

EAST MILLINOCKET SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN

NEPN/NSBA CODE: EBCA

Crisis Response Plan

The School Board hereby adopts the East Millinocket Crisis Response Plan. The Superintendent and building administrators shall be responsible for ensuring that the plan is implemented in each school and evaluated on an annual basis. It is understood that specific procedures may vary from school to school due to differences in school facilities and the ages of students.

As required by law, the Board will approve the plan annually. Any substantive changes in the plan shall be subject to the approval of the Board.

Adopted Date: June 10, 2003

**SCHOOL UNION 113
CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN**

Key Elements of Crisis Response Plan

- ❑ Notification: Immediate notification of principal and crisis response team
 - Police notification: immediate 911 call
 - Implementation of crisis response plan
 - Principal or designee to the scene
- ❑ Isolation of the crisis, either by removal of students or lock down of students
- ❑ Establishment of communication between principal and police, ideally through a cell phone
- ❑ Identification of person to meet police and take them to the crisis scene
- ❑ Transfer of tactical authority to police upon arrival with principal's designee insuring completion of evacuation plan
- ❑ Assembly of crisis response team including teacher/guidance counselor responsible for specific student(s) to provide access to necessary materials
- ❑ Communications
 - Parents of students directly involved
 - Other parents of students
 - Medical response team
 - Media

SCHOOL UNION 113

CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN

Administrative Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to provide the format and the structure for further planning for a MAJOR CRISIS. The crisis response plan can be modified to fit any level crisis (see levels below). Each school is expected to develop their Crisis Response Plan in accordance with the designed guidelines.

Short-Term Crisis

Level 1: Imminent potential violence from student/adult

Level 2: Act of violence

Media involvement, ex: look alike weapon, custody battle repercussions

Level 3: MAJOR CRISIS

Hostage situation

Discharge of firearm in school

I. Notification

- A. As soon as any staff member becomes aware of any situation with the potential for significant violence (for example, student with weapon) the staff member shall immediately notify the main office by the fastest possible means which could include intercom, cell phone, use of student courier, or the teacher proceeding directly to the office.
- B. As soon as the principal's office is notified, the principal or the principal's designee shall immediately:
 - ❑ call 911
 - ❑ notify the office of the Superintendent (Superintendent names crisis contact person at Central Office)
 - ❑ notify the pre-designated crisis response team

II. On site assessment

- A. As soon as the crisis response team has been notified, the principal or the principal's designee will proceed to the crisis scene or, depending upon the situation, the location which will provide the best on-site assessment of the nature of the crisis.
- B. The principal or designee must have a means of on-going communication (two-way radio/cell phone) both with the crisis response team and the police.
- C. The principal will make an initial assessment of the situation, in order to direct the crisis response team. Thereafter, however, the principal or designee will in most situations remain on site at or near the crisis scene to await the arrival of the police and monitor/reassess the situation as necessary.

III. Crisis response team meeting / plan implementation

- A. The crisis response team, to include the building administrators, lead secretary, guidance counselors, nurse, head custodian, and security staff (if applicable) shall immediately upon notification meet in the main office, or an alternate site as necessary, once the principal has notified the team of an emergency.
 - Roles and expectation for crisis response team will be developed for each building.
- B. Depending upon the nature of the emergency and the on-site assessment made by the principal or principal's designee, the crisis response team shall:
 - Implement the pre-determined plan to isolate the crisis from the balance of the school community. This could take the form of either:
 - a lock down directive, communicated by intercom or other means as necessary, for some or all students and staff to remain in their rooms and to lock the doors; or
 - a directive for all or selected students and staff to evacuate the building. In the event of a decision to evacuate some or all of the building, the evacuation plan shall be followed.

NOTE: The responsibility for supervising the implementation of the evacuation or lock down plan shall remain with the head of the crisis

response team, to allow the principal or designee to remain on site and respond to the crisis.

- Designate a specific individual to meet responding police units and take them to the principal's location at the crisis scene. The same individual shall also be assigned to meet secondary police units as they arrive and brief them on the situation as well.

NOTE: The individual designated to meet police shall be responsible for notifying police dispatch of the school location where they are to arrive.

- Begin the process of assembling specific school records/data/files and personnel with respect to any individual student(s) involved in the crisis in order to assist police with specific information upon their arrival.

IV. Police Arrival

With the arrival of the police unit at the scene, tactical authority over the crisis situation is transferred to the ranking on-site police officer, who becomes responsible for the security of the scene and the safety of students and others. Although tactical authority is assumed by the police department, the principal shall under normal circumstances remain with the police for consultation and input with respect to the response at the crisis scene.

