
- Instruct teachers to prepare a special absentee list to document the names of the students who participated in the walkout.
- Instruct teachers to watch their actions and comments so that they do not aggravate the walkout situation.
- Designate a person to make a video tape recording all students and adults who participate in the walkout.
- Emphasize to the video operator the importance of the film for later use in identification purposes and for documenting the verbal communications between the principal and the walkouts.
- Confer with the superintendent for advice and assistance in decision making.
- Do not make any statements to the media.
- Refer all media to the superintendent.

During the walkout:

- Instruct staff members to allow the students to leave the building.
- Do not stop any student from leaving.
- Encourage staff members to say the following to the walkouts “Students if you go to class now, there will be no disciplinary action. If you choose to walkout, you will be subject to disciplinary action”.
- Ensure that the video camera operator is filming the students, any outsiders, and adults that are participating in the walkout.
- Make the following P.A. Announcement: “Students, we want you to go to class. You have 5 minutes to return to class. If you leave, you are subject to disciplinary action”.
- Wait 5 minutes to give students the opportunity to return to class.
- Instruct personnel assigned to hall duty to conduct a “halls sweep” to clear the halls after 5 minutes.
- Ensure that all students are either in class or outside.
- Secure the building doors so students cannot come back in and disrupt classes.
- Monitor the ongoing situation.
- Communicate the current status to the superintendent.
- Go outside with a bullhorn to address those involved in the walkout.
- Ensure that the audio/visual camera operator is with you to record your statements.
- Address the walkouts by the following statements: “Students we want you back in school. If you come back now, there will be no disciplinary action. You have 5 minutes to return to the gymnasium where we can process you to go to class. If you do not come back in within 5 minutes, you are subject to disciplinary action.”
- Concentrate on trying to get students back in the building and into class. Do not let the news media distract that effort.

After the walkout:

- Instruct teachers to take attendance each period so a list can be generated to identify students involved in the walkout.
- Be responsible for developing a list of participants in the walkout.
- Use the attendance lists and video tape to develop the list of all students who walked out.
- Contact the parents/guardians to arrange for the return of each student.
- Inform the parents/guardians of the disciplinary action.
- Develop a system for admitting students back to school after a walkout.

SUICIDAL STUDENT/EMPLOYEE: GENERAL GUIDELINES

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY (see attached liability issues)

- Any written or verbal reference by a student to suicide, to dying, ending his or her life must be immediately reported to administration.
- Stay with the student. **Maintain constant visual contact with student** until trauma team members arrive to escort the student for evaluation.
- Inform the family.
- Refer to a clinical setting for further evaluation and treatment.
- If parent refuses to accept referral, report to child protective services.
- Follow up the conversation with parent with a letter.

Never delay reporting. This reporting includes a third party reference such as another student letting you know of their concern for their friend who’s been talking about suicide.

POTENTIALLY SUICIDAL STUDENT/EMPLOYEE

- Inform the crisis team.
- Meet immediately with the youth.
- Develop an understanding of the crisis, assess the seriousness of the situation, and assess the risk of the youth in crisis. (see attached - Assessing the Risk and checklist)
- Consult with team members to arrive at a consensus of the interventions to be implemented.
- Reach agreement with youth, or if an agreement is not possible, define interventions
- Inform family.
- Assess family’s ability to provide support.

- Refer family for assessment.
- Contact support systems.
- Arrange for daily contact with youth as often as necessary until youth has regained balance (resolved the crisis).
- Contract with youth as to how they will attempt to manage day-to-day, solutions they will implement, activities they will engage in at school, etc.
- Link youth with twenty-four hour crisis centers to use should the situation escalate after school hours. Call National Youth Crisis Hotline at 1-800-448-4663.
- Request outside evaluation, outside counseling.
- Transport or request transport to emergency facility if danger is imminent.
- Contact the police if a weapon or other dangerous objects may be involved or there is a potential for escalating violence.

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN SCHOOL – A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

- Immediately call 911.
- Call the office.
- Initiate appropriate life saving measures.
- Office will inform the superintendent.

