



Best Practices for K-12 Public School Security Policy

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The primary mission of the National Insider Threat Task Force (NITTF) is to develop a Government-wide insider threat program for deterring, detecting, and mitigating insider threats, including the safeguarding of classified information from exploitation, compromise, or other unauthorized disclosure, taking into account risk levels, as well as the distinct needs, missions, and systems of individual agencies.



The DoD Counter-Insider Threat (C-InT) Program provides leadership, management, and oversight of the policy, resources, and operational capabilities to prevent, detect, deter, and mitigate the threat posed by an insider. As part of this, the program works to ensure a well-equipped, trained, and vigilant workforce and a program/capabilities informed by social and behavioral science research.



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Introduction

Tragic events like the shootings at Columbine, Sandy Hook, and Parkland have a very low probability of occurring, but their consequences demand constant dedication to prevention. As part of previous work, the Defense Personnel and Security Research Center conducted a systematic review of academic, professional, and government publications to identify evidence-based best practices for security programs associated with active shooter prevention and response, managing threats made by students, post-crisis family reunification, and mental health interventions (Beneda et al., 2020). To help prevent school violence and keep schools safe for learning, the resulting best practices for kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) public schools are presented here. County and school district superintendents as well as other school administrators are encouraged to review their schools' safety plans for preventing and responding to school violence to ensure plans (a) are comprehensive and (b) reflect best practices in school security.

Methods

In 2019, the Defense Personnel and Security Research Center conducted a multistep assessment of security-related best practices for evaluating and improving K-12 school protection programs. The assessment included a systematic review of evidence-based best practices in U.S. public schools.

We followed a method of systematic review developed for conducting evidence-based management research (Tranfield et al., 2003) to select and analyze relevant best practices publications. These procedures ensured a logical and orderly approach to source identification, selection, and assessment. Specifically, the method informed the iterative source selection process and data extraction (e.g., key word identification). We identified student threat management, family reunification, and mental health as themes relevant to school security. The search was expanded to settle on a representative selection of current evidence-based security policy best practices for U.S. public schools.

For this study, we defined a “best practice” as a procedure that has been shown by research and experience to produce optimal results; to be actionable and objectively measurable; to be applicable to school or district-level operations; and to be either directly or indirectly relevant to protecting against, responding to, or recovering from an active shooter incident.

Our systematic review included a broad sample of published best practice documents, including major school safety commission reports, Federal guidelines, academic and professional publications, and a selection of policies from four U.S. States (i.e., Colorado, New Jersey, Virginia, and Wisconsin). We used keywords to organize the data and revised those keywords through periodic team meetings to ensure consistency of use across sources. A second researcher reviewed all entries for accuracy.



Best Practices

For this booklet, we numbered and grouped each best practice by category and subcategory and provide a brief description, including background and justification, and a list of references from which the practice was drawn. The best practices are presented in three broad categories: security management, emergency management, and threat management. Security management best practices fall into four subcategories: security policy and planning, vulnerability assessments, School Resource Officer (SRO) programs, and physical security programs. Emergency management best practices fall into six subcategories: policy and planning, preparation and training, coordination with community partners, emergency communications, post-crisis family reunification, and emergency recovery. Threat management best practices fall into three subcategories: violence prevention programs, student threat assessment team programs, and student threat assessment procedures.

Security Management

Past responses to school violence have generally focused on technical solutions and hardening school facilities. However, many experts now recognize that security is equally a human problem. School security and violence prevention policies and programs should be built holistically around “adaptive leadership strategies to build a culture and climate of safety” (Goodrum & Woodard, 2019, p. 16; Wisconsin Department of Justice [WisDOJ], 2019).

Security Policy and Planning

Best practices related to security policy and planning include establishing standards for district-level security programs and collaborating with community partners. In addition, best practices call for clearly defined security leadership expectations for school administrators and comprehensive security training for the school community. Here are three best practices for security management policy and planning.

1. District Level: The school district should appoint a dedicated security representative responsible for implementing and overseeing security personnel, policies, programs, and training within the district and to serve as liaison among the district, schools, local law enforcement, and other community partners in all matters related to school security. *References:* DHS (2018), FBI (2017), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), National Association of School Psychologists (NASP, 2015), New Jersey School Security Task Force (NJSSTF, 2015), Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS, 2018), Sandy Hook Advisory Commission (2015)

Well-managed, comprehensive district security programs will better prepare and equip school personnel to deter and intervene in potential security incidents “thus providing valuable time for professional emergency responders to arrive on scene” (NJSSTF, 2015, p. 41). Effective district and school security programs integrate security, safety, emergency preparedness, and school climate priorities and “balance efforts to promote and protect physical and psychological safety” (NASP, 2015, p. 7).



2. Community Partners: The district should oversee implementation of interagency agreements with local law enforcement agencies that establish procedures and expectations for the working relationship between the school and law enforcement and guidelines on cooperating with law enforcement for school principals and staff. *References:* Broward County League of Cities' School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Columbine Review Commission (2001), DHS (2018), FBI (2017), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC; 2018), NTAC (2019), NJSSTF (2015), U.S. Department of Education (ED, 2013), Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) & Virginia Department of Education (VDOE, 2019) WisDOJ (2019)

"Partnerships between schools and emergency response agencies will yield far greater results than anything an individual organization can achieve on its own. Schools without a law enforcement partnership cannot leverage the information, resources, and legal options available to officers. A law enforcement agency acting on its own cannot effectively assist and protect students and staff within a school. Neither schools nor law enforcement can effectively respond to critical incidents without a collaborative partnership with fire and emergency medical responders" (WisDOJ, 2019, p. 29).

Districts create agreements with local law enforcement agencies that address

- Terms and conditions governing the placement of security personnel in school buildings
- Chain of command, roles and responsibilities of security personnel, work hours, and required qualifications
- Required trainings and ongoing professional development
- Legal issues related to search and seizure, interviews of juveniles, police access to students, information sharing, and privacy restrictions
- Needs assessment of local schools by law enforcement to determine goals and scope of law enforcement involvement

3. Security Program Leadership: School administrators should provide leadership in school security; promote awareness about security; and build a security culture by facilitating education, addressing security concerns, and connecting school staff on security committees with local, State, and Federal working groups. *References:* DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), NASP (2015), National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (2017), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), WisDOJ (2019), U.S. ED (2013)

School administrators should provide leadership in school security by (WisDOJ, 2019)

- Establishing and publishing school security and safety rules
- Educating staff on school security safety principles, policies, and procedures
- Identifying and addressing areas where staff may unintentionally or unknowingly short-circuit proper security and safety procedures
- Providing professional development sessions focused on school security and safety, with follow-up refresher training and drills
- Documenting training, including the dates, content, time spent, and attendance
- Ensuring school personnel are connected with and participate in local, State, Federal, or private sector security working groups
- Providing information to the school community about security awareness information



- and specific security incidents on a recurring basis
- Ensuring all staff members are responsible for safety and security reporting, challenging unidentified visitors, and initiating the Standard Response Protocol (SRP).

