



State of Vermont
Vermont School Safety Center

ALL-HAZARDS EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANNING GUIDE

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Introduction: How to Use this Guide

This guide is designed to support public Supervisory Unions and Supervisory District (SU/SD) and Independent School development of an All-Hazards Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. § 1480, as introduced by Act 29 of 2023, requires that all public SU/SDs and approved and recognized Independent Schools adopt and maintain an all-hazards emergency operations plan for each school site that is at least as comprehensive as the template maintained by the Vermont School Safety Center. The plan shall be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, in collaboration with local emergency first responders and local emergency management officials.

All-Hazards EOPs should be developed in consideration of the unique factors, risks, and local needs applicable to each SU/SD or Independent School. The Vermont School Safety Center and Agency of Education have published a template All-Hazards EOP ([link here](#)), which allows flexibility in how each plan is developed. The template provides the recommended structure, formatting, and inclusions for each All-Hazards EOP, however additional detail is required to support thoughtful development and specific processes required during emergency response. Deviations from the template may be necessary to adequately capture the unique needs of each SU/SD/Independent School as long as they meet the minimum criteria provided in the template.

This guide was developed in consideration of the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (“REMS”) Technical Assistance (TA) Center “[Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#)”. It is recommended that any representatives of the SU/SD or Independent School involved in the development of the All-Hazards EOP complete the full REMS training and review this guide prior to beginning this work.

For technical support regarding the development of an All-Hazards EOP, contact the Vermont School Safety Center at 1-800-347-0488 or schoolsafety.vermont.gov.



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Plan Development and Maintenance

The SU/SD Superintendent or Independent School Head is responsible for the overall development implementation and maintenance of the All-Hazards Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). All schools within the district shall be included in the development of this plan and are responsible for training the appropriate individuals within their school in their individual roles and responsibilities.

This framework serves as a planning guide for school districts for the development of their own EOP. Throughout this planning process, SU/SDs and Independent Schools must coordinate with local emergency first responders, emergency management officials and other stakeholders in the development of this plan.

This template is developed utilizing guidance provided by the US Department of Homeland Security, National Fire Protection Association, and the US Department of Education's "[Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools](#)".

Threat-specific vulnerabilities should be discovered during planning. As the SU/SD or Independent School conducts a thorough hazard and vulnerability impact assessment, they will need to identify specific threats or vulnerabilities and identify a plan for each. The list of threat-specific annexes should be built based on individual district assessments. [A list of possible inclusions](#) is noted in this guide, however additional annexes may be required based on the unique needs of the SU/SD or Independent School.

Plans Must Comply with The Americans with Disabilities Act.

All EOPs must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, among other prohibitions on disability discrimination, across the spectrum of emergency management services, programs, and activities, including preparation, testing, notification and alerts, evacuation, transportation, sheltering, emergency medical care and services, transitioning back, recovery, and repairing and rebuilding. Plans should include students, staff, and parents with disabilities. Among other things, school emergency plans must address the provision of appropriate auxiliary aids and services to ensure effective communication with individuals with disabilities (e.g., interpreters, captioning, and accessible information technology); ensure individuals with disabilities are not separated from service animals and assistive devices, and can receive disability-related assistance throughout emergencies (e.g., assistance with activities of daily living, administration of medications); and comply with the law's architectural and other requirements. (Information and technical assistance about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is available at ada.gov.)

For more information about planning, refer to the REMS "Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans", page 4, "Planning."



Approval and Implementation

The Approval and Implementation section should address the intended use of the All-Hazards EOP and should include specific details about the local emergency response partners included in the development of the EOP. Any partners who are assigned specific responsibility within the plan should be acknowledged and included as signatories.

This section should also address confidentiality requirements of the plan. In general, All-Hazards EOPs should be kept confidential within the necessary responsible parties. To ensure the safety of the SU/SD or Independent School community, All-Hazards EOPs should not be presented for public use or dissemination and should not be duplicated. For guidance on public use and accessibility to the All-Hazards EOP, contact the Vermont School Safety Center at 1-800-347-0488 or schoolsafety.vermont.gov.

Lastly, included in the Approval and Implementation section is a Record of Changes. This record should be updated each time the All-Hazards EOP is updated, edited, or amended. A sample record of changes is included in the All-Hazards EOP template.

Information about the promulgation statement can be found in the REMS “[Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#)”, page 23, “The Basic Plan”.



Promulgation

The promulgation statement formally establishes the mission and value of the All-Hazards EOP. This section should offer information about the purpose, participants, and resources used in the development of the EOP. This section also assigns authority and responsibility to SU/SD/Independent School leadership to fulfil certain tasks before, during, and after an emergency incident.

The template offers sample language to consider. SU/SDs/Independent Schools may also consider including any additional efforts included in the development of the EOP, including external stakeholder efforts or previous iterations of the EOP or Emergency Guides.

Information about the promulgation statement can be found in the REMS "[Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#)", page 23, "The Basic Plan".



Introduction and Purpose

This section should include, at minimum:

Purpose

Scope

Coordination of Emergency Responders and School Staff

Situation Overview

Planning Assumptions

Each of these sections should be carefully considered, and the EOP should contain enough specific information about each section to ensure the plan is detailed and specific to the unique needs, risks, and processes of the SU/SD or Independent School. Each section should be developed following a thorough planning and assessment process which includes local emergency management partners. More information about what should be included in each section can be found in the REMS "[Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#)", page 24, "The Basic Plan".



Situation Overview

The content of the All-Hazards EOP will be based on a district or school-wide risk assessment and input from local emergency management officials and emergency first responders as to the threats and vulnerabilities that may affect the district.

Tailor this section to reflect your individual district or school demographics and basic information. Considerations for this section may include the number of schools in the district, each school's population, geography, potential threats and vulnerabilities, transportation challenges, local crime rates, faculty and staff population, staff to student ration, etc.

At a minimum, each EOP should include, for all schools in your district:

- maps of each school
- floor plans for each school
- overall district map
- individual school evacuation routes and locations
- family reunification sites
- assembly areas for emergency first responders
- school and school district emergency operations center
- any other information necessary to assist in the effective critical incident response.

More information about what should be included in each section can be found in the REMS "[Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#)", page 24, "The Basic Plan".



Planning Assumptions

This section should describe the situational assumptions that set that basis, or foundation, for the All-Hazards EOP. This section can include considerations for local emergency warning systems, availability of local emergency responders, initial or preliminary actions taken in the event of a predicted incident and expected State or Federal assistance in certain emergency situations.

The template identifies several examples of planning assumptions that could be incorporated into the plan. Not all of these need to be included in every plan, and some plans may need to make additional inclusions to ensure that appropriate context is provided for the implementation of their plan.

