

***SOUTH ORANGETOWN CENTRAL  
SCHOOLS  
District Wide Safety Plan***

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This district wide school safety plan is a multi hazards approach to address the following situations:

- Threats of Violence
- Violent Acts
- Medical Emergencies
- Weather Related Emergencies
- Emergencies affecting school facilities
- Fire and Explosions
- Radiological and hazardous materials incidents

This program and associated documents shall serve as the standard operating guidelines for the South Orangetown Central Schools when dealing with the aforementioned issues. Safety is of the utmost importance to the South Orangetown Central Schools and this plan in concert with other plans provides for a safe, secure workplace and learning environment for our staff, students and visitors.

## **2.0 Scope and Application**

This school safety plan shall be used in concert with the building level safety plans when addressing any of the issues listed above. This plan shall apply to all district facilities, properties and vehicles.

## **3.0 Policies**

Listed below are the various policies that have been developed during the creation of this manual in order to develop the various procedures required to address school safety, security and violence prevention.

### **Subject: Explosive Device Threat Response**

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

Explosive Device: Any item that is capable of producing a detonation or deflagration.

Threats: There are two types of threat, specific and non-specific. A non-specific threat is one that indicates that device is located on the property but no further information is provided. A specific threat is one in which the caller relates more specific information with regards to the device.

The South Orangetown Central Schools recognizes that violence and threats of violence result from an atmosphere of apprehension in district facilities which can fundamentally disrupt the educational process. To minimize the disruptive effects upon the orderly operation of the South Orangetown Central Schools and its facilities and to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the response to such threats the district has developed a comprehensive district wide safety plan and building level safety plans that contain specific procedures on how to respond to an explosive device threat. Upon receiving an explosive device threat by any method or manner the individual receiving the threat shall immediately implement the appropriate actions as set forth in the district wide safety plan and the building level safety plan. The District Superintendent or his/her designee shall serve as the incident commander for the duration of the event unless that role is transferred to another appropriate agency or individual. The South Orangetown Central Schools shall in all instances notify the appropriate law enforcement agency immediately and shall work in cooperation with all outside emergency response agencies in an effort to bring the incident to a safe and successful closure.

### **Subject: Violence and Threats of Violence**

## **DEFINITIONS:**

**DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR** disturbs, interferes with, or prevents normal work functions or activities. Disruptive behavior includes yelling, using profanity, waving arms or fists, or verbally abusing others; making inappropriate demands for time and attention; making unreasonable demands for action (demanding an immediate appointment or a response to a complaint on the spot); or refusing a reasonable request for identification.

**THREATENING BEHAVIOR** includes physical actions short of actual contact/injury (e.g., moving closer aggressively), general oral or written threats to people or property ("you better watch your back" or "I'll get you") as well as implicit threats ("you'll be sorry" or "this isn't over").

**VIOLENT BEHAVIOR** includes any physical assault, with or without weapons; behavior that a reasonable person would interpret as being violent (e.g., throwing things, pounding on a desk or door, or destroying property); and specific threats to inflict physical harm (e.g., a threat to shoot a named victim).

The South Orangetown Central Schools can best perform its missions of teaching, and public service when faculty, students, staff, and visitors share a climate that supports the free exchange of ideas and utilizes constructive methods of conflict management. The District is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that is free from disruptive, threatening, and violent behavior. The District will not ignore, condone, or tolerate disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior by any member of the school district community or by unaffiliated visitors. Faculty, staff, or students engaged in such behavior will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or dismissal, under the applicable policy. Some disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior is prohibited under criminal or civil law. When appropriate, the South Orangetown Central Schools will refer cases for civil action or criminal prosecution. An individual may be excluded from district premises for certain reasons, including disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior. Faculty, staff, or students may be suspended or put on leave under applicable district policies.

## **Subject: Annual Training in School Violence Prevention and Intervention**

### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Violence:** Violence shall be defined in accordance with the Districts violence and threats of violence policy, the explosive device threat policy and as any behavior or action performed by any person or persons that may inflict emotional, mental or physical harm to another individual or against district owned property.

In accordance with the Commissioner of Education's Regulations the South Orangetown Central Schools shall on at least an annual basis provide training to employees on the topic of school violence prevention and intervention. This training shall be provided during a superintendent's conference day at no cost to the employee. The training provided shall be no less than two hours in length. The topic and content of the training shall be determined by the superintendent and his/her designees and shall be of a nature such that the training will improve to educational community in the South Orangetown Central Schools. The annual training shall be provided by persons that are qualified in the individual area of expertise for which they are to present information. Persons providing training may be employees of the district, local/regional/state/federal officials, contract consultants or volunteers.

## **Subject: Contacting of Law Enforcement/Emergency Response Officials**

In an effort to provide a safe, secure and conducive learning environment the South Orangetown Central Schools has developed a District Wide Safety Plan and Building Specific Safety Plans to address issues that could adversely affect the employees, staff, students and visitors of the District. These plans provide for specific procedures to be used when contacting both law enforcement and emergency response officials. In the event that a situation arises that necessitates the contacting of outside law enforcement or emergency

response officials it shall be done in an expeditious manner and in accordance with any and all applicable procedures as set forth in the safety plans.

**Subject: Notification of Parents, Guardians and Persons in Parental Relation**

In an effort to provide a safe, secure and conducive learning environment the South Orangetown Central Schools has developed a District Wide Safety Plan and Building Specific Safety Plans to address issues that could adversely affect the employees, staff, students and visitors of the District. These plans provide for specific procedures as to the method and manner of notification of parents, guardians, and persons in parental relationship of issue regarding violent incidents that occur in or on district owned properties. The District Superintendent shall ensure that timely and appropriate information about violent incidents in or on District Owned property is communicated to parents, guardians, and persons in parental relationship. This notification may include but will not be limited to written video, audio or other electronic methods. The notifications will include such information that is pertinent to the incident but that will not compromise an on going investigation, violate laws of privacy or civil right, compromise sensitive or confidential information or violate any other district policy or procedure or legal statute.

**Subject: Building Security**

In an effort to provide a safe, secure and conducive learning environment the South Orangetown Central Schools has established a program of building security that shall be administered by the Superintendent and His/her designees. This security program includes but may not be limited to limiting of access, perimeter control, employee identification, video surveillance, building use permits, anti theft devices, inventory control, asset management, loss control programs and risk management programs. Building security may also include the use of trained staff such a hall monitors, cafeteria aids and security guards. Only students, staff members, employees, administrators and persons having legitimate business to be in or on school property shall be authorized to be on school property.

**Subject: Gangs**

**DEFINITIONS:**

Gang-three or more individuals with a common interest; bond, or activity; whose purpose includes the commission of illegal acts; and who refer to themselves by a group name or designation. The definition of a “gang” shall also include what is commonly known as a hate group.

It is the districts policy to prohibit on school property or at any school activity the;

- Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying or selling of any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign or other thing which is evidence of membership in or affiliation with any gang.
- Commission of any act or omission, or the use of any speech, either verbal or nonverbal(gestures, handshakes, etc.), which shows membership in or affiliation with any gang; and
- Use of any speech, or committing any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang or gang activity, including but not limited to:
  - Soliciting other for memberships in any gangs
  - Requesting any person to pay for “protection” or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person;
  - Committing any illegal act or violation of school district policies; and
  - Inciting another person to act with physical violence upon any other person.
  
- A school or school district employee shall report all suspected signs of activity to his/her administrator
- Administrators shall be aware that the occurrence of any of the acts described above does not necessarily constitute gang activity unless the entire definition of a “gang” is met.
- No student shall engage in the above whether or not he/she is connected with a gang.
- The administration shall devise s schedule of penalties for engaging in activities in violation of this policy and shall be in accordance with the districts Code of Conduct

- Notification of this policy shall be given to all students and employees.
- Gang clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, shall be identified by school administrators. Administrators shall consult with police, and/or other agencies as needed to assist in the determination of gang activity.

#### **4.0 Emergency Types**

This emergency plan shall be used in conjunction with building specific safety plans when dealing with any applicable emergency. Emergencies in this plan are divided into the following categories:

Violence and Threats  
 Facilities  
 Fire and Explosion  
 Medical  
 Environmental  
 Indian Point/Radiological/Hazardous Materials

Specific response procedures for the various types of emergencies in each of the above categories are delineated in section six of this plan. In many cases one of the four basic responses outlined in section five of this document will be required to be implemented by the district.

#### **5.0 Basic Response Procedures**

- **EMERGENCY CLOSING PRIOR TO SCHOOL OPENING**
- **“GO HOME” PLAN**
- **SHELTERING WITHIN SCHOOL BUILDING**
- **EVACUATION**
- **CODE RED**
- **CODE BLUE**

##### **EMERGENCY CLOSING PRIOR TO START OF DAY (Before 6:30 a.m.)**

A. Supervisor of Transportation and Assistant Superintendent for Business are to check with road supervisors, drivers and other necessary people and make recommendation to the District Superintendent as soon as conditions are clear enough to make decision.

B. After decision is made jointly by District Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Business, and Supervisor of Transportation, and the following procedure is to be followed:

Assistant Superintendent for Business notifies:

Radio stations WLIR, WFAS, WOR, WXTF and WHUD at earliest possible moment (see below).

C. In the absence of the District Superintendent, the line of delegation is as described in regulation #2520.

1. Asst. Supt. for Instruction
2. Assistant Supt. for Business & Finance
3. Director of Human Resources

D. In case of absence of Supervisor of Transportation, the line of delegation is as follows:

1. Chief Dispatcher
2. Head Mechanic

#### RADIO STATIONS

Station	Telephone
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#### EMERGENCY GO HOME PLAN

Definition: "Emergency Go Home" is when a decision is made to dismiss all students from school(s) for the following reasons:

1. Civil Defense declared emergencies
2. Inclement weather
3. Any other situation that necessitates the dismissal of all students from school(s) before the regular scheduled time.

