

Loss Control *NOTES*

Crisis Response Planning — Points to Remember

Emergency situations bring out the best and the worst in people.

Pre-planning and training are the keys to everyone's response.

Crisis means stress — don't expect everyone to respond calmly and effectively in a crisis. Your entire staff will be called on to respond. Prepare them adequately with planning and with training.

Train every staff member - teachers, administrators, maintenance, clerical, support staff, kitchen staff, bus drivers, education and playground aides. Substitute teachers and part-time temporary employees should be aware of your plan and know what they are expected to do.

Consider the frequency of staff turnovers. Make Crisis Response plans a part of the fall in-service training. Include Crisis Response training in new employee orientation.

Student safety and your district's public image depend on your response.

Your district will be judged on the adequacy and effectiveness of your response to crisis, and the measure of success will be the safety of your students and staff. Make sure your plan addresses crises that occur when students are in travel status. Familiarize yourself with Crisis Response plans and Crisis Response Team members in neighboring districts

Your School District does not operate in isolation from your community — use community members and resources.

Inventory all district resources and equipment. Identify and evaluate outside resources. The contacts and

relationships you make now will be that much more valuable when a crisis occurs. Your plan will need to dovetail with existing community emergency planning. The success of your plan depends on how well it integrates into the whole community plan. Remember that your community will call on district resources, too.

Establish contacts with key people in the law enforcement, medical, and other support areas. In an emergency situation you will get quicker, more helpful response when you have already developed these relationships.

Contact APEI for a list of State Emergency Managers and Local Emergency Planning Committee Chairpersons.

Prepare for contingencies.

Never assume that ordinary resources will be available in your emergency. Plan for the what if's.

Your plan's effectiveness depends on the availability of ordinary resources. But, chances are, your community will be in crisis too. Develop contingencies based on the fact that many of your planned resources may be unavailable or inoperable. This is a realistic scenario.

Keep your plan fresh.

How often should the plan be addressed? As often

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For additional information, contact Mike Lary (mlary@akpei.com) at Alaska Public Entity Insurance.

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as the factors change. At the least, annually. Update names and phone numbers. Re-establish contacts. Check each step to be sure factors remain consistent and resources are still available. Not only will district staff members change, but community resources and personnel will change too.

Practice.

Practice increases the likelihood of success by reducing stress when the real emergency occurs. Debrief after practice sessions to evaluate effectiveness and to improve the plan.

Much crisis planning has already been done over recent years. Before you begin planning, or as you readdress your plan, check out the resources available at APEI's *Crisis Response Planning Resource Clearinghouse*. APEI has prepared a free package of inventory lists, sample letters, and other valuable forms. They are available in hard copy or by e-mail as Microsoft Word attachments. To order, send us e-mail to admin@akpei.com.