Assessing the Risk

What happens when youngsters say ‘yes’? The immediate task is to assess the possible risk involved. This necessitates asking questions. You need to know if they have thought about how they would kill themselves. The more specific the plan, the higher is the risk. If they have a when, where, and how, it is serious. It is necessary to ascertain if the means are available to them - for example, is there a gun in the house? If the means are available, the risk is greater. Find out if they are using drugs; there is a 50% correlation between suicide and drugs. In addition to these factors, if there is a history of suicide in the family, and/or a parent has been chronically depressed, the risk is greater still. If someone they know has recently completed suicide, the risk is higher. When the suicidal person is focused solely on dying as a solution (tunnel vision) and cannot attach himself to any future possibility, the risk may be higher.

This tunnel vision is often expressed by using words and phrases like “always”, “never”, and “either/or”, “It will always be this way”, “It will never change”, “Either you make this relationship work or I’ll kill myself”. Other high-risk factors include. history of physical/sexual victimization, witness to violence, poor impulse control (regardless of whether the suicide is deemed low-risk, a child with a history of poor impulse control who is thinking about suicide is in fact, a very high-risk as they may lack the ability to think things through but rather have the thought and act on it). Homosexual preference is also a risk factor.

Be aware that when assessing risk, the higher the number of risk factors present, the higher the risk. This does not mean, however, that if only a few of the risk factors are present there is little likelihood for an attempt.

Someone who has no plan, only an ideation, but has a history of poor impulse control, could be considered high risk. We reiterate the importance of a second opinion by another member of your crisis team and/or by an outside referral source. **The determination of risk, and the sub-sequent interventions, should not be the responsibility of one person.**

Additional Risk Factors

If a student refuses to agree to a “no suicide” contract, the risk may also be higher. A “no suicide” contract is a verbal agreement that the student agrees to call for help if he is feeling suicidal. **When using this contract, being realistic** with the student is essential. Indicating that you may not be able to get back to him immediately and that he is to wait for your call is realistic. Some professionals provide the potentially suicidal person with the 24-hour suicide prevention center number and instruct the center to call them immediately should the student call. They also instruct the student of this agreement.

VERBAL OR WRITTEN THREATS OF SUICIDE

Teacher

- Contact the counselor.
- Take threat seriously.
- Tell the student you are concerned.
- Do not leave the student alone.
- Continue to express interest in the student after the crisis is over.

Counselor

- Talk privately with the student and assess the seriousness of the threat (see checklist).
- Ask directly if the person has entertained thoughts of suicide.

If threat is serious:

- Do not leave the student alone.
- Notify the principal's office.
- Notify the parents/guardians.
- Continue to counsel the student.
- Give the student and parents number for National Youth Crisis Hotline 1-800-448-4663.
- Provide parents with other community resources for counseling.
- Ask the parent/guardian to acknowledge suicidal threat (if refuse see release form).
- Work with the parents, students, administrators, and teachers to monitor the student.

Principal's Office

- Inform the Superintendent.
- Remain in contact with counselor about the situation.
- Parents may be required to show proof of psychological consultation before the student is permitted to return to school.

SUICIDE ATTEMPT IN PROGRESS

Teacher

- Send for principal and counselor.
- Try to calm the student and others.
- In calm voice, ask student for permission to evacuate the rest of class.
- Evacuate quietly, if allowed.
- Return students to classroom when advised.
- In the event of the death of a student, be prepared to assist principal with notification of next of kin.
- Complete an incident report ASAP.
- Identify students in need of more intense counseling.

Principal's Office

- Activate Crisis Response Team.
- Call 911 for police and ambulance.
- Notify nurse.
- Notify parents.
- Appoint a staff member to handle arriving parents.
- Call the superintendent's office who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Direct the emergency responders to the scene.

If suicide prevented:

- **Require parents to show proof of psychological consultation before the student is permitted to return to school (If parents refuse, make note of refusal and indicate time and date.).**
- Authorize increased counseling services to the student
- Facilitate any investigations by district and civil authorities

If suicide not prevented:

- Inform staff (all staff meeting).
- Prepare classroom announcement for teachers to read to students.
- Authorize increased counseling services to students and staff.
- Hold a mandatory staff meeting at the end of the day so staff can inform administration and Trauma Team members as to what was and wasn't helpful, what staff need to make the next day a bit easier, to identify additional students who staff are concerned about, to give additional directions as to expectations and schedule changes for the next day.
- Facilitate any investigations by district and civil authorities.