#### EMERGENCY GO HOME PLAN:

When the decisions made to implement the Emergency Go Home Plan, the following procedure must be strictly observed:

1. A school-wide announcement will be made, stating that a decision to implement the Emergency Go Home Plan has been made.
2. Any student not in his/her homeroom is to be immediately escorted back to the homeroom. Kaplan students at the Career Center will be bused to their Kaplan teachers. Culinary Arts students will walk to the multipurpose room in Building #3.
3. [a] Any building staff not at his/her regularly assigned work area must report to that work area immediately.
  - [b] All maintenance, custodial and transportation staff must contact their immediate supervisors.
4. Regular dismissal staff should stand by to assume dismissal duties in the usual manner.
5. Personnel previously identified to perform phone duty are to report immediately to the principal's office for further instruction.
  - [a] Bus duty staff assigned to make phone calls must then report to their assigned extension with assigned bus company and district call lists and commence notifying bus companies and districts.
  - [b] Staff assigned to call parents must report to their assigned extensions with:
    - [1] Assigned emergency call cards (arranged according to bus route).

[2] An appropriate number of Bus Ready Sheets (those sheets will be filled out by staff with information about any alternative drop-off points and the names of students who should not go home on bus).

6. Calls to parents should be made in the following order:

[a] Call the student's home number first.

[b] If no answer, call the emergency contact person (alternative drop-off) named on each emergency call card. Indicate on Bus Ready Sheet the student's name and the name and address of emergency contact person.

[c] Call parent business number. Inform parent that student was sent home to emergency contact person, or if there was no answer at emergency contact person's number, get information as to time the student should be sent home or get alternative drop-off point. Indicate this information on Bus Ready Sheet.

7. When all the calls have been made for a particular bus route, return to front office with completed Bus Ready Sheet. Make two copies of Bus Ready Sheet for the bus dismissal person. Bus dismissal person will give one copy to bus driver and keep the original for the records. Bus driver will return his/her copy to dispatcher.

8. Return to extension and commence calling from next batch of emergency call cards.

[a] Bus dismissal person must notify driver of any student who must be held back. Driver will contact dispatcher to outline any alternative situations. No student is to be sent home if no contact was made with parents or emergency contact person.

[b] Where a student is required to transfer to another bus, it is the driver's responsibility to transfer information to person in charge of bus dismissal at that site.

10. Dispatcher then dispatches bus in the usual manner.

11. After all buses have left, teachers who still have students remaining in their classrooms will be instructed as to what arrangements are being made to dismiss these remaining students. Students must be properly supervised during this waiting period.

12. Phone staff will continue to call parents and/or emergency contact persons of students still remaining in the school, until contact is made. When contact is made, inform person contacted that all buses have left and for him/her to pick up the student. If contact person cannot pick up student, a bus will be retained to return all leftover students.

13. After all students have been dismissed from a particular classroom, staff is to go directly to the supervisor and wait for further instructions.

14. All staff who have completed special assignments should go directly to their supervisor's office for further instruction.

15. No staff member may be dismissed until given specific permission by his/her supervisor.

A. If School is in the process of opening when the notification is received:

1. Inform teachers and school staff of the sheltering recommendation.
2. Shelter the students when they arrive.
3. Have teachers gather information on pupil attendance and location (Field trips, class outings, etc.)
4. Relay this information the School Superintendent.

B. If School is already in session:

1. Instruct teachers to have all students report to their homerooms and take attendance and explain the sheltering recommendation to the students.

2. Superintendent/Emergency Coordinator notifies Supervisor of Transportation that sheltering is in effect. Supervisor of Transportation notifies appropriate transportation personnel.

3. Instruct the Director of Facilities to have his staff and administrative staff prepare the sheltering areas for student occupancy as follows:

[a] Identify sheltering areas.

[b] Assure access to toilet facilities.

[c] Close all exterior windows and doors.

[d] Have all air conditioning and ventilation units shut down.

[e] Kitchen facilities should be shut down.

[f] All doors opening into hallways from outer offices and rooms must be closed.

4. Once the building has been prepared for sheltering, have staff report to specific sheltering locations with students. Staff should take attendance again. Notify building administrator of any students gone. Building administrator notifies Superintendent.

5. Insure that employees and students stay inside building.

6. Minimize traffic into and/or out of sheltering areas during the emergency to control infiltration of outside air.

7. Notify the School Superintendent when all students and staff who are going to be sheltered are sheltered. Superintendent will notify Health and Safety Officer.

8. Instruct all school personnel and students to keep eating and drinking to a minimum.

9. Stay tuned to the EBS station for updated information and keep in close contact with the School Superintendent.

10. When sheltering is lifted, arrange for appropriate movement of students to:

[a] class

[b] home

[c] relocation center.

11. Notify School Superintendent when all students have been relocated appropriately.

### **CAUTION**

**SCHOOLS WILL CONTINUE TO BE USED TO SHELTER STUDENTS AFTER SCHOOL HOURS IF THE SHELTERING RECOMMENDATION HAS NOT BEEN LIFTED.**

### EVACUATION

THIS EVACUATION PLAN IS FOR OTHER THAN GOING HOME.

The School Superintendent/Designated Alternative will inform the school administrator or designee when the evacuation procedure should be implemented.

If the school administrator is unavailable at the time, a designated alternate should implement the following checklist procedure:

1. Upon notification of evacuation from the Superintendent or designated alternate, call back to the Superintendent's secretary to verify the call was made.
2. Inform the school personnel of the emergency situation and the evacuation response action. (If so directed, implement parent notification. See Go Home Procedures.)
3. If schools are in the process of opening when the notification is received, implement evacuation action when the students arrive.

Instruct the teachers to do the following:

- [a] Explain the emergency situation to the students, as appropriate.
- [b] Take attendance. Distribute nametags to special education students needing special help/attention.

- [c] If time allows, instruct the students to collect their belongings.

- [d] All staff remain with students in the classroom until permission is given to board buses.

4. School administrator/designee gathers information on students at other locations. School administrator/designee contacts those on school-related activities off school property, i.e., community vocational placement, field trips, outings.

5. Inform field trip leaders/representatives of the emergency and give instructions. If they need transportation, school administrator/designee calls the Transportation Coordinator.

6. When the buses arrive at the school for evacuation, all staff must provide assistance in bus loading (see individual building plan).

7. Have custodial staff secure building before leaving.

8. Instruct the Director of Facilities to make a final tour of the building to check security and to ensure that everyone has left the building.
9. Building custodian places the prepared relocation sign in a prominent window and/or doorway. This will provide notice that the evacuated school population has gone to a relocation center.
10. Before departure, Transportation Supervisor ensures that bus drivers have been given their bus route maps to the designated relocation center.
11. Allow the buses to depart after teachers have determined that all children listed on their student roster are present on the buses or are otherwise accounted for.
12. School administrator notifies the Superintendent of the completion of the school evacuation. Superintendent notifies Health & Safety Officer.
13. School administrator proceeds to the relocation center, reports in, and is available to the Superintendent for further instructions/information.

CODE RED

CODE BLUE

## **6.0 Specific Emergency Response Procedures**

### **Threats of Violence**

- . If a staff member becomes aware of a student's threat or actual act of violence:
  - A. Staff member will immediately notify the principal and/or designees
  - B. The principal and/or designees will notify appropriate members of the building response team\*
  - C. The principal and/or designees will arrange to have student immediately escorted to principal's office
  - D. There shall be NO STOPS, NO EXCEPTIONS, NO QUESTIONS
  - E. The student will be attended by one or more adults, at all times.
  - F. The crisis team will conduct a joint assessment of student
  - G. Other staff will simultaneously conduct an investigation of the incident
  - H. Student's parents will be notified and required to participate in an immediate school conference
  - I. When a more general threat is made to a large, unspecified group, the principal and/or designees will determine the course of action
- II. As a result of the joint assessment and investigation:
  - A. **HIGH RISK DETERMINATION**
    1. Inform police immediately
    2. Mandate parents to have the Student receive an immediate psychiatric evaluation
    3. Notify potential victim(s) and potential victim(s)' parents
    4. Develop a safety plan with the potential victim(s) and potential victim(s)' parents
    5. Recommend other interventions/services if indicated
    6. Refer for discipline
  - B. **LOWER RISK DETERMINATION**
    - I. Discuss with student and his parents the significance of the incident and possible intervention measures
    2. Notify potential victim(s) and potential victim(s)' parents
    3. Develop a safety plan with the potential victim(s) and potential victim(s)' parents

4. Refer for support services, peer mediation and/or outside services if indicated
5. Refer for discipline if indicated

III. At the conclusion or the potential incident of violence:

1. A written summary shall be prepared by a designated staff person
2. Involved personnel shall debrief

Notify Director of Special Education whenever a CSE student is involved

POTENTIAL VIOLENCE INCIDENT SUMMARY FORM

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Title of Person Completing Form: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Incident:

(Include date/time of incident, names/titles of all involved parties and their specific roles):

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Actions Taken & Recommended Follow Up:

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Notification (names, titles dates):

Police: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Potential victim(s) and potential victim(s)'

Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Referrals (names, titles, dates): \_\_\_\_\_

Psychiatric evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

Community Services: \_\_\_\_\_

In-school Services: \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) Talks about violence and has a specific plan.
- 2) Talks about violence and/or expresses violence in writings and drawings.
- 3) Severe expressions of rage often for minor reasons (i.e., banging head against the wall, unstoppable screaming).
- 4) Severe destruction of property.
- 5) Tortures animals.
- 6) Frequently fights with peers and/or family members.
- 7) Access to family or own firearms and capable of competent use.
- 8) History of suicidal or other self-destructive behavior.

