

# ***CRISIS MANAGEMENT***

## **Procedural Handbook**



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## *Preface*

In a perfect school setting, a principal and staff would concentrate on helping students master skills important for their future. However, other events may occur that will infringe upon the school day.

Natural disasters, student and faculty deaths, and other types of disruptions are a fact of life. How these events are managed becomes the responsibility of the school administrator and staff. This handbook outlines procedures to help a school prepare for such emergencies.

How sensitive a staff is about situations which might create a school disruption, and the ability to deal with the disruption, is a key to good building management. Too many times we are lulled into the belief that it couldn't happen here.

The procedures presented in this handbook have been developed by a cross section of school district employees. It is not meant to be "all inclusive." Based on this handbook, each school staff is expected to develop procedures to cope with emergencies that may arise.

Correctly used, this handbook will help the school principal and staff plan for and defuse potentially dangerous disruptions of the school routine. Good planning will make the school a safer, more secure place for both youngsters and staff.

# *Procedures*

## **Crisis Teams**

Every school in the district shall establish a Crisis Team to plan strategy to handle various emergencies, including those outlined in this handbook. The crisis plan that is established to cover each emergency situation must be filed with the Superintendent of Schools or his designee. The team should be composed of both certified and classified staff.

At an elementary school, the committee could be made up of the principal, secretary, a teacher or two, the custodian, and cafeteria manager. In larger schools, more people could be used. For example, team members could be drawn from the different floors, wings or departments of a school.

## **Team Responsibilities**

Before a crisis occurs, the team should organize, establish responsibilities, and develop contingency plans to deal with different situations. Staff responsibilities could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Communications with staff, students, parents, and media. The district's director of public information and communication may be called upon to fill this responsibility or to assist the building representative. As soon as possible, the responsible team member should develop a brief statement of facts to be used by the person answering the telephone.
- Building security.
- First aid.
- Telephone procedures to receive and direct calls related to the emergency. Locate phones in the building and, also, outside phones that can be used in case the building telephone system is inoperable.
- Maintenance of a "log" in which are listed the date, time, and nature of each incident, names of persons involved, and descriptions of the action taken.
- Locate an alternate location, as well as transportation, to move students and staff if necessary.
- Notification of the Central Office.

When a crisis occurs, the team should assemble immediately to assess the situation. Certain questions must be answered before appropriate plans can be implemented: *Are there injuries? Extent of physical damage? Are there dangerous situations that require immediate action? Do the phones work?*

Having a contingency plan in place is not enough. During the school year, the team should conduct several drills to see if every aspect of the plan works well. Modifications may have to be made according to the assessment of the drill.

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## **Notifications**

The final decisions for determining the nature of the emergency and requesting assistance is the responsibility of the school principal. Any problem will be relayed immediately to the Superintendent of Schools. Frequent updates should be made to the superintendent's office as the situation warrants. Good communication and the benefit of involving key decision makers will insure that the crisis is handled in the best way possible.

The principal or his/her designee will then notify the **Assistant Superintendent for Pupil and Parent Services**. The Assistant Superintendent for Pupil and Parent Services will secure additional security officers if they are needed and notify the **Director of Public Information and Communication**, and the **Assistant Superintendents**.

## **Reaction Review**

As soon as possible after the crisis, a comprehensive review of the situation needs to be made by the key persons involved. Weaknesses in the response need to be identified and recommendations for changes made to aid in the handling of future disasters.

## ***Personal Security***

**Definition:** A staff member or student has been assaulted and/or robbed on the school grounds, in the school building or at a school event.

### **Prevention Strategies:**

Because of the concern for personal safety issues, the crisis team at each building should develop plans to reduce the potential for injury, theft or robbery of staff members and students. The plan must strive to make each building as secure as possible within the constraints of the building structure and staff limitations. The plan may include but should not be limited to the following suggestions:

1. Each school building should be secured as much as is possible during the school day.
2. Be aware of surroundings when arriving and leaving the building. Observe if suspicious cars or persons are present. Report suspicious persons to the principal immediately.
3. Use the “buddy” system. Arrange to enter or leave the building accompanied by another person.
4. The last person to leave the building should ask the custodian or security officer to accompany them to the car.
5. Designate an entrance to be used by all staff members to enter and leave the building. Someone should be assigned to observe the designated entrance during normal arrival and departure times.
6. When going to your locked car, observe shrubbery, trees and nearby cars which may conceal someone hiding. Have your key ready to unlock the car but also observe the back seat and floor to be sure that no one is hiding inside.
7. Valuables, including purses, should not be left in unlocked classrooms, closets or desks.
8. Valuable items in your car should be out of sight and preferably locked in the trunk.
9. Purses should be carried close to the body. Shoulder bags should be carried over one shoulder across the body.