Counselor/Crisis Response Team

- Assist at the scene if needed.
- If a weapon is visible, use good judgment on whether or not to approach the student.
- Speak calmly with the student and try to defuse the situation using counseling expertise.
- Try to get the student isolated.
- Maintain contact with the student. Do not abandon the student.
- After crisis is over evaluate the response using the Potential Suicide Tasks and Disposition Report (see attached).

If suicide prevented:

- Give the student and parents the phone numbers of contacts and community resources.
- Work with the parents, the student, administrators, and teachers to monitor the student.

If suicide not prevented:

- If suicide was not prevented, coordinate and document increased counseling services to students.
- File a written report ASAP.

SUICIDE AT SCHOOL

- Contact office immediately. **DO NOT LEAVE THE SCENE TO DO SO.**
- Office contact police and superintendent.
- Do not remove or touch anything at the scene. (Suicide is a criminal offense that must be investigated. In today's society students do murder other students. This could possibly be a murder scene.)
- Administration and Trauma Team members will thereafter initiate all necessary procedures.

AFTER A SUICIDE**BE PREPARED TO:**

- Hold an all staff meeting before school begins.
- Read a classroom announcement to be read by teachers. (see below).
- Struggle with students emotional reactions as well as your own.
- Hold a mandatory staff meeting at the end of the day so staff can inform administration and Trauma Team members as to what was and wasn't helpful, of what staff need to make the next day a bit easier, to identify additional students who staff are concerned about, to give additional directions as to expectations and schedule changes for the next day.

CLASSROOM ANNOUNCEMENT:

On _____ we were given some very tragic news. _____ died on _____. _____ was (murdered, killed in a car accident, committed suicide, died suddenly, etc.) We do not have all the information at this time but will inform you as we learn more. _____'s (death, injury, accident, etc.) will upset some of you more than others and it will upset you in different ways just as it has the staff when we were informed. In the next few days, we will be visiting each class to answer any questions you may have and to talk about the kinds of reactions you may experience. OR there will be counselors

available should you want to talk with someone about _____ and your reactions to his/her death. Please (tell teacher, let someone know) and arrangements will be made for you to meet with a counselor.

If there were information at this time about services, it would be appropriate to mention them. If exams or other school activities are being postponed or changed; it is also appropriate to mention this.

Teachers should be notified at the staff meeting prior to the announcement that if they have concerns about announcing this to their class, they can ask for assistance. Sometimes teachers may themselves be emotionally overwhelmed and fear losing control or feel as if they may not be able to deal with the classroom response, usually a concern of those closest to the deceased.

After Reading Announcement (staff handout)

- Ask students what they have heard as to what happened. (Restate factual information provided by principal. Report rumors immediately to administrator or designee.)
- Ask students if they have questions they want to ask. Answer honestly. If you cannot answer honestly, admit that you do not have the answer but you will get an answer for them. Write the question down and before the day is completed ask for assistance from the Trauma Team. Let students know that you will get the answer for them by that day or the next.
- Express your own grief, shock, and difficulty with knowing what to say or what you feel right now. It's okay to show tears and emotions. This is a difficult time.
- Ask students if they would like you to have someone come into class to talk with them or make that decision based on your observations of the need. (You know your students fairly well. Err on the side of this being a need of theirs if you have a doubt.)
- Let them know that counselors have been trained for this situation and can help if they would like to talk with someone. (Direct them to inform you and you will arrange it as quickly as possible.)
- Know that students may have difficulty focusing and attending. Homework is probably not a good idea for a day or two. If there are any scheduled tests, check with administration about delaying these tests.
- Finally, there is no way to predict how your students will respond. They may present some difficult situations for you simply because it is something new you have not experienced before.

AFTER A SUICIDE

BE PREPARED FOR:

- Numerous emotional reactions from hysteria to numbness to disbelief.
- Questions regarding "why?"
- Your own emotional reactions that perhaps make you nervous and not sure what to say or do.
- Students who want to place blame and may, in fact, trigger anger and fighting in friends of the victim.
- A difficult day. You will need to be flexible and ready to ask for help at times, especially when the victim was in your class or friends with students in your class.