#### Early Warning Signs for the Potential of Violent Behavior

- A) Social withdrawal/lacks commitment or connection to a group or persons
- B) Excessive feelings of isolation and being alone.
- C) Excessive feelings of rejection
- D) Often the victim of aggression, bullying, or other violent acts.
- E) Feelings of being picked on/persecuted.
- F) Low school interest/poor academic performance.
- G) Patterns of impulsive, chronic hitting, intimidation, and/or bullying behavior.
- H) Regularly involved in behavioral/discipline problems.
- I) Behavioral difficulties at an early age - the earlier the problems, the higher the likelihood of serious problem in adolescence.
- J) Past history of violent and aggressive behaviors.

#### **Bomb Threats**

1. Upon receipt of a bomb threat by telephone, Initiate Response Form. Listen for identifying speech Characteristics: male or female; young or old, etc. Fill out the response form as complete as possible.
2. Notify the following individuals:

Superintendent  
Assistant Superintendent for Business  
Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds  
Bldg Principals or designees (see chain of command for full list of #s.)

3. Notify local law enforcement agencies by telephone at 911.

NOTE: The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Business, Building Principal, Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds should notify law enforcement agencies.

4. Under the direction of an administrator listed in item 2, notify all building occupants using the public address system of a "CODE BLUE" Response.  
Note: Do NOT activate the Fire Alarm System;  
Do NOT use portable radios or cell phones.
5. When "all clear" is given by Central Office Administration in consultation with Building Principal (or designee) and the local law enforcement agency, the staff and students to report back to their classrooms.
6. Central Office Administrator informs parents and guardians that the school Emergency Management Plan has been activated.

### **Anthrax Threats**

In the event of an Anthrax threat, the individual receiving the letter/package should do the following:

1. Remain in the room/office where package is opened.
2. Do not let any room/office occupants leave after package is opened.
3. Do not allow anyone to enter the area.
4. Use the intercom or in house communication system to inform the building administrator of the situation.
5. The building administrator must then call 911 and the Superintendent's office and informs them of the "Anthrax Scare".
6. Do not initiate an evacuation or make any announcements of the emergency. However, an announcement should be made to hold all staff and students in their present location until further notice and disregard all class bells for period changes.
7. Isolate/lock down all entrances and exits and post monitors at each point to prevent unauthorized entry/exit.
8. If evacuation is necessary, law enforcement and emergency services will determine the need, extent and period.

### **Bio-terrorism Threat**

1. Remain in the room/office where package is opened.

2. Do not let any room/office occupants leave after package is opened.
3. Do not allow anyone to enter the area.
4. Use the intercom or in house communication system to inform the building administrator of the situation.
5. The building administrator must then call 911 and the Superintendent's office and informs them of the "Bio-terrorism threat".
6. Do not initiate an evacuation or make any announcements of the emergency. However, an announcement should be made to hold all staff and students in their present location until further notice and disregard all class bells for period changes.
7. Isolate/lock down all entrances and exits and post monitors at each point to prevent unauthorized entry/exit.
8. If evacuation is necessary, law enforcement and emergency services will determine the need, extent and period.

### **Violent Incident**

An act perpetrated by a student, faculty member or unauthorized persons entering the school, which results in physical harm to an individual or potential of harm (hostage situation), is reported to the principal or designee.

- I. Notify staff by using the appropriate code via PA.
  - A. Codes should be universal to district
  - B. Subs and other "transient" staff/volunteers trained in codes
  - C. An Emergency Information Poster is to be placed in each classroom containing specific instructions for several types of emergency situations.
- II. "Code Red" Lockdown will occur immediately.
  - A. Teachers should lock doors and windows of their classroom and students should back away from windows.
  - B. Students and teachers remain in the secured area until further directions.
  - C. Teacher should immediately take attendance.
  - D. Teachers should report to a pre-designated individual, the names of students who are out of the room and/or unaccounted for.
- III. Following calls to be made by principal or designee-
  - A. A single call can be made to 911. Give a brief description and state what services are needed.
  - B. Superintendent who in turn will make the following calls:
    1. Other building principals
    2. Bus Company
    3. Other directors
    4. Activate crisis response team via South Orangetown Central Schools District Superintendent.

- IV. Crowd Control - An appointed Assistant Principal and Nurse to go directly to scene to assess situation and to clear area.
  - A. Nurse will have an emergency kit ready and accessible  
(Location is known in case of substitute)
  - B. Building Response Team (w/CPR knowledge and prior training) to assist at scene as well.
- V. Paraprofessionals/Staff need to do immediate sweep of hallways and have all students go directly into a pre-designated site (\*not into nearest classroom because intruder could be accidentally placed in room with children).

\*\*If perpetrator is still at large:

- 1. Act in a manner that will not put any more lives in jeopardy.
- 2. Avoid any reckless and/or imprudent action.
- 3. Obtain for police as much information as possible:
  - A. Description/clothing
  - B. In what direction they were traveling
  - C. Profile - background information
- VI. An announcement is made via code on the PA to instruct all available personnel where to go for assignments. Codes may be helpful to designate targeted area when possible.
- VII. Command Center to be established in each building. If the originally designated control center is in the area in which the incident is situated, another pre-planned site is to be named. (Superintendent, Principal, Police, EMS, Representatives of Counseling Services.)
- VIII. Secondary staging areas need to be designated with the incident commander for staff assignments, fire, police and EMS, etc.
- IX. Restrict access to the crime scene-
  - A. Isolate area
  - B. Methodically evacuate the immediate area keeping potential witnesses available for law enforcement personnel.
  - C. Limit access to only essential personnel.
- X. MEDIA/PRESS
  - A. Develop relationship w/media prior to incident.
  - B. No one speaks to press except the public information officer.
  - C. Establish an area in district for them to be able to access information.  
(Preferably the media area should be at the Board Office and not at the incident site.)
    - \* \*Can be used to our advantage for communicating w/parents about staging areas to pick up their children, community advisories regarding traffic problem, etc.
- XI. Parents
  - A. Designate area for parents to assemble for information.
  - B. Parents will be notified via area radio station if possible.
  - C. Instructions given to parents that students will be kept at school until the crisis is determined to be over.

- D. Instructions not to phone the school and tie-up the few telephone lines that will be needed for emergency use. (Good to have limited access number telephone #) (Fax machines can be utilized).
  - E. When it is considered safe to release students this will only be done to his/her parent or authorized designee.
  - F. Logs will be kept as to who is released.
  - G. Police assistance may be helpful.
- XII. Evacuation of school as soon as deemed safe.
- A. Put into effect the Early/Emergency Dismissal Plan.
  - B. Prepare special needs students and personnel for evacuation.
  - C. Have prearranged alternate site if student cannot be taken home.
  - D. In the case of elementary school walkers or unaccounted for children, they will be bused to another school in the district.
- XIII. A. Pay particular attention to friends of deceased, and persons with recent losses or a history of suicide threats or attempts.
- B. Set up support rooms/stations and call for back-up counselors, if needed.
  - C. High School Sudden Adolescent Death plan to be made available and be adapted in each school.
- XIV. Hold faculty meeting as soon as possible.
- A. Debrief faculty/staff to help process feelings.
  - B. Plan for anticipated reactions of students.
  - C. Have articles available on signs and normal responses to grief
- XV. Determine the most effective method to inform parents about the crisis/death, what the school is doing and what reactions to expect from their child.
- XVI. Prepare to hold community meetings, if necessary.
- XVII. Log activities and decisions (what worked/what didn't).

### **Kidnapping**

1. Identify kidnapping incident.
2. Notify building administrator.
3. Notify immediately the superintendent and police.
4. Advise police of situation and follow their instructions.
5. Notify parents/spouse.

### **Riots**

1. Identify Situation. Verification should be made that there is indeed a disturbance in the building or the grounds. *Always assume that weapons may be involved.*

Notify the following individuals:  
 Superintendent  
 Assistant Superintendent for Business

Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds  
Bldg. Principals or designees (see chain of command for full list of #s.)

2. Under the direction of an administrator listed in item 2, notify all building occupants using the public address system that, "There is a CODE RED in the facility, all occupants follow CODE RED Response Guidelines."
3. Notify local law enforcement agencies by telephone at 911.  
NOTE: The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Business, Building Principals, Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds should notify law enforcement agencies.
4. A lock down of all rooms and assembly halls should take place immediately.
5. Isolate the area of the incident from all staff and students. Do not allow anyone to enter the area without the advice of law enforcement officials.
6. Based on advice from law enforcement officials, consider implementing the following response actions:
  - Isolate the area of the building involved
  - Develop class schedule changes
  - Evacuate staff and students from uninvolved areas
  - Notify parent(s) and/or spouse of victim(s)
7. Inform (update) Superintendent of situation and actions taken.
8. When "all clear" is given by school district administrator(s) and/or local law enforcement, direct staff to conduct accountability check. When accountability check is complete, staff and students may resume normal operations.

## **Facilities Related Incidents**

### **Building System Failure (Electric, Water, Gas, HVAC, Telephone)**

- a. Notify building administrator and O & M office.
- b. Evacuate the building if there is any question as to the safety of building occupants.
- c. Director of Facilities and/or designee shall assess the situation and direct and/or coordinate recovery operations.