Examples of planning assumptions that may be included in the All-Hazards EOP:

- Effective prediction and warning systems have been established that make it possible to anticipate certain emergency situations that may occur throughout the area.
- An emergency could occur at any time. In many cases, dissemination of warning to the public and implementation of increased readiness measures may be possible; however, some emergency situations occur with little or no warning.
- Initial actions to mitigate the effects of emergency situations or potential disaster conditions will be conducted as soon as possible by the [Town Name] emergency responders and school officials.
- Assistance to the town of [Town Name] by response organizations from other jurisdictions is expected to supplement the efforts of the [Town Name] emergency responders in an efficient, effective, and coordinated response.
- Federal and State emergency assistance, when provided, will supplement, not substitute for, relief provided by the town of [Town Name].
- It is the responsibility of officials under this plan to save lives, protect property, relieve human suffering, sustain survivors and restore services.
- An emergency in any school could occur at any time without warning and the employees of the school affected cannot and should not wait for direction from local emergency response agencies. Action is required immediately to save lives and protect school property.
- There may be a number of injuries of varying degrees of seriousness to faculty, staff, and/or students. Rapid and appropriate response will reduce the number and severity of injuries.
- Maintaining the School Emergency Crisis Plan and providing frequent opportunities for stakeholders to exercise the plan through live drills and tabletop exercises can improve the schools and emergency services readiness to respond to incidents.
- All responding agencies will work within the unified incident command structure.



Concept of Operations

The Emergency Operations Plan, based on input from many internal and external stakeholders, is built around the five mission areas of emergency management:

Prevention: For the purposes of this guide, means the capabilities necessary to avoid, deter, or stop an imminent crime or threatened action or actual mass casualty incident. Prevention is the action schools take to prevent a threat or actual incident from occurring.

Protection: Means the capabilities to secure schools against acts of violence, manmade or natural disasters. Protection focuses on ongoing actions that protect students, teachers, staff, visitors, networks, and property from a threat or hazard.

Mitigation: Means the capabilities necessary to eliminate or reduce the loss of life and property damage by lessening the impact of an event or emergency. In this document, “mitigation” also means reducing the likelihood that threats and hazards will happen.

Response: Means the capabilities necessary to stabilize an emergency once it has already happened or is certain to happen in an unpreventable way; establish a safe and secure environment; save lives and property; and facilitate the transition to recovery.

Recovery: Means the capabilities necessary to assist schools affected by an event or emergency in restoring the learning environment.

The All-Hazards EOP should reflect a thoughtful approach to each of the above mission areas and should reflect thorough consideration of the various factors that could potentially impact each mission during an emergency event. The All-Hazards EOP template provides baseline information about the Concept of Operations as provided by the National Incident Management System, inclusive of the five mission areas noted above. It is recommended that all District or School staff involved in the development and management of the EOP complete basic Incident Command Structure training prior to engaging in this work.

Trainings referenced within the Concept of Operations section of the EOP template include:

IS-700: [National Incident Management System, An Introduction](#)

IS-100: [Introduction to Incident Command System \(FEMA.com\)](#)

More information about what should be included in each section can be found in the REMS “[Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#)”, page 24, “The Basic Plan”.



Direction, Control and Coordination

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Is a systematic, proactive approach to guide departments and agencies at all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector to work together seamlessly to manage incidents involving all threats and hazards—regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity—in order to reduce loss of life, property, and harm to the environment.

Incident Command System (ICS)

One component of NIMS is the Incident Command System (ICS), which provides a standardized approach for incident management, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. District Crisis and Public Safety Teams are organized using the ICS framework to work more efficiently with the responders and stakeholders in the community. Each member of the Incident Command System understands his/her role as outlined by the specific duties of the command staff and general staff:

The Incident Command System (“ICS”) is defined as a standardized, on-scene, all-risk management concept. ICS allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

Incident Commander (IC)

- Commands the incident and is the decision-making final authority.
- Assesses the situation and engages appropriate crisis response protocol.
- Communicates with School Board.
- Monitors implementation of the response guide.
- Requests notification and activation of the SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team.
- Serves as liaison with public safety and response agencies to coordinate responses in a unified command.
- Assigns duties to team according to team structure.
- Reviews and approves public information releases with District Public Information Officer (PIO).
- Coordinates with Director of Operations for the safety of students and staff.
- Coordinates with the Communications Coordinator to review and approve communication with staff and students.
- Approves appropriate requests for additional resources.

Public Information Officer (PIO)

- Serves as the conduit of information to and from internal and external stakeholders including the Superintendent and the media. Is also responsible for



ensuring the command staff is kept apprised of what is being said or reported.
Works closely with Incident Commander and parents/community.

- Works as the media contact for the school.
- Coordinates with the Incident Commander for statements to the press.
- Briefs the media after approval from Incident Commander.
- Serves as link with the Town/State Communications Coordinator.
- Provides written statements to use for student, staff, and parent notification (works with District Liaison, as needed).
- Coordinates the communication content and dissemination to student and staff during a crisis event (works with District Liaison).
- Monitors communication with victims and families.
- Keeps records of communication requested and released.
- Engages and monitors communication with victims and families.

Director Of Operations

- Monitors safety conditions and develops measures for assuring the safety of all assigned personnel. Works closely with the Incident Commander.
- Monitors safety conditions and develops measures to assure safety for all response personnel.
- Maintains liaison with public safety agencies on operational issues.
- Briefs incident commander and key officials on safety issues and investigation.
- Knows evacuation plans/routes/procedures, security measures, alternative site plans.
- Reports weather, emergency conditions, obstacles or others concerns.
- Other duties associated with protection of life, property and information.
- Accounts for all students and staff.

Director Of Special Services

- Serves as the primary contact for supporting agencies. Works closely with the Incident Commander and Communications Coordinator.
- Translates and serves as a cultural interpreter for the crisis team and/or community.
- Helps with culturally competent responses and trains staff on cultural awareness.
- Helps facilitate meetings with students, parents, and community, as needed.
- Coordinates the communication content and dissemination to student and staff during a crisis event (works with Communications Coordinator).
- Works with the Student Care & Recovery Coordinator to determine appropriate content and means of communication.

Operations Section Chief



Directs all actions to meet the incident objectives. Works closely with IC. Monitors evacuation and Parent/Student Reunification.

- Assists Incident Commander
- Chairs or co-chairs the District School Crisis Team meetings
- Provides expertise in linking team to the appropriate critical response guidelines.
- Leads the development of the response and intervention to include physical and psychological interventions.
- Leads or provides the functions in the Operations section.
- Reviews effectiveness of response and interventions.
- Coordinates with planning and logistics coordinator to assure resources are available.
- Leads team in debriefing after a crisis occurs.
- Documents activities

Search and Rescue

- Assists first responders.
- Searches facility for injured or missing students and staff
- Conducts initial damage assessment.

First Aid

- Assists first responder with triage and medical care.
- Establishes safe triage area.

Security

- Security or designee will verify all doors are locked in person, if necessary
- Crowd management plans must anticipate many scenarios, including the need to cordon off areas to preserve physical evidence or to manage increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- Collaborates with first responders.
- Secures incident site, perimeter.
- Works with local law enforcement.
- Supervises crowd and traffic control and access management.
- Supervises safe and organized movement of students and staff, as needed.
- Assist in verifying emergency authorized person(s) to authorize student pickups.

Evacuation / Shelter and Care

- Works with Logistics food/supplies and staffing personnel and Student Release personnel.



- Provides accounting and long-term care for all students until reunited with parents/caretakers.
- Designates a Reunion Site/Center.

Crisis Intervention:

- Provides onsite counseling and intervention.
- Determines need for outside mental health support.
- May need to reach out to outside firm or organization such as a community mental health provider or mental health designated agency for assistance.