### **Response Procedures**

1. When an incident occurs, notify
  - Police department
  - School security
  - Superintendent’s Office
2. In the event of an injury, call 911. First aid procedures should be begun as quickly as possible.
3. Gather information from those who may have witnessed the incident.
4. Prepare a brief factual statement to be used to inform staff members of the incident.
5. If the incident warrants media coverage, call the Director of Public Information for advice and assistance.

### **Other Considerations**

When the crisis team has developed strategies to be used in a building, those personal safety precautions must be shared with and followed by all staff members.

# *Death of Student, Employee or Prominent Public Figure*

**Definition:** The death of a student, staff member or prominent public figure has been reported.

**Considerations:** Following are items to be addressed by the building level administrator --

- Is the report of the death accurate?
- Location of the incident (at the school, a school-related event, non-school related location).
- To what extent is information of the death known by students and staff? The time frame of the death in relation to the current time will be of importance. Did the death occur within the last few hours and is unknown by student and staff or did the death occur one or two days earlier and is a widely known fact?

## **Response Procedures:**

1. Locate information that is as accurate as possible. The need here is for the basic facts.
  - Has a death occurred?
  - Personal data: For an employee: age, number of children, names of spouse and children; For a student: age, names of parents and siblings (This should come from school files. **Do not request this information from the family.**)
2. Convene the crisis team to assess the situation and implement the appropriate plan of action.
3. Prepare a brief statement to be used later to inform staff members. This statement should be factual presenting only the basic facts of the incident. An example of this statement would be:

Please take a few moments to prepare yourself and your students and then share this information with your classes at 8:25 a.m.

Some students may need assistance. If you or any of your students need assistance, please contact the office.

“Last night Mr. John Doe passed away. Mr. Doe leaves a wife, Jane, and two children, Jim and Joe. Currently the family is making arrangements for services. Information will be made to staff members as it becomes available.”

This statement should be prepared and ready for distribution as soon as possible. Do not distribute the statement at this time. It will be distributed as Step #10.

4. Notify other key individuals in the office staff, i.e. assistant principals and counselors. However, this information should be maintained as privileged until a statement is made to the entire staff.

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5. In the case of the death of a student, secure all personal items that may be in the individual's locker. This may be done by removal of items or may be accomplished by changing the combination to the locker. (Parents may wish to visit the school later and remove the items themselves.) The building level administrator and an assistant should review with discretion the contents of the locker. Delete the student's name from mailing lists so that correspondence is not sent to the home of the deceased.
6. In the case of a death of a staff member, all personal items should be quietly collected and prepared for the family. These items may be placed in the school vault or in a closed container in the principal's office. The building level administrator and an assistant should collect and review these items with discretion.
7. Contact Central Office Personnel:
  - a. **Superintendent.** Be prepared to review the incident and general information with the superintendent. The superintendent may ask for information concerning family members and length of employment and job duties, or schools attended by a student.
  - b. **Assistant Superintendent for Personnel.** The assistant superintendent should be provided with information concerning family members, length of employment and job duties, or, for a student, the schools attended. In addition, review the method being planned to inform students and staff of the death. The statement should be written exactly as it will be presented.
  - c. **Public Information Department.** The director of public information should be provided with the information concerning family members, length of employment, and job duties, or school attended by a student. Also, review with the director of public information the type of information to be released to the news media if they contact the school for information or a picture of the individual.
8. Make arrangements to handle student and staff needs. Be prepared for a large number of students who will need assistance for emotional difficulty. Some students may need to contact parents to be dismissed from school. Some staff members may need to have classes covered for a short time or the remainder of the day. Contact and have the following individuals available:
  - Counselors
  - Social workers
  - School nurse
  - Assistant principals
  - School security officer