## **Fire and Explosion**

### **Fires & Explosions**

Upon the occurrence of an explosion or notification of a fire in a facility, sound the building fire alarm immediately. Building systems which are not automatically turned off by the alarm being activated should be shut down.

2. Notify local fire and emergency services at 911.
3. Begin evacuation of facility in accordance with established emergency evacuation plans.
4. Notify the following individuals:
  - Superintendent
  - Assistant Superintendent for Business
  - Bldg. Principals or designees (see chain of command for full list of #s.)

5. Initiate accountability procedure to determine if any staff, students, or visitors are injured or missing.
6. Upon their arrival, advise the fire department of the situation. Assist the fire department incident command with activities related to the incident. such as accountability of building occupants, building plans (maps with building layout), locations of utilities shut down, etc.
7. Prepare public information release to the media, if necessary. Notify local media (radio and television) if early dismissal is initiated and give appropriate dismissal times. (Superintendent's Office)
8. Resume, curtail or cease building operation, as advised by fire department officials. Notify staff, students and parents.
9. If false alarm, investigate to identify the individual(s) who activated the alarm system.
10. Initiate "Go Home" procedure if necessary.

### **Hazardous Materials Incident (On Site)**

**Upon discovery or detection of any spill of a hazardous material, petroleum or chemical product, notify the following:**

Superintendent  
 Assistant Superintendent for Business  
 Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds  
 Building Principals or designees (see chain of command for full list of #s.)  
 Local Fire Department (911)

\*\*\*School administrators will notify local fire and emergency medical services

2. Based on the advice of the fire department, curtail or cease building operations', as appropriate.
3. When deemed appropriate, notify staff and students to evacuate using the fire evacuation pre-plan. Insure that evacuation route does not go through the spill area. Re-route evacuees away from spill area.
4. Notify parents through media. (Superintendent or Public Information Officer)
5. Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds and Fire Department Officials will evaluate the problem.
  - a. If trained and adequately protected with safety equipment, determine cause.
  - b. If trained and adequately protected with special equipment. mitigate the situation.
  - c. Notify New York State DEC spill hotline at 1-800-457-7362.
6. After consulting with fire and environmental officials, resume normal operations.

### **Medical**

A medical emergency is the result of a minor or major illness or injury to an individual and can be of such severity as to be life threatening or merely cause the victim discomfort or pain. Such emergencies require that school officials have plan in place so that all school personnel can react swiftly to provide care to the victim that is affected.

### **Medical Non – traumatic (Illness)**

- Identify Victim(s) and evaluate situation
- Summon emergency assistance – designated School first responders, notify 911.
- Keep victim calm , administer basic first aid if qualified
- Notify building administrator
- Assure access to victim : doors unlocked for EMS

### **Medical – traumatic (Injury)**

- Identify Victim(s) and evaluate situation
- Summon emergency assistance – designated School first responders, notify 911.
- Keep victim calm , administer basic first aid if qualified
- Notify building administrator
- Assure access to victim : doors unlocked for EMS
- If violence related notify police and secure area

### **Environmental**

An emergency caused by a naturally occurring environmental problem requires an appropriate response by school officials. This emergency plan addresses the response actions that should be taken by school officials for the following events.

Hurricanes  
Floods and Flash Floods  
Tornado/High Winds/Thunderstorms  
Winter Weather  
Earthquakes  
Air Pollution

In each case, the guiding principles are protection of life first, and then preservation of property, including restoration to normal activities.

If it becomes necessary for school officials to respond to an environmental problem, they may rely on one of the following contingency responses:

Closure before opening

Go Home

## Shelter

An instruction to shelter students and staff will require principals to ensure that all staff and students remain inside school buildings. Principals should develop plans for sheltering students and staff for as long as 24 hours. During sheltering for certain types of air pollution problems, chemical spills or radiological emergencies, windows should be closed and ventilation systems should be shut down. Radiological emergencies or hazardous chemical spills can pollute food and water supplies. In such cases, ingestion of food and water should be prohibited until school officials receive authorization and instruction from appropriate health officials (see Basic Response section)

## Evacuation

Upon receipt of an order to evacuate, principals should take all necessary measures to prepare students for an evacuation. Students and staff will be evacuated by buses which will be sent to a safe location. Students should not be permitted to go home. However, they should be permitted to leave school if accompanied by a parent or guardian.

It is the responsibility of principals to develop specific plans to meet the needs of students for whom they are responsible (see Basic Response section)

## **Hurricanes**

1. If school is in session, monitor weather and road conditions.
2. Close school if conditions warrant.
3. Institute "Go-Home" Plan.
4. If dangerous or impossible conditions preclude going home, provide shelter
5. For further reference use the Rockland County guide to severe weather.

## **Floods /Flash Floods**

1. If school is in session, monitor weather and road conditions.
2. Close school if conditions warrant.
3. Institute "Go-Home" Plan
4. If dangerous or impossible conditions preclude going home, provide shelter.

## **Winter Weather**

1. If school is in session, monitor weather and road conditions.
2. Close school if conditions warrant.
3. Institute "Go-Home" Plan.
4. If dangerous or impossible conditions preclude going home, provide shelter.

### **Tornadoes/High Winds**

1. Monitor any weather bureau tornado watch/warning.
2. If tornado is imminent, curtail all outdoor activities.
3. Summon all persons into building(s).
4. Post trained weather spotters to watch for approaching weather.
5. If tornado is sighted in vicinity of school, institute tornado/high wind protective actions.

### **Indoors**

**Seek shelter in predefined sheltering areas.**

### **Outdoors**

**If possible seek shelter inside a building, if not seek shelter in a low-lying area such as a ditch.**

### **Air Pollution Incident**

Follow instructions as issued by the Rockland County Office of Fire and Emergency Services and the Rockland County Health Department.

### **Earthquakes**

1. Persons indoors should seek cover under a sturdy piece of furniture.
2. Cover head for protection
3. Hold onto the furniture.
4. If no furniture is present seek cover near an interior wall in the drop position. The drop position is; on the knees, leaning over to rest on the elbows, hands cover head for protection, face down.
5. Persons outdoors should move away from buildings, power lines, and other structures and take the drop position.
6. Once the earthquake has stopped, assess all persons for injuries and treat as needed.
7. Assess building condition for gas leaks, electrical failure, water and sewage failure, and respond in accordance with the building failure response guide.

### **Indian Point/Radiological/Hazardous Materials**

#### **EMERGENCY PLANS AND PROCEDURES FOR ROCKLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS FOR THE INDIAN POINT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS AND/OR HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENTS**

The plans and procedures detailed in this packet are intended to instruct and direct staff members of your school on how to respond to a radiological emergency at one of the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plants or for a hazardous materials incident not occurring on school property. These plans and procedures are standard for all schools within Rockland County and are in accordance with the Rockland County Radiological Emergency Plan and Hazardous Materials Annex.

### **Radiological Emergency Classification System**

1. **Normally Unusual Event (NUE)** Events are in progress or have occurred which indicate a potential degradation of the plant. No releases of radioactive material requiring off-site response or monitoring are expected.

2. **Alert** Events are in progress or have occurred which involve an actual or potential substantial degradation in the level of safety of the plant. Any releases are expected to be limited to small fractions of the EPA Protective Action Guideline exposure levels.

3. **Site Area Emergency** Events are in progress or have occurred which involve actual or likely major failures of plant functions needed for protection of the public. Any releases are not expected to exceed EPA protective Action Guideline exposure levels.

4. **General Emergency** Events are in progress or have occurred which involve actual or imminent substantial core degradation or melting with potential loss of containment integrity. Releases can be reasonably expected to exceed EPA Protective Action Guideline exposure levels off site for more than the immediate site area.

#### Notification of an Incident at Indian Point

The Nuclear Facility Operators (NFO) will immediately notify the Rockland County Warning Point (CWP) via the New York State Radio-logical Emergency Communications System (RECS). The County Warning Point is the primary communications center located in Pomona. The CWP shall notify the Director of Emergency Services, who shall contact the School Emergency Coordinator (a South Orangetown Central Schools representative). The School Emergency Coordinator will then notify district superintendents by telephone of the response action to be taken. The district superintendents will then notify the schools within their respective districts.

### SCHOOL RESPONSE ACTIONS

#### Unusual Event

No response required unless otherwise directed by Rockland County Emergency Coordinator.

#### Alert, Site Area or General Emergency

##### Prior to 6:30 a.m.

- (1) School would be canceled, prior to opening, for all schools in Rockland County.

##### After 6:30 a.m.

(2) School would be ordered closed and children and staff sent home according to the school's "Go Home" policy and procedures.

(3) In the event the "Go Home" policy is not the safest course of action, based on information and instructions from the Rockland Emergency Coordinator, students and staff may be ordered to take shelter within the facility.

Sheltering of students and staff within the school:

a) Have all students come indoors (e.g., physical education classes, students on lunch breaks) and report to their homerooms.

b) Have attendance taken to assure that all students, faculty and staff are accounted for.

c) Direct staff to close all doors and windows.

d) Have students remain indoors and move away from windows to building sub-structures, gym, hallways, etc. and await further instructions from the district superintendent or his designee.

e) Keep school administrators' phone lines open for direct communication with School Districts Emergency Liaison for further instructions.

f) Have air conditioning/ventilating units shut down.

g) Monitor the local Emergency Broadcast System radio station for further details on the emergency. The Rockland County station is

(4) For schools within 10 miles of the Indian Point Nuclear Plants: students and staff would be evacuated to a School Reception Center by county-operated buses. Buses would be dispatched by the Rockland Emergency Coordinator to each school within the 10-mile emergency planning zone.

a) School Emergency Coordinator would notify school district superintendent of evacuation activities and advise EOC of need for assistance. School administrator would be notified by superintendent's office of evacuation order.

b) School administrator would supervise loading of buses and make final attendance check (master list and individual bus lists must be updated each year and with additions or deletions of students in the school system). Secretarial staff should continue to monitor phone lines until buses are ready to depart.

c) School administrator should notify school superintendent's office when buses are ready to depart to School Reception Centers. Advise superintendent as to time of departure, number of students and staff to be transported.

d) School administrator would instruct head custodian to secure building.

e) School administrator and all staff would accompany buses to School Reception Center.

f) The School Reception Center, number of buses needed for evacuation, and school district are identified on the attached fact sheet.