Trauma Response Protocol Suicide Lethality Checklist for Youth

<u>PART I</u>	<u>LOW</u>	<u>MODERATE</u>	<u>HIGH</u>
Plan	___ none	___ vague	___ specific*
*What is plan? _____			
Method			
What is method? _____			
Method available	___ no		___ yes
When	___ unplanned	___ vague	___ specific
Where	___ unplanned	___ vague	___ specific
Previous attempt	___ no		___ yes
Alcohol/drug use	___ no		___ yes
Recent loss	___ none		___ yes
<u>'PART II</u>	<u>LOW</u>	<u>MODERATE</u>	<u>HIGH</u>
*Physical sexual assault	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
Gender identity conflict	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
*Witness to violent behavior/trauma	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
Hyposomnia/Disturbed sleep	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
Preoccupied with death/dying	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
Weight loss	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
*Poor impulse control	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
*Fear of losing control	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
Loss of concentration	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
Psychomotor retardation/agitation	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
*Constricted thinking (either, or; always, never)	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
Somatic complaints	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
*Expression of guilt/shame	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
*Expression of hopelessness	___ no	___ recent	___ ongoing
*Chronically depressed parent	___ no		___ yes
*Turning against self (verbally) ___ no		___ yes	
Perceived support of others	___ several supports	___ one/two	___ none
*Refuses to contract	___ no		___ yes
<u>TOTAL</u>	___	___	___
*Represents high risk			

Potential Suicide Tasks and Disposition Report

Student _____ Date _____ Time _____
School _____ Referred by _____
Parents _____ Ph _____ Wk _____

Trauma Response Members _____
State the Nature of Crisis _____

INITIAL THOSE PROCEDURES APPROPRIATE TO THIS CRISIS:

- ___ A member of the team was with the student at all times.
- ___ Student was under direct supervision at all times.
- ___ Assessment of risk completed. Checklist attached.
- ___ Principal, team members, and other appropriate school personnel were contacted and consulted prior to final disposition.
- ___ Attempts to contact parents/guardian by telephone were:
 successful or unsuccessful (circle one)
- ___ Protective Services contacted for direction
- ___ Police contacted for support
- ___ Parents/guardian advised of the Trauma Team's concern that student is:
 1) actively suicidal 2) high suicide risk 3) low suicide risk (circle one)
- ___ Request was made for parents/guardian to come to school
- ___ Student transported for evaluation.(Parents directed to outside agency.)
- ___ Parents/guardian were able to come to school to discuss concerns regarding student. Student released to parent.
- ___ Parents/guardian told to remove gun or method of choice from home.
- ___ Parents refused referral. Parent ___ signed ___ did not sign release form.
- ___ Professional therapy for student recommended, and parents/guardian assisted in making arrangements for prompt assessment of student prior to releasing the student to parents/guardian.
- ___ Referral made to outside agency. Agency contact _____
- ___ Follow-up call about evaluation made. Date of call: _____
- Appointment made _____ Appointment not kept _____

Additional comments: _____

SUICIDE LIABILITY ISSUES

Suicide and homicide are situations that demand knowledge of legal ramifications of interventions.

The duty to warn the family and to refer the potentially suicidal youth for further evaluation and treatment, if necessary, is a duty, which has been upheld by the court.

Who Pays For Referral?

The American Association of Suicidology News Link (Volume 14, No.2, Summer 1989) helps to clarify legal responsibility. It supports the duty to both warn and refer. It also points out that if a child is taken involuntarily to the hospital because of the school's recommendation, the district should not be responsible for the bill, as this service is the same as the school calling the rescue squad for an injured student.

Informing Family:

If the situation is potentially life threatening, the family should be informed immediately. If there is doubt about family support, ask the student who in the family he or she trusts the most and start with that family member. Be prepared to be very supportive with the family, as it is not unusual for them to deny that suicide is a problem. (For parents, suicide is ultimate rejection – a sign (false as it may be) that they have failed. They need to know that they, as parents, could not keep the tragedy from happening.

