

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Crisis Management Policy is to act as a guide for school district and building administrators, school employees, students, school board members, and community members to address a wide range of potential crisis situations in the school district. For purposes of this Policy, the term, “school districts,” shall include charter schools. The step-by-step procedures suggested by this Policy will provide guidance to each school building in drafting crisis management plans to coordinate protective actions prior to, during, and after any type of emergency or potential crisis situation. Each school district should develop tailored building-specific crisis management plans for each school building in the school district, and sections or procedures may be added or deleted in those crisis management plans based on building needs.

The school district will, to the extent possible, engage in ongoing emergency planning within the school district and with emergency responders and other relevant community organizations. The school district will ensure that relevant emergency responders in the community have access to their building-specific crisis management plans and will provide training to school district staff to enable them to act appropriately in the event of a crisis.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. The Policy and Plans

The school district’s Crisis Management Policy has been created in consultation with local community response agencies and other appropriate individuals and groups that would likely be involved in the event of a school emergency. It is designed so that each building administrator can tailor a building-specific crisis management plan to meet that building’s specific situation and needs. This Policy and the plans will be maintained and updated on an annual basis.

B. Elements of the District Crisis Management Policy

1. **General Crisis Procedures.** The Crisis Management Policy includes general crisis procedures for securing buildings, classroom evacuation, building evacuation, campus evacuation, and sheltering. The Policy designates the individual(s) who will determine when these actions will be taken. A communication system will be in place to enable the designated individual to be contacted at all times in the event of a potential crisis, setting forth the method to contact the designated individual, the provision of at least two designees when the contact person is unavailable, and the method to convey contact information to the appropriate staff persons. The alternative designees may include members of the emergency first responder response team. A secondary method of communication should be included in the plan for use when the primary method of communication is inoperable.

All general crisis procedures will address specific procedures for the safe evacuation of children and employees with special needs such as physical, sensory, motor, developmental, and mental health challenges.

a. **Lock-Down Procedures.** Lock-Down procedures will be used in situations where harm may result to persons inside the district site, such as a shooting, hostage incident, intruder, trespass, disturbance, or when determined to be necessary by the site administrator or their designee. The site administrator, designee or a employee will announce the lock-down over the public address system or other designated system. Code words will not be used. Provisions for emergency evacuation will be maintained even in the event of a lock-down. Each site administrator will submit lock-down procedures for their building as part of the building-specific crisis management plan.

- b. Secure Mode. Occurs when there is a threat outside the building or there are circumstances from which people need to be kept away. Access to and from the building is limited. The site administrator, or designee or a employee will announce the lock-down over the public address system or other designated system. Code words will not be used. Each site administrator will submit secure mode procedures for their site as part of the site-specific crisis management plan.
 - c. Evacuation Procedures. Evacuations of sites shall be implemented at the discretion of the site administrator or their designee. Each site's crisis management plan will include procedures for transporting students and employees a safe distance from harm to a designated safe area until released by the site administrator or designee. Safe areas may change based upon the specific emergency situation. The evacuation procedures should include specific procedures for children with special needs, including children with limited mobility (wheelchairs, braces, crutches, etc.), visual impairments, hearing impairments, and other sensory, developmental, or mental health needs. The evacuation procedures should also address transporting necessary medications for students that take medications during the school day.
 - d. Sheltering Procedures. Sheltering provides refuge for students, employees, and visitors within the site building during an emergency. Shelters are safe areas that maximize the safety of inhabitants. Safe areas may change based upon the specific emergency. The site administrator or their designee will announce the need for sheltering over the public address system or other designated system. Each site administrator will submit sheltering procedures for their site as part of the site-specific crisis management plan.
2. Crisis-Specific Procedures. The Crisis Management Policy includes crisis-specific procedures for crisis situations that may occur during the school day or at school-sponsored events and functions.
3. Site Emergency Response Teams
- a. Composition. The site administrator in each site will select an emergency response team that will be trained to respond to emergency situations. Emergency response team members will receive ongoing training to carry out the site's crisis management plans and will have knowledge of procedures, evacuation routes, and safe areas. For purposes of student safety and accountability, to the extent possible, emergency response team members will not have direct responsibility for the supervision of students. Team members must be willing to be actively involved in the resolution of crises and be available to assist in any crisis situation as deemed necessary by the building administrator. Each site will maintain a current list of emergency response team members which will be updated annually. The site administrator, and their alternative designees, will know the location of that list in the event of an emergency. A copy of the list will be kept on file in the district office.
 - b. Leaders. The site administrator or their designee will serve as the leader of the emergency response team and will be the primary contact for emergency response officials. In the event the primary designee is unavailable, the designee list should include more than one alternative designee and may include members of the emergency response team. When emergency response officials are present, they may elect to take command and control of the crisis. It is critical in this situation that district officials assume a resource role and be available as necessary to emergency response officials.