(5) For schools outside the 10-mile EPZ:

Students and staff would not need to be evacuated to a School Reception Center but should follow instructions as given by the School Coordinator at the Emergency Operations Center.

### Communications

The emergency response activities in Rockland County rely on the public telephone system with back-up provided by an emergency radio communication system among police, fire and ambulance agencies.

In the event of an Indian Point Emergency, you should utilize the Rockland County Emergency Radio System as the local radio system that would carry specific information on local emergency response activities.

## **7.0 Violence Prevention and Intervention**

### **Security**

The level of physical security may need to be modified in order to lower schools' vulnerability to violent behaviors. Different strategies will be required to address needs specific to individual elementary, middle, and high schools.

Administrators should initiate a comprehensive security assessment survey of their school's physical design, safety policies, and emergency procedures.

The assessment should be conducted in cooperation with law enforcement, school security staff, physical facilities personnel, fire and other emergency service personnel, teachers, staff, students, and other school community members. Using the conclusions of that survey, administrators should assign a safety and violence prevention committee composed of all of the above representatives to develop a comprehensive security plan (School Site Safety Plan). Based on each school's needs, school safety plans may include some or all of the following suggestions:

- a. Utilize School Resource Officers, who may be provided by local law enforcement. SROs often provide law enforcement, law-related counseling, and law-related education to students, faculty, and staff. Continuity of officers within individual schools should be encouraged, so that students and SROs develop rapport.
- b. Consider seeking one or more probation officers for use on campus to help supervise and counsel students. This would be especially appropriate for high schools with a significant caseload of juveniles on probation.
- c. Utilize paid, trained personnel hired specifically to assist teachers and administrators in monitoring student behavior and activities. Continuity of monitors within schools should be encouraged to facilitate good rapport with students. The number of monitors used should be based on the number of students, the extent of problems at the school, and the space and layout of school grounds.
- d. Encourage screened and trained parents/guardians and other volunteers to provide monitoring of students. Ensure volunteers have adequate training and guidelines outlining their duties.
- e. Develop and enforce restrictions about student loitering in parking lots, hallways, bathrooms, and other areas. Publish restrictions in the student handbook/code of conduct.
- f. Consider the use of metal detectors only in special circumstances to deter weapons on campus.
- g. Adopt policies for conducting searches for weapons and drugs. Publish policies in the student handbook/code of conduct.
- h. Require visitors to sign in and sign out at the school office and to wear visible visitors' passes. Post prominent signs at all school entrances instructing visitors where to sign in and out. Publish the policy in the student handbook/code of conduct.
- i. Encourage school personnel to greet strangers on campus and direct them to sign in if they have not. Also instruct school personnel to report visitors who have not signed in.
- j. Require students and staff to carry with them and/or wear their school photo IDs during school and at all school-related activities.
- k. Establish a closed campus policy that prohibits students from leaving campus during lunch.
- l. Establish a cooperative relationship with law enforcement and owners of adjacent properties to the school that allow for joint monitoring of student conduct during school hours. Encourage neighboring residents and businesses to report all criminal activity and unusual incidents. Establish a protocol within the school to handle calls from the neighborhood.
- m. Consider providing and making use of alarm, intercom, cell phone, building paging, two-way radio, and mounted and hand-held camera monitoring systems on buses and school campuses.
- n. Develop a school bus rider attendance checklist for each bus and use it daily.

- o. Consider the need for employing outside security personnel during school functions.

### **Collaborative Agreements**

Collaborative agreements or memorandums of understanding will be developed between the LEA and the appropriate County, State and Federal agencies so as to present a unified command in responding to school emergencies and in preventing and intervening in school violence related issues. A sample MOU is provided below.

### **Crisis Management**

In an effort to effectively manage any situation it is imperative that staff be trained in appropriate topics of crisis management. This training is addressed in the employee training section of this document. Appropriate organization is also key to successfully dealing with crisis therefore each school building will organize a Rapid Response Crisis Kit containing:

- Master Key(s)
- Blank nametags or identification vests
- Classroom telephone director
- Building floor plans (supplied by South Orangetown Central Schools Risk Management)
- Utility Shut-off master diagram (supplied by South Orangetown Central Schools Risk Management)
- Notebooks, pens, markers
- Complete student roster
- Bell and Bus schedules
- Current yearbook or class photos
- Daily attendance list
- Building level Safety plan
- Bullhorn

Each principal should have a Rapid Response Crisis Kit in the main office & in a secure room or location on the other side of the building.

### **Conflict Resolution**

**The LEA should consider and develop conflict resolution programs such as but not limited to:**

#### **Peer Mediation and Youth Courts Other Programs**

#### **Reporting**

Establish a climate that encourages and enables students, teachers, and parents/guardians to report threats and acts of violence. For an example of a case involving violence that may have been averted with more adequate reporting and assessment the following shall be applicable:

- a. Within the limits of legal guidelines and statutes, maintain confidentiality.

- b. Develop and adequately communicate reporting procedures with input from district school officials and local public safety agencies. Standard procedures should include definitions of pertinent information and how and where information should be distributed.
- c. Consider establishing a properly staffed, confidential hotline for reporting issues of harassment, safety, vandalism etc. If answering machines are used, calls need to be retrieved in time to effectively address threats of violence. Aggressively advertise the hotline number to students and parents /guardians in student handbooks, on posters throughout the school, on pencils, student IDs, lockers, etc. Parents and students should also be advised when to use 9-1-1 rather than the hotline.
- d. Obtain training to recognize whether reports of threats or acts of violence are false and/or malicious.

#### Student Rules

Student rules must be communicated, understood, and consistently enforced. They also must comply with constitutionally guaranteed due process procedures.

- a. Establish rules of conduct pertaining to improper student behavior using input from students, parents/guardians, staff, public safety officials, mental health agencies, and legal counsel.
- b. Annually review, and if needed, revise rules of student conduct.
- c. Ensure that all rules have a purpose that is clearly understood. They should be clear and communicated to all students in both written and verbal formats. Students' comprehension of the rules should be assessed.
- d. Post summaries of rules of student conduct in classrooms and throughout the school.
  
- e. Send rules home to be read by students and parents/guardians. Include an acknowledgment form for students and parents/guardians to sign and return to the school. Hold meetings to communicate rules to parents/guardians, and to the extent practicable, make sure they understand them. Invite parents/guardians to call if they have questions about the rules.
- f. Communicate rules in as many languages as needed and possible for each school's population.
- g. Apply rules in a consistent manner. Have pre-established consequences for rule violations.
- h. Develop a consistent, timely, and effective means to notify parents/ guardians of rule violations and consequences.
- i. Establish clearly defined rules and appropriate consequences for all types of harassment, intimidation, and disrespect. Rules should cover adult and student behavior at all school events. Parents/Guardians and teachers need to act as positive role models for students.
- j. Suspend and recommend expulsion of students and dismiss or discipline of staff for serious rule violations. Serious rule violations include:

1. Possession of a firearm on school property or at school events. The 1994 Gun-Free Schools Act mandates a one-year expulsion for students who bring a firearm to school. The chief administrating officer of the local education agency is able to modify the expulsion requirement on a case- by-case basis. All local education agencies that receive funding from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) must require all students found carrying a firearm to be referred to the criminal justice or juvenile justice system.
2. Possession or use of a weapon on school grounds or at school events that is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm.
3. Physical assault of a teacher, administrator, staff member, or student.

k. Suspend and consider the appropriateness of expulsion for the following:

1. Verbal threat to a teacher, administrator, staff member, or student.
2. Possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs on campus.
3. Actual or threatened retaliation against persons who report threats or acts of violence.

#### Anti-Bullying Programs

Bullying is a range of behaviors, both verbal and physical, that intimidate others and often lead to antisocial and unlawful acts. Staff, students, and parents/guardians need to understand that bullying is a pervasive problem that leads to violence. Bullying should neither be thought of as a "kids will be kids" occurrence nor accepted as a way of life. Implement anti-bullying programs that include the following school-wide, classroom, and individual tactics:

- a. Clearly define what constitutes bullying activity with input and involvement from the school community (students, staff, parents, teachers, volunteers, and law enforcement). Communicate that definition to students, teachers, parents, and staff. The definition should include physical, verbal, and psychological aspects of bullying.
- b. Based upon the above, establish specific rules prohibiting, and consequences for, bullying activity as part of a comprehensive school code of conduct.
- c. Seek information about the motivations behind specific incidents of bullying.
- d. Establish a reporting mechanism by which incidents of bullying can be reported and recorded immediately after they occur.
- e. Ensure reporting procedures address with whom and under which circumstances information will and will not be shared. Care should be taken to:
  - Protect witnesses and victims from retaliation.
  - Meet applicable standards for confidentiality.
  - Ensure that personnel involved with victims and bullies have the information they need to effectively work with them.
  - Protect the accused from false allegations.
- f. Notify parents/guardians of both victims and perpetrators whenever a report of bullying is formally filed. Establish a policy regarding the circumstances under which parents/ guardians of bullies and/or their victims should be called in for an on-site conference.
- g. Continually monitor the number of reported incidents of bullying.
- h. Regularly conduct a survey assessing the prevalence, location, and kind of bullying activities that are occurring. Include students, parents, teachers, and staff. Also address bullying activities that occur on the way to and from school. Work with community policing efforts to help make students' journeys to and from school safe and free from acts of intimidation. For surveys requiring student input, follow administration guidelines regarding the possible need for parental approval.
- i. Consider holding focus groups on an on-going basis to discuss the nature of the problem of bullying and ways to solve it.
- j. Identify community resources that can be utilized to intervene immediately, as well as those that can be used to develop additional intervention and/or prevention programs. Ensure adequate social service and mental health resources are both available and being utilized.
- k. Take actions to identify bullies and victims and to promote intervention at the classroom level and at other student contact points within schools. Develop a program that provides victims with immediate support services and referrals, as well as teaches avoidance techniques and coping skills. Refer offenders to available support services.
- l. Advise teachers and staff to record events, as well as the interventions and strategies that are implemented to address different instances of bullying.

