



**SCHOOL EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Planning Guide

School Emergency Management Plan—Planning Guide

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Prepared by the Department of Education

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Introduction

It is recognized that schools are exceedingly safe places for students and staff. The probability of targeted violence occurring in our schools is extremely low; however, the consequences of such an event would be immeasurable.

We must be able to manage emergencies effectively and in a timely manner, while at the same time, continuing to work diligently to prevent them. A well-prepared and practised plan will assist staff in managing such an event if it occurs.

The *Emergency Management for Nova Scotia Schools Planning Resource*, including this document and the *School Emergency Management Plan—Template* and *School Emergency Management Plan—Quick Guide* provides a complete resource for developing emergency management plans for school boards and schools. This guide is not intended to be the standard by which plans are measured; rather, it is a compilation of the best practices collected from a variety of sources. The *Template* and *Quick Guide* are available in Word at www.EDnet.ns.ca in order to customize content for individual schools (files can be downloaded from the “Schools—Emergency Management Planning” section of the Document Depot).

Scope

Emergency

“An abnormal situation which, in order to limit danger to people or damage to property or environment, requires prompt action beyond normal procedures.”

~Nova Scotia Emergency Management Organization, 2003
(formerly Emergency Measures Organization)

Emergencies may include but are not limited to

- bomb threats
- dangerous person(s)
- fire/explosion
- internal/external environmental threats
- loss of communications (telephone)
- loss of heat
- loss of water
- medical emergency
- power failure
- sudden severe weather
- suicide/attempted suicide

The emergency management plan represents the preparedness component of a comprehensive school plan addressing student safety. The four areas addressed in a comprehensive plan are

- mitigation and prevention
- preparedness
- response
- recovery

Mitigation and prevention include all activities, initiatives, and programs designed to mitigate or prevent harm from occurring to students, staff, and visitors while at school. Mitigation and prevention may include, but are not limited to, threat assessment, bullying/harassment and intimidation programs/policies, and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design audits.

Preparedness includes all activities that enable students and staff to respond to emergencies. Prevention activities may include, but are not be limited to emergency management planning, first-aid training, and acquiring emergency supplies.

Response includes all activities undertaken at the time of an emergency and includes, but is not limited to, the four all-hazards plan responses of evacuation, relocation, isolation, and expansion.

Recovery includes all activities that assist the students and staff in returning to school healthy, both mentally and physically. Recovery activities may include, but are not be limited to, utilizing the crisis support team, participating in critical incident stress debriefing and, participating in an operational debriefing with re-evaluation of the emergency management plan.

AUTHORITY

The authority to implement the provisions within this plan is drawn from the following provincial legislation and school board policies:

- Education Act
- Fire Safety Act
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- applicable school board policies

DESIGNATION OF THE PERSON-IN-CHARGE

Nothing in the plan supercedes the authority of the person-in-charge (principal or designate) to alter the response to an emergency.

The principal or his or her designate will be known as the person-in-charge and will have full authority within the provisions of the plan in addition to the other responsibilities of his or her office. A predetermined chain of command will be established should the principal not be available to delegate his or her authority. The school plan template outlines suggested roles and responsibilities of the person in charge, the administrative assistant, teachers/classroom assistants, maintenance staff, students, and visitors/tenants.

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

During an emergency, the person-in-charge will work with and take direction as appropriate from the incident commander of the lead emergency service.

Types of Emergency Responses

Implementation of the emergency management plan begins when the person-in-charge becomes aware of a situation that may be an emergency. The person-in-charge will assess the situation utilizing all immediately available information. Once the person-in-charge decides that an emergency exists, he or she will choose the most appropriate response.

The person-in-charge may choose from one of the following responses:

| All-Hazards Plan Responses | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. evacuation | 3. isolation |
| 2. relocation | 4. expansion |

EVACUATION

The decision to evacuate will be based on the need to have students and staff leave the building for their safety.

Examples of emergencies that may result in evacuation include, but are not limited to, fire/explosion, bomb threat, and internal environmental threat.

Once the decision to evacuate the building has been made, the person-in-charge will use the most appropriate means to announce the evacuation.

On receiving the announcement to evacuate, all students and staff will follow either the predetermined protocols or the explicit directions of the person-in-charge.

Once the building has been successfully evacuated, the person-in-charge, in consultation with the responding emergency service, will determine if it is safe to re-enter the building or if it is necessary to relocate to the predetermined site.

The person-in-charge may also choose to begin a controlled evacuation after an emergency isolation has been instituted and the emergency is under control but is not yet resolved.