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9. Meet with all members of the administrative staff, assistant principals, counselors and security, and discuss the need to maintain a high level of visibility. Everything else becomes secondary; the needs of students and staff become the only concern of these individuals. Their visible presence will help students deal with the insecurity of the moment.
10. The written statement should be hand delivered to all staff members by administrators and counselors. Remember to include custodians, kitchen staff and secretaries. Do not place the statement in mailboxes and do not use the intercom system to make this statement.
11. In the case of the death of an employee, the principal will contact the comptroller of the school district and discuss the incident. The principal or building level administrator will be the individual who will assist the family with Board of Education policies and benefits provided through the school district. The comptroller of the district will furnish a packet of information to the principal to help him/her in the general discussion of benefits. The comptroller may be asked to research the possibility of additional insurance coverage provided through the school district that family members may not be aware exists. Ask that all correspondence to the family be hand delivered to a family member.
12. As information pertaining to funeral arrangements becomes available, make plans for the need to dismiss students and provide class coverage for staff members who will choose to attend the services. These plans should be reviewed with the assistant superintendent for instruction and curriculum. This information should be shared with staff members. Possibly a short faculty meeting at the end of the day will allow for this time.
13. As is appropriate, make contact with the family to offer assistance and prepare for any arrangements that will involve the school.

# *Suicide*

**Definition:** A student or staff member is reported to have committed suicide.

## **Prevention Strategies:**

**Primary Intervention.** What can be done to stop a crisis from happening through eliminating hazards or modifying situation:

- to detect suicidal students
- to assess the severity of their suicidal thoughts and/or actions
- to notify the parents
- to secure needed supervision and services for the students
- to assure the school's main function is to identify a course of action, not be a treatment facility

## **What to Look For**

1. **Verbal signs.** "I wish I were dead - No one cares if I live or die - Things would be better if I weren't here."
2. **Behavior clues.** Alcohol or drug abuse, previous attempts, giving away possessions, making a will, sudden change in behavior (e.g. quiet student becomes talkative, friendly student becomes quiet), significant drop in grades, risk-taking behavior resulting in accidents or injuries.
3. **Situational clues.** End of serious relationship, divorce or death of a parent, family financial difficulties, moving to new location (other stresses among family members).
4. **Syndromatic clues.** Social isolation, depression, disorientation, changes in sleeping and/or eating patterns, dissatisfaction (constant complaining, helpless or hopeless feelings).

## **How to Help**

1. **Listen and hear.** Avoid false reassurances that "everything will be okay." Never demean suicidal expressions. Don't be judgmental or moralizing.
2. **Be supportive.** Communicate concern for the person.
3. **Be sensitive.** Take any suicidal complaint seriously even if expressed in a calm voice. When the person speaks of clear-cut self-destructive plans, the situation is usually much more serious.

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4. **Don't be misled into ignoring suicide signals.** Tell others. It may be necessary to betray a secret to save a life.
5. **Encourage students** to look out for each other and to seek help for a friend if that friend won't seek it out on their own.
6. **Stay with a suicidal person** if there seems to be immediate danger. Call on whoever is needed. Do not try to handle everything alone.

**Secondary Intervention.** Provides immediate assistance to an individual or group in handling a crisis with the purpose of minimizing the effects of the suicidal crisis.

### **Response Procedures**

1. Contain the story and protect the privacy of the family. Do not refer to the death as a "suicide" and move to contain the story until it has been verified.
2. Direct the person who brings the message not to repeat it to anyone. Explain that the information has not been verified. Even if it is correct, it is important that the announcement come from the principal in an appropriate and official manner.
3. Instruct secretaries and others in the office not to repeat anything that has been said or to give out any information until the report has been verified. Do not allow news of the incident to get out of hand.
4. Verify the fact that the reported death did occur. Do not refer to the death as a suicide. Do everything possible to verify the facts of the case. Principals make the calls - to the police or coroner - if necessary. Hospitals usually will not give out information. Do not call the home.
5. If the death is verified, notify the Superintendent (main administration officials).
6. Convene the school crisis team to assess the situation and implement the appropriate plan of action.
7. When a suicide is reported, hold a faculty meeting as soon as possible. If it has to wait until the end of the day, give notice of the meeting early. As soon as the facts are known, prepare a brief written announcement to be distributed to teachers, which they can read to students simultaneously throughout the school.
8. Refer all inquiries for information from outside the school to the district's director of public information. One person from that office will serve as spokesperson for the district. Do not allow reporters to interview any student or staff member in the school or on the school grounds.

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9. Contact resources (school counselors or school social workers) to work with students, parent(s) and staff, if needed. Contact the Assistant Superintendent for Pupil and Parent Services for specific referrals.
10. Do not glorify the death in any way. Do not fly the school flag at half-mast. Do not observe a moment of silence in school. Do not have a memorial service at the school.
11. Try to get things back to normal as soon as possible. Be sensitive to the fact that certain students may have been profoundly affected by the death. These students still need special help, but don't let it become a "contagious action." Minimize the possibility that other students may imitate behavior and take their own lives.