### **Anti-Gang Programs**

Gang membership is destructive to a healthy school environment. Members of gangs are more likely than other students to carry weapons and engage in acts of violence.

- a. Establish partnerships with law enforcement in order to exchange information and educate teachers and staff about the presence of gangs and their activities.
- b. Establish and fund gang resistance and violence prevention teams to implement community, family, and youth education programs and to provide alternative activities in which children can participate. Teams should include educators, law enforcement, probation officers, community leaders, students, school resource officers, gang specialists, mental health professionals, and parents.
- c. Become aware of gang-related clothing, paraphernalia, and behavior. Establish a school dress code that would exclude outward manifestations of gang membership.
- d. Inform parents/guardians if their children are suspected of involvement in gangs and give them relevant information, counseling, and access to available pertinent resources.

## **Suicide Prevention**

Suicide is a far more common form of violence involving students than school homicide. In some cases, perpetrators of school shootings felt their actions would lead to their being killed by police, which also could be considered a form of suicide. It is hoped that effective suicide prevention will decrease the occurrence of both self-inflicted suicide and violence by students who believe their acts will result in their being killed by others.

- a. Develop a plan that specifies how to identify students at risk, how to handle threats, and what actions to take in the event of a suicide.
- b. Ensure that students have, and are aware of, easy ways to get help, such as access to suicide hotlines, counselors, and written/visual materials.
- c. Educate students, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school personnel on how to identify and get help for troubled students before they become victims of suicide. Include how to get immediate help to prevent or respond to suicide attempts.

## **Programs to Reduce Isolation and Alienation and to Promote Respect**

School administrators and teachers should identify and implement programs that increase positive self-respect and respect for others. In general, these programs should:

- a. Establish standards for how people should treat each other.
- b. Promote and ensure that classroom standards are consistent with school and district policies.
- c. Ensure classroom standards are reviewed in class and that a copy of them is sent to the parents/guardians.
- d. Coordinate a cooperative effort to create and disseminate statements of values that all affiliates of the school will be expected to follow. All members should be able to state their school's values.
- e. Establish better lines of communication with students who may feel alienated or isolated and/or have low self-esteem.
- f. Increase the number and diversity of positive extra-curricular activities available to students.
- g. Help students become more successful in achieving desirable short- and long-term goals and increase the likelihood that their progress is recognized and rewarded.
- h. Teach students how to resist others' efforts to intimidate or isolate them.
- i. Initiate a community service requirement for middle and high school graduation.
- j. Model and reinforce values such as learning, respect, character, and cooperation.
- k. Encourage students to work together through the use of cooperative learning techniques such as team projects.
- l. Encourage the contemplation of core values (respect, responsibility, trust, sharing, etc.) through the use of age- and curriculum-appropriate writing assignments and class discussions.
- m. Encourage students to become actively involved in the school community.
- n. Recognize and reward students who exhibit positive and responsible behavior.
- o. Offer troubled and withdrawn students, including victims, help outside of class with schoolwork and personal problems.
- p. Develop a climate that encourages open communication between students and adults. It should maximize the options by which students can transmit their concerns about violence to school personnel, foster an environment of trust, and be sensitive to their fears of retaliation.

## **8.0 Notification of Emergency Response Agencies**

Identify the procedures the district will use for obtaining advice and assistance from local government officials including the county or city officials responsible for implementation of Article 2-B of the Executive Law. The types of procedures for obtaining advice and assistance from local governments during countywide emergencies could include the following:

Superintendent/Designee in an emergency will contact the emergency management coordinator and/or the highest-ranking local government official for obtaining advice and assistance.

## 9.0 Utilization of Local resources

The South Orangetown School District has developed an emergency management plan along with specific procedures to follow should an emergency occur. A copy of this plan is located in each of the building main offices. The incident commander for the district (i.e., superintendent) shall either notify agencies listed below or delegate notification procedures to someone else in the district chain of command (see section 11.0 for chain of command). If an incident happens at the building level, the chain of command specific to that facility may take effect and therefore notification procedures set for the district wide plan may not be applicable.

Should an actual emergency occur, the District Emergency Officer or Incident Commander will contact the appropriate agency below with the specific nature of the emergency and request assistance.

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Town Police	Chief of Police	911
State Police	Dispatcher	911
Fire Department	Chief	911
South Orangetown Central Schools	District Superintendent	845-680-1050
Hospital	District Superintendent	911
Ambulance	Dispatcher	911
Risk Management (BOCES)	Risk Manager	845-627-4761
Poison Control		1-914-366-3030
Gas Leak		1-800-533-5325
FBI		633-6000
Orange & Rockland Utilities		986-1191
Life Threatening Emergencies		911

## 10.0 District Resources

The district will employ procedures listed below (section 11.0) for purposes of authorizing and coordinating manpower in the event of an emergency. The incident commander will authorize the use of all district resources. Trained personnel at each building level with respect to emergency equipment and response services such as Automated External Defibrillators (AED), Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), should be identified at each location. For this district the location and personnel are:

	<b>Tappan Zee H.S.</b>	<b>South Orangetown M.S.</b>	<b>Cottage Lane School</b>	<b>Tappan Zee School</b>	<b>W.O. Schaeffer School</b>
Buildings with Kitchens	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Buildings with Generators	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Buildings with Basements	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Buildings with Air Conditioning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cots	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Blankets	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
First Aid Supplies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transportation Vehicles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Flashlights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Laptop Computers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ventilation Fans	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extension Cords	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Telephone System	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zoned Fire Alarm System	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PA System	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Two Way Radios	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bullhorns	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fire Extinguishers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Food Storage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Floor Plans	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maps	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
NOAA Radio	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Incident Command Vests	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
EBS Radio	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
AEDs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personnel Trained in AED/CPR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of People Trained in AED/CPR per School	7	4	4	4	4

## 11.0 Chain of Command

The incident commander shall begin at the top of the list below (superintendent) but may be delegated as each emergency warrants; this will most likely be in descending order. The chain of command for this district is:

Superintendent

Deputy Superintendent

Assoc. Superintendent

Asst. Sup. For Curricular & Instructional Services

Asst. Superintendent for Business

Director of Athletics, Physical Education, Health & Safety

Director of Operations & Maintenance

## 12.0 Incident Command System

In an effort to provide for an appropriate response to any school emergency it is important that all response agencies, the LEA included, operate using a common emergency management method. The National

Unified Incident Command System will be used when responding to an emergency in the South Orangetown Central School District. All administrative staff shall be trained in ICS on an annual basis as outlined in the training section of this document.

### **13.0 Notification Process**

In the event of a violent incident which affects the entire school district, immediate implementation of "Code Red" procedures shall take effect. Notification to administrative personnel shall be done by incident commander by calling the main office and alert office personnel regarding the need to call 9-1-1 for law enforcement agencies. Office personnel will immediately contact the Building's Principal and/or Designee, Central Office and call 9-1-1 if a building administrator can not be immediate reach. If a specific facility is involved with the incident which does not involve the district collectively, the Building Level Response Plan will be utilized to call 9-1-1.

In the event of a weather emergency, the South Orangetown School District Central Office will alert district personnel whenever possible by telephone chain and/or fax for the need to seek shelter. Building Level Response Plans will be followed to alert faculty, staff, students and guests as designated within each plan

### **14.0 District Security**

The district shall perform on at least an annual basis a full security audit to determine the condition of district facilities and grounds with regards to the physical security of the property. At any time any situation brought to the attention of the district wide safety committee shall be investigated by the appropriate persons or agencies. Any and all appropriate actions generated by such investigation shall be implemented by the district in a timely fashion.

### **15.0 Public Information**

#### **Responsibilities:**

1. Serve as the coordination point for all media releases for the District. Represent District EOC as the lead Public Information Officer.
2. Ensure that the public within the affected area receives complete, accurate, and consistent information about life safety procedures, public health advisories, relief and assistance programs and other vital information.
3. Coordinate media releases with Public Information Officers representing other affected emergency response agencies within the Operational Area as required.
4. Develop the format for press conferences, in conjunction with the Superintendent.
5. Maintaining a positive relationship with the media representatives.
6. Supervising the Public Information Branch.

- Obtain policy guidance from the Superintendent with regard to media releases.
- Keep the Superintendent advised of all unusual requests for information and of all major critical or unfavorable media comments. Recommend procedures or measures to improve media relations.
- Coordinate with the Situation Status Unit and identify method for obtaining and verifying significant information as it is developed.
- Develop and publish a media-briefing schedule, to include location, format, and preparation and distribution of handout materials.
- Implement and maintain an overall information release program.
- Establish a Media Information Center, as required, providing necessary space, materials, telephones, and electrical power.
- Maintain up-to-date status boards and other references at the media information center. Provide adequate staff to answer questions from members of the media.