If the student protests a great deal about family involvement, he or she may be directly covering up or protecting such family secrets as physical abuse or alcoholism. The family still needs to be told. You can approach the student by asking how he thinks mom and/or dad will respond. If the student paints a very negative picture, it is important to reinforce that this is no reason to attempt suicide. You might say, "So they have responded this way to you in the past over other things. Let's say they do react this way.

This is no reason to kill yourself. It simply means that for whatever reason, they are incapable of responding to you the way you need and want. This is not new for you and I refuse to accept that as a cause for you to kill yourself because there are people here who can help." A firm response is frequently received as a directive by the suicidal student. This is critical.

Under these circumstances, however, it may help if the student can be taken from school to the local children's mental health center and the family called from there. If the family is unable to be supportive in this situation, the center will be better able to deal with the issues of short-term residential care if return to the home is not advisable or if hospitalization is needed.

When meeting with the family at school, do not include the student in the meeting until you have presented the parents with all the information, obtained their response, and assessed their ability to respond supportively and follow your recommendations.

Special Considerations:

If possible, do not indicate to parents over the phone that their child is suicidal. Indicate that there is an emergency, their child is safe but before he/she can be released to them, they must come to school.

Indicating that the safety of the child is under control reduces the anticipated panic reaction yet lets the parent know there is a serious enough situation to warrant their presence. To tell a parent by phone their child is suicidal can place that parent in jeopardy in their attempt to drive to school, etc.

If parent cannot come immediately, staff should be available to stay with the student until the parent arrives. If parents insist on knowing, simply indicate that it is complicated and best dealt with in person and that the sooner they can arrive, the sooner resolution can be reached.

Some parental responses to requests to come to school will be met with refusal. Children who have been troublesome, parents who are emotionally disturbed, abusers, etc., simply may not be capable of responding in any way but a negative and dysfunctional way. Should parents refuse to meet with you, before releasing their child, you have no choice but to transfer and transport that student to the community resource that can provide a psychiatric assessment of lethality or risk and can contain the student as long as needed until parents arrive.

If it is necessary to transport the student, use police, ambulance, or a minimum of three adults: one drives while the other two sit in the back seat with the students between them for safety reasons.

Terrorism

Terrorism may be defined as a verbal threat or physical act of violence against persons or property with the intent to create fear and intimidation, to cause evacuation of a building, to cause major public inconvenience, or to cause serious education disruption with reckless disregard of a person's welfare or a property's value.

Procedures to Follow in an Act of Terrorism:

- The principal or designee shall promptly report the incident to the superintendent or designee, and to law enforcement officials, as appropriate.
- The principal or designee shall pursue the information promptly, steadfastly, and thoroughly, to determine its accuracy and origin.
- If a student makes a threat, he/she shall be referred immediately to the principal's office.
- If the principal or designee has evidence that a student did commit an act of terrorism, the student will be subject to student discipline procedures.
- If an adult makes a threat, the principal or designee shall confront the individual and ask them to leave school property immediately. In addition, law enforcement officials shall be notified if necessary.
- If a threat is made via the telephone, the same procedures used for a bomb threat shall be implemented.

Tornado or Severe Storm

Tornado Safety Guidelines*

- Remember that the National Weather Service issues a tornado WATCH when the possibility of tornadoes exists, and the tornado WARNING when a tornado has been spotted or indicated on radar. Remember also, there may not be time for a tornado WARNING before a twister strikes. Tornadoes form suddenly. Teachers and students should know the difference between a Watch and a Warning.
- Each school should have tornado shelter areas designated. Schools should use interior hallways on the ground floors that are NOT parallel to the tornado path, which is usually from the southwest. Never use gymnasiums, auditoriums or other rooms with wide free-span roofs. Avoid all windows and other glassed areas. The most dangerous locations of a building are usually along the south and west sides, and at all corners.
- Teachers and students should know their designated shelter areas.
- During a tornado Watch, specific office personnel or other staff members should be assigned to monitor the weather radio for tornado Warnings.
- Weather spotters should keep an eye on the sky for dark, rolling clouds, hail, driving rain or a sudden increase in wind in addition to the telltale funnel or roaring noise.
- Specific teachers should be assigned to round up students on the playground or other outdoor areas.
- When students are assembled in designated sheltered areas, and when the danger is imminent, they should be instructed to respond to a specific command, such as "Drop and Tuck". They should assume a protective posture facing an interior wall. Most tornado deaths are caused by head injury.