## *Child Abuse*

**Definition:** Injury to a child as a result of physical, mental, or emotional abuse, neglect or sexual abuse.

### **Legal Considerations**

Kansas State law states that whenever one has reason to suspect that a child has been injured as a result of physical, mental, or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse, the person shall report the matter promptly (KSA 38-1522).

**Call 371-6700, child protection intake, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
After hours and weekends, call police.**

Kansas State Law requires that principals, teachers, all school employees, including nurses and social workers, must report suspected abuse. **The person with the evidence (verbal or physical) shall call in the report. It is not the role of the school employee to do the investigative procedures nor is it up to the school administrator to decide whether or not the occurrence should be reported. The statute is clear that the school personnel must report and SRS will investigate.** No teacher should be reprimanded or intimidated for making a referral. Staff must realize that failure to protect the child by not reporting is a Class B misdemeanor punishable by \$1,000 fine and/or 6 months in jail.

### **Response Procedures**

1. Report the incident to the appropriate authorities as outlined under “Legal Considerations.”
2. Confidentiality of the incident and the individuals involved must be maintained. Staff members and others who are privy to the information must be careful not to discuss the incident.
3. If the alleged incident involves a staff member, the principal should immediately notify the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel.
4. If the incident becomes public, the school crisis team may need to implement its prepared communications plan with staff, students and parents.

Refer all inquiries for information from outside the building to the district Director of Public Information. Do not allow reporters to interview any student or staff member in the school or on the school grounds. Handle rumors or published reports regarding the incident by preparing a statement to distribute to staff and/or students and parents if deemed appropriate.

Contact resources (school counselors or school social workers) to work with student, parents, and staff, if needed.

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**Investigative procedures:** To be done by SRS and/or police. Other considerations: See Kansas Statutes.

The need to report is clear. Principals are not to make the decision whether or not employees report an alleged incident of child abuse. Suspected abuse of a student by a school employee must be reported in the same fashion.

***Prohibition from imposing sanctions on employees:*** No employer shall terminate the employment, or prevent or impair the practice or occupation of or impose any other sanction on any employee because the employee made an oral or written report to a law enforcement agency or the department of social and rehabilitation services relating to injury inflicted upon a child which was suspected by the employee of having resulted from the physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse of the child (KSA 38-1525).

***Immunity from liability:*** Anyone participating without malice in the making of an oral or written report to a law enforcement agency or the department of social and rehabilitation services relating to injury inflicted upon a child under 18 years of age as a result of physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse or in any follow-up activity to or investigation of the report, shall have immunity from any civil liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed. Any such participant shall have the same immunity with respect to participation in any judicial proceedings resulting from the report (KSA 38-1526).

***Confidentiality:*** All records and reports concerning child abuse or neglect received by the department of social and rehabilitation services or a law enforcement agency...are confidential and shall not be disclosed except under the following conditions...The secretary or the law enforcement agency where the report is filed may authorize access to the records and reports to...a person licensed to practice the healing arts who has before that person a child whom the person reasonably suspects may be abused or neglected...

It is unlawful for any individual, association, partnership, corporation or other entity to willfully or knowingly permit or encourage the unauthorized dissemination of the contents of records or reports concerning child abuse or neglect received by the department of social and rehabilitation services or a law enforcement agency...except as provided by this code (KSA 38-1507).

# *Drugs*

**Definition:** The unlawful attempt/intent to sell, trade, or distribute drugs/contraband to another individual. Subcategories:

1. Illegal drugs
2. Prescription drugs
3. Over-the-counter drugs
4. Any item not intended for casual consumption or use that could produce an altered state of being.

## **Prevention Strategies:**

1. Consistent, effective utilization of “Here’s Looking at You 2000” curriculum and other district adopted drug/alcohol education programs.
2. Communicate to students the school’s position that the possession, selling or attempted sales of any type of drug on school property or at any school-sponsored event will be treated as a serious offense. Any person found in violation of this district/school policy will be subjected to one or all of the following response actions\*:
  - a. contacting parent/guardian
  - b. suspension
  - c. arrest (contacting law enforcement agencies)
  - d. expulsion
  - e. detention
  - f. contacting juvenile authorities

\*consult Code of Student Conduct manual

3. Establish the routine with security personnel, bus drivers, custodial staff and faculty members to communicate their knowledge of whether drug items have been brought to school, and sales are being initiated.
4. Keep lines of communication open to students. If drug items have been brought to school, they will probably talk about it. It is important to have access to students who will be willing to share this information with staff.