Student Release:

- Provides for systematic and efficient reunification of students with parents/caretakers (checks and verifies ID with name listed on student emergency card).
- Maintains a student release log.
- Works closely with Evacuation / Shelter & Care personnel.
- Coordinates proper documentation for authorization for medical transportation and treatment.

Planning Section Chief

Collects, evaluates and documents information about incident, including status of students, staff and maintenance, coordinates demobilization of ICS response.

Situation:

- Processes and organizes all incident information, including staff, student and facility status.
- Maintains ICS status boards and SU/SD site map.

Documentation:

- Collects and archives all incident documents.
- Keeps records of communication requested and released.

Resources:

- Tracks equipment and personnel assigned to the incident.
- Checks in all resources (incoming equipment, personnel, and volunteers).

Demobilization:



- Coordinates orderly and safe release of assigned resources and deactivation of incident response at the site.

Logistics Section Chief

Provides all resources, services and support required by the incident. Works closely with the IC and Logistics Director.

- Leads or provides the functions of the Logistics section.
- Works with [Enter name of district] Maintenance.
- Works with office personnel for supplies and equipment needs.
- Monitors supplies and equipment needs.
- Coordinates access with district personnel.
- Coordinates access to and distribution of supplies during an emergency.
- Documents activities of Logistics section.
- Implements School Crisis Team, as needed.
- Coordinates the communication content and dissemination to students and staff during a crisis event.
- Works with the Student Care & Recovery Coordinator to determine appropriate content and means of communication.
- Provides written statements to use for student, staff, and parent notification (works with PIO as needed) (i.e. fact sheet, parent letter).
- Monitors communication dissemination plan.
- Considers information and responses needed by office personnel.
- Coordinates requests for copying, documentation instruments, parent letters, etc.
- Locates identified support supplies to help implement critical response guide.
- Purchases or delegates to procurement to purchase necessary supplies.
- Coordinates the acquisition, preparation and distribution of food and water during secure school.

Food / Supplies / Staffing:

- Assesses supply resources at site, including food and water.
- Procures supplies and provides personnel, as requested, including volunteers.

Transportation:

- Arranges transportation for staff, students and supplies.
- Coordinates the assembly and transport of students.

Maintenance:

- Coordinates site repairs and use of district maintenance.





- Knows floor plan of building and locations of shut-off valves (e.g. gas, electrical, furnace, alarm system).
- Restores utilities.
- Arranges debris removal.

Information Technologies (IT):

- Maintains all communication equipment, including radios.
- Provides services to support Information Technology functions.

Finance / Administration Section Chief

- Provides financial tracking, procurement and cost accounting of incident response, administers incident-related compensation and claims.
- Works closely with IC and Financial Director.
- May also serve as Finance (“the payer”) and approve funds.

Time:

- Maintains incident time logs for all personnel.

Procurement:

- Tracks and maintains complete records of site expenditures and purchases made by Logistics.
- Manages vendor contracts.

Cost:

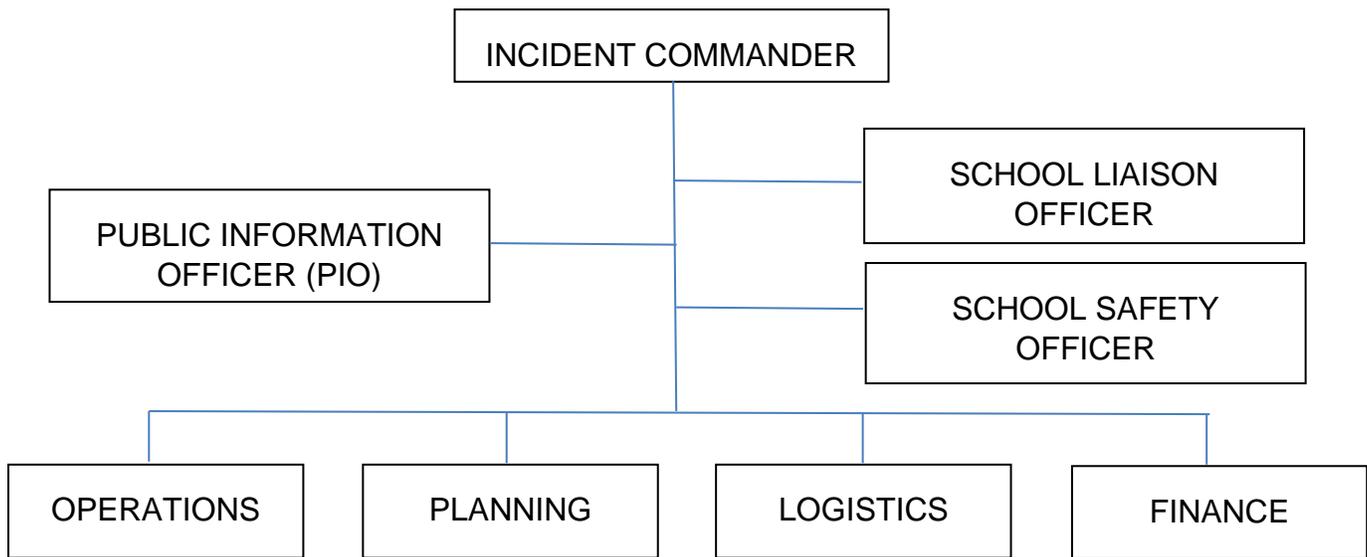
- Provides cost estimates, analysis and recommendations for cost savings.

Compensation / Claims:

- Processes compensation/injury claims related to incident.



Sample SU/SD ICS Structure



The above chart is a management organization for SU/SD or Independent School response to an emergency. The sample shown indicates “Incident Commander” at the top with the “Public Information Officer”, “School Liaison Officer” (Director of Special Services) and “School Safety Officer” (Director of Operations) reporting to them. Beneath these roles the areas of responsibility of Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance jointly report up to the Incident Commander.

This structure is scalable. One person can perform multiple functions within the same section. Each function to the level needed to make it work; consolidate functions to meet resource availability and incident requirements.



Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

The responsibility for the safety and security of the SU/SD community is a shared responsibility between the School Board, school district and school administration, faculty, staff, students, families, community responders and other school safety partners. Each individual must know his/her role and responsibility in an emergency within the Incident Command System from the Incident Commander to those directly involved in critical incident response.

The specifics of the organizational structure need to reflect the unique needs and abilities of the District/School. The All-Hazards EOP template, section “Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities”, provides sample language that will need to be modified based on the district’s individual needs, capabilities, and preferred approach. At minimum, the All-Hazards EOP should define specific positions, entities, and organizations responsible as well as their distinct responsibilities, discrete tasks, and level of accountability or decision-making authority assigned to each. For example, a district may choose to address faculty and staff responsibilities such as:

- Knowing the plan and training on the plan.
- Directing students to inside or outside lockdown/shelter/assembly/evacuation according to school policy, practices and instructions provided by the Incident Commander or designee;
- Accounting for students/staff and reporting through the attendance system.
- Obtaining first-aid services for injured students and staff; and rendering first aid within their scope of training and/or certification.
- Assisting in the safe and secure reunification of students and their parents
- Other roles and responsibilities as directed by the Incident Commander and outlined within the Incident Command System under Direction, Control and Coordination.