Vulnerability Assessments

Best practices related to vulnerability assessments require districts and schools to establish a comprehensive vulnerability assessment program “to observe security that is currently in place, identify security deficiencies or excess, determine what level of security is needed, and finally to make recommendations for improvement to effectively control identified risks” (Fennelly & Perry, 2014, p. 4). A holistic approach to vulnerability assessment includes school-by-school evaluations of physical security, emergency preparedness, safety and health hazards, and school climate and culture. Best practice also requires a tiered approach to vulnerability reduction and cooperation between schools and districts to mitigate vulnerabilities cost-effectively. Here are six best practices for vulnerability assessments.

4. District Vulnerability Assessment Program: The district should establish holistic, district-wide vulnerability assessment standards to identify district-wide and school-specific threats and hazards based on school-by-school evaluations of physical security conditions, emergency preparedness, safety and health hazards, and school climate and culture. *References:* Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), FBI (2017), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), National Center for Education Statistics (n.d.), National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (2017), U.S. ED (2019), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

“Vulnerability assessment is a critical on-site examination to observe security that is currently in place, identify security deficiencies or excess, determine what level of security is needed, and finally to make recommendations for improvement to effectively control identified risks” (Fennelly & Perry, 2014, p. 4).

Districts develop vulnerability assessments based on

- Recognized standards such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the U.S. ED School Climate Survey
- Results of previous vulnerability assessments
- Assessments of local, State, and national trends impacting school security and safety
- Capacity of district and school risk prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery programs

5. Physical Security Assessment: The district security office should implement a school physical security assessment program to identify district-wide and school-specific threats and hazards, assess risks, and prioritize risk mitigation efforts. *References:* Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), FBI (2017), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2019), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)



A physical security assessment program allows districts and schools “to observe security that is currently in place, identify security deficiencies or excess, determine what level of security is needed, and finally to make recommendations for improvement to effectively control identified risks” (Fennelly & Perry, 2014, p. 4). Physical security assessments review both physical structures and practices because schools may not have been designed to incorporate security best practices.

6. School Safety and Health Hazards Assessment: The district occupational safety and health office should implement a school safety and health hazard assessment program, including regularly scheduled building inspections and documentation of all safety-related incidents, to identify district-wide and school-specific threats and hazards, assess risks, and prioritize risk mitigation efforts. *References:* Fennelly & Perry (2014), NASP (2015), NJSSTF (2015), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

Safety and health hazards assessments ensure compliance with occupational health and safety requirements and local fire and public safety codes. Maintaining records of all safety-related incidents, including policy violations, and using a standardized documentation method enable school leaders to categorize incidents as specifically as possible and analyze the data to identify trends and vulnerabilities.

7. Emergency Preparedness Assessment: The district emergency management office should implement a school emergency preparedness assessment program to identify district-wide and school-specific threats and hazards, assess risks, and prioritize risk mitigation efforts (see Best Practices 22–23, 24–25). *References:* Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2018), FEMA (1996), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), NJSSTF (2015), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

School districts must undertake an all-hazards approach to emergency planning and response to effectively coordinate the efforts and resources of the district, schools, and community partners. According to FEMA (1996), an all-hazards approach provides a community with “an emergency management ‘bottom line’” to focus efforts on preparedness and risk mitigation. According to the U.S. ED, district-level planning should be conducted prior to developing school emergency plans. District plans should establish consistent expectations for all schools in the district but “must also provide enough flexibility for each school to develop emergency plans that address their specific needs” (2019, p. 12).

8. School Climate Assessment: The district should implement a school climate and culture assessment program to identify district-wide and school-specific threats and hazards, assess risks, and prioritize risk mitigation efforts and to help schools identify opportunities to improve student achievement and morale, attendance, teacher satisfaction, graduation rates, and school security and discipline (see Best Practices 47–48). *References:* FBI (2017), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), NASP (2015), National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (2017), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), Vossekuil et al. (2004), WisDOJ (2019)

According to the NTAC (2019, p. 53), school safety and security depend on efforts to establish and promote “a safe school climate built on a culture of safety, respect, trust, and emotional support for students” in which school leaders “encourage communication, intervene in conflicts and bullying, and empower students to share their concerns.”



The climate assessment prioritizes problems identified in previous assessments and collects data from multiple sources, including

- Formal surveys of students, staff, and parents
- Individual and group interviews
- Evaluation of school security and safety incidents
- An external audit of discipline infractions and disciplinary actions

9. Mitigating Vulnerabilities: The district and school should adopt an all-hazards, tiered approach to vulnerability reduction. The school should identify vulnerabilities that can be mitigated with little or no cost and that may be implemented quickly. After basic vulnerabilities have been mitigated, the district should then address more costly security vulnerabilities. *References:* Fennelly & Perry (2014), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NASP, 2015, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA, 2018), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019)

Districts and schools “have an obligation to provide a reasonable level of security to mitigate risks.” Effective risk assessment and mitigation are proactive security functions that reduce controllable risks by identifying and measuring vulnerabilities that can be prioritized through an all-hazards security and emergency response program (PASS, 2018, pp. 10-11).

SRO Programs

Although at times controversial, SRO programs are generally recognized as a best practice for enhancing school violence prevention efforts. As a collaborative approach to school safety, well-structured, properly resourced, and effectively managed SRO programs are “a proven means to fulfill the statutory and constitutional duty to maintain a safe and effective learning environment.” SRO programs are able to merge information and resources of schools and local law enforcement agencies “to eliminate disruptions, reduce victimization, increase school attendance, and improve the learning environment” (National Association of School Resource Officers [NASRO], 2012, p. 7). SROs can serve as a trusted source for reporting security concerns, enhance perceptions of safety, promote anti-bullying programs, and facilitate nonviolent conflict resolution. This requires clear differentiation between the SRO’s law enforcement responsibility and the school’s disciplinary programs (NASP, 2015; WisDOJ, 2019). Here are two best practices for SRO programs.