- Interact with other EOCs as well as Operational Area EOC PIOs and obtain information relative to public information operations.
- Monitor EAS releases as necessary.
- In coordination with other EOC sections and as approved by the Superintendent, issue timely and consistent advisories and instructions for life safety, health, and assistance to the public.
- At the request of the Superintendent, prepare media briefings for members of the Board of Education and provide other assistance as necessary to facilitate their participation in media briefings and press conferences.
- Ensure that a rumor control function is established to correct false or erroneous information.
- Ensure that adequate staff are available at incident sites to coordinate and conduct tours of the disaster areas.
- Provide appropriate staffing and telephones to efficiently handle incoming media and public calls.
- Prepare, update, and distribute to the public a Disaster Assistance Information Directory, which contains locations to obtain food, shelter, supplies, health services, etc.
- Ensure that announcements, emergency information and materials are translated and prepared for special populations (non-English speaking, hearing impaired etc.).
- Monitor broadcast media, using information to develop follow-up news releases and rumor control.
- Ensure that file copies are maintained of all information released.
- Provide copies of all media releases to the Superintendent.
- Conduct shift change briefings in detail, ensuring that in-progress activities are identified and follow-up requirements are known.
- Prepare final news releases and advise media representatives of points-of-contact for follow-up stories.

## **16.0 Employee Training**

All district personnel (faculty, custodial staff, office staff and administrators) will receive an orientation to the districts multi-hazards emergency plan on an annual basis. The orientation will focus on the district policies and procedures for fire evacuations and emergency response codes procedures, emergency communications and the districts incident command system. (Substitute Teachers and Teacher Aides will receive a fact sheet on the districts policies and procedures upon initial assignment).

Following a program orientation, drill and/or exercise, participants will forward their observations to their “Building Safety Committee” representative for further review and/or discussion. If immediate action is needed, the Building’s Principal will be notified in order to take corrective action. The “Building Safety Committee” will review after action reports and forward their recommendations and suggestions to the “District Wide Safety Committee”.

## **17.0 Student Training**

Students shall be trained and familiarized on both code red and code blue procedures so that they shall respond in the appropriate fashion during both drill and actual incidents. Students should be encouraged to participate in the drills and exercises and to understand the seriousness of the situation. This training should whenever possible be included in the normal curriculum.

## **18.0 Exercises and Drills**

- Each emergency response code procedure will be practiced on a semi annual basis as part of a regularly scheduled staff meeting to test the districts communication system.
- Building evacuation procedures will be practiced a minimum of 12 times per school year. These procedures will be tested and evacuated during the facilities fire evacuation drills.

- The district will conduct one early go-home drill to test its alerting and warning procedures, communications procedures, resources, staff procedures, transportation procedures, public information procedures, and evacuation procedures on an annual basis.
- The emergency plan for sheltering in the event of severe weather threat such as a tornado or thunderstorm will be practice on an annual basis to test alerting and warning procedures. Communications procedures, staff procedures and the movement of students to designated areas within the school building.
- The district will conduct one drill and/or exercises with local law enforcement agencies and other emergency response agencies to practice and review its emergency procedures for a “violent incident” on an annual basis.

## **19.0 Threat Assessment**

Faculty and/or staff will conduct a daily inspection of their classrooms, specialty rooms, playground, athletic fields and/or office area to identify, evaluate and if needed to control any potential hazards associated within their work area. All concerns should forward to a member of the facility’s safety committee for further review. If immediate action is needed, the Building’s Principal should be contacted directly.

The district will continue to work with outside emergency response agencies and BOCES Risk Management Department to evaluate potential hazards associated in transporting and/or educating the children within our district. See “Building Level Response Plans” for a list of Specific hazards associated with each building.

### **Secret Service Threat Assessment Suggestions**

School and law enforcement officials are frequently placed in the difficult position of having to assess specific people (e.g., students, staff, teachers, and others) who may be likely to engage in targeted violence in which there is a known or knowable target or potential assailant. The following suggestions for threat assessment investigations are based on guidelines developed by the Secret Service’s National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC). They were developed primarily for preventing the assassination of public officials so they may not be applicable to all school situations.

To identify threats, school officials are advised to:

- Focus on individuals’ thinking and behavior as indicators of their progress on a pathway to violent actions. Avoid “profiling” or basing assumptions on socio-psychological characteristics. In reality, accurate “profiles” for those likely to commit acts of targeted violence do not exist. School shootings are infrequent and the great majority of individuals who happen to match a particular profile do not commit violent acts. In addition, many individuals who commit violent acts do not match pre-established profiles.
- Focus on individuals who pose a threat, not only on those who explicitly communicate a threat. Many individuals who make direct threats do not pose an actual risk, while many people who ultimately commit acts of targeted violence never communicate threats to their targets. Prior to making an attack, potential aggressors may provide evidence they have engaged in thinking, planning, and logistical preparations. They may communicate their intentions to family, friends, or colleagues, or write about their plans in a diary or journal. They may have engaged in “attack-related” behaviors: deciding on a victim or set of victims, determining a time and approach to attack, and/or selecting a means of attack. They may have collected information about their intended target(s) and the setting of the attack, as well as information about similar attacks that have previously occurred.

Once individuals who may pose a threat have been identified, ten key questions should guide the assessment of the threat:

- What motivated the individual to make the statement or take the action that caused him/her to come to attention?
- What has the individual communicated to anyone concerning his/her intentions?
- Has the individual shown an interest in targeted violence, perpetrators of targeted violence, weapons, extremist groups, or murder?
- Has the individual engaged in attack-related behavior, including any menacing, harassing, and/or stalking-type behavior?
- Does the individual have a history of mental illness involving command hallucinations, delusional ideas, feelings of persecution, etc., with indications that he individual has acted- on those beliefs?
- How organized is the individual? Is he/she capable of developing and carrying out a plan?
- Has the individual experienced a recent loss and/or loss of status, and has this led to feelings of desperation and despair?
- Corroboration: What is the individual saying, and is it consistent with his/her actions?
- Is there concern among those that know the individual that he/she might take action based on inappropriate ideas?
- What factors in the individual's life and/or environment might increase/decrease the likelihood of the individual attempting to attack a target?

## **20.0 Job descriptions**

The South Orangetown School District employs security guards who are fully screened and trained in accordance with New York State Law. They also have hall monitors in each school.

## **21.0 Plan review and Updating**

In accordance with the Commissioner of education regulations this plan shall be reviewed and updated on an annual basis by the District Wide Safety Committee. This plan shall also be updated at any time should the information in this document no longer be accurate or affect the ability of the district to respond to emergencies. After any actual incident that requires the activation of this plan the incident shall be reviewed in accordance with the post incident recovery section of this document and any and all appropriate changes made to correct any deficiencies that are discovered.

## **22.0 District Wide Emergency notification**

In the event of a violent incident, immediate implement "Code Red" procedures. Notify administrative personnel by calling the main office and alert office personnel regarding the need to call 9-1-1 for law enforcement agencies. Office personnel will immediate contact the Building's Principal and/or Designee, Central Office and call 9-1-1 if a building administrator can not be immediate reach. If the main office is involved with the incident, the alternative site as designated within the "Building Level Response Plan" will be utilized to call 9-1-1.

In the event of a weather emergency, central office will alert whenever possible district personnel by telephone chain and/or fax for the need to seek shelter. "Building Level Response Plans" will be followed to alert faculty, staff, students and guest as designated within each plan

### **23.0 District demographics**

### **24.0 Post Incident Recovery**

#### **Planning for the Psychological Aftermath of School Tragedy**

Thomas T. Frantz  
Associate Professor of Counseling and Educational Psychology  
State University of New York at Buffalo

Our purpose is to discuss a basic postvention plan that can be adopted for use in any school following a death or tragedy. The plan is designed to go into effect the first school day after the trauma has occurred.

To initiate thinking about postvention, consider the following specific questions that will usually arise:

1. How and when should students and faculty be informed of the pertinent details surrounding it?
2. How, when, and where should students be allowed to express their reactions?
3. What should be done for victims' close friends?
4. What should be done for "high risk" students?
5. Should the school hold a special assembly or memorial service?
6. Should there be a symbolic expression of grief, such as lowering the flag to half-mast?
7. Should the school close for the funeral?
8. Who should go to the funeral?
9. What kinds of commemorative activities or symbols—plaques, memorial funds, etc.—are appropriate?
10. Should the victims' parents be contacted and what help can be offered to them?
11. What should be done about the concerns of other parents?
12. How should the school deal with the media?
13. Should the school turn to outside consultation for help? To whom?
14. What reactions from students should be expected?
15. Should a regular school schedule be followed the day after?
- 16.** How long should the school be concerned about student react
17. How much grieving or "acting out" should be allowed?
18. Should students be involved in planning the school's response?
19. Who should organize and coordinate the school's response?

20. What about siblings or affected students in other schools?

21. What should teachers say to students in their classes?

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### **Principles of Postvention**

Before presenting a plan to respond to the issues raised by these questions, interrelated principles of postvention are outlined. The postvention plan is on the principles of reducing fear, facilitating grieving, and promoting education.