Danger Signs:

- SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS:
 - Thunder, lightning, heavy rains, and strong winds.
- HAIL:
 - Pellets of ice from dark-clouded skies.
- ROARING NOISE:
 - Like a hundred railroad locomotives: a crashing thunderous sound.
- FUNNEL
 - Dark, spinning "rope" or column from the sky to the ground, or a sudden increase in wind.

*Information from "Tornado Safety Rules in Schools".

Prior to onset of Bad Weather:

Principal's Office

- Be aware of NOAA guidelines for safe and unsafe shelter areas.
- Designate tornado shelter areas.
- If possible, have a cellular phone on hand and with a charged battery, and ensure that all district personnel have that number.
- A special alarm system should be designated to indicate a tornado WARNING.
- Ensure that staff and students are aware of the difference between tornado drills and fire drills.
- Have regular tornado drills (1 per semester) at all levels.
- Ensure that all staff and students are aware of the difference between a Watch and Warning.
- Ensure that staff and students are aware of tornado shelter areas.
- Instruct students on how to “drop and tuck” when they are signaled to do so.
- Instruct students caught in an open area outdoors how to take cover in nearest depression.
- Designate staff to monitor the weather radio during threatening weather.
- Have a battery-operated radio on hand.
- Be responsible for the assignment of duties for teachers and custodians.

Teachers

- Be aware of watch and warning signals.
- Know shelter area your class is expected to reach.
- Be aware of any other specific assignments during a tornado watch or warning.

During a Tornado Watch:

(Severe weather exists in which conditions are right for tornado formation)

Principal's Office

- Make a P.A. Announcement that a tornado WATCH is in effect.
- Remind staff and students what will be expected if a TORNADO WARNING is issued.
- Remind teachers in exterior rooms to close the windows and curtains/blinds.
- Activate pre-designated staff to monitor the weather radio for warnings.
- Bring in students and staff from outdoor areas.
- Bring students and staff who are in temporary buildings into main buildings.
- Notify custodians that a utility shutdown may be imminent and gas only should be shut down if he hears a TORNADO WARNING.
- During a tornado WATCH a student may be released to a parent or to one of those listed on the emergency release form.

Custodians

- Be prepared to, but do not, shut down main gas at the meter.
- Listen for WARNING signal.

Teachers

- Close windows and curtains/blinds.
- Remind all students of tornado drill procedures.
- Define the shelter area to which they may need to move.
- Review the “drop and tuck” position.
- Inform students not be alarmed if the lights go out.
- Immediate action may be called for if the students do not have time to move to designated area.
- “Drop and tuck” UNDER DESKS if instructed to do so.

During a Tornado Warning:

(A tornado is spotted or reported in your area)

Principal's Office

- Sound the WARNING alarm immediately.

- Move all occupants to tornado shelter areas.
- **IMPORTANT:** If a tornado is spotted or reported as being very imminent, issue a “drop and tuck” command over the P.A. system immediately.
- Ensure that appointed caretakers assist handicapped students.
- Issue “drop and tuck” command when judgment warrants.
- Account for all students. Parents arriving to pick up students should be invited to shelter inside but not be allowed to remove students.
- Keep all exterior doors closed.

Teachers

- Evacuate students to pre-designated shelter areas.
- Take roster with you.
- Take flashlight, if available.
- Leave classroom door open.
- Have students sit on floor quietly.
- Close any metal gates (if available) after all students are in place.
- Take roll and account for all students.
- Keep students calm and quiet.
- If you are given a “drop and tuck” command, ensure that all students face the wall. If you sense that a tornado is imminent, give a command to “drop and tuck” yourself.

Custodians

- Shut off gas, but not electricity.
- Ensure that all exterior doors are closed to prevent wind tunnel effect and flying debris.
- If time permits, hand out flashlights to teachers.
- Return to main shut-off for electrical power and if there is any possibility that a tornado has hit the building, shut off electrical power immediately.