III. PREPARATION BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

A. Communication

1. District Employees. Teachers generally have the most direct contact with students on a day-to-day basis. As a result, they must be aware of their role in responding to crisis situations. This also applies to non-teaching school personnel who have direct contact with students. All employees shall be aware of the district's Crisis Management Policy. The site's specific crisis management plan shall include the method and dates of dissemination of the plan to its employees. Employees will receive a copy of the relevant site-specific crisis management plan and shall receive periodic training on plan implementation.
2. Students and Parents. Students and parents shall be made aware of the school district's Crisis Management Policy and relevant tailored crisis management plans for the district. The district's specific crisis management plan shall set forth how students and parents are made aware of the district and school-specific plans.

B. Planning and Preparing for Fire

1. Designate a safe area at least 50 feet away from the building to enable students and employees to evacuate. The safe area should not interfere with emergency responders or responding vehicles and should not be in an area where evacuated persons are exposed to any products of combustion.
2. The building's facility diagram and site plan shall be available in appropriate areas of the building and shall identify the most direct evacuation routes to the designated safe areas both inside and outside of the building. The facility diagram and site plan must identify the location of the fire alarm control panel, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses, water spigots, and utility shut offs.
3. Employees will receive training on the location of the primary emergency evacuation routes and alternate routes from various points in the building. During fire drills, students and staff will practice evacuations using primary evacuation routes and alternate routes.
4. Certain employees, such as those who work in hazardous areas in the building, will receive training on the locations and proper use of fire extinguishers and protective clothing and equipment.
5. Fire drills will be conducted periodically without warning at various times of the day and under different circumstances, e.g., lunchtime and during events. State law requires a minimum of five fire drills each school year, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 299F.30. See Minn. Stat. § 121A.035.
6. A record of fire drills conducted at the building will be maintained in the site administrator's office.
7. The school district will have pre-arranged sites for emergency sheltering and transportation as needed.
8. The district will determine which employee will remain in the building to perform essential functions if safe to do so (e.g., switchboard, building engineer, etc.). The district also will designate an administrator or their designee to meet local fire or law enforcement agents upon their arrival.

C. Facility Diagrams and Site Plans

NWSISD's building will have a facility diagram and site plan that includes the location of primary and secondary evacuation routes, exits, designated safe areas inside and outside of the building, and the location of fire alarm control panel, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses, water spigots, and utility shut offs. All facility diagrams and site plans will be updated regularly and whenever a major change is made to a building. Facility diagrams and site plans will be maintained by the site administrator and will be easily accessible and on file in the district office. Facility diagrams and site plan will be provided to first responders, such as fire and law enforcement personnel.

D. Emergency Telephone Numbers

The district office will maintain a current list of emergency telephone numbers and the names and addresses of local, county, and state personnel who may be involved in a crisis situation. The list will include telephone numbers for local police, fire, ambulance, hospital, the Poison Control Center, county and state emergency management agencies, local public works departments, local utility companies, the public health nurse, mental health/suicide hotlines, and the county welfare agency. A copy of this list will be kept on file in the school district office.

- District employees will receive training on how to make emergency contacts, including 911 calls, when the district's main telephone number and location is electronically conveyed to emergency personnel instead of the specific building in need of emergency services.
- The district plan will set forth a process to internally communicate an emergency, using telephones in offices, intercom systems, or two-way radios, as well as the procedure to enable the employee to rapidly convey emergency information to a building designee. Each plan will identify a primary and secondary method of communication for both internal and secondary use. It is recommended that the plan include several methods of communication because computers, intercoms, telephones, and cell phones may not be operational or may be dangerous to use during an emergency.

E. Warning and Notification Systems

The district shall maintain a warning system designed to inform students, employees, and visitors of a crisis or emergency. This system shall be maintained on a regular basis under the maintenance plan for all school buildings. The site administrator shall be responsible for informing students and employees of the warning system and the means by which the system is used to identify a specific crisis or emergency situation.