10. Administration: Districts should coordinate with law enforcement agencies to implement SRO programs that

- Support school safety and security, student threat assessment, emergency preparedness, law-related education, and student counseling and mentoring
- Are governed by formal agreements between the district and local law enforcement agencies that clearly define the objectives of the program, officer qualifications and selection procedures, and officer roles and responsibilities

References: Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Columbine Review Commission (2001), FBI (2017), Fein et al. (2004), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Herbert (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), Nance (2016), NASP (2015), NASRO (2012), NTAC



(2018), NTAC (2019), NJSSTF (2015), Theriot and Orme (2016), U.S. ED (2019), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019)

As a collaborative approach to school safety, SRO programs are “a proven means to fulfill the statutory and constitutional duty to maintain a safe and effective learning environment.” They merge information and resources of schools and local law enforcement agencies “to eliminate disruptions, reduce victimization, increase school attendance, and improve the learning environment” (NASRO, 2012, p. 7).

Identifying the needs of individual schools requires a collaborative assessment to determine the most effective deployment of SRO program personnel and resources. Not all schools will require assignment of a full-time SRO. (FBI, 2017, p. 1)

“SROs should be among the most well-trained and well-equipped law enforcement personnel to confront active-shooters” (Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission, 2019, p. 102).

SROs are selected, with input from the school administration, based on evaluation of the candidate’s ability, interest in the position, and expertise. They require specialized training for working in a school environment in accordance with standards recommended by the FBI and NASRO.

11. Roles and Responsibilities: District SRO policy and training should be based on clearly defined roles and responsibilities that

- **Prioritize the SRO’s role in protecting the safety and security of the campus, students, and school staff; and clearly differentiate between law enforcement and school disciplinary responsibilities**
- **Encourage active SRO participation in the school community as educators and mentors**
- **Assign SROs as a member of the school’s student threat assessment team and define the SRO’s role in student threat assessment and threat mitigation actions (see Best Practices 53–55)**

References: Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Columbine Review Commission (2001), FBI (2017), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NASP (2015), NASRO (2012), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), NJSSTF (2015), U.S. ED (2013), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

Along with law enforcement responsibilities, educating students about law-related topics and mentoring students as informal counselors and role models make up the “Triad Model” of SRO responsibilities (NASRO, 2012).

Effective threat assessment programs ensure that SROs have the authority to access police and juvenile records otherwise unavailable to the school as well as to interview of out-of-school contacts (e.g., work, family, and social media accounts).

Formal agreements between district and law enforcement agencies establishing SRO programs provide clear, unambiguous guidance on the SRO’s law enforcement and security roles.



Physical Security Programs

Security management best practices require a holistic, multilayered approach to physical security that includes district-wide, campus perimeter, building exterior, and building interior protection layers. Following this approach, districts and schools develop minimum standards for each layer that address school design, deployment of security systems, and security policies and procedures. Most security processes and systems have both school- and district-level components. According to PASS, district leadership and coordination “are integral to the successful development and adoption of school safety processes, plans, technologies and procedures and for ensuring these measures are updated for consistency with evolving best practices” (2018, p. 12).

Best practices suggest the adoption of common standards for school facility architecture as well as for integrating school and district systems for emergency communications and video surveillance. In addition, districts should develop common systems, policies, and procedures for student and staff identification, visitor management, key control, ensuring security of extracurricular activities and events, and conducting persistent staff patrols of the campus perimeter and parking lot. The most critical best practice in school security is to control building and classroom doors during emergency events. Here are 10 best practices for physical security programs.

12. Physical Security Planning: The district and school should adopt a holistic, multilayered approach to physical security that includes district-wide, campus perimeter, building exterior, and building interior protection layers with

- **Minimum standards for school design, security systems, and security policies and procedures**
- **A multitiered approach for effectively implementing minimum standards ranging from baseline security to comprehensive programs**

References: DHS (2012), DHS (2018), PASS (2018), WisDOJ (2019)

“The security profession and industry has always recognized that the best approach to security is a layered approach” that addresses a broad variety of threats by providing barriers to attackers at each layer. If one layer is penetrated, other layers will continue to stop an adversary. (PASS, 2018, p. 6)

Multitiered strategies for implementing physical security protection layers incorporate standards for school design, security systems, and security policies and procedures to allow schools to more accurately identify and assess vulnerabilities and to provide a more synchronized response to security incidents. “Schools that adopt comprehensive best practices minimize the chance of serious violence and better recover from the effects of such incidents” (WisDOJ, 2019, p. 1).

13. Systems and Procedures: The district should establish architectural standards for layered security of the

- **Campus perimeter (i.e., parking, vehicle access, fencing, gates)**
- **Building exterior (i.e., entries, doors, windows, lighting, signage)**
- **Building interior (i.e., interior walls, doors, windows, and lighting)**

References: Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)



School perimeter and building exterior security are established and continuously assessed based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles to promote “territorial reinforcement” and clearly designate school property.

“Classroom and other shelter in place locations, if designed correctly, can enhance safety and security through effectively deterring and delaying adversarial behaviors” (PASS, 2018, p. 80).

14. Systems and Procedures: The district should establish district-wide security policies and standards for security and emergency communications systems that

- **Provide layered security for the campus perimeter and building interior**
- **Include the use of public address, intercom, two-way radio, duress/panic alarm, and audible/visual mass notification systems**
- **Are integrated with district, law enforcement, and first responder communication systems**

References: Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2017), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), NFPA (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

Mass notification by both audible and visual indicators (e.g., color-coded visual cues that correspond to specific threats) is more effective than audio alarms. Effective security and emergency response requires seamless communication among the district, school, law enforcement, and first responders. Detection and alarm monitoring allows more rapid response to emergency events. Accumulated monitoring data can be analyzed to identify risks to the district and individual schools and to evaluate the effectiveness of security policies, procedures, and systems (PASS, 2018).