Bus Drivers

- When a tornado is sighted, head away from the tornado’s path, at a right angle to it.
- Try to find shelter under a bridge or overpass.
- If under an overpass, have students open windows, then drop to the floor and cover their heads.
- In an open area, escort children to a low area, such as a ditch, culvert, or ravine.
- Have students lie flat, face-down, and cover their heads.
- Account for all students.
- Report in as soon as possible.

Post-Tornado Procedures:

Principal’s Office

If your building is struck by a tornado:

- Call custodian to ensure that gas and electricity have been shut off at the main switches.
- Activate medical response (see “Medical Problems or Campus Accident” page __)
- Call 911 for ambulances and fire department if needed.
- All staff should administer first aide until medics arrive.
- The injured should be moved as little as possible.
- All injured should be noted.
- Evacuate damaged areas cautiously.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators and the maintenance director are notified.
- Report any injuries or damage.
- Advise whether 911 has been called.
- Report by telephone, radio or special messenger.
- Take roll of students.
- Search for any missing staff or students.

- Establish a parent-information response team as soon as possible.
- Retain students in an area until safe to return to class, go home or be released to parents, or board school buses.
- After uninjured students have all been accounted for and released, principal should go to the hospital to be with injured students and their parents.
- After crisis has passed, file a complete incident report.

If a tornado passes without striking:

- Be cautious as there may be other funnels in the area.
- Continue to monitor the weather radio, radio, or TV for current information.
- Notify utility companies of any break or suspected break in power lines that may cause danger.
- Retain students in areas until it is considered safe to return to class, go home or be released to parents or board school buses.
- Sound 2-Bell for an “all clear” signal to return to class.

Teachers

- Take roll ASAP.
- Report any injuries or missing students.
- Report by intercom or messenger but stay with students.
- Try to restore calm.
- Assist in any first aid needed in your area.
- Await further instruction.

Utility Failure

Inside Gas Leak

Principal’s Office

- Notify the building occupants by P.A., bullhorn or oral announcement to evacuate whenever a strong gas odor is reported.
- Do not use the fire alarm signal as it may take students into areas of highest gas concentration.
- Call 911 and tell the fire dispatcher you smell gas.
- Notify the gas company that serves your building.
- Call the Superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Oversee the evacuation to the designated assembly point.
- Determine when the building is safe for re-occupancy after conferring with the authorities.
- File an incident report.

Custodian

- Ventilate the area, starting where gas concentration is strongest.
- Operate manual controls to shut off open flame devices.
- Do not operate electrical switches.
- Assist gas company personnel in finding and fixing the gas leak.
- Advise the principal when the building is safe for re-occupancy.

Teacher

- Evacuate students to pre-designated assembly point when informed to do so.
- Use fire drill procedures for evacuation.
- Do not use electrical switches.
- Route students away from area of strong gas odor.
- Take roll call at assembly point.
- Ensure that medical attention is given to anyone in need of care or overcome by gas.

Power Outage

Principal’s Office

- Inform electric company that serves your building.
- Instruct the occupants of the building to either remain in place or to evacuate by using a bullhorn or messenger.

- Call the superintendent's office.
- Notify the Director of Food Services.

Cafeteria

- Prepare cold food menus when possible.
- Monitor food storage temperatures.

Custodian

- Distribute available flashlights.
- Assist the light company in restoring power.

Teacher

- Follow the instructions from the principal's office to either remain in place or to evacuate.

Power Line Down on School Property:

Principal's Office

- Notify the building's occupants by bullhorn or messenger, if P.A. system has failed.
- Designate someone to guard the area of the downed power line to prevent students and staff from making contact.
- Notify the electric company that serves your building.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- File an incident report.

Custodian

- Distribute available flashlights.
- Assist the light company in restoring power.

Teacher

- Follow the instructions from the principal's office.

Water Shortage

Principal's Office

- Notify the building occupants by PA announcement or by messenger.
- Call the appropriate water department district office.
- Call the superintendent's office.
- File an incident report.

Custodian

- Assist the water department in determining the cause and in making the repairs.

Teacher

- Continue normal educational duties.