IV. Communication

- A. The principal or designee and ranking police officer shall upon assessment of the situation direct the crisis response team with respect to necessary communications, which could include notification of:
 - Parents / guardians of students directly involved – Such individuals shall be contacted by a member of the crisis response team, provided with a summary of the situation as necessary, and informed of a pre-designated location (well off school grounds in most cases) where they can be met by a member of the crisis response team if need be.
 - Parents of other students – Depending upon the situation, it may be necessary to notify parents or guardians of students other than those directly involved. The crisis response team shall be responsible for such notification as well, and for information with respect to parent and student assembly off-site points.

- Media – The principal or designee and / or police shall designate a media spokesperson, through whom all media contacts (including broadcast media with respect to a school closing) will be made.

V. Crisis follow up

Superintendent and / or designee meet with crisis response team. Crisis response team meets with police and other agencies involved to a) plan next steps, b) de-brief / critique the crisis event, c) faculty meeting ASAP, and d) plan communication.

Administrator Responsibility – NOTE: This plan obviously assumes a great deal of pre-planning to include, among other things (1) the appointment of a crisis management team; (2) the availability of physical diagrams of buildings for use by the team and by police; (3) an evacuation plan; (4) a lock down plan; and (5) drill twice a year / all buildings – crisis response drill in conjunction with police department. Police input for crisis response plan effectiveness as needed.

Level III Crisis Program Guideline

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT

DO

➤ **TAKE THE THREAT SERIOUSLY**

When evaluating the nature of the reported situation, always consider the worst case scenario. Many tragedies have resulted from a *failure to believe* that the worst can happen.

➤ **MAINTAIN A SAFE DISTANCE AT ALL TIMES**

Understand that proximity to the threat increases the likelihood of injury and decreases your ability to exercise options. Remember, if you can see what is happening, you are in danger.

➤ **FOLLOW EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Compliance with established procedures helps ensure an orderly response to crisis situations. Predictable actions allow emergency responders a greater opportunity to isolate and control the threat.

➤ **RELAY ALL THE INFO YOU HAVE TO THE 911 DISPATCHER**

Tell the person answering the 911 call as much as you can about the threat. Make sure you give the school's location as well as the location of the threat (i.e., Room 209, the playground). If you can, give the dispatcher the name and a description of the individual involved and a description of any weapon involved. Let the dispatcher know if anyone is injured. Most important, if you are able to safely, **STAY ON THE LINE**.

➤ **BE PATIENT**

Time is our greatest ally. Give the police time to ensure the safe resolution of the incident.

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DON'T

➤ **ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION YOURSELF**

Successful crisis resolution is dependent upon the coordinated efforts of trained, skilled law enforcement professionals. It is a rare event when individual action is a more viable option than teamwork.

➤ **PLACE YOURSELF OR OTHERS IN HARM'S WAY**

Any action which exposes additional people to the threat is counterproductive. The goal is to control the threat, not to increase the size of the threat.

➤ **UNDERESTIMATE WHAT SOMEONE IS CAPABLE OF DOING**

Regardless of whom the threatening individual may be, you must assume they are willing and able to carry through with their threat.

➤ **MAKE PROMISES THAT YOU CAN'T KEEP**

Never tell an individual that they won't be prosecuted or suspended for their actions. Don't tell a person that you will make certain things available to them (i.e., food, water, telephone). Those items are bargaining chips the police may need later. It is not your job to negotiate.

IF YOU ARE A HOSTAGE

- ◆ Don't be a hero. Time is an ally. Accept your situation and be prepared to wait.
- ◆ Don't speak unless spoken to. The individual is agitated and may not respond positively to additional conversation or stimuli.
- ◆ Don't make suggestions. Think of the potential consequences if you are wrong.
- ◆ Don't be argumentative. Do not introduce any further hostility into a volatile situation.
- ◆ Don't stare at or turn your back on an armed person. Treat that individual like royalty. Follow the hostage-taker's instructions quickly, calmly and quietly.
- ◆ If you are taken hostage with a group of children, remember that the children will be looking up to you for guidance. They will model their behavior after yours.
- ◆ Don't attempt to escape unless you are convinced you will be successful. Consider your fate if you fail and the consequences to those left behind if you succeed.
- ◆ Remember, you are **NOT** the person in control of this situation.

SCHOOL UNION 113 CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN

Members:

Administration (3)
Office Manager
School Nurse
Head Custodian
Director of Special Services
East Millinocket Fire/Police Representative

I. Notification

- As soon as any staff member becomes aware of any situation with the potential for significant violence (for example, student with weapon), the staff member shall immediately notify the main office by the fastest possible means, which could include intercom, cell phone, the teacher proceeding directly to the office or other direct communication.
- **ADMINISTRATION** calls 911 – (say) “Schenck High School / Medway Middle School / Opal Myrick Elementary School ... identify caller ... identify crisis.” Be sure to identify the location, identify caller and what the crisis situation is.
- Crisis team convenes – notification is by **OFFICE MANAGER**, by intercom, cell phone, two-way radios, beeper, and office phone. “Report to -----, we have a level 3.”
- **ADMINISTRATION** calls Superintendent.
- **OFFICE MANAGER** notifies cafeteria workers, custodians, guidance.