See pages 16–18 of this guide for details regarding evacuation planning and procedures.

RELOCATION

In the event of a relocation, standard school insurance coverage is in place.

If the person-in-charge determines that it is unsafe to re-enter the building or that re-entry will be postponed for longer than students and staff can reasonably wait outside, he or she may choose to relocate to a predetermined site.

The person-in-charge will further determine the safest and most effective means of relocating the students and staff.

Whenever possible, the person-in-charge will also give advance notice to the receiving facility of their impending arrival.

Under certain circumstances it may be necessary to use both the identified primary and secondary relocation sites. In this event, the person-in-charge will designate staff to fill the required administrative roles at the secondary site.

When selecting a site for relocation, the planning team should consider the following:

Proximity to the School

The site should be close enough that students and staff are not required to travel extended distances. However, the site should not be so close as to be subject to the same hazard as the school. If no site is available within walking distance, the plan should include alternatives—such as requesting emergency bus transportation.

Capacity

The site should be able to accommodate the entire student and staff population. If this is not possible, it may be necessary to identify more than one site for this purpose.

Accessibility

It is also vital that the person-in-charge is able to access the site with little or no notice. If it is necessary for the person-in-charge to possess keys to the site, this should be covered in the letter of agreement with the receiving facility (a sample letter of agreement can be found in the *Template* appendix). It is likely that students will be dismissed from the relocation site; therefore, the site must be accessible by school busses and parents and guardians.

Suitability

Ensure that the relocation site has sufficient washrooms, telephones, and privacy rooms.

Alternative Site

A secondary site should also be identified in case the primary site cannot be accessed.

ISOLATION

The person-in-charge may choose to institute isolation when he or she has determined that it is safer for students and staff to remain inside the classroom and/or building.

Examples of emergencies that may result in isolation include, but are not limited to, a student(s) or other person(s) committing or threatening to commit violence and an external environmental threat. Isolation may also be considered when weather is so severe that it is safer for the students to remain in the school until it is safe for them to leave.

EXPANSION

The person-in-charge may choose to begin expansion when he or she receives notification that their facility is the intended relocation site of a group who have evacuated their premises.

Planning and Preparation

It will not be possible or even desirable to create a plan that addresses every conceivable situation that may occur in your school. Such a plan would be overly complicated and consume far too many resources in its creation. At the same time, experience tells us that regardless of the amount of planning done, something will occur that was not considered.

It is much more effective to create an all-hazards plan based on simple principles that cover the essential elements. Such a plan will allow for more adaptability to the constantly changing circumstances that occur during an emergency.

SCHOOL BOARD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING TEAM

1

Planning begins with the establishment of a school board emergency management planning team. The objective of this committee is to develop as much of the board's emergency management plan as possible, thereby reducing the work required by school principals in implementing the plan. The foundation for the team could be the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, which already has student and staff safety as its prime responsibility. This committee should be supplemented if possible by representatives from operations or facility management, school administration, program development, student services, and school principals from the various grade levels. It is highly recommended that a representative from the police and fire services be added to the committee. Some areas of the province have Joint Emergency Management (JEM) teams that could be invited to participate.

2

The school board emergency management planning team then undertakes the following tasks:

- Review the relevant provincial legislation and school board policies.
- Review the *School Emergency Management Plan Planning Guide and Template*.
- Complete tasks required to develop a school based response to emergencies.
- Develop hazard specific plans for the most common school-based emergencies.
- Assemble the emergency management kit and partial classroom emergency kits.

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- Identify and arrange for any required specialized training.
- Conduct training and carry out emergency exercises to test the plan.
- Review the training and exercises and modify plan as required.

3

The school board committee delivers gathered emergency management plan information and materials to schools for emergency management plan completion.

SCHOOL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING TEAM

1

The school emergency management planning team should consist of the principal, secretary, caretaker, representatives from the teaching staff, and educational assistants.

Representatives for any building co-tenants should also be a part of the planning team, and it is highly recommended that a representative from the local police agency be a part of the team as well. Other team members may be recruited from parent and community groups, as well as the fire and ambulance service.

2

The school-level emergency management planning team should then undertake the following tasks:

- Review the school board emergency management planning guide and template.
- Conduct a risk assessment for potential hazards or emergencies requiring a special response unique to the school.
- Develop hazard specific plans as required based on the results of the risk assessment.
- Assemble the school-specific content for the emergency management kit and classroom emergency kits.
- Conduct training and carry out emergency exercises to test the plan.
- Review the training and exercises and modify/update plan as required (see page 13 for details).