VANDALISM

When a security breach and /or act of vandalism is discovered in district facilities or grounds, the following procedures are to be followed:

- Notify the Superintendent.
- Law enforcement should be contacted after consulting with the Superintendent.
- If the intruder is still in the building, all personnel must avoid contact with the intruder. Supplying pertinent information to the police is essential.
- Notify the Building Principal.

- Notify the Director of Operations.
- Notify the Chief Financial Officer for insurance claim purposes.
- Document as to kind, extent, location, and approximate time the damage occurred.
- Before Police arrive, the building/area affected should be sealed off by appropriate means and all items within the affected must be left intact for possible police investigation.
- The Superintendent and Director of Operations should make a record of the type and extent of damage to the area and to the building and its contents. Photograph the scene.
- A maintenance request form detailing pertinent damage information will be forwarded to the maintenance department to effect damage repair.
- Guilty parties will be assessed replacement value of the damage.

Weapons

Teacher

If gunmen are in same room and shots have been fired:

- Yell to class “get down and take cover”.
- Do not raise your voice or challenge the intruder.
- Do what you are asked to do.
- Try to stay calm.
- Do not try to be a hero, await police rescue.

If gunmen are in area and no shots have been fired:

- Notify principal’s office ASAP and advise whether a weapon is suspected or visible.
- Try to calm the students under your care.
- Do not approach student or attempt to confiscate the weapon.
- If a person is visible or student is threatening, ask the student in a calm voice for permission to evacuate the rest of the class.
- Evacuate quietly, if allowed.
- If evacuation is not allowed, keep talking with the student until police arrive.

If gunmen are not in area and lockdown is ordered:

- Quickly survey the hallway by your classroom, order any students in the hall or restroom into your room.
- Lock your door and move students to a corner of the room out of sight of the entry door.
- Have the class sit on the floor and keep quiet.
- Open door only to a police officer and follow his instructions, if told to evacuate, take roll book.
- If students are outside and teacher received “lockdown” message by messenger, escort students to evacuation site. **Do not reenter building.**

Armed Person(s) with Hostages

Principal’s Office

- Call 911 for police.
- Order an immediate school “lockdown”.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Isolate the danger area with locked doors and no hall traffic.
- Evacuate any students who have been locked out of their classroom or who are in public areas to a safe area.
- Send messenger to playground. Advise teacher to take students to evacuation area.
- When police arrive, escort them to scene, but school administrators should stay out of view of gunmen. Rescue of the hostages will be the responsibility of law enforcement.
- Work with police officers as directed. Police will evacuate students area by area.
- Work to maintain as much calm as possible.
- After gunmen are contained, account for all students and record extent of injuries.
- If contacted by media, refer all questions to superintendent’s office.
- Follow up at hospital, if necessary.

- Inform media of any school closings.
- Announce counseling services and document students and staff receiving counseling.
- Visit with parents or victims.
- Facilitate investigations by civil authorities.
- Keep staff informed.

Superintendent's Office

- If students are injured:
 - Notify insurance carrier to authorize medical care at the hospital.

Armed Student with No Hostages:

Principal's Office

- Call 911 for police.
- Under advisement of police officers, consider the following options:
 - Option 1: Announce a "lockdown" on the P.A. system, which means all teachers, will lock doors. Have administrative staff evacuate any students who have been locked out of their classroom or who are in public areas to a safe area.
 - Option 2: Evacuate the building by P.A. announcement. Do not use fire alarm system. Advise teachers of areas to avoid during evacuation.
- Escort police to scene and work with them as directed. Stay out of view of student.
- Call the superintendent who will ensure that the necessary administrators are notified.
- Maintain calm.
- Refer media calls to superintendent's office.

Suspected Weapon

Principal's Office

- Call 911 for police.
- Have police officer immediately pat down student and then bring the student to the office with backpack, purse, books, and other possessions.
- Ensure that at least 2 adults and a police officer are present at the meeting.
- Tell the student what is suspected and ask the student where the weapon is hidden.
- If the student denies or refuses, ask the student to empty pockets. Police officer, principal, or assistant principal should search backpack.
- If search yields nothing, 2 adults, the police officer, and the student go to the student's locker for a search.
- If a weapon is found, police officer will remove student from campus.
- Notify a parent.
- Call the superintendent.
- Follow disciplinary action according to the code of student conduct.