Other roles and responsibilities are outlined within the Incident Command System under Direction, Control and Coordination.

District/Supervisory Union Crisis Team

It is recommended that the SU/SD or Independent School establish a team of senior leadership assigned to lead the SU/SD or Independent School’s response during an emergency/critical incident. Examples of senior staff to consider for this team may include, but are not limited to:

- Superintendent/Independent School Head
- Director of Finance
- Director of Operations
- Director of Curriculum



Director of Special Services

Director of Communications

Emergency Operations Center

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the centralized location of emergency response and recovery support operations during responses to critical incidents. Depending upon the location and scope of the incident, the SU/SD or Independent School may need to establish an Emergency Operations Center.

Each All-Hazards EOP should reference the specific locations, equipment and resources needed, and potential personnel who may be assigned to an EOC during the response to a critical incident. The All-Hazards EOP should clearly reference which positions are authorized to activate or de-activate the EOC and the procedures and expected communications prior to, during, and after an activation.



Administration, Finance and Logistics

The SU/SD or Independent School is responsible for establishing the administrative controls necessary to manage the expenditure of funds and to provide reasonable accountability and justification for expenditures made to support incident management operations. During an emergency incident, it is critical that administrative controls are implemented in accordance with established fiscal policies and standard cost accounting procedures.

During emergency response and recovery, there may be additional federal, state, or other external funding and/or resources that can be accessed by the impacted SU/SD or Independent School. Access to these resources often requires that the SU/SD or Independent School produce significant documentation and records to support reimbursement or allocation of funding. SU/SDs and Independent Schools should be prepared to maintain appropriate records to support resource requests during and after an emergency, as well as to ensure compliance with standard administrative and fiscal policies and requirements.

A designated “Section Chief(s)” should be assigned in accordance with ICS protocol. The Section Chief(s) assigned to the Emergency Operations Center (Superintendent Office or alternate location) will maintain accurate logs recording key incident management activities including:

- Significant changes in the incident situation.
- Major commitments of resources or requests for additional resources from external sources.
- Issuance of protective action recommendations to the staff and students.
- Evacuations.
- Casualties among students, faculty, staff, or visitors.
- Containment or termination of the incident.

If the SU/SD resources prove to be inadequate during an incident, the SU/SD will request assistance from local emergency services, other agencies, and local businesses in accordance with existing mutual aid agreements and contracts. Such assistance includes equipment, supplies, and/or personnel. All agreements are entered into by the Superintendent or designee and must be in writing. Agreements and contracts will identify the SU//SD administrators who are authorized to request assistance pursuant to those documents.



Information Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination

The SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Planning Team should develop and oversee the emergency planning efforts for each SU/SD and Independent School, however additional roles and responsibilities may be assigned outside of the team. These specific assignments, especially as they relate to information sharing, should be identified within the All-Hazards EOP.

The All-Hazards EOP template provides space for each SU/SD to define the specific roles and responsibilities for these positions. Some additional examples are noted below, but the roles and responsibilities to each will be unique to your district and your specific plan.

- Superintendent/Independent School Head: Responsible for carrying out the priorities of the school plan and leading the school crisis team.
- Principal/Vice Principal: During incident response, they typically oversee attendance and safety of students and staff.
- School Counselor/School Based Clinician: May conduct an annual survey of students regarding emotional and psychological safety and continue to reassess throughout the school year.
- Office Administrative Assistant: Works directly with the Principal and coordinates with the relocation group supervisor and PIO.
- Director of Operations: Custodian/Maintenance Staff analyzes life safety, building, grounds and transportation risks as they relate to OSHA and other local, state and federal regulations or guidelines throughout the school year.
- School Nurse: Coordinates advance procedures with EMS, doctors, and hospital emergency staff. Prepares inventory of students and staff who have CPR and other Emergency medical training. During incident response, they typically serve as medical point person.
- Teachers and Staff: Provide information about how plans will work in the classroom. During incident response, responsibilities typically include supervision for the safety of students, assisting other staff as needed, managing student communication per local school board policy, and reporting any missing/injured students.
- Food Services: Responsible for supporting and coordinating mass feeding for students and larger community during a prolonged disaster as part of the State's Mass Feeding effort.
- Athletic Director or Department: Ultimately responsible for analyzing fields, athletic personnel, practices, events, and equipment throughout the school year.
- School Board: May be responsible for establishing school or district policy related to Emergency Operations, may support school or district leadership with community engagement.



- Local Emergency Management Officials/Emergency Management Director: Provides guidance on local emergency management capabilities and response to all hazards, as well as local threats and hazards.
- Local Emergency First Responders (Fire, Rescue, EMS, Law Enforcement, etc): During incident response, responsibilities typically include critical incident response, collaboration with other local first responders, protection of life and property, and incident recovery.
- Local or State Law Enforcement: During incident response, responsibilities typically include securing the scene, investigating criminal acts, directing service to remove vehicles impeding emergency vehicles. Police Chief will serve as Incident Commander as necessary.
- Local Fire Department: Provides guidance on Fire Department capabilities and response to all hazards and integrates school fire and Hazardous Materials Response plans. During incident response the Fire Chief will serve as Incident Commander as necessary.
- Local Rescue and Emergency Medical Services (EMS): Provides guidance to the SU/SD or Independent School on rescue capabilities and response to all hazards and helps to identify school and community members who have CPR and other medical skills that may be utilized during a critical incident at the school. During incident response they may work with the school nurse to coordinate the delivery of medical treatment.
- State Agency Education Partners: Includes relevant State of Vermont Agencies, such as the Agency of Education, Department of Public Safety, Vermont School Safety Center to streamline communication with State leaders and connect districts with technical supports in certain emergency situations.
- Other State Agencies and Partners: Agency of Transportation, Department of Mental Health, Vermont Department of Health, Vermont Hazardous Materials Response Team, etc. Incident and district specific.
- Rescue Emergency Medical Services (EMS): Provides guidance to the School Crisis Team on rescue capabilities and response to all hazards and helps to identify school and community members who have CPR and other medical skills. During incident response they typically work with the school nurse to coordinate the delivery of medical treatment.
- School/District Transportation: Provides guidance to the SU/SD on transportation capabilities and response to all hazards.

In addition to defining roles and responsibilities for certain information-based tasks, this section should also provide specific instruction about any other mechanisms or processes by which the SU/SD will share or disseminate information before, during, or following an emergency incident.

Example:

Depending upon the critical incident, school faculty and staff may initially have the knowledge, skills, and ability to effectively respond to the incident. However, as the





situation evolves additional law enforcement, fire, EMS and other emergency management support may be required.

The [Vermont School Safety Center](#) has published a [one-page quick reference document](#) which provides recommended immediate responses for a variety of emergencies. SU/SDs may consider posting this resource in all classrooms and common areas to support community awareness of critical response actions.



Education, Training and Exercises

The Superintendent or designee should develop and implement a competency-based training and educational curriculum that supports all employees in appropriate emergency response based on their specific roles within SU/SD or Independent School. The curriculum should comply with applicable regulatory and program requirements. SU/SDs and Independent Schools should identify the goal of the training program. For example, a more comprehensive goal statement may be “To create awareness and enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of all employees required to mitigate, prevent and protect against hazards and to respond and recover in the event of an incident”, or alternatively, “To prepare all faculty, staff, and administrators with the necessary knowledge and skills to prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency incident”.