3

Involve local police and building tenants. The local police agency will play a critical role in the planning phase. In addition to providing valuable information about community resources, the police will require certain information that will assist in making their response more effective. Be prepared to provide the police

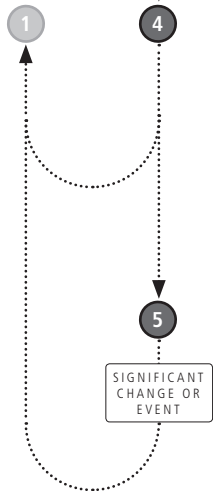
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representative with a copy of the school profile, building information, interior and exterior school photos/video, aerial photos, and the map of the school area (see page 31–34 of this guide for details). The police will work with the school to establish the following information:

- command post location
- traffic control points to reduce congestion and protect evacuating/relocating students
- staging areas for emergency personnel
- controlled access routes for responding emergency services
- temporary triage area
- landing zone for an air ambulance
- parent information centre
- media reception area
- additional services as identified

Building tenants (recreation, YMCA, public library, C@P site, etc.) also have a vested interest in the planning process, as any emergency situation will likely have a direct impact on their staff and clients as well. It may be necessary for memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or letters of agreement (LOAs) outlining the agreed-upon roles and responsibilities in an emergency to be drafted and approved by the school board and the tenant agency (MOUs or LOAs can be added to the school emergency management plan appendix).



Re-evaluate the plan. The plan should be evaluated at least once each year but definitely after every significant change that occurs in the school, such as the appointment of a new principal or vice-principal, a large change in the school population, any alteration to the school building, when the person who signed the letter of agreement at your relocation site moves, and whenever relevant school board policies change.

Make copies of the plan. It is advisable to have complete copies of the plan located in different secure areas of the building in case the administrative office copy cannot be acquired during an emergency. Abbreviated copies (with confidential information removed) should also be kept at your primary and alternative relocation sites.

Copies of the *Quick Guide* (or customized school quick guide) should be placed in every classroom, staff room, and office.

Training and Exercises

All staff and students **must** receive training on the school emergency management plan.

Training does not have to be extensive in order to be effective. Training should be age appropriate and result in everyone having sufficient understanding of the importance of their roles in any emergency.

The more that school emergency management plan exercises are carried out, the more likely the plan will be adhered to during an actual emergency. Therefore, all components of the school emergency management plan **must** be exercised on a regular basis.

Evacuation
*minimum of six times
each school year*

Regulations require that fire evacuations be exercised successfully a minimum of six times each school year with three drills before the new year and three after the new year.

Relocation
*minimum of once each
school year*

Relocation to a predetermined site should be exercised a minimum of once each school year and the results recorded. For maximum effectiveness, the relocation drill should include accounting for all students and staff as well as student dismissal.

Isolation
*minimum of two times
each school year*

Isolation drills should be exercised a minimum of two times each school year, with one drill occurring before the new year and one after the new year with results recorded.

Exercising should also include variations to the primary format. For instance, evacuation drills could include exits that cannot be used for whatever reason. This will cause staff and students to use alternative routes. Isolation drills could include situations where students are not in the classroom such as at lunch or during the change of class.

In addition, the principal may be asked to participate in larger field exercises in collaboration with emergency services and the local emergency management organization (EMO).

Exercises may be limited to discussion format or table-top exercises; however, any identified hazard with a high likelihood of occurring should be incorporated into a full field exercise.

Before conducting or participating in a field exercise the principal should contact the school insurance program to determine coverage and any risk management requirements.

Components of the Plan

COVER INFORMATION

Include school name, address, and other relevant information. This may be important for other agencies who are the recipients of a copy of the school plan.

DISTRIBUTION LIST

This list should include every agency and/or staff person who has been given a copy of this plan. It is important to keep this list up-to-date and to distribute new copies of the plan as it is updated.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

This list should include the position, name, and phone numbers for every person you may want to contact during an emergency. It is important to keep this list up-to-date and it should be reviewed on a regular basis.

DEFINITION OF EMERGENCY

Refer to page 3 of this guide and the *Template* for more information.

DESIGNATION OF THE PERSON-IN-CHARGE

Refer to page 4 of this guide and the *Template* for more information.

EVACUATION

This section of the school plan should include all relevant information that staff and students need to know in order to safely evacuate the school under a variety of conditions.

The foundation for your evacuation planning is your Fire Evacuation Plan, which should be added to the school emergency management plan appendix.