15. Systems and Procedures: The district should establish district-wide video surveillance practices and systems for layered security of the

- **Campus perimeter (i.e., parking lot, vehicle and pedestrian entrance gate, signage indicating video monitoring)**
- **Building exterior (i.e., video intercoms at visitor entrances, interior and exterior camera coverage of all entrances)**
- **Building interior (i.e., main entrance lobby, common areas, restricted areas, and other potential areas of concern)**

References: Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Columbine Review Commission (2001), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

Video surveillance systems are “an integral component of a school’s physical security plan” and provide “deterrence, detection and, in more advanced implementations, enhanced response to a variety of daily challenges experienced at schools.... Management of video surveillance assets and use policy at the district level will help ensure the most effective use of the technology to support safety and security across facilities and the most efficient use of resources” (PASS, 2018, p. 43).

District security policies provide district-wide guidance on

- Use and data retention policies in accordance with Federal and State laws



- Information-sharing agreements with law enforcement
- Coordinated use of surveillance systems in emergency situations
- Standards for school video equipment
- Procedures for schools to conduct video monitoring

16. *Systems and Procedures*: The school should establish layered security controls of building and classroom entrances, including

- **Implementing a standard building and classroom numbering system to support first responders**
- **Implementing Lockdown and Lockout procedures**
- **Designating primary, secondary, and emergency entrances and exits**
- **Monitoring entrances and exits during critical times**
- **Controlling classroom doors during emergency events**

References: Broward County League of Cities' School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Columbine Review Commission (2001), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), Sandy Hook Advisory Commission (2015), U.S. ED (2013), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

The most critical best practice in school security is to control building and classroom doors during emergency events. "Each school should invest in a plan to secure its building perimeter with an access control system that uses a combination of electronic and mechanical locks. Mechanical locks form the base for any access control system; however, electronic systems allow for historical and/or real-time tracking of ingress through secured doors, mitigates the expense of replacement of lost keys, allows for immediate deletion of access credentials when necessary and provides a means for the immediate lockdown of doors in the system. Exterior doors should comply with appropriate locally enforced building codes for new educational occupancies, existing educational occupancies, new day care occupancies, existing day care occupancies, new business occupancies, existing business occupancies and ADA laws" (PASS, 2018, p. 72).

17. *Systems and Procedures*: The district should establish district-wide security practices and systems for key control of both mechanical locks and electronic access control systems. *References:* DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), NJSSTF (2015), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

District policies govern, track, and revoke the distribution of keys and other access credentials as necessary and include a formal authorization process for key duplication. Policies require that adoption of lock systems is coordinated with law enforcement and first responder agencies.

Schools conduct regular inventory of all keys.

All locks use a patented or restricted key system for both exterior and interior doors that protects against unauthorized duplication.

Schools have a "Knox-box" type system for law enforcement and first responders to access school master keys for both exterior and interior doors during an emergency.



School security and emergency operations plans assign key control duty to one staff member and provide clear procedures for limiting access to master keys to designated personnel.

18. Systems and Procedures: The district should establish district-wide security practices and systems for issuing identification cards to all school personnel and volunteers and to high school students.

References: Broward County League of Cities' School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

Systems for determining if a person is permitted in the school or on campus during the school day are critical to school safety and security. "Identification badges are simple and secure ways to easily determine who is supposed to be on campus if they are required to be worn visibly and presented to school staff upon request; this can be especially important to responders during emergency events, as they are not likely to be familiar with the students" (PASS, 2018, p. 27).

19. Systems and Procedures: The district should establish district-wide security practices and information systems for visitor management at all district schools. *References:* Broward County League of Cities' School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), NASP (2015), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

Enterprise-level visitor management systems streamline the visitor check-in process, track visitors across schools and over time, and provide an effective means of more accurately identifying risks posed by individual visitors (PASS, 2018, p. 26).

20. Systems and Procedures: The school should establish policies and procedures for conducting routine patrols of the campus perimeter, including parking lots. *References:* DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

School attacks frequently occur during high-traffic periods. "Increased squad or foot patrol during these times may serve to calm traffic in congested pedestrian zones as well as deter school violence" (WisDOJ, 2019, p. 31).

Routine parking security procedures include

- Monitoring by CCTV systems
- Implementing perimeter security patrols by trained staff equipped with radios
- Using color-coded parking decals with radiofrequency identification for staff and students
- Prohibiting visits to the parking lot during school hours "so that a person's presence is more likely to draw attention and warrant questioning by faculty and/or staff" (Virginia DCJS & VDOE, 2019, p. 8)
- Using shared parking lots for high school staff and students
- Prohibiting reserved parking spots for named staff to reduce risk of possible targeted attacks or vandalism

21. Systems and Procedures: The school should establish security policies and procedures for holding extracurricular activities and outdoor events. *References:* Broward County League of Cities' School and



Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2018), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security (National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security, 2019), PASS (2018), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019)

Providing security for after-school events is “made more challenging after hours by the nature of the extra-curricular activities,” such as limited staffing by school personnel, access to campus by visitors unaffiliated with the school, large crowds in confined spaces, different vehicle and pedestrian traffic patterns, and campus lighting for evening events (Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force, 2018, p. 81).

School districts may adopt policies based on the National Center for Spectator Sports *Safety and Security Best Practices Guide for Outdoor Activities and Events* (PASS, 2018).

Emergency Management

Policy and Planning

Planning guides published by the U.S. ED (2013; 2019) provide a framework for districts and schools to develop, maintain, and revise comprehensive emergency management policies and plans. This framework provides best practices for developing district and school emergency plans, preparedness assessments, emergency response procedures, and training activities for district and school personnel and resources. Here are five best practices for emergency management policy and planning.

22. District All-Hazards Emergency Plan: The district emergency management office should establish a planning team for developing, maintaining, and revising a comprehensive, emergency management policy that includes requirements for developing district and school emergency plans, preparedness assessments, emergency response procedures, and training activities for district and school personnel and resources. *References:* DHS (2018), FEMA (1996), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

According to FEMA (1996), an all-hazards approach provides a community with “an emergency management ‘bottom line’” to focus efforts on preparedness and mitigation of threats and hazards. District emergency planning teams are necessary to an all-hazards approach for effective coordination between schools and community partners to ensure integration with local, State, and Federal emergency management programs; to set parameters for district schools; and to support school efforts in developing tailored emergency plans (U.S. ED, 2019, p. 2).