The plan should also provide some detail about specific required trainings, as appropriate, and the staff responsible for completing them. Examples may include:

- Faculty and staff review of the SU/SD emergency operations plan and their designated responsibilities under the plan.
- Safety orientation for new administration, faculty and staff.
- Safety review for existing administration, faculty and staff.
- Key stakeholders trained in the Incident Command System (ICS).
- CPR/First Aid review or certification, and OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens.
- SU/SD/School Health (including the administration of an EpiPen) training, as prescribed by the Secretary of Education or Vermont Department of Health.
- Hazing, Harassment, Bullying training, as prescribed by the Secretary of Education.
- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Any other training as necessary during the school year to support emergency operations.

Drill Reporting and Other Exercises

This section should also reflect the SU/SD or Independent School’s drill reporting and exercise schedule. As a reminder, 16 V.S.A. § 1481, as amended by Act 29 of 2023, requires all schools to comply with certain requirements around Emergency Drill completion and reporting. Drill guidance provided by the Vermont Agency of Education, Vermont Department of Public Safety and the Vermont School Safety Center is updated annually and can be found on the [Agency of Education](#) and [Vermont School Safety Center](#) websites.

Lastly, this section should include any other trainings or exercises, such as tabletop or other Emergency Preparedness exercises, as deemed necessary by the SU/SD or Independent School.



Warning, Timely Notifications and Communications

In the event that a situation arises within the district, if the judgment of the Superintendent, Principal or other district staff constitutes an ongoing or continuing threat, a district/school wide timely warning should be issued. It is recommended that the decision about when to make timely warnings be made on a case-by-case basis in light of all the facts surrounding an emergency incident. In the event of an incident, the SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team will convene and plan appropriate action in accordance with the established All-Hazards EOP.

The Superintendent, Incident Commander, and the PIO are usually responsible for determining the content, timing and tool(s) used for the different audiences depending upon the timing, cause, size, location and complexity of the emergency. The All-Hazards EOP should reflect the specific criteria, tools, and procedures used to make the determination, as well as to implement any communications or warnings.

For example, a completed EOP may include any combination of the following:

- The Superintendent or their designee will write the message that is conveyed for the emergency.
- Any time the buildings are evacuated, the faculty/staff should take their cellular phone with them.
- A warning will be issued to faculty, staff, and students via the Emergency Notification System, *which includes the phone and Public Address System (PAS), email, as well as text messages and phone calls.*

Ensure that the emergency notifications listed here meet those of your school district. If not, edit as necessary.

All emergencies have three distinct time periods in which action/reaction occurs. The [National Preparedness System](#) defines these as, Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery.

The specifics of the communications plan need to reflect the unique needs and abilities of the District/School. The All-Hazards EOP template provides sample language that will need to be modified based on the SU/SD or Independent School's individual needs, capabilities, and preferred approach. At minimum, your communication plan should address a specific process for communicating with your community, internally and externally, during a critical incident. The plan should include detailed information about the mechanisms and tools used to communicate (such as mass alert platforms, social media, websites, phone messaging systems, etc), designated responsibilities for communicating with certain stakeholders, and establish priorities for communication in certain critical incidents. For example, a District may choose to develop a Three-Phased communication plan, such as:

SAMPLE PLAN



PHASE A Emergency:

(ADVISORY):

Administrative alert of a potential, impending, or actual event that can be handled by personnel working in the area where the incident occurred.

District/School Crisis Team actions:

Example: *Isolated power outage being handled by limited onsite staff.*

PHASE B Emergency:

An emergency event that requires personnel from other departments to assist in the response.

District/School Crisis Team actions:

Staff actions:

Example: *Isolated fire resulting in partial evacuation requiring coordination of several responding departments.*

PHASE C Emergency:

Response to an emergency that requires additional staff and resources from off-site. It establishes mechanisms to utilize local systems of support. In these events, outside agencies typically get involved. An internal Command Center is set up, and university/hospital operations are significantly impacted or altered.

District/School Crisis Team actions:

Staff actions:

Example: *A building evacuation due to fire or other building emergency where occupants may be displaced for a period of time. Response from personnel not currently on site may be needed and coordination between several departments is imperative.*

Command and Control and Delegation of Authority

This section should identify the position assigned ultimate authority unless authority to make decisions and implement the SU/SD or Independent School’s All-Hazards EOP, unless that authority is delegated to another administrator in his/her absence. If there is a clear hierarchy or delegation to other administrators or positions, that information should be included in the All-Hazards EOP under “Delegation of Authority”.



Media Communication Guidelines

During an emergency incident, all staff, students, and school personnel should direct news or other media questions to a designated PIO. If the named PIO is unavailable, the SU/SD or Independent School should establish a clear chain of command. The following list is an example of such delegation. You may substitute positions as appropriate for your SU/SD or Independent School:

- Director of Special Services
- Director of Operations
- Director of Curriculum
- Director of Finance

It is recommended that each All-Hazards EOP require that any named representative or authorized staff consult with the Incident Commander or designee prior to communicating with the media. The media is **not** allowed inside the school unless authorized by the Superintendent or Independent School Head.

When answering requests, be honest with media personnel. If the answer to a question is not known, tell the reporter that you will get back to them as soon as possible. It is important that all messaging be consistent and accurate. As such, it is critical that all staff authorized to respond to media or other public requests consult with the Superintendent or Independent School Head and/or Incident Commander prior to providing statements to the media or participating in interviews.

The following sections provide recommendations to support media communications. SU/SDs and Independent Schools may choose to include all, or none, of the below suggestions are part of the directive language included in the All-Hazards EOP.

Basic Communications Guidelines

DO NOT provide information "off the record". Do not say "no comment" nor use jargon.

- Alternatives to "no comment"
 - "The matter is under investigation and that information is not available at this time."
 - "We will provide updates as more information becomes available."
 - "Let me put you in contact with someone who is better able to answer that question."
 - "Those details are covered by the Privacy Act and I cannot discuss them, but I can give this general information...."

Student confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

Other recommendations for effective communications with media:

- Use a tone-alert radio to warn of impending natural disasters.





- Notify parents and all staff prior to speaking with the media.
- Maintain key names, phone numbers and information for radio, television, and newspaper contacts, such as in the sample table below.
- Identify a spokesperson: Generally, this will be Superintendent or Independent School Head or designee. Using someone other than the Superintendent or Independent School Head allows the spokesperson to say, “I do not have the answer to that question but will check with the Superintendent,” and then enables the SU/SD or Independent School to have time to prepare an appropriate response. It also “saves” the most important person to handle other elements of the situation). The spokesperson should:
 - be knowledgeable and credible
 - be forthright, honest and ethical
 - be calm and even-tempered
 - be accessible
 - be able to express sorrow but not admit guilt
 - be well-rehearsed; role play a press conference, use hot lights, get a feel for the real experience
 - be able to understand legal implications of answers
- **Anticipate questions by the Media:** Anticipating questions and having answers, especially those that may take some research, will not only save time but also help the SU/SD or Independent School appear responsible and knowledgeable. Make a list of all the possible questions that could be asked. Include questions that could be asked by the media of those persons/groups on the other side of the situation. Practice in front of an audience and in the location where questions and answers will actually take place. Even with the best preparation, the spokesperson may not be able to answer a question and should say something similar to “I don’t know the answer but will find it out and get back to you.” Preparing possible questions and answers does not have to begin when a crisis occurs.
- **Prepare for Interviews:** Have written answers before an interview:
 - What do I want headline or sound bite to be? What’s the longer, 20-second message?
 - What are the key back-up facts?
 - What’s the best relevant anecdote?
 - Other questions the SU/SD may anticipate based on the specific incident.