Your plan should also take into consideration situations other than fire that might call for an evacuation. Situations could include, but are not be limited to

- bomb threats
- hazardous material spills
- toxic or noxious gasses
- heating plant failure
- burst water pipes

In some situations it may be advisable to announce the evacuation over the PA system rather than using the fire alarm. Making a verbal announcement will allow you to give specific instructions that you could not otherwise.

Assessment

This section of the school plan could include circumstances under which the person-in-charge may decide to evacuate.

If a fire alarm sounds, all students, staff, and visitors will follow the recognized procedures.

In the event of another type of emergency, the person-in-charge will assess the situation and determine if an evacuation is warranted.

Implementation

Fire: If a fire has been located within the building, any and all persons have the responsibility to sound the alarm.

Other Emergency: In the event of another type of emergency, the person-in-charge will give clear directions to the students, staff, and visitors on the safest means of leaving the building.

Once an emergency is identified, the person-in-charge will announce the evacuation by the safest and most expedient means. If a specific area of the building is determined to be unsafe for any reason, the person-in-charge may choose to give directions for alternative exits. If the person-in-charge chooses to use the PA system to announce the evacuation, he or she should use plain, clear language (no codes), with specific directions. For example

- *“Attention. Everyone must leave the building immediately and assemble at your fire drill assembly points.”*
- In the event of a bomb threat, the person-in-charge may include the direction: *“Take your backpack if you have it with you.”*

In the event of a bomb threat, it is recommended that the staff and students be told to take any bags or backpacks they have with them when they evacuate. Bags left behind are considered to be suspicious packages and must be examined by the police before the building can be re-entered.

Under certain circumstances, such as the need to get as far away from the school as quickly as possible, it may be necessary to combine an evacuation with an immediate relocation. This should be made clear during the announcement of the evacuation.

This section of the plan should also include procedures for situations when students are not in the normal classroom setting, such as at lunch or during class change or assemblies.

Decision to Re-enter/Relocate

Once the evacuation is complete and all occupants are accounted for, the person-in-charge will consult as appropriate with responding emergency services and/or the school administration supervisor on whether to re-enter the building, relocate to another site, or dismiss.

The decision to re-enter the building will follow the re-entry procedures used during fire alarm drills.

If the person-in-charge decides to relocate, he or she will follow the procedures as listed under the Relocation section of the school emergency management plan.

Duties

The specific duties assigned to the occupants of the school should be simple and direct, without being overly restrictive.

The *Template* and *Quick Guide* include recommended duties that may be altered to suit the individual school.

Other Considerations

Implementation should include how visitors will be managed during an evacuation.

Special consideration should be given to what items should be evacuated with special needs students. An evacuation may become relocation with no opportunity to re-enter the school for required items.

The person-in-charge should take a set of all interior and exterior door keys when exiting the building. These should be included in the school emergency management kit.

RELOCATION

Assessment

Circumstances that require an evacuation may make relocation obvious. However, on other occasions, the person-in-charge may want to consult, as appropriate, with emergency service personnel and/or the school administration supervisor before deciding to relocate. If it appears that an evacuation may be prolonged, it may be advisable to relocate before deciding to dismiss.

This section of the school plan could include circumstances under which the person-in-charge may decide to relocate.

Implementation

Once the school has been evacuated and all students and staff are accounted for, the person-in-charge will announce the relocation by the most effective means. Classes will then travel along the prescribed route under the supervision of their teachers.

Duties

The specific duties assigned to the occupants of the school should be simple and direct, without being overly restrictive.

The *Template* and *Quick Guide* include recommended duties, that may be altered to suit the individual school.

ISOLATION

Assessment

Under certain circumstances it may be safer for students and staff to stay secured inside the school and/or inside the classroom. Situations that warrant isolation may include, but are not be limited to,

- a student or visitor/intruder who has become or is threatening to become violent inside the building
- person(s) outside the building intent on entering the building to cause harm
- an imminent external environmental threat such as an overturned and leaking tanker containing toxic chemicals
- a police action such as a barricaded person in the vicinity of the school
- severe weather or other situations that do not allow for transportation of students

For situations such as the first two, it will be the person-in-charge who will evaluate the risk associated with the situation and determine if an isolation drill is appropriate. For situations such as the second two, the person-in-charge will consult with emergency services and/or school board administration on whether it is safer to evacuate and relocate or isolate and shelter in place.

Implementation

Once a potential risk is identified the person-in-charge will announce the isolation by the safest and most expedient means. If the person-in-charge chooses to use the PA system to announce the isolation, he or she should use plain, clear language (no codes), with specific directions. If it is available, the person-in-charge should activate the isolation drill alarm and light system.