II. On-Site Assessment

- Team convenes and quickly reviews / assigns responsibilities.

- **PRINCIPAL and DESIGNEE** proceed to crisis scene. Communicate site information back to the team.
- **DESIGNATED TEAM MEMBER** informs responding police of situation.
- **POLICE / CRISIS TEAM** makes decision to evacuate or lock down or a combination based on the situation.

III. Plan Implementation

A. Evacuation

- **ADMINISTRATION AND POLICE DEPARTMENT** communicate need to evacuate. Signal to evacuate (bell code, PA, door-to-door).
- Staff and students move to predetermined site.
 - Sites identified
 - Primary and alternate sites assigned
 - Routes of travel to site from class to site posted and followed
 - Rooms to be locked / lavs checked
 - Staff bring class attendance lists, cell phones (at least one phone per site), general instructions (crisis kit)
- Students with disabilities evacuated to sites.
 - Develop individual plan for chronically disabled student
 - *copies of schedule, list of stairwells, staff member assigned if appropriate
 - List established of all injured students, classroom teacher responsible for those students
 - List of all students with elevator keys
 - Establish communication with team leaders
 - Site contacts:
Schenck High School _____
Medway Middle School _____

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B. Lock Down

- Signal to lock down (bell code, PA door-to-door) full or partial lock down.
- **STAFF** implements lock down plan, i.e., students to remain in classroom, stay out of visible sight – duck and cover, under desks ... stay away from doors and windows and lock classroom door.
- **CUSTODIANS** lock exterior doors / fire doors, additional spaces secured and locked.
- Students out of supervised area (halls. . .) proceed to nearest classroom.

IV. Communication

- **GUIDANCE COUNSELOR / POLICE** notify parents of students directly involved in incident.
- Move parent / guardian to off-campus site.
- Include other appropriate people as deemed necessary.
- Notify media – decision to be made by Police, Administration and Superintendent (the only spokesperson).
- List of phone and fax numbers for radio and television stations.

V. Crisis Follow-up and Evaluation

- **POLICE DEPARTMENT / SUPERINTENDENT** meets with Crisis Team to debrief.
- Information meeting with staff.
- Counselors, peer leaders, social workers . . . available for students.
- Letters to parents.
- Press conference.
- General address to students.

LEVEL III CRISIS RESPONSE PLANNING GUIDE

The following suggestions / recommendations are provided as helpful information as you begin to develop your crisis plan.

1. Establish a crisis team and consider who should be on the team.
2. Determine the roles and responsibilities of team members.
3. Acquire appropriate safety and communication equipment. Suggested items include two-way radios, cellular phones, first aid kits, etc.
4. Central office and police review of final plan.
5. Determine off-site evacuation facilities.
6. Establish meeting place for crisis team. Most likely the location will be the main office.
7. Establish alternative site if main office is the site of the crisis and develop roles / responsibilities.
Install door bell alarm wired to guidance to alert that the main office is crisis site.
8. Develop a plan / procedure for building evacuation and a what-to-do list once at off-site facilities, e.g. signal, exit routes (primary and secondary), attendance taking, communication link.
9. Establish team leader(s) at off-site evacuation areas.
10. Acquire floor plans of the school. Determine the “plant” expert.
11. Develop a plan for lock down, e.g. signal, expectations, communication, etc. Consider all entrance and exit points: elevators, etc.
12. Acquire keys for non-classroom areas, e.g. lavatories, and determine responsibility for securing / locking those areas.
13. Don’t forget that there may be students in unsupervised areas such as the lavatories or corridors. Plan for that.

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14. Remember to include Level III crisis information in substitute teacher packets. Have available daily list of substitute teachers.
15. Establish a plan for students with disabilities.
 - ◆ Consider special attention for limited English students if needed.
 - ◆ Consider a plan for public in / around school building during the crisis.
16. Have student photos on hand. e.g. yearbook.
17. Include Level III crisis information in student handbook.
18. Meet with staff to outline plan Level III crisis.
19. Develop a Level III crisis notebook and include: the plan with roles and responsibilities of team members, staff list, evacuation sites, procedures, phone numbers, floor plan of school, etc. Phone numbers should include evacuation sites, cell phones, media, hospitals, etc.
20. Develop a crisis kit or notebook for each teacher.
21. Develop a plan for crisis response drills.
22. Use technology to support communication at / during the crisis.

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