#### **(a) Reduce Fear**

Fear is the most overpowering and debilitating human emotion. Fear can cause us to flee in panic, act irrationally, become immobilized, say things we regret, and act in other ways that later are embarrassing to us. To deal with fear, we first recognize that fear breeds in the unknown. People are most afraid of what they don't understand, of mysterious, dark, different, unknown situations. The neighbors' German Shepherd running at you, riding the subway, or driving to Toronto may each be scary the first time, but once you get to know the dog, have taken the subway a few times, or made the trip to Toronto often, you are much less afraid. Experience reduces the unknown and thereby reduces fear. An earthquake, especially one resulting in death, produces so many unanswered questions, leaves so much unknown, and thus creates fear. What made it happen? Will it happen again? Is the school really safe? Am I safe at home?

Will the next one get me? Why didn't God do something! Is there any place that's really safe?

As a result of so many unanswerable questions, the atmosphere in a school following an earthquake may be tinged with fear. Students and staff may feel unsure of themselves, confused, afraid of what else might happen, and not know how to behave or what to say.

Most of us grow up not thinking much about earthquakes. They only happen to other people, people we heard of or read about. It's hard to imagine that a major earthquake, especially one that kills people, would ever happen to our friends, family, or community, and when it does, many people feel insecure and afraid. Something that wasn't supposed to be part of the plan, something that wasn't supposed to happen has happened, and if that can happen, then anything can happen.

An earthquake can pull the rug out from under basic beliefs about how the world is and leave us feeling unsure, unsafe, and wondering what we can count on with certainty. It's in this sense that an atmosphere of fear may prevail in a school the days following an earthquake. Of course, those friends and staff closest to those who may have died will be most affected; but the tragedy will affect everyone in the school to some extent.

It is very difficult for any constructive activity to take place when people are afraid. It's hard to concentrate, hard to take tests, write essays, or listen to lectures. It's even hard to feel sadness, remorse, or other normal grief feelings. Hence the reduction of fear is the first major goal for the school following a tragedy. We can't expect to eliminate it, but we can reduce it by reducing the unknowns.

While exercising sensitivity, we reduce fear by providing students and staff factual information about what happened, the deaths, and the grieving process to be expected in the days ahead by organizing the school

day with as few changes as possible and by providing an open, accepting atmosphere allowing the “secret” fears, questions, and feelings of students and staff to come out.

### **(b) Facilitate Grieving**

Grief is the normal, healthy, appropriate response to death or loss. Anyone who knew those that were killed is going to experience grief, from the parents whose bereavement will normally last 2 to 3 years to tangential acquaintances whose grief will be measured in days. Students and staff don’t get a choice of whether to feel grief, but they do get to choose how they’ll respond to it.

People who deny their grief, pretend it’s not a big deal, or insist they’re not going to let it bother them, or try to cover it up with bravado, laughter, or stoicism usually have a much harder time resolving their grief than do people who are able to grieve more expressively.

Each person grieves in his or her own way, a way that has been learned by experience with loss over the years. A student or staff member’s way of grieving or coping with loss can be predicted (based on past experience with loss) and is not likely to change in the midst of a crisis like the aftermath of an earthquake.

Accordingly, a wide range of grieving behavior needs to be tolerated, e.g., screaming in anguish, pounding the lockers in anger, sobbing in the hallway, stunned silence, inability to answer even simple questions, seeming totally unaffected as if nothing happened, or saying as one boy did upon being told of his friend’s death, “Good, now I don’t have to pay him the ten bucks I owe him.” (This last remark was made in shock and he spent the next month being attacked for it and apologizing over and over for it.)

The initial response of most people to learning that someone they know has died is shock. Shock is usually a numbness, feeling like in a fog or spacey during which the full impact of what’s happened may not have sunk in. People in shock usually don’t talk a lot and mostly need friends to be patient and not assume that they’re unaffected just because they’re not emotional.

Other reactions to be expected for some people following death are anxiety over what else might happen; anger at the person that died (e.g., for not heeding warnings); blame at someone for not doing something to save her; and perhaps guilt for surviving when he didn’t. Naturally sadness and feeling the loss will usually replace shock, anxiety and anger and remain as the major result of the death for a long time.

While each person’s way of grieving needs to be accepted, people who can get their grief out by talking, crying, expressing anger or guilt, writing, reading, exercise, painting, music, etc. are usually better able to resolve their grief and in less time than those who can’t or are not allowed to grieve. Thus, the school’s postvention program needs to allow and encourage the natural expression of grief, especially immediately after the tragedy, but also, for some students, in the weeks and months ahead.

In this vein, one of the most predictable and significant consequences of a tragedy is that it will unlock and trigger unresolved grief in many students and staff. That is, there will be a sadness in the school not only because a student has died, but because grief over people’s previous losses will be activated. For example, the girl whose father drowned last year, the teacher whose miscarriage at 6 months no one would talk about, the boy whose mother has breast cancer, the custodian whose dad is deteriorating with Alzheimer’s disease at a nursing home, the freshman whose parents are fighting out a bitter divorce all will be feeling both the effects of the tragedy and, now even more intensely, the pain of their own life.

The school’s postvention program must take into consideration both grief over previously unresolved losses and give high priority to facilitating the grieving process of students and staff.

### (c) Promote Education

The purpose of a school is to educate its students and (if Anna who says in The King and I, “by our students we’ll be taught” is right) staff. Since we learn more from problems, crisis, and tragedies than on average days, an earthquake will be an intense time of learning—not reading and arithmetic, but of things perhaps more important.

The postvention program must be developed to promote constructive and useful learning in the aftermath of tragedy. Students and staff can be helped to learn how they react in a crisis, what people do that help most, how to help other people, what they really believe about death, that people can cry and still be strong, and, measured against the criterion of death, what’s really important in life.

Obviously no one wants a student to die; however, given that the death has happened, inevitably learning is going to take place. The only question is, is the school going to allow it to occur haphazardly or will a postvention program be developed to promote constructive grieving, ways of helping others, and understanding of death and people in crisis.

What follows is intended to be a practical step-by-step outline of the tasks to be accomplished in planning a school’s response to tragedy. The planning process should begin, of course, long before the event occurs. It may be initiated by anyone recognizing the need for a postvention plan; however, the cooperation, support, and, hopefully, leadership of key school personnel must be obtained before meaningful planning can take place. That is, the principal, superintendent, and guidance staff clearly needs to be involved and preferably also key teachers, coaches, school psychologists and social workers, nurses, and administrative assistants. Some involvement of an outside expert or consultant may be helpful at varying stages of the planning process. At times in the process it is extremely important to consider the roles that custodians, secretaries, cafeteria workers, substitute teachers, bus drivers and student leaders may play in the planning and/or implementation of the postvention program.

Each school needs to plan how it will carry out the 19 tasks outlined below. A report containing plans for how each task will be accomplished constitutes the postvention plan and should be available to all school personnel. It should be periodically reviewed, especially by the administrative and guidance staff, to update it (key resource people and phone numbers may change) and to keep copies of it at home as that’s where the initial call about the tragedy may come.

To provide a context for the specific aspects of the postvention plan, we’ll assume that the school day after the earthquake would begin with an emergency staff meeting before school followed by each faculty member facilitating a short discussion of what has happened in the homeroom or first period class. Discussion of feelings about what’s happened should be allowed to take as much class time as seems appropriate. A regular school schedule should be followed, but with great flexibility in allowing students to talk in the hallways, go to various individual and group counseling rooms provided, sit quietly in pairs on the stairway, be excused from tests and homework, etc. The structure of a regular school day provides some security and routine in a suddenly topsy-turvy world while the wide latitude given students allows grief to be expressed.

A variety of school and community personnel will be available to help students during the day. After school a second general staff meeting is held to review the day and prepare for tomorrow.

1. Selection of the Crisis Response Team. A crisis response team of perhaps three to five members with authority to make decisions in the time of crisis needs to be chosen. The team is responsible for both planning and implementation of postvention. Among its members should be staff who have some respect in the school, are sensitive to student and faculty needs, are committed to personal involvement in a crisis response, are able to be decisive, and who are relatively calm under fire. The crisis response team would conduct planning for the remaining tasks and, along with the building principal if he or she is not on the team, be responsible for carrying out the school’s response to a suicidal death on the days succeeding it.

2. Identification of Media Liaison Person. One person within the school district should be designated to handle all contact with newspaper, television, radio, and magazine reporters and shield school personnel from media intrusion. Media personnel should not be allowed in school. All school students and staff should be firmly instructed to refer any phone or personal contact, whether in school or at home, to the media liaison person whose phone number should be readily available and who should receive instructions on what information to release from the crisis response team. A press release should be prepared to serve as a basis for talking with the media. In general, the less publicity death receives the better.
3. Identification of Family Liaison Person. The crisis response team should designate a representative of the school to initiate immediate and appropriate contact with the family of the dead student, to express the empathy and concern of the school, to answer parents' questions regarding school plans; to ascertain family wishes and plans regarding funeral, wake and memorials; to discretely obtain the information about the death and the circumstances surrounding it; and to offer to help the family with support, contact with community resources, or perhaps tangible help like driving, food, babysitting, or talking with siblings. The family liaison person should be educated about helpful and unhelpful responses to grieving people, be sensitive to family privacy, and use intuition about maintaining some contact with the family during the weeks ahead. The crisis response team may choose one family liaison person for all situations or a different one may be designated for each crisis based on the person's relationship to the deceased student or his/her family.
4. Organization of Staff/Telephone Network. A telephone network or tree should be developed wherein each school staff member is called as soon as possible after the incident has occurred, given the brief basic facts, and notified of the time and place of the emergency staff meeting to be held usually before the next school day. Care should be taken to reach not only faculty, but all auxiliary and related personnel as well. Furthermore, selected staff members in schools throughout the district should be notified, particularly in schools attended by siblings or schools from which support staff may be borrowed to help during the crisis.