As is the case with a fire alarm, speed in announcing the isolation is essential to minimize the chance of injury. It is far better to error on the side of caution and announce an isolation at the first indication of danger rather than wait until the danger is confirmed.

Once isolation has been commenced and all doors are secured, staff inside the building may require a means of identifying themselves to people inside secured areas to gain entry. This could be a code word and/or a card designed specifically for that purpose that could be slipped under the door.

It critically important that the plan include how an isolation drill will be announced to students or staff who are outside the building,

such as before school, recess, and lunch. This is where an isolation drill alarm and light system would be beneficial. It would also be useful to place a sign in the window at the entrance announcing that isolation is in effect.

An alternative to having students and staff enter the building would be to prearrange that they move well away from the building to predesignated sites such as the relocation facility. This may be the safest course of action should the threat or hazard already be inside the building.

Duties

The specific duties assigned to the occupants of the school should be simple and direct.

The *Template* and *Quick Guide* include recommended duties, that may be altered to suit the individual school.

The person-in-charge may choose to have staff monitor the hallways and exit doors to ensure that students remain in classrooms, to allow only authorized persons to enter or exit, and to provide communications.

When announcing an isolation, the person-in-charge may direct non-supervising staff to meet at a location other than the administration office.

It is recommended that once isolation has been announced no one be allowed to enter or leave the building except for responding uniformed police officers. Depending on the reason for the isolation and if it is safe to do so, staff who are monitoring the entrances may be directed by the person-in-charge to allow students and other authorized persons to enter and direct them to a secure area until the isolation has ended.

If the emergency is a violent person inside the building, the person-in-charge should re-direct students and staff outside the building to a predetermined site, such as the site identified for school relocation. It will be necessary for this to be included as part of student and staff training, so that on receiving an isolation announcement anyone outside the building will immediately move to the relocation site. It will also be necessary to make prior arrangement with staff at the relocation site for this contingency, and a staff person will be required to attend the site as soon as they safely can do so.

Other Considerations

- Implementation should include how visitors will be managed during isolation.
- Planning should be considered for situations involving prolonged isolation or shelter in place.

EXPANSION

Assessment

It is possible that your school has been identified as a potential relocation site for another facility. Often it is a neighbouring school, but it may also be a nursing home. In some circumstances, your school may become a reception centre for large groups as happened during the 9/11 attacks when HRM became the host to thousands of stranded air travellers.

A memorandum of understanding or letter of agreement outlining roles and responsibilities should be entered into with the facility that has identified the school as a relocation site. Determining who has identified the school in their planning may be accomplished with the assistance of the local municipality's emergency management organization.

On receiving notice or a request to host a displaced group, the person-in-charge should ascertain the following information:

- number of people coming
- when they will arrive at the school
- the general makeup of the group
- people with special needs
- whether the group will be serviced by the displaced facility staff or by an outside agency such as the Red Cross

The person-in-charge, in consultation with the appropriate school board staff person, will determine if it is appropriate to dismiss students.

Implementation

Implementation will depend on how many people will be arriving at the school and whether the students will be dismissed. If students are to remain in class, the person-in-charge will determine what area of the building will be used to accommodate the group and make the necessary preparations.

The plan should include likely scenarios such as using the gym or the cafeteria and what would need to occur to make them available.

Once the group has arrived, the person-in-charge of the school should meet with the person-in-charge of the displaced group to identify what resources are required and decide on a common command/reporting structure.

Duties

The specific duties assigned to the occupants of the school should be simple and direct, without being overly restrictive.

The school plan template and quick guide template include recommended duties, which can be altered to suit the individual school.

Command/reporting structure
a means of identifying who is in command and who reports to whom

Hazard-Specific Planning

INTRODUCTION

Hazard-specific plan
a plan developed to respond to a specific hazard that has a reasonable likelihood of occurring

Local hazard
any situation external to the school that may present a threat to students and staff

When developing your hazard-specific plan, review any existing school hazard-specific plans or emergency response plans.

Steps to Develop Hazard-Specific Plans

1. Assess potential local hazards to which the school may be exposed.
2. Assess vulnerability and capacity of the school to deal with the hazard.
3. Consider the probability of the hazard versus the consequences.
4. Take steps to prevent or mitigate the hazard.
5. Develop procedures for managing the hazard.

Following are some of the common hazards that should be considered when developing your school emergency management plan.

BOMB THREATS AND SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES: SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

The school plan should include board policy and procedures dealing with bomb threats. Considerations when developing this plan include the following:

Bomb Threat Checklist

This list is used by the person who answers the phone to obtain and record as much useful information as possible. A suggested checklist is included in the *Template*.