Tips for Working with Reporters During a Crisis

- It is usually better from a public relations (PR) perspective to answer a question rather than claim “no comment.” “No comment” can cause more problems and lead a reporter to go find the answer elsewhere. Decide ahead of time, in conjunction with attorney and/or PR professionals, if and when “no comment” is an appropriate response. If so, find creative ways to say “no comment.”
- There is no such thing as “off the record.”



- Work from written facts that have already been verified and approved by the School Planning Team.
- Repeat deadlines.
- Have a key position statement to work into all communication.
- Be honest; don't exaggerate.
- If you don't know the answer, say that and say you will find it out and get back to the questioner to provide the answer.
- Answer in short, concise sentences.
- If you need to get your own point across, bridge over to that.
- Take control tactfully.
- Practice the answers for potential questions (even develop Q and A sheets for "what if" scenarios). Stick to scripted talking points.
- If a press conference takes place, practice in the actual setting; even use lighting to get the feel of the upcoming situation.
- Put mistakes into perspective; use humor; show empathy.
- Be human.
- Don't be defensive.
- Never falsify, color or slant information.
- Restate the questions in your answer to avoid being quoted out of context.
- Don't create conflict during the interview.
- Candor is important, but don't give more information than is asked for.
- Turn negatives into positives; say what the [ENTER SCHOOL NAME] is doing to fix the problem.
- Don't let reporters put words in your mouth.
- Don't speculate.
- Don't have important papers on the desk that can be read upside down.
- When a reporter calls on the phone, don't answer any questions; find out the deadline and get back after you have had time to prepare and review a statement with colleagues.
- Explain any school jargon.



Planning a News Conference (if applicable)

- Schedule it early in the day.
- Prepare written information to hand out; press release (time, place, purpose), fact sheet, bio of speaker.
- Choose a site and time that does not interrupt the school; consider a convenient location so media will attend.
- To inform media of the press conference, assign a position to contact local media outlets.
- Practice possible questions and answers. Arrange for person(s) to be available afterwards to answer questions.
- If media do not attend, fax the press release after the event.
- Consider preparing a press kit of background information with general information about school.

Sample Media Contact Log:

Media Contact	Radio Frequency/Channel	Phone/Fax Numbers Web Address
Weather Band		
AM		
FM		
Cable Television Station		
Broadcast Television Station		
Newspaper		

SU/SD or Independent School Planning Team Responsibilities: Communication

During a crisis, communication to both to the SU/SD or Independent School community and to the broader public is critical. The method of communication is just as important as the content of what is being communicated. While the SU/SD or Independent School Planning Team is responsible for making decisions regarding the method, timing and content of communication, faculty and staff play an important part in supporting this



overall communication. The PIO is generally the spokesperson who provides information to the media.

During a crisis the following guidelines will aid in effective communication:

- Remain calm, whether around adults or children.
- Know that the School Planning Team will keep you informed as events unfold.
- Communicate only factual information to parents, students and others.
- Follow the School Planning Team's instructions regarding referral of parent calls to designated persons.
- Be assured that administrators will give you strategies and guidance for helping students through the crisis.

Only the designated spokesperson Superintendent/Independent School Head or PIO may speak to the media.

For any incident, the SU/SD or Independent School Planning Team should:

- Convene to go through initial checklist (below) and determine if the appropriate team is assembled based on the event.
- Be responsible for clearly defining action steps and a point person for each action step as well as associated follow-up.
- Point person briefs assembled group.
- Meet the following checklist:

Considerations Checklist:

- Is this the appropriate team to respond to this particular event?
- Are there any special timing considerations?
- Do the needs of our communities differ? (Faculty/Staff?)
- Is there a response team needed upon return to school?
- How will the group be in touch over the course of the next couple days?
- Who is the point person(s) who will respond to ongoing communication from constituents?
- Are there any other pre-planned communications (email, social media, etc.)? If so, what do we need to do to reschedule and/or redraft them?
- Do we need to make any contingency plans?
- Do we need legal advice and/or an outside public relations consultant?
- What have we missed?

Outreach Communication Structure

In a crisis situation, it is helpful to ensure that any person answering the phones or other inquiries in a calm, professional tone that indicates the SU/SD or Independent School is





handling the situation effectively and appropriately. The following steps are recommended to include in the SU/SDs All-Hazards EOP:

- The PIO or designee will be provided with a scripted message for answering calls related to the crisis or a scripted message relaying their call to someone who can better respond to the caller's concerns.
- If the caller wishes further information beyond the scripted message, the call is directed to an appropriate person. Depending on the situation, the SU/SD or Independent School Planning Team may ask for the call to be referred to someone else who has been authorized to answer calls.
- A log of all phone calls (see Appendix A) should be kept in order to assess the responses of parents and others. Anyone receiving calls should keep a log. The log should include date, time of day, caller's name, nature of the call, and anything else that seems important. For example: was the caller particularly angry or emotional?
- The person answering the phone should be polite and professional, yet not get drawn into a conversation about the issue, especially when the callers are parents or others who are well known in the SU/SD or Independent School community.
- If anyone from the media calls, the person answering the call directs them to the designated PIO, announcing who is calling before transferring the call.

Releasing Information in General

The SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team should collect as much information about the situation as possible and provide updates whenever possible; before releasing any information, employ reliable sources to verify facts, spelling of names, and explain educational jargon (if applicable).

Communication directed to any or all of the groups identified below should be written down even when the message is delivered verbally. These written notes ensure that important ideas are communicated, ensure accuracy, and help to curtail rumor. For example, this section of the SU/SD or Independent School All-Hazards EOP may state:

The SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team will decide the central message the [SU/SD or INDEPENDENT SCHOOL] wants to communicate and use that in all internal and external communication. At the discretion of the SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team, the messaging broadcast system or chain of command may be used to communicate information to parents, faculty & staff, and other members of the [SU/SD or INDEPENDENT SCHOOL] community.



Handling The Effects of a Crisis

Standard Response Protocol

The Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is an options-based response to crisis situations. It allows for different actions to be taken depending on the situation at hand. The Vermont School Safety Center strongly encourages schools and school districts to utilize the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) as their standardized response language when responding to a critical incident. The SRP is action-based, flexible, and easy to learn. It rationally organizes tactics for response to weather events, fires, accidents, intruders and other threats to personal safety. By standardizing the vocabulary, all stakeholders can understand the response and status of the event. For students, this provides continuity of expectations and actions throughout their educational career. For educators, this becomes a simpler process to train and drill. While there are other response methodologies (such as A.L.I.C.E) that schools may want to follow, we feel the SRP is “all hazards” focused and provides the greatest level of flexibility when responding to the variety of threats schools may face each and every day.

