

Changing Realities in School Preparedness Using the All Hazards Approach

Presented to the 4 Corners Conference
By Dr. Bob Hull, Director
And Mr. Jerry Tenbrink
Kansas Center for Safe & Prepared Schools

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KC-SPS Mission Statement

- Provide leadership, training and resources that will sustain and improve the safe and prepared learning environments in Kansas Schools
- Provide leadership in assisting schools in the prevention of, preparation for, response to and recovery from crisis incidents that impact schools and their communities



KC-SPS Duties

- Become the Kansas clearing house for school safety and preparedness activities
- Create and deploy a school crisis management resource center
- Provide training and exercise opportunities for schools
- Coordinate standards and expectations for school safety and preparedness



Problem Statement



- Every educational institution is vulnerable to threats, hazards and disasters that have the potential to disrupt normal school operations and cascade into a crisis situation
- Schools are not uniformly prepared, resource equipped or trained to respond to emergency situations



KC-SPS Guiding Principles-I

- Regardless of current challenges, schools have a duty of care to students, staff & community
- **Seek ways to bring awareness and improvement of school safety and preparedness so they have no or minimal cost when implementing in schools**
- Clearly state standards & expectations for school safety and preparedness
- **Promote best practices - minimize mandates**
- Advocate for children during times of crisis
- **Focus on and celebrate the positive connection between academic success and a safe/prepared school**



KC-SPS Guiding Principles-II

- Remember that school officials become 'immediate first responders' until professional first responders arrive
- A school crisis is a community crisis and a community crisis is a school crisis. The worlds of education, first responders and emergency management must work together in advance of a crisis
- Training must be continuous due to staff turnover and changing expectations. The all-hazards approach must be the theme for training and exercises
- Public awareness for school safety & preparedness must be constant while public interest is cyclic
- KC-SPS will advocate for school nurses, SRO's & DARE officers and school mental health professionals who help form the school safety net in school emergencies



School's Mission Statement

Schools provide a **safe environment** where all students acquire skills, knowledge, abilities and behaviors necessary to be productive citizens in an ever changing world.





Schools Are . . .

- Soft Targets
- **Vulnerable**
- Places where on a typical day have 20 - 25% of population
- **Often the largest gathering place in a community**

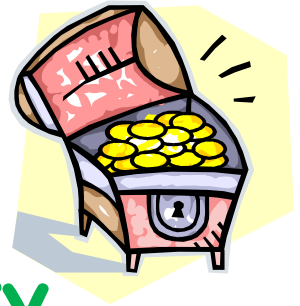


Challenges in School Preparedness

- Budget
- **Staffing**
- Apathy & Naiveté
- **Incorporating Emergency Management Principles**
- Collaboration
- **Communications**
- Training & Exercises
- **Advocacy for Children**
- Foundations of Preparedness



Budget & Finance



- Campus Safety Magazine Article
- National School Safety & Security Services
- US Department of Education - OSDIFS
- Belief that education has sufficient money to successfully run its schools
- Funding levels at previous years levels



Staffing Levels

- School's safety net (nurses, law enforcement, mental health) personnel are being cut
- Administrators who manage preparedness/safety programs are being cut and responsibilities consolidated
- Safety/preparedness responsibilities being pushed to the classroom or other staff level
- Data trends indicate need for more services not less



Apathy and Naiveté

- Only 20% of Americans are prepared for a catastrophic event
- Only 10% of American households have a plan, a crisis kit and have taken training
- Over 50% say they aren't ready for an everyday emergency
- 50% responding to a K-12 school survey (Campus Safety Yearbook) worry about administration apathy and naiveté



Disaster Superintendents

- In the future they will provide a greater emphasis on preparedness
- In times of disasters, the community looks to the school for leadership
- In times of disasters, school resources are community resources
- There is the need for school officials to be familiar with principles of emergency management



Incorporating Principles of Emergency Management in Schools

- Schools are microcosms of society
- A school crisis is a community crisis and a community crisis is a school crisis
- Schools must take the all-hazards approach
 1. People caused
 2. Natural disasters
 3. Technological/physical plant failures



Phases of Emergency Management

- **Mitigation (prevention)** - On going activities aimed at eliminating or reducing the risk of personal injury & loss of life, property damage or risk to the environment
- **Preparedness (Planning)** - Actions that improve the speed and coordination of the response to the emergency
- **Response** - Period of time shortly before, during and after a disaster when activities are conducted in order to save lives, minimize damage and protect the environment
- **Recovery** - Period of time when the immediate threat to life & property has passed. This continues until the return to 'normal operations' is complete



NIMS & ICS

- **NIMS - (National Incident Management System)** A comprehensive system that improves the response operations through the use of the incident command system & application of standardized emergency procedures and preparedness measures.
- **ICS - (Incident Command System)** A standardized on scene emergency management system designed to provide an integrated organizational structure to the scene. ICS is used for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to all size incidents. ICS is designed to aid the management of resources during a crisis incident.



Collaboration with Others

- Building relationships - "the day of the emergency is not the day to be handing out business cards"
- Schools are part of community plans, but sometimes they don't know it
- Only 28% of school leadership said they held regular meetings with 1st responders and emergency management



Communication

- Communication is often the first break down during an emergency
- Internal communication for schools focuses on staff and student communication
- External communication for schools focuses on first responders, parents & media
- Need for interoperable communication between schools and 1st responders



Training and Exercises

- Standardization of drills and skills
- Impact of drills - Our Lady of the Angels School in Chicago
- Drills all schools can use:
 1. Severe weather
 2. Evacuation
 3. Lockdown
 4. Shelter in Place
 5. Reunification
 6. Bus evacuation



Benefits of Exercising The School EOP

- Assesses policies, plans, procedures, training, resources, assumptions and partnerships
- Clarifies roles and responsibilities
- Improves coordination and communication
- Identifies gaps in resources
- Measures performance
- Identifies opportunities for improvement



Advocacy for Children

- **National Commission on Children and Disasters Report**
 - + Funding to improve disaster planning for schools
 - + Creation of a tracking system to reunite children and families separated during disasters
- **Save the Children Report Card**
 - + 7 States received an "A" grade
 - + Majority of states received a "C" grade
 - + 11 states received an "F" grade

Educators, EM & 1st Responders are well positioned to add their advocacy voice for children during disasters



Foundations of Preparedness in Schools

- Implementation of Crisis Management Team (Community, District & Building levels)
- Implementation of all hazards crisis management plans (EOP's)
- Standardization of drills and skills
- Stocking and staging of resources (kits)
- Continuous and standardized training and exercises that are collaborative with local 1st responders
- Requirement that key school personnel are conversant with concepts of NIMS and ICS



Value of School Safety/Preparedness

Our schools are the most valuable structures in our community because they possess the most priceless treasures of our society. They should receive the constant attention and protection they deserve. School safety and all-hazard preparedness should rise to the level of value we place on our children*.

*Adapted from School Resource Officer Article



Contact Information

Dr. Bob Hull, Director

Mr. Jerry Tenbrink, Associate Director

Kansas Center for Safe & Prepared Schools

email: robert.e.hull@us.army.mil

jerry.tenbrink@ksag.org

office phone: 785-274-1428