Notification Procedures

All threats must be taken seriously. The person-in-charge may choose to notify the police or direct someone else to do so and will make the decision to evacuate the school or isolate everyone to their classrooms. School administration should be notified, based on established policy and procedures. Consideration should be given to what information will be provided to the media and to parents.

Evacuation or Isolation

Decision. The decision is made by the person-in-charge and is based on all immediately available information, including the credibility of the threat source, other recent threats of violence or conflict with students, the amount of detail in the threat, the number of repeat calls. The person-in-charge may elect to institute isolation rather than evacuation and conduct a search of public areas. If at any time a suspicious package is discovered, the person-in-charge may choose to begin a controlled evacuation.

Evacuation. If the person-in-charge chooses to evacuate, all routes out of the school should be searched, if possible, for suspicious articles before beginning the evacuation. Should a suspicious article be discovered in the building, evacuation routes must be altered to reduce the chance of injury. The fire alarm should not be used to signal evacuation unless critical urgency is indicated. Students should be directed to take any backpacks or bags they have with them when they evacuate. The person-in-charge may also choose to combine the evacuation with an immediate relocation.

Search Procedures

Searching is most effective when done by someone familiar with the environment. Staff are better able to determine if something is suspicious. Staff should be accompanied by emergency personnel with the clear understanding that under no circumstances are they to touch or otherwise investigate anything suspicious. It is also important to direct searchers not to use portable radios or cell phones, as they could cause a device to explode. Should a suspicious package be located, the area should be immediately cordoned off. The person-in-charge may choose to begin a controlled evacuation. It should be noted that the search does not stop on finding one suspicious package. It is possible that more than one explosive device has been placed in the school. Control of the scene and any subsequent actions will be the responsibility of the police. As an alternative, the police may elect to utilize a dog trained to detect explosives if available.

Crisis Intervention Team
A group of school staff and mental health professionals especially trained to assist individuals deal with the emotional aftermath of a traumatic event.

Contingency Plans

Steps to be taken in the event of an explosion should be included in the plan. Priority is given to preventing further harm from subsequent explosions or fire and providing aid to the injured. A controlled evacuation with relocation to the identified site will follow if one is not already completed. Consideration should be given to activating of additional resources, including the crisis intervention team.

Evidence Preservation

In addition to the recommendations listed in the Evidence Preservation appendix of the *Template*, the following steps should be taken:

- If available, press *57, Call Trace, on the phone as soon as the caller hangs up. This will alert the phone company to trace the call; they will release the information only to the police.
- Retain any threatening notes or other physical evidence for police investigators.
- Prevent any suspect students from accessing either their lockers or backpacks

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE RELEASE: INSIDE THE SCHOOL

The person-in-charge will assess the need to evacuate the school based on all immediately available information and hazardous substance guidelines. Material Safety Data Sheets should be kept in a readily accessible location in accordance with Occupational Health and Safety regulations (such as near dangerous chemicals or near the front entrance for emergency responders).

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE RELEASE: OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

The recommended procedure has been included in the *Template*. The length of time anyone can safely remain in a well-sealed building can be calculated at 10 square feet of floor space per person for up to three hours. This time is affected by a number of factors, including hazardous material concentration, air tightness of the building, and respiratory health of the people inside.

SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENT/INCIDENT

Each school should maintain a bus folder for each bus serving the school. This folder should contain rosters, including an emergency telephone number for each student assigned to ride the bus. The teacher in charge of a special activity trip should prepare trip bus folders, one copy of the student manifest should be placed in the trip folder and a second copy should accompany the teacher on the trip.

AFTER-HOURS SCHOOL USAGE

Any time a school activity is being conducted outside of normal hours, it is necessary that someone be identified as the person-in-charge with the responsibility to activate the Emergency Management Plan. This section should include any alterations to the plan required to accommodate the time of day and available staff.

EXTENDED ISOLATION (SHELTER-IN-PLACE)

This is a situation where it is necessary to hold and care for students for an extended period of time. Situations that may result in an extended isolation include extended police action in the vicinity of the school or sudden and severe weather and an interruption to means of transportation or transportation routes. Considerations for an extended isolation include the following:

- backup electric generator
- emergency food stores (24 hours minimum)
- blankets
- flashlights and batteries

Other considerations for an extended isolation include communicating with parents, resources for special needs students, and access to emergency medical assistance.

OFF-SITE SCHOOL-RELATED EMERGENCY

Any time a school activity is being conducted away from the school building, it is necessary that someone be identified as the person-in-charge with the responsibility to activate the Emergency Management Plan. This section should include any alterations to the plan required to accommodate the activity, location, and available staff.