The [“I Love U Guys” Foundation](#) provides training and programs for crisis response and post-crisis reunification, and are used in more than 45,000 schools, districts, departments, agencies, organizations and communities around the world. The Vermont School Safety Center encourages SU/SDs and Independent Schools alike to adopt the “I Love U Guys” Foundation Standard Response Protocol (SRP) for all hazards. This action-based response protocol allows specific vocabulary for rapid and coordinated action, necessary to respond appropriately to a variety of crises.

The [“I Love U Guys” Foundation SRP](#) recommends the following five (5) actions:

- **Hold** is followed by the Directive: "In Your Room or Area" and is the protocol used when hallways need to be kept clear of occupants.
- **Secure** is followed by the Directive: "Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors" and is the protocol used to safeguard people within the building.
- **Lockdown** is followed by "Locks, Lights, Out of Sight" and is the protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep occupants quiet and in place.
- **Evacuate** and may be followed by a location and is used to move people from one location to a different location in or out of the building.
- **Shelter:** State the Hazard and Safety Strategy for group and self-protection.

At the onset of an emergency, the SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team should follow the response appropriate to the specific crisis at hand.

Disasters differ in their impact by:

- Type (natural vs. perpetrated by humans)
- Duration
- Degree of personal impact





- Potential for occurrence (or containment)
- Control over future impact

Initial Response

At the onset of an emergency, the SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team should follow the response appropriate to the specific crisis at hand. This may include the need to make immediate contact with Law Enforcement or other Emergency First Responders.

In situations where outside agencies are contacted (i.e. DCF, Police Department) the Superintendent or Independent School Head should be contacted first in non-emergency situations.

Helping the District Community Deal with the Situation

During the Response and Recovery phases of an emergency, SU/SDs and Independent Schools may be assisted by outside organizations such as State and Federal partners, the American Red Cross, FEMA, VT-211, and local volunteer or charitable organizations. Using outside resources to work with the SU/SD or Independent School community allows the faculty and staff the opportunity to be the recipients of services rather than the provider. This may be particularly helpful in situations such as the death of a student or colleague. SU/SD or Independent School Planning Teams should be prepared to assign a position or positions as a designated point of contact for outside resources, when applicable.

Each SU/SD and Independent School should anticipate the need for staff meetings for debriefing, sharing feelings, etc. following an emergency incident. Depending on the severity of an incident, this need may continue beyond the immediate response and recovery phases of an incident and may require support from outside entities. For more information about supporting the SU/SD or Independent School community following an emergency incident, the Superintendent, Independent School Head or designee should contact the [Vermont School Safety Center](#).

Announcing the Situation

Ordinarily, the Superintendent or Independent School Head initiates contact with appropriate individuals or convenes a meeting to inform faculty and staff of an emergency incident. The SU/SD or Independent School EOP should identify who is responsible for this task to eliminate confusion or duplication of efforts.

Considerations should be made ahead of time to determine whether there are individuals who should be told privately before groups are informed. This determination should be made on an individual basis depending on the scope, severity, and specifics



of an incident. Some considerations for what to include in this section of the All-Hazards EOP:

- The SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team may be assigned to suggest ways for teachers to announce the situation to students and help them discuss feelings, engage in positive activities and other helpful procedures.
- Any announcements informing staff of the situation should be done using a method that provides facts and minimizes rumors, such as a morning meeting where administrators are present and available to answer questions.
- The SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team may be assigned to determine a process for handling students' needs to call home and/or go home.
- The All-Hazards EOP should include clear procedures for informing parents, especially when there is a possibility that students and family members may quickly learn about the situation, such as through the media or other parents.

Involving the Faculty

The district may decide to use counselors or hire other professionals to provide the faculty guidelines and suggestions for helping students during this time. In general, the role of the faculty will be to:

- Be aware of students and colleagues who may need to talk with a counselor.
- Implement grief-related activities and discussions of medical procedures and terms as developed by counselors. Remember that a crisis may bring to the surface previous emotional challenges in any given student.
- Work together to keep daily routines as normal as possible while acknowledging the need to reschedule major assignments.

Handling the Daily Life of the School

- The SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team and other administrators directly involved should reschedule the day's activities and cancel appointments and meetings in order to be available to teachers and students.
- The SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team should consider an after-school meeting for faculty and staff for upcoming information, sharing feelings and planning the next days.
- Administrators should consider canceling learning trips, guest speakers, special events, and other activities as appropriate.
- The SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Team keeps staff updated on events.
- All adults in the community should present themselves, particularly with students, in a manner that projects calmness and positive support.

Handling Parent/Guardian Concerns (Students not directly involved)



The Superintendent or Independent School Head determines a communication plan and delegates specific staff to communicate with student parents or guardians. It is important that families be supported and informed of facts in order to allay fears and minimize rumors. A special “drop in” location should be determined in advance. The district may want to arrange a meeting for concerned parents and others to help them deal with their own feelings and those of their children.

Informing Local Law Enforcement

Each All-Hazards EOP should specify contact information for local emergency responders, including local Law Enforcement. The All-Hazards EOP Template includes sample formatting for this section, however the SU/SD or Independent School may choose to incorporate this information elsewhere in the plan.

Sample:

Emergency: 911

Non-emergency: 802-[Enter phone number]

Local Police Dept.: 802-[Enter phone number]

Vermont State Police (VSP): 802-[Enter phone number]

In situations where the media would be involved, all information will be conveyed by the Superintendent or Independent School Head or authorized designee.

Informing Students

The SU/SD or Independent School All-Hazards EOP should address the procedures for informing students upon return from an emergency event. Whenever possible, the Vermont School Safety Center (VSSC) recommends that students are informed in smaller, class-size or other small student group meetings, however the SU/SD or Independent School may also consider an all-student or all-school assembly or meeting, presentation by the Superintendent or Independent School Head or designee, or other methods as determined in the All-Hazards EOP.

Informing Board

Normally, the Superintendent or Independent School Head should facilitate notification to the School Board. The SU/SD or Independent School All-Hazards EOP should clearly define the position responsible for this communication, method of communication, and any SU/SD or Independent School-specific procedures to consider when making this communication.



Informing Non-Emergency State Partners and Critical Incident Reporting Form

It is also strongly recommended that the SU/SD or Independent School specify a position and/or procedures to inform non-emergency State Agency partners, such as the Agency of Education and Vermont School Safety Center in the event of an emergency.

The Critical Incident Reporting Form was developed in December 2023 to serve as a communication tool with the Agency of Education and Vermont School Safety Center during and immediately following critical incidents. The intent of this form is to ensure state level school safety stakeholders are informed of a school based critical incident and to provide insight into any regional or statewide school threats schools/school districts may be experiencing.

The Critical Incident Reporting form does NOT replace the need to call (911) if you are in need of emergency response resources to assist with managing a critical incident. This form should be completed once the situation is being effectively managed and school leaders are in a position to submit this form with the level of accuracy and detail requested.