## **Response Procedures/Investigative Techniques:**

1. Convene the school crisis team to evaluate the situation and implement the appropriate plan of action.
2. Assign staff to locations during passing periods/lunch periods, which will provide high visibility of authority figures. Until the suspected transactions cease, it is important to create the impression that adults are everywhere.

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3. Start talking. Interview everyone who might have information about drug sales. Keep in mind that the primary concern is to get a handle on drug sale activity. Therefore, if the situation is such that “deals” need to be made to gain knowledge, do so.
4. If it becomes necessary to search lockers or personal storage spaces, do it. Be reasonable in the manner in which the search is conducted. (NOTE: Refer to Board policy 5.3.4.0.0 and administrative guideline 5.3.4.0.OA for search procedures.)
5. If information leads to one suspect and that student is now being questioned, don’t hesitate to do a “pat down” search of the individual with another adult present, preferably the school attendance and security officer. This type of search involves the external feeling of clothing and the inspection of purses or other hand-held carried objects. Persons should be trained to conduct the search in such a manner that it is visible to both the suspect and witnesses. (Refer to Board policy 5.3.4.0.0 and administrative guideline 5.3.4.0.OA)
6. Do not, under any circumstances, conduct a search that requires the removal of clothing other than outerwear such as coats, hats (caps), gloves, etc.. If it is believed that the suspect has drug/drug paraphernalia hidden on his/her body, call the parents/school authorities.

#### **Other Considerations**

1. Don’t deny the presence of drugs if they are, in fact, recovered in the school. Answer any inquiry honestly and include in the answer what actions were taken concerning the offense. Refer further media inquiry to the district public information office.
2. Don’t keep recovered drugs in the school. Call the police and turn the item(s) over to them. Take officer’s badge number and name. (Refer to Board policy 5.3.4.0.0 and administrative guideline 5.3.4.0.0.)

# ***Gang Activities***

**Definition:** A group of people together for questionable activities, so identified by appearance and/or behaviors.

Levels:

- Hard core
- Support people/peripheral group - business people who offer and provide gang-related services
- “Wannabes” - emulate gang activity/identify

Possible observable indicators:

- Hats, jackets, scarves (more often on “Wannabes” than hard core gang members.)
- Colors
- Shoelaces
- Pendants
- Graffiti on books, notebooks, personal possessions (pitchfork, Star of David, six dots, six points)

## **Prevention Strategies**

1. Control entrances to the school. There may be a posted statement to the effect that all who enter are subject to search. Security personnel should monitor outside areas such as grounds and parking lots to keep non-students from entering the campus. All staff should be alert to the presence of strangers in or around the building, and such presence should be communicated to the office or other designated personnel. Adults and authority figures should be highly visible.
2. Give students respect and exhibit genuine concern. Many join gangs to gain respect from peers and to receive a feeling of belonging. The gang replaces family structure that is missing for many students.
3. Emphasize the self-esteem aspect of the established drug/alcohol/sex education programs.
4. Support and/or initiate after-school and weekend extra-curricular activities. Such activities should be competitive and require practice.
5. Investigate community gang intervention programs that could benefit the school. Utilize experts in the law enforcement agencies to learn about gangs in the area. Effective methods of coping with gangs only result from awareness and understanding of the problem.
6. Provide outside speakers who can be role models for the students. Former gang members can be an excellent resource for prevention activities.
7. Encourage parent involvement in the school through organizations such as PTA or Booster Clubs, or through parent meetings and parent volunteer programs.

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8. Keep lines of communication open to students. If information is given concerning gang activities, it is important to protect sources of information and/or witnesses because most gang codes require retribution.
9. Sponsor parent meetings with speakers regarding gang activities and community action in regard to gangs.

### **Response Procedures/Investigative Techniques**

1. Convene the school crisis team to evaluate the situation and implement the appropriate plan of action.
2. Remove graffiti immediately.
3. Confiscate questionable clothing or objects that may identify groups or may intimidate others.
4. Contact parents if signs of gang activity such as clothing or graffiti is evidenced by a student.
5. Share information on gang activity with other administrators and authorities.
6. Initiate community gang intervention programs with the assistance of law enforcement agencies, such as the Kansas City, Kansas Police Department neighborhood crime department.
7. Report substantiated activities to proper authorities - school security and/or local law enforcement agencies.
8. Follow an established plan for reporting incidents to the proper authorities, parents and the general public. Prepare an official statement responding to the particular crisis situation. Designate an official spokesperson for the school and refer to the district's public relations office for further information.
9. Unfamiliar or suspicious individuals or activities, including students obviously under the influence, drug sales, or satanic symbols or accessories should also be reported to school security personnel and/or police.