School Emergency Management Plan Appendices

The school emergency management plan should include the following appendices.

A. SCHOOL PROFILE

This is a brief description of the school, including what grades or age levels attend, how many buildings and rooms are on the school property, how many teachers and staff, etc. Be sure to include any unique situations or information, such as other tenants. Include the location and identification of external doors.

B. EVACUATION ROUTES

This section should include the fire evacuation routes, which should also be posted in every classroom.

C. LOCAL HAZARDS ASSESSMENT

Include plans for situations external to the school that may present a threat to students and staff.

D. OFF-SITE EMERGENCY PLAN

Include protocols or procedures for staff when supervising students away from the building. Items that should be included are

- emergency contact lists
- first-aid kit and someone with training
- student emergency contact information
- staff/chaperon emergency contact information
- what to do in the event a student is injured
- what to do in the event a student is missing

E. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The communications plan provides guidance to the person-in-charge regarding communications before, during, and after an emergency in the following areas:

- Police/Fire/Emergency Health Services/Emergency Management Organization
- School/Board Staff and Tenants
- Parents/Guardians/Students/Community
- Media

Police, Fire, Emergency Health Services, Emergency Management Organization

During an emergency, one of the first priorities will be to contact police/fire/emergency health services/emergency management organization. The most expedient means is by calling 911. The 911 operator will ask you to state your emergency. This is done to ensure that the appropriate agency or agencies are dispatched. It is vital at this point to be clear as to what has actually happened or is happening. Do not speculate, exaggerate, or minimize the facts. The 911 system will provide the operator with a specific address for a telephone, however you will be asked to confirm your address. It will be vital that you clearly describe where the main entrance is located or where the police should arrive or should avoid. It is important to remember that the 911 system will not give a location if you are calling from a cell phone; therefore, you will need to state the address of the school as well as any specific directions responders should know.

The 911 operator will continue to ask you questions as responders are being dispatched. Questions you should be prepared to answer include

- What is happening?
- Is anyone or how many are injured?
- Are the suspects still on the scene?
- What are their descriptions?
- Do they have weapons?
- Who will meet the police/fire/EHS at the door and what is their name/description?

If the emergency involves injuries to students or staff, 911 operators will transfer you to Emergency Health Services dispatchers who will ask further questions in relation to the injuries or illness as well as giving directions for emergency care.

Finally, if the emergency is ongoing, the 911 operators will request that you stay on the line with them to provide updates and additional information until the emergency responders arrive.

Staff, School Board Staff, and Tenants

The school plan should answer the following questions:

- How will you communicate with staff internally during an emergency?
- How will you communicate internally in the event of a power failure?
- How will you communicate internally/externally in the event of a phone/cell phone failure?
- With whom, when, and under what circumstances will you communicate with school board staff during an emergency?
- Include additional relevant information.

Assess each emergency to determine the most appropriate means of communication, such as

- *Public Address System*
- *telephone/cell phone*
- *portable radio*
- *megaphone*
- *school or staff runner (when safe to do so)*

Parents/Guardians/Students/Community

The school plan should answer the following questions:

- How will you communicate the plan to parents of new students?
- How will you communicate with parents/guardians during an emergency?
- How will you communicate with parents/guardians after the emergency is concluded?
- Include additional relevant information.

Media

All staff should be aware of the person responsible for communicating with the media.

The school plan should answer the following questions:

- Who is the media spokesperson for the school?
- If the media spokesperson is not available, who will communicate with the media?
- When will you defer media inquiries to the responding emergency service?
- Has an area been designated for media to gather, to deter them from approaching or photographing students? (For the safety of everyone involved, this staging area should be away from emergency operations and the school.)

Following are some guidelines for dealing with the media:

- No person other than the communications manager or the person-in-charge should speak with the media.
- Do not play favourites. Give all media access to the same information.
- Try to have consideration for the media's deadlines.
- Be factual. Don't speculate.
- Do not cover up or try to mislead the media.
- Keep records of all information provided to the media. Provide written press releases when possible.
- If the media will be on the site during the emergency/disaster, ensure that appropriate safety precautions are followed.

F. SAMPLE LETTER OF AGREEMENT FOR RELOCATION

It is advisable to have letters of agreement between persons with authority at the school and the primary and secondary relocation sites. It is also advisable to have similar letters for any other group that lists your school as a relocation site. These letters should be reviewed whenever one of the signing parties changes. Letters should outline how contact persons will be notified and how building access will be gained.

A sample letter of agreement has been provided with the *Template*.