The types of incidents that a report should be submitted include:

- Bomb threat
- Swatting
- Death of a student or faculty/staff member during the academic day or during recognized after school activities
- Other than drills or exercises, any event that results in a partial or total evacuation of the school
- Lockdown
- Threat of targeted violence
- School bus accident where students and/or staff have sustained serious injury
- Cybersecurity breaches or other incidents
- Any critical incident response that may result in significant media attention

The Critical Incident Reporting Form should only be used by Superintendents, Independent School Heads, Principals or other Key School Safety staff. It should not be distributed or used by other members of the school community and a direct link to the form should not be included in publicly accessible documents, which may include the SU/SD or Independent School EOP. For more information about the form, please contact the Vermont School Safety Center.



Record Of Distribution

The Superintendent or Independent School Head or designee is responsible for the distribution (electronic and hard copy) to members of the SU/SD or Independent School Crisis Teams, appropriate faculty and staff, local emergency first responders and emergency management officials. The All-Hazards EOP should specify the location and record keeping schedule for all records of distribution.



Authorities And References

Ultimate authority rests with the Superintendent or Independent School Head. The SU/SD or Independent School EOP should include a list of any references used in the development of the EOP. This guide, and the All-Hazards EOP Template, were established in accordance with the following laws, authorities, and specialized resources:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)
- Guide For Developing High-Quality SU/SD Emergency Operations Plans by the US Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students, Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center
- National Incident Management System: Department of Homeland Security, March 2004
- The I love U guys Foundation
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive HSPD-5
- Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) - 8, 20, 51
- NFPA 1600
- Vermont School Safety Center



Threat And Hazard Specific Procedures (Annexes)

Threat-specific vulnerabilities should be discovered during planning. As the SU/SD or Independent School conducts a thorough hazard and vulnerability impact assessment, they will need to identify specific threats or vulnerabilities and identify a plan for each. The All-Hazards EOP Template suggests that the SU/SD or Independent School include a list of high-priority hazards in their EOP, which may act as the basis for Threat-Specific Annexes.

The importance of the inclusion of threat-specific annexes cannot be understated. Each SU/SD and Independent School should take care to develop threat specific procedures that are clear, comprehensive, and achievable based on the specific needs and abilities of their school or district. In many cases, the threat annexes may represent the bulk of the All-Hazards EOP and should provide case-specific procedures for high-priority threats or hazards identified during the planning process.

Included threat-specific annexes should be built based on individual district assessments. Each Annex should include specific procedures, similar to the Basic Response Plan, addressing any unique needs, considerations, or resources required in certain emergency situations. Page 28 of the REMS "[Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#)" provides some additional detail and suggested considerations for building your threat assessment annexes. A list of possible inclusions is noted below, however additional annexes may be required based on the unique needs of the SU/SD or Independent School:

- Active Shooter
- Bomb Threat
- Bus Crash
- Chemical Spill/Gas Leak
- Cybersecurity Breach
- Death of a Student/Staff Member
- Discovery of a Dangerous Weapon
- Drug Exposure or Overdose (Student or Staff)
- Earthquake
- Explosion
- Fire
- Flood
- Heat (Excessive)
- Intruders
- Medical Emergency
- Mass Casualty
- Mass Feeding Incident (May include contaminated food outbreak)
- Missing Student; Kidnapping
- Public Health Emergency





- Power Outage
- Riot or Student Demonstration
- Suicide
- Weather-Related Emergency (Tornado, Lightning, Severe Wind, Hurricane, Extreme Temperatures, Winter Weather)

While not all examples above will be applicable to every SU/SD or Independent School, many are universally applicable. We encourage all teams to include, at minimum, the following:

Medical Emergency, including Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) and suspected overdose;

Natural Disasters, including severe weather, flooding, wildfire, landslides, etc;

Discovery of a Dangerous Weapon, such as firearms;

Bomb Threat;

Response to Violent Intruder, including Active Shooter;

Hazardous Material Exposure, including chemical spills or lab leaks, and;

Transportation Hazards, such as road closures, transportation failure, or medical emergencies on school buses.

In the All-Hazards EOP Template includes, a sample Medical Emergency Annex has been provided. Additional Threat and Hazard Specific Annexes should be developed and included as appropriate for each SU/SD or Independent School All-Hazards EOP.



Emergency Support Functions (Annexes)

Similar to the threat-specific annexes, those identified as having responsibility under each Emergency Support Function (ESF) should establish and maintain plans (as necessary) to support their respective function(s) and established objectives.

Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) provide the structure for coordinating support most commonly used by organizations during the response to an incident. This may include transportation, communication, information and planning, logistics etc.

The actions described in the Support Procedures are not limited to particular types of events but are overarching in nature and applicable to nearly every type of incident. The all-encompassing nature of the functions described in these annexes frequently involves either the support to, or the cooperation of all departments and agencies involved in incident management efforts to ensure seamless integration of and transitions between preparedness, response, and recovery activities.

Through the EOP development process, the district leadership team should work with their school safety stakeholders to identify the specific responsibilities and actions that need to be taken within the district for each of these support functions. If these functions and procedures are not otherwise clearly identified within the base plan, function-specific annexes should be developed. Examples of specific emergency support functions that should be addressed by the All-Hazards EOP:

- Shelter in Place
- Accounting for all Persons
- Warning, Timely Notifications and Communications
- Continuity of Operations Program (COOP)
- Evacuation
- Parent/Student Reunification
- Public Health, Medical and Mental Health Post-Incident
- Recovery
- Security



Appendix B: Critical Resources & School Board Contact Information

MEDIA OUTLETS:

ATTORNEYS:

INSURANCE REPRESENTATIVES:

VSBIT: 802-223-5040

INSURANCE CARRIERS:



Appendix D: Alternate Plan Format for Certain Independent Schools

As a reminder, Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. § 1480 requires that all public SU/SDs and approved and recognized Independent Schools must adopt and maintain an all-hazards emergency operations plan for each school site that is at least as comprehensive as the template maintained by the Vermont School Safety Center.

The Agency of Education and Vermont School Safety Center acknowledge that for certain Independent Schools, use of the full comprehensive template may not be reasonable or efficient. Therefore, an optional, alternative plan format has been developed for schools which meet the following criteria:

1. Average student enrollment is less than thirty (30) students annually.
2. School is not considered a Therapeutic Approved School – therapeutic schools should develop and implement the full, comprehensive template.
3. School is not a residential school or facility – any residential school must use comprehensive template format.
4. Strong partnership with local emergency responders has been established, and school leadership can ensure that local emergency responders are equipped to manage the majority of emergency response actions on behalf of the school.

The alternate format is included in the All-Hazards EOP Template as Appendix D. If your Independent School chooses to use this alternative format, the following sections of the template must be included:

- Emergency contact information for school faculty, staff, parent community.
- Emergency contact information for local first responders.
- Floor plans of school.
- Overhead map of school that details evacuation locations, routes to evacuation locations and family reunification sites.
- Incident command graphic that shows who will fill the basic roles within ICS structure – this may be limited to one or two staff, depending on school size.
- Copy of any classroom action guide the school uses that covers critical incident response.
- Locations of any hazardous materials located within the school.
- Any specific planning guidance for faculty, staff, students with special physical, social, emotional needs.