## ***Bomb Threats***

**Definition:** Any verbal or written communication that indicates that an incendiary/explosive device will/may be located and/or detonated on school property.

### **Prevention Strategies:**

Every morning have faculty and/or staff check building areas for foreign objects/objects of suspicious origin. If such an item is detected, established response procedures should be followed.

### **Response Procedures:**

The bomb threat will usually be made by telephone and will be brief. The person answering the phone should ask the following questions:

1. Exact location of the bomb.
2. Time set for detonation
3. Description of explosive or container
4. Type of explosive
5. Reason for call or threat

The person receiving the call should note the following:

1. Date and time of the call
2. Exact language used
3. Sex of caller
4. Estimated age of caller
5. Peculiar or identifiable accent
6. Possible race of caller
7. Identifiable background noise such as music, trucks or other conversation.

The bomb threat should be reported to the building principal who should evaluate the call and make the decision of what prior planned procedure is to be initiated, or, if there is time, convene the school crisis team to evaluate the situation and implement the appropriate plan of action.

No call or threat should be disregarded. Choices for administrative response, after documentation, are:

- To take no action
- To search without an evacuation
- To evacuate and search

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1. If a decision to evacuate the premises is made, evacuate the building according to established fire drill procedure, subject to modification for inclement weather. These modifications might include moving to a neighboring building (church, school, business) or boarding buses to provide protection. This system should be clearly communicated and practiced throughout the year. For those teachers who have been designated as “search personnel” an alternate staff person must be designated to accept responsibility for students. Evacuation distance should always be at least 300 feet from the suspected device. Keep in mind that the most accessible areas for a bomb are the outside areas.
2. Notification procedures include:
  - Contact Kansas City, Kansas Police Department regarding the receipt of the bomb threat.
  - Contact Superintendent’s office concerning the receipt of the threat.
  - Establish communications procedures for:
    - Staff
    - Students
    - Media (“We have received a bomb threat. The situation is being handled according to district policy. Additional information may be obtained from the District Public Information Officer.”)
    - Community

### **Investigative Techniques/Procedures:**

A search, if deemed necessary, must be carefully and properly made. It will be the responsibility of the school administrator to designate those individuals who will conduct the search. Building custodians (with master keys) and/or other staff persons may be designated. As a general rule, searches follow two basic rules:

1. Start on the outside and work toward the inside.
2. Once inside, start from the lowest level and work up.

The people best suited to search any given area are those who work in that area, for they will have the least difficulty spotting any new or foreign object.

*Exterior* searching should begin at ground level with close attention given to piles of leaves or refuse, shrubbery, entrances, manholes, trashcans, and parked vehicles. Particular attention should be given to window ledges, air-conditioning units, signs, building ornaments, fire escapes. If the roof is accessible from the outside, the roof should be included in the search.

*Interior* areas most likely to attract bombers are areas open to the public and areas containing service equipment. The search team should move systematically from floor to floor, room to room, through the building. Detailed room searches are best carried out by following these suggested steps:

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1. An audio check should be made, and any unusual sound should be investigated immediately.
2. Searchers should divide the room into approximate equal parts on the basis of number of objects or areas to be searched. These areas are searched by member of teams assigned to search them. When completed, they should switch areas and conduct searches again.
3. Each area should be searched by each team, first from waist level down, then from waist level up.

If/when a bomb or suspected explosive device is located, **do not disturb it**. The Kansas City, Kansas Police Department will be in charge of the disposal of the bomb. If evacuation has not been done, it should be ordered immediately. Windows and doors should be opened, and all electrical equipment should be disconnected.

**Other Considerations:**

Building administrators must use their discretion as to what information to communicate to students based, in part, on the age of the student body. A false reason for the evacuation, such as a leaking gas main, may be given in order to prevent panic, and would account for the opening of doors and windows and the turning off of lights and disconnecting all electrical equipment and appliances.

## ***Weapons***

**Definition:** Any object that can reasonably be used to inflict bodily injury.

**Subcategories:**

Gun, knife, club, other

- Used in a threatening manner
- Used to cause bodily harm
- Concealed

**Prevention Strategies:**

1. Communicate to students the school's position that the possession and/or carrying of any type of weapon on school property or at any school-sponsored event will be treated as a serious offense. Any person found in violation of this district/school policy will be subjected to one or all of the following response actions:
  - Contacting parent/guardian
  - Suspension
  - Arrest (contacting law enforcement agencies)
  - Expulsion
  - Detention
  - Contacting juvenile authorities
2. Establish a routine with bus drivers and custodians to communicate their knowledge of whether weapons have been brought to school. These people will probably know before anyone else. Special attention needs to be given to trash bins, wooded areas near parking lots, restrooms, and any other hiding place students have discovered in the school.
3. Keep lines of communication open to students. If a weapon has been brought to school, they will talk about it. It is important to have access to students who will be willing to share this information with the staff.

**Response Procedures/Investigative Techniques**

1. Convene the school crisis team to assess the situation and implement the appropriate plan of action.
2. Assign staff to locations during passing periods/lunch periods, which will provide high visibility of authority figures to create the impression that adults are everywhere.
3. Start talking. Interview everyone who might have information about the weapon. The primary concern is to get possession of the weapon, not to prosecute someone for possession of a weapon. Therefore, if it is necessary to make some "deals" to gain knowledge, do so.
4. If it becomes necessary to search lockers or personal storage spaces, do it. Be reasonable in the manner in which the search is conducted. (NOTE: Refer to Board policy 5.3.4.0.0 and administrative guideline 5.3.4.0.OA for search procedures.)

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5. If information leads to one suspect and the subject is now being questioned, don't hesitate to do a "pat down" search of the individual with another adult present, preferably the school attendance and security officer. This type of search involves the external feeling of clothing and the inspection of purses or other hand-held carried objects. Persons should be trained to conduct the search in such a manner that it is visible to both the suspect and witnesses. (Refer to Board policy 5.3.4.0.0 and administrative guideline 5.3.4.0.OA)
6. Do not, under any circumstances, conduct a search that requires the removal of clothing other than outer wear such as coats, hats (caps), gloves, etc.. If it is believed that the suspect has a weapon hidden on his/her body, call the parents/civil authorities.
7. If a student or adult displays or threatens immediate use of a weapon, call 911 immediately, and call school security personnel. Do not attempt to physically disarm the person. Secure the area as much as possible. Try to maintain a calm situation and calm demeanor. Avoid panic. Make use of the school intercom system to get a non-threatening message to staff to secure their areas. A special coded message known to staff might be used.
8. In event of injury to any individual, call 911 immediately. First aid measures should be employed as quickly as possible, if feasible.
9. Notify the Superintendent of Schools if the situation warrants it.

### **Other Considerations**

1. Don't deny the presence of a weapon if one is in fact recovered in the school. Answer any inquiry honestly and include in the answer what actions were taken concerning the offense. You may refer inquiries from outside the school to the district director of public information, if you desire.
2. Don't keep recovered weapons in the school. Call the police and turn the item(s) over to them.
3. Try to establish why a weapon was brought to school. By establishing the possible motive for bringing the weapon(s) to school, a logical list of suspects will have been developed.

NOTE: The majority of weapons that are brought to school are not brought with the intent to use them. Most often weapons are brought to school for protection or for "show."

## ***Disruptions***

**Definitions:** The Board of Education recognizes the right of peaceful demonstrations providing that demonstrations do not infringe on the rights of others. The Board will, to the full extent of *its* legal powers, insure that every student has an opportunity to attend school and receive an education without fear of harm or injury to person or property. If disruptions do occur, measures will be taken to safeguard students, school personnel and school facilities. Persons causing disruptions in or on school property will be prosecuted according to local city ordinances. Disruptions may be, but are not limited to, the following subcategories:

- Unauthorized entry: Persons, either juveniles or adults, including former school district employees, who are disturbing the orderly process of the school.
- Riots
- Protests
- Walkouts
- Unlawful assemblies

### **Prevention Strategies**

1. Staff and security officers will be on the alert before, during and after school for unauthorized persons in the building.
2. The main entrance to the campus and school will be supervised.
3. Teachers will be advised to keep classroom doors locked.
4. Student identification cards are strongly recommended for all secondary students in the school district.
5. School personnel will work closely with community representatives or resource groups, such as the PTA, to reduce the likelihood of disruptions or disorders at the school.

### **Response Procedures**

1. Convene the school crisis team to evaluate the situation and implement the appropriate plan of action. In an emergency the final decision for determining the nature of assistance needed at a disturbance is the responsibility of the school principal.
2. Building administrators and school security should be notified immediately when an incident occurs. Custodians will be directed to secure all exterior doors.
3. Faculty and staff will be informed by memos, direct contact or emergency signals.
4. Isolate students from the disruption and direct them to classrooms or classroom settings.

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5. The principal or a designee shall notify the following people:
  - Superintendent of Schools
  - Assistant Superintendent for Pupil and Parent Services - who will then notify the following staff:
    - Additional security officers
    - Director of Public Information and Communication
    - Assistant Superintendents
  
6. Each school administrator should prepare a building emergency plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following assignments. The plan should be shared with all staff.
  - Person who will give permission to those legitimately entering the campus
  - Person to keep staff informed
  - Person who will talk to news media, parents and others who are in the building (the District's Director of Public Information and Communication may be requested to fill this role.) A place for news media representatives to remain should be identified. Ideally, this room should be equipped with a telephone.
  - A room where discussions between school officials and a small group of representatives from dissident groups may take place. Administrators are cautioned never to keep with large groups during such incidents.
  
7. Maintain a "log" in which are listed the date, time, and nature of each incident, names of the persons involved, and descriptions of the action taken.

### **Post Response Procedures**

1. Make plans for the school schedule on the following day with persons and agencies involved.
2. As soon as possible prepare letters to parents explaining what has happened and why the appropriate response was taken.

## *Natural Disasters and Physical Plant Failures*

**Definition:** A natural disaster is a calamity or catastrophe brought about by a natural occurrence such as a thunderstorm, tornado, earthquake, etc., which results in a disruption of the normal functioning of the facility. On the serious end of the continuum, there could be destruction of life. Related to natural disasters could be unforeseen occurrences such as water line breaks, boiler explosions, gas line leaks, power failure, fires, etc., which may have the same effects as a natural disaster.

### **Contingency Plans:**

The crisis team should develop contingency plans to deal with different possible disasters. The plans should deal with the following levels of disasters:

1. Inconvenience occurrences: Included are power failures, water line breaks, air conditioning failure, hazardous materials, etc.
2. Property destruction: Included is minor damage such as window breakage and roof damage, all the way to extensive structural damage.
3. Physical injury or death: Conceivably, this could occur on any of the above levels.

### **Response Procedures:**

1. Assessment: When a crisis occurs, the team should assemble immediately to assess the situation. Certain questions must be answered before appropriate plans can be implemented. *Are there injuries? Extent of physical damage? Are there dangerous situations that require immediate action? Do the phones work?*
2. Contact Help: 911 should be the first number called in the event of a fire or an incident that has resulted in injuries. If there are injuries, be prepared to provide emergency first aid until emergency medical help arrives. Determine beforehand who will make the necessary phone calls to summon help and notify district administrators. Locate all phones in the building and also, outside phones that can be used in case the building system is inoperable. Computer labs usually have phones that are separate from the main building system. A person should be stationed at this phone continually during the crisis. The phone numbers of these extra phones should be provided to the Superintendent's Office and the Shop Office. If no working phones are available in the building for communications, the shop can send a two-way radio.

Notify the Superintendent's Office of the crisis. Be prepared to provide an accurate assessment of the situation. Administrative decisions will be made based on the information provided. Be sure the information adequately conveys the situation. The Superintendent's office will then notify the public information office to handle press notices, if needed.

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Next, notify the Shop Office of the crisis. Maintenance and operations will then be mobilized to address the situation. Again, be prepared to provide detailed information about the situation so that proper action can be taken. The shop will notify utility companies, civil defense, etc., as needed.

3. Disable utilities in the event of structural damage. Before a disaster strikes, locate the main gas and water shut off valves and the main electrical disconnect. Also, if occupants are in danger of further harm with the utilities functioning, then they should be disabled. For example, a tornado strikes causing a gas line to rupture; the main gas valve should be turned off to prevent the possibility of fire.
4. Provide protection and care for the occupants. Care for the injured until help arrives. Evacuation may be necessary. Take all necessary steps to insure the health and safety of the building occupants.
5. Establish parental contact team. Parents will come to the site to determine the welfare of their children. Be prepared to direct vehicle traffic and to receive parents or relatives. A processing procedure should be established to document which children have been picked up and by whom. If there are injuries or deaths, be prepared to give the needed support and comfort. The police and emergency medical staff should be available to assist.