G. EVIDENCE PRESERVATION FOR SCHOOLS

Guidelines for preserving evidence can be found in the appendix of the school *Template*.

H. SCHOOL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT KIT CONTENTS

School Emergency Management Plan

Include a current copy of the school emergency management plan.

Student Data

- a list of all registered students and class schedules
- student file cards including emergency contact and medical information
- student photos (print copies and/or digital)

Student Release Forms

This should document who has been released (required for all students) and to whom (may not be applicable to senior students)—parents, relatives, emergency personnel, or the hospital.

Staff Data

- list of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and any regular volunteers
- staff file cards including emergency contact and medical information
- staff photos if available

List of Staff with any Emergency Training/Skills

Survey staff to build an inventory of special skills and training they possess. Document your findings and place the list in the box. For instance, experience can include prior medical and triage experience, bilingual capabilities, grief counselling background, search and rescue training, hostage negotiations, first-aid/CPR certification, and volunteer firefighter. These skills could prove to be very helpful in a critical incident.

□ **School Profile and Building Information**

The school profile and building information section of the plan is consistent with the RCMP School Action for Emergency (SAFE) Plan. In some instances, where schools are policed by the RCMP, a representative will contact schools to obtain this information.

The School Data Form (adapted from the RCMP SAFE Plan), found in Appendix A of the *Template*, can be used to document the following information.

- **School Profile**

- name of school and school board
- school address, phone, and fax
- after hours emergency contact name and phone number
- school hours
- grade levels
- number of students
- number of mobility challenged students
- number of staff
- number of floors
- number of classrooms
- number of portables

- **Building Information**

- contact information for principal and vice-principal(s)
- audio/intercom location and instructions for use
- fire, intrusion, and other alarm panel location and shut-off instructions
- public address system location and instructions for use
- list of all phone numbers and location of phones including dedicated emergency phone
- security camera locations, monitoring station locations, and instructions for use
- utility locations and turn-off instructions for natural gas or propane, water, and electrical
- sprinkler system
- cable or satellite television feed locations and shutoff instructions
- boiler room location and access
- main telephone panel location and access
- roof access locations
- elevator location and instructions
- electrical room and main switch location

- emergency power system type, location, and turn-off procedures
- on site hazards including custodial areas, science labs, and machine shops
- building floor plans with the following information included
 - location of all entrances and exits
 - identification and usage for each room
 - fire alarm pull stations
 - fire extinguishers
 - first aid kits
 - security camera locations and coverage areas
 - security camera monitoring stations

☐ School Photos/Video

Provide digital photos with explanations of the interior and exterior of the school. If possible, include a narrated video walking tour of the school.

☐ Aerial Photos

An aerial perspective of the school and the surrounding area is very helpful for all agencies involved in a critical incident, including police, fire, and paramedic personnel. Aerial photos should provide views from all sides of the school. Digital photos on a CD as well as printed copy are preferred.

☐ Map of School Area

A detailed map including the school and surrounding area should be made available to emergency response agencies and should identify the following:

- command post location
- traffic control points to reduce congestion and protect evacuating/relocating students
- staging areas for emergency personnel
- controlled access routes for responding emergency services
- temporary triage area
- landing zone for an air ambulance
- parent information centre
- media reception area
- additional services as identified

A minimum of three copies of the map should be included in the kit (electronic copies on CD may also be useful).

☐ Map of Relocation Route (if not included in the school area map)

Include a map of the routes you will take to your primary and secondary relocation sites.

Traffic Safety Vests

Traffic safety vests should be worn by the person-in-charge and administrative assistant. They should be easily identifiable and differ from other similar vests.

Keys

The Emergency Management Kit should also contain a master key and a set of keys for rooms that cannot be opened with the master key. Keys should be included for roof access doors if applicable. The keys must be clearly tagged. Consider placing the keys in a locked container within the box to assure added security in case the box should end up in the wrong hands.

First Aid Kit

Charged Cell Phone

Megaphone

Portable Radio(s)

I. CLASSROOM EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT KIT CONTENTS

Each classroom should have a small shoulder bag or pack sack that the teacher will carry when an emergency is announced. In addition to containing essential and useful items, the bag will act as a means of quick identification for students, other staff, and emergency personnel. The Classroom Emergency Kit should contain the following:

- a copy of the *Quick Guide*
- class student roster and current attendance list
- small first-aid kit
- other useful items

J. BUILDING TENANT INFORMATION

This section captures essential information for all building tenants, such as

- names and contact information for tenants
- number of mobility challenged tenants
- other appropriate information (refer to Building Information on pages 32–33)

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