F. Early District Closure Procedures

The Executive Director will make decisions about closing the site as early in the day as possible. The early site closure procedures will set forth the criteria for early site closure (e.g., weather-related, utility failure, or a crisis situation), will specify how closure decisions will be communicated to employees, students, families, and the school community (designated broadcast media, local authorities, e-mail, or district or school building web sites), and will discuss the factors to be considered in closing and reopening the site. Early site closure procedures also will include a reminder to parents and guardians to listen to designated local radio and TV stations for school closing announcements, where possible.

G. Media Procedures

The Executive Director has the authority and discretion to notify parents or guardians and the school community in the event of a crisis or early site closure. The Executive Director will designate a spokesperson who will notify the media in the event of a crisis or early site closure. The spokesperson shall receive training to ensure that the district is in strict compliance with federal and state law relative to the release of private data when conveying information to the media.

H. Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention Procedures

Short-term behavioral health crisis intervention procedures will set forth the procedure for initiating behavioral health crisis intervention plans. The procedures will utilize available resources. Counseling procedures will be used whenever the Executive Director or the site administrator determines it to be necessary, such as after an assault, a hostage situation, shooting, or suicide. The behavioral health crisis intervention procedures shall include the following steps:

1. Administrator will meet with relevant persons to determine the level of intervention needed for students and employees.
2. Designate specific rooms as private counseling areas.
3. Escort siblings and close friends of any victims as well as others in need of emotional support to the counseling areas.

4. Prohibit media from interviewing or questioning students or employees.
 5. Provide follow-up services to students and staff who receive counseling.
 6. Resume normal routines as soon as possible.
- I. Long-Term Recovery Intervention Procedures
Long-term recovery intervention procedures may involve both short-term and long-term recovery planning:
1. Physical/structural recovery.
 2. Fiscal recovery.
 3. Academic recovery.
 4. Social/emotional recovery.

IV. SAMPLE PROCEDURES INCLUDED IN THIS POLICY

The NWSISD #6078 Emergency Response and Safety procedures will be maintained and available at the site to reference in a crisis and includes guidance in the following areas:

- A. Serious Injury, Illness or Death
- B. Communication/Media
- C. Disturbance or Demonstration
- D. Public Emergency Alerts
- E. Hazardous Materials
- F. Natural Disaster/Severe Weather
- G. Bomb Threat
- H. Train Derailment
- I. Lockdown/Secure Mode
- J. Utility Emergency
- K. Fire Emergency
- L. Suicide Ideation/Attempt/Completion
- M. Interrogation or Interviewing of Students
- N. Suspected Child Abuse
- O. Sexual Assault
- P. Emergency/Utility Telephone Contact Numbers

V. MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES

- A. Chemical Accidents
Procedures for reporting chemical accidents shall be posted at key locations such as janitorial closets.
- B. Visitors
The district shall implement procedures mandating visitor sign in. See MSBA/MASA Model Policy 903 (Visitors to School District Buildings and Sites). The district shall implement procedures to minimize outside entry into the building except at designated check-in points and assure that all doors are locked prior to and after regular building hours.

Legal References:

- Minn. Stat. Ch. 12 (Emergency Management)
- Minn. Stat. Ch. 12A (Natural Disaster; State Assistance)
- Minn. Stat. § 121A.035 (Crisis Management Policy)
- Minn. Stat. § 121A.06 (Reports of Dangerous Weapon Incidents in School Zones)
- Minn. Stat. § 299F.30 (Fire Drill in School)
- Minn. Stat. § 326B.02, Subd. 6 (Powers)
- Minn. Stat. § 326B.106 (General Powers of Commissioner of Labor and Industry)
- Minn. Stat. § 609.605, Subd. 4 (Trespasses on School Property)
- Minn. Rules Ch. 7511 (Fire Safety)
- 20 U.S.C. § 1681, *et seq.* (Title IX)
- 20 U.S.C. § 6301, *et seq.* (Every Student Succeeds Act)
- 20 U.S.C. § 7912 (Unsafe School Choice Option)
- 42 U.S.C. § 5121 *et seq.* (Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance)

Cross References:

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 407 (Employee Right to Know – Exposure to Hazardous Substances)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 532 (Use of Peace Officers and Crisis Teams to Remove Students with IEPs from School Grounds)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 903 (Visitors to School District Buildings and Sites)
<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/sfm/documents/2011comprehensiveschoolsafetyguide.pdf>

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