23. District All-Hazards Emergency Plan: The district emergency planning team should develop, maintain, and annually revise the district-wide all-hazards emergency plan and adopt SRP as a district-wide framework for managing classroom responses to critical incidents. *References:* DHS (2018), FEMA (1996), Fennelly & Perry (2014), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), WisDOJ (2019), DHS (2018), , Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

District emergency plans are necessary for establishing common objectives and goals, identifying common threats and hazards, and providing a framework for schools to develop their own plans. District emergency plans “provide consistent expectations for schools throughout the district as well as some continuity for all district emergency operations plans. However, the district parameters must



also provide enough flexibility for each school to develop emergency plans that address their specific needs” (U.S. ED, 2019, p. 12).

“Hazard” is defined as a “natural disaster, disease outbreak, or accident.” “Threat” is defined as a “human-caused emergency, such as a crime or violence” (U.S. ED, 2019, p. 1).

The SRP is not a comprehensive emergency policy. “It is simply a classroom response enhancement for critical incidents, designed to provide consistent, clear, shared language and actions among all students, staff and first responders. SRP is being adopted by emergency managers, law enforcement, school and district administrators and emergency medical services across the country. (I Love U Guys Foundation, 2019, p. 7).

24. School All-Hazards Emergency Plan: The school should ensure that the all-hazards emergency plan addresses the following cross-cutting functional areas: hazard analysis, communications, classroom response procedures (e.g., SRPs), accounting for all persons, reunification, continuity of operations, security, recovery, and health and medical. *References:* DHS (2018), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019)

An effective emergency plan depends on the synchronized response of cross-cutting functions and relevant courses of action that must be taken before, during, and after an emergency and that are applicable to more than one threat or hazard.

25. School All-Hazards Emergency Plan: The all-hazards emergency plan should include a written, unambiguous active assailant response policy that can be initiated by all school personnel. School leaders should ensure that the active assailant response policy is understood by all school personnel, students, parents, and relevant community partners. *References:* Broward County League of Cities’ Schools and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Columbine Review Commission (2001), Everytown for Gun Safety (2019), Fennelly & Perry (2014), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), Price & Khubchandani (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

“Staff responses in the first 30 seconds of a crisis often determine the severity and outcome. Time is a precious commodity in an emergency, and if an appropriate supervisor is not immediately available to decide upon a course of action, that supervisor should have trained and entrusted his or her subordinates with the functional authority to act in their stead.” (WisDOJ, 2019)

District and school security personnel must coordinate with law enforcement to ensure that the first priority of law enforcement, including SROs, in any ongoing assault is to engage an active assailant. The school provides regular active assailant training conducted by trained law enforcement personnel for security personnel, SROs, administration, faculty, staff, and relevant community partners. There is conflicting evidence regarding the effectiveness of including students in active assailant drills (Everytown for Gun Safety, 2019; Price & Khubchandani, 2019).

Classroom doors must remain closed and locked by the teacher while classes are in session. All school staff are trained and authorized to initiate an SRP response without the approval of school administration.

26. Command and Control: District and school emergency plans should use FEMA’s Incident



Command System (ICS) as a common command structure for all stakeholders responding to a crisis to facilitate mutual understanding, coordination, and execution of emergency management strategies. *References:* Columbine Review Commission (2001), FEMA (2015), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NASP (2015), WisDOJ (2019)

Emergency response agencies across the United States use FEMA's ICS in emergency situations. ICS has proven effective in the management of large, complex, and multifaceted events.

School administrators should have a working knowledge of ICS to ensure effective coordination of resources in the implementation of the emergency plan. "To be useful during the event, the school or district personnel need to have some experience with incident command. If the school or district personnel don't exhibit any knowledge of the process, their input may be marginalized" (I Love U Guys Foundation, 2018, p. 13). The SRP and Standard Reunification Method (SRM) were developed for easy incorporation into ICS protocols.

[Preparation and Training](#)

Emergency management preparation and training best practices require districts and schools to take active measures to prepare for an emergency. This includes districts and schools identifying required emergency supplies and equipment and designating personnel responsible for stocking, inventorying, and replenishing supplies. Schools should also appoint a first aid coordinator to oversee employee first aid training requirements, ensure availability of first aid equipment and supplies, and manage first aid response procedures during emergencies. Districts should establish emergency management training standards, manage a district-wide train-the-trainer program for school emergency planning teams, and support schools' emergency plan training exercises. School emergency planning and response teams should also implement an emergency response training and drill program in partnership with the district and community partners. Here are three best practices for emergency management preparation and training.

27. Crisis Response Equipment and Supplies: District and school emergency plans should identify required emergency supplies and equipment and designate personnel responsible for stocking, inventorying, and replenishing supplies. *References:* Columbine Review Commission (2001), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), Office of Community Oriented Policing Services ([COPS] 2014), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019)

Emergency supplies are critical to a smooth emergency response, and school emergency plans must identify required supplies and equipment and the staff members responsible for maintaining them (COPS, 2014).

Schools maintain first aid equipment, including bleeding control kits and automated external defibrillators. Bleeding control kits are installed in each classroom and in common areas such as cafeterias and auditoriums. The school ensures availability of durable medical equipment such as evacuation chairs for individuals with disabilities.

28. First Aid: The school should appoint a first aid coordinator to oversee employee first aid training requirements, ensure availability of first aid equipment and supplies, coordinate the



school emergency plan with local emergency medical services protocols, and manage first aid response procedures during emergencies. *References:* Broward County League of Cities' Schools and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2017), DHS (2018), FBI (2017), Fennelly & Perry (2014), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2019)

School employees in school-based emergencies are the very first responders (PASS, 2018). A first aid station provides critical medical care to injured students and staff and serves as a staging area for medical evacuation. Immediate medical assistance can help victims recover sufficiently to be reunited with family.

The school assigns a first aid coordinator to establish a first aid station and direct the administration of first aid to injured students and school staff.

29. *Emergency Training and Drills:* District emergency management programs should establish district-wide emergency training standards, manage a district-wide training program, and support schools' emergency plan training exercises. *References:* Broward County League of Cities' Schools and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), NASP (2015), NASP (2016), PASS (2018), Sandy Hook Advisory Commission (2015), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

Training with community partners helps schools ensure consistency with common emergency management terminology. A well-developed emergency exercise program will allow "all stakeholders to become familiar with the plans and be prepared in the event of an actual emergency. Exercises provide opportunities to practice with community partners (e.g., first responders, local emergency management personnel) as well as to identify gaps and weaknesses in the plan. Additionally, exercises offer planners information as to where there are gaps in the planning or training" (U.S. ED, 2019, p. 40).

"Performing a successful reunification is much more likely when drills are conducted in advance of an incident... Going through the planning and training process may help strengthen district relationships with first responders. Often law enforcement is very active in partnering with schools and districts. Less often is the fire department. The [SRM] may be a vector into strengthening relationships with fire agencies as well." (I Love U Guys, 2018, p. 11)

Coordination with Community Partners

Emergency management depends on close coordination by both the district and school with relevant community partners. Districts should assign a liaison to each school's emergency planning and response team for coordination with law enforcement, first responder, and emergency management agencies to develop formal emergency response agreements, including incident command protocols, review of district and school emergency plans, information sharing, communications interoperability, and emergency response training and drills.

Districts should engage law enforcement or local criminal justice agencies to ensure trained victim advocates are available for onsite support following an incident. In addition, it is best practice for districts to coordinate with local hospitals and emergency medical services agencies to support medical evacuation and treatment in mass casualty incidents. District and school mental health programs should also coordinate with community service providers to integrate intensive interventions into emergency



planning and response policies and procedures. Here are four best practices for emergency management coordination with community partners.

30. Law Enforcement and First Responder Agencies: The district emergency management office should assign a liaison to each school's emergency planning and response team for coordination with law enforcement, first responder, and emergency management agencies to develop formal agreements related to emergency response and incident command protocols, review of district and school emergency plans, information sharing, communications interoperability, and emergency response training and drills. *References:* Broward County League of Cities' Schools and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Columbine Review Commission (2001), DHS (2018), FEMA (2013), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), Sandy Hook Advisory Commission (2015), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019)

Formal agreements with law enforcement and first responder agencies "are a requirement for full adherence to the SRP and should be reviewed and renewed on a scheduled basis" (I Love U Guys, 2019, p. 11).

"As schools present unique challenges to emergency responders due to size, complexity and occupants, responders require extensive amounts of detailed yet easily understandable information in the event of an attack or other emergency at a school" (PASS, 2018, p. 23).

"Schools are strongly encouraged to establish relationships [with] local emergency managers in an effort to better coordinate overall reunification efforts in the event of a large-scale or catastrophic incident. It is also recommended that schools be included in local emergency planning drills" (FEMA, 2013, pp. 12-13).

31. Law Enforcement and First Responder Agencies: Districts should coordinate with law enforcement agencies to ensure trained victim advocates are incorporated in emergency response procedures and are assigned to the incident command center to provide direct liaison to the families and friends of victims. *References:* Columbine Review Commission (2001), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), U.S. ED (2013)

"Many law enforcement agencies, district attorneys, and prosecutors have victim advocates on staff and a cadre of volunteers. They often deploy when there is a crisis. Very often they are trained in Psychological First Aid and can be helpful with crisis counseling, if needed, during a reunification." (I Love U Guys Foundation, 2018, p. 16)

Victim advocates are trained to provide emotional assistance following a crime, guide victims through future legal proceedings, assist in application for victim compensation, and provide referrals for additional victim services.

32. Medical Treatment Facilities: The district emergency management office should coordinate with local hospitals and emergency medical services agencies to support medical evacuation and treatment in mass casualty incidents and to develop appropriate medical emergency response protocols in emergency plans. *References:* Columbine Review Commission (2001), DHS (2017), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), NASP (2019), SafePlans.com (2017), U.S. ED (2013)



In large-scale emergencies, hospitals “coordinate closely with one another so that injured victims receive needed care at medical facilities best able to provide it” (Columbine Review Commission, 2001, p. 125). School emergency plans must account for local hospital and emergency medical services’ protocols for communication, transportation, and reunification.

33. *Mental Health Services:* District and school mental health programs (e.g., school counselor, psychologists, and social workers) should coordinate with community service providers to integrate intensive interventions into emergency planning and response policies and procedures. *References:* American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2019), Broward County League of Cities’ Schools and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Mental Health Colorado (2018), Sandy Hook Advisory Commission (2015), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019)

“Investment in preparing to recover from a major crisis will pay major dividends every day, even in communities fortunate enough to escape a major school or community crisis event. Meeting needs daily in schools and communities will be a major step in improving everyday functioning as well as recovery from large-scale crises.... While short-term support by mental health professionals from outside the community may be required or helpful in the immediate aftermath of a crisis event, the goal should be to transition direct services provided during the recovery process to those who are part of the impacted community or adjoining/nearby communities. With some outside support, the goal should be empowering and training providers within the school and community to ensure that the recovery is self-sustaining to the extent possible” (Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, 2015, p. 212).

Emergency Communications

During a school emergency, clear and understandable communication must occur on multiple levels, including immediate notification of the campus; ongoing communication among the school, district, and first responders; notification of parents; and provision of public information to the community and other key stakeholders. In each case, communication is most effective when done through multiple channels. Here are four best practices for emergency communications.

34. *Campus and Facilities:* The school should develop and maintain a mass notification system and standard operating procedures for alerting the campus in the event of an emergency. *References:* Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2017), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), NFPA (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

“The minimum standard of providing critical communication outside of the school building is to ensure that students and staff who are not within the building receive a clear, concise and easy-to-understand audible message” (PASS, 2018, p. 52). Minimum standards for building interior mass notification require “intelligible audible communication in all areas in which staff and students occupy a space” (PASS, 2018, p. 82). Mass notification by both audible and visual indicators (e.g., color-coded visual cues that correspond to specific threats) is more effective than audio alarms. Emergency communications systems use multiple platforms and formats and should not be overly reliant on app-based notifications, as schools may limit student access to mobile devices.



35. Community Partners: The district and school emergency communications plans should establish standards for interagency emergency communications protocols, emergency response procedures, and post-crisis communication. *References:* DHS (2017), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

Effective security and emergency response requires seamless communication among the district, school, law enforcement, and first responders. District and school emergency plans address technical requirements for integrating school communications systems with local first responders and emergency management networks. District and school emergency plans include training standards for school staff to operate communications equipment. School emergency plans provide standard operating procedures for implementing a comprehensive emergency communications plan, including guidance for communicating with law enforcement and first responders in all SRP actions. The school's mass notification system is networked to allow district-wide communication to school facilities.

36. Parents: The district should develop a detailed emergency communications plan based on the SRP and SRM for parental notification and develop protocols and templates for emergency notification via multiple communications platforms. *References:* DHS (2017), DHS (2018), FEMA (2013), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), I Love U Guys Foundation (2019), NASP (2019), COPS (2014), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019), WisDOJ (2019)

“Circumstances may occur at the school that require parents to pick up their students in a formalized, controlled release. This process is called a Reunification and may be necessary due to weather, a power outage, hazmat or if a crisis occurs at the school. The [SRM] is a protocol that makes this process more predictable and less chaotic for all involved.” (I Love U Guys Foundation, 2018, p. 28)

37. Public Information: The district should develop standard protocols and templates for managing public information following an emergency via multiple communications platforms. *References:* DHS (2017), FEMA (2013), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), NASP (2019), COPS (2014), SafePlans.com (2017), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019)

“Emergency communications are most effective when they can be transmitted across multiple channels; however, it’s important to ensure the most effective mechanisms received the highest implementation priority.... People best responded to communication in the following order: phone call from a known person; live voice communication through a public address system; social media notification.... Using multiple emergency communications methods supports an all-hazards approach to safety and security.” (PASS, 2018, p. 83)

Post-Crisis Family Reunification

Districts must coordinate with law enforcement and first responders to provide support at both the school and reunification sites for staging-area security, perimeter control, route safety and security,



casualty collection, and collection of personal belongings. Districts should also integrate district reunification procedures with local hospital plans to provide information, support services, and reunification assistance to family members of patients. Individual schools must establish site-specific reunification management procedures, including

- The locations of reunification sites with alternate sites for emergency-specific contingencies
- An onsite command center, student staging area, and parent check-in area
- Procedures for controlled lines of sight and pedestrian flows to ensure lines of students and parents/guardians do not cross
- Protocols for special needs children and staff (e.g., accessible staging area, special medications)

Here are three best practices for post-crisis family reunification.

38. SRM: Districts and schools should adopt the SRM as a common framework within the all-hazards emergency plan for post-crisis family reunification at all schools. *References:* FEMA (2013), I Love You Guys Foundation (2018), I Love You Guys Foundation (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NASP (2019), COPS (2014)

In U.S. public schools, districts, rather than schools, manage the reunification process because “training can be more readily coordinated, experienced teams are more proficient, [and] school based teams may initially be unavailable” (I Love U Guys Foundation, 2018, p. 16).

39. Law Enforcement and First Responders: The district reunification team should coordinate with law enforcement and first responders to provide support at both the school and reunification sites for staging-area security, sexual offender identification, perimeter control, route safety and security, traffic control, collection of personal belongings, and casualty collection. *References:* FEMA (2013), I Love You Guys Foundation (2018), I Love You Guys Foundation (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NASP (2019), COPS (2014)

Law enforcement and first responders are significant participants during school incident response. Coordinating with them will ensure that appropriate support for public safety and security is received during lockout, lockdown, evacuation, and reunification.

40. Medical Treatment Facilities: The school district should coordinate with community partners to integrate district reunification procedures with local hospital plans to provide information, support services, and reunification assistance to family members of patients who present to the hospital following a mass casualty incident or disaster. *References:* American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) & Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Disaster Medicine (2018), Coyote Crisis Collaborative (2017), FEMA (2013), Los Angeles County Operational Area (2014), Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council (2017)

“Disaster events that involve reunifying large numbers of children with their families present considerations that extend beyond the hospital’s walls. News media, schools, law enforcement, public health, emergency managers, and many others are likely to be involved in the response, depending on the specific nature of the incident. Because of this likelihood, it is essential that hospitals work with all



their appropriate community stakeholders to harmonize their plan and to make the most efficient possible use of available resources.” (AAP & Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Disaster Medicine, 2018)

Emergency Recovery

The U.S. ED recommends that district and school emergency plans include short- and long-term recovery plans. Recovery planning ensures that districts and schools have the capabilities necessary to restore the learning environment after an emergency and “represents a commitment, even prior to an emergency, to providing emotional and mental health services and supports to all members of the community” (2013, p. 54). Short-term continuity of operations plans ensures that essential functions continue during an emergency and its immediate aftermath and provide guidance for managing recovery efforts, maintaining student safety and well-being, and ensuring that students receive continuing services in the event of a prolonged closure. Long-term recovery plans address academic, physical, fiscal, and psychological and emotional recovery. Here are six best practices for emergency recovery.

41. *Continuity of Operations and Recovery Planning:* District and school emergency plans should establish short- and long-term recovery plans to address academic, physical, fiscal, and psychological/emotional recovery. References: DHS (2017), DHS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019)

Recovery planning ensures that districts and schools have the capabilities to restore the learning environment after an emergency. Recovery planning, as part of building a positive school climate, “represents a commitment, even prior to an emergency, to providing emotional and mental health services and supports to all members of the community” (U.S. ED, 2013, p. 54).

42. *Continuity of Operations and Recovery Planning:* The district and school emergency plans should establish continuity of operations plans to ensure that essential functions continue up to 30 days following an emergency. References: DHS (2017), DHS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. ED (2019)

The district and school must ensure that essential functions continue during an emergency and its immediate aftermath to manage recovery efforts, maintain the safety and well-being of students and the learning environment, and ensure that students receive applicable related services in the event of a prolonged closure (U.S. ED, 2019, p. 70).

43. *Student Support Services:* Districts should adopt evidence-based mental health intervention models for use by schools in the immediate aftermath of an emergency and for short-term and ongoing psychological and emotional recovery efforts. Districts should ensure trained personnel and resources are available for the proactive response to trauma reactions by students, staff, family, and school partners. References: Broward County League of Cities’ Schools and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Brymer et al. (2012), DHS (2017), Everly & Lating (2019), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Litz et al. (2002), NASP (2019), National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN, 2010), NCTSN (n.d.), Oosterbaan et al. (2019), Sandy Hook Advisory Commission (2015), U.S. ED (2013)

The psychological impact of active shooter or other violence incidents differs for each affected individual (DHS, 2017). Various levels of care are needed to address the spectrum of responses, but evidence shows that early interventions can reduce the severity of trauma responses such as post-traumatic stress disorder (see, for example, Oosterbaan et al., 2019). Disaster survivors experience a



broad range of reactions (e.g., physical, psychological, behavioral, and spiritual) over differing periods of time. Although some individuals need referral for treatment after an event, research suggests that a skills-building approach is more effective than support counseling for most (NCTSN, 2010). For many children, schools offer the only real possibility of accessing services, so districts should increase the availability of school guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other school health and behavioral health professionals during and after school as well as potentially on Saturdays (Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, 2015).

The U.S. ED (2013, 2019) recommends Psychological First Aid for Schools (PFA-S) as an evidence-based mental health intervention model for use by schools in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. Districts and school emergency plans integrate PFA-S (or other intervention models) in emergency response procedures, including the SRP and SRM. Districts and schools designate district and school staff for PFA-S training and crisis response roles, including administrators, teachers, counselors, psychologists, and SROs. Schools initiate PFA-S immediately following or during an incident to reduce the initial distress caused by emergencies. The goal of PFA-S is to reduce the “initial distress caused by emergencies, and to foster short- and long-term adaptive functioning and coping” (Brymer et al., 2012).

Schools and community service agencies should implement Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR) following an emergency incident. SPR is an evidence-informed intervention designed to follow PFA-S. The goal of SPR is to help children, adolescents, adults, and families develop skills to reduce ongoing distress and effectively cope in the weeks and months following a disaster. SPR is not formal mental health treatment but rather a secondary prevention model that uses skills-building components that have been found to be helpful in a variety of post-trauma situations.

44. Student Support Services: District mental health programs should implement ongoing training and professional development for teachers and school personnel to integrate trauma-informed principles in teaching and interaction with students. *References:* Broward County League of Cities’ Schools and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Mental Health Colorado (2018), NASP (2016), National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS, 2018), NTAC (2018), Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2015)

It is important for teachers and school personnel to incorporate trauma-informed principles into their work because a child’s ability to cope is significantly undermined after witnessing one or more overwhelmingly stressful events such as a school shooting or violence between caretakers. Traumatic experiences in one’s childhood can diminish concentration, memory, and other abilities students need to succeed in school and can lead to poor coping skills, substance abuse, and smoking. Once schools understand the educational impacts of trauma, they can become safe, supportive environments where students make positive connections with adults and peers, manage their trauma symptoms so they can behave appropriately, and feel confident to learn.

45. Employee Support Services: District and school post-crisis recovery plans should provide for comprehensive employee support services to help school staff return to normal in their daily interactions and professional life. *References:* Bright (2020), DHS (2017), I Love U Guys Foundation (2018), Mental Health Colorado (2018), Office for Victims of Crime (2015), Sandy Hook Advisory Commission (2015)



The goal of immediate employee counseling services after an emergency incident is to get people affected by an incident to a baseline emotional well-being as quickly as possible. Returning to work before adequate recovery time has passed can prolong or worsen recovery from these injuries. After an emergency incident, employees and their families may be overwhelmed by the emotional or physical side effects they are experiencing. In addition, employees and their families may not be aware of the resources available to support their recovery physically, emotionally, or financially from an incident.

Some active shooter incidents may result in criminal or civil trials. As the case moves through the criminal justice system, victims and family members will need help with understanding and navigating the criminal justice system and/or emotional support (Office for Victims of Crime, 2015). Victim assistance programs provide legal representation in the criminal justice process, resources to meet victims' physical and psychological needs, and opportunities for victims to successfully reintegrate into society as restored individuals (Bright, 2020).

46. Memorials: District and school emergency recovery plans should address commemorations, vigils, memorial activities, and permanent memorials and include plans for managing donations in the wake of a crisis. *References:* Broward County League of Cities' School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), DHS (2017), Sandy Hook Advisory Commission (2015), U.S. ED (2013)

"Recovery plans include provisions addressing bereavement and meaning-making through memorialization and commemoration activities so that communities can approach these proactively. Without such forethought, critical decisions about elements of the recovery process are often made under great stress and less than optimal approaches [are] taken" (Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, 2015, p. 203).

Threat Management

Violence Prevention Programs

The purpose of a threat management program is to identify and intervene in the progression from violent ideation to violent behavior. Violence prevention depends on creating an environment in which that progression is less likely to occur and that encourages opportunities for intervention. For schools, this is achieved through developing a positive school climate and a culture of safety, trust, respect, and social and emotional support. The PBIS model is an evidence-based approach to maintaining positive school climate, culture, and behavioral supports for students and has been shown to reduce school bullying rates and exclusionary discipline (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2015). Here are six violence prevention program best practices.

47. School Climate Management: District and school violence prevention efforts should revolve around school climate management programs to build positive and trusting relationships with students and a culture of safety, trust, respect, and social and emotional support. *References:* ASCA (2019), FBI (2017), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Mental Health Colorado (2018), NASP (2015), NASP (2016), National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (2017), NTAC (2019), NJSSTF (2015), PASS (2018), U.S. ED (2013), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019), Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2015)



Efforts by schools to promote a climate in which students “feel safe, supported, challenged, and accepted” will help schools boost student achievement and morale, increase attendance, improve teacher satisfaction, improve graduation rates, and improve school safety and discipline (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, 2017, p. 1).

48. *School Climate Management*: Districts and schools should consider adopting the PBIS model, an evidence-based, multidisciplinary approach to building a positive school climate and culture by providing multitiered behavioral supports for students that has been shown to reduce school bullying rates and exclusionary discipline while improving academic outcomes. *References*: Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2017), Feinberg (2003), Lee (n.d.), NASP (2016), National Technical Assistance Center on PBIS (2018), NTAC (2018), U.S. ED (2013), WisDOJ (2019), Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2015)

Maintaining a safe school climate includes providing students with training or lessons to acquire skills and abilities to manage emotions, resolve conflicts, cope with stress, seek help, and engage in positive social interactions (NTAC, 2018).

PBIS is a “prevention-based framework for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral supports and interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students” (Colorado School Safety Resource Center, 2017, p. 21).

49. *Anti-Bullying*: Schools should consider implementing a comprehensive anti-bullying program that is fully integrated in classroom, disciplinary, and student support services policies and provides faculty and staff training for safely intervening in the event of bullying, name-calling, or gossiping. *References*: Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2017), Columbine Review Commission (2001), Feinberg (2003), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Lee (n.d.), NASP (2015), National Center for Safe Supportive Learning Environments (2017), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), NJSSTF (2015), Sandy Hook Advisory Commission (2015), U.S. ED (2013), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2017), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019)

The NTAC found that, in cases of targeted school violence, most attackers “were bullied by their classmates, and for over half of the attackers the bullying appeared to be of a persistent pattern which lasted for weeks, months, or years. It is critical that schools implement comprehensive programs designed to promote safe and positive school climates, where students feel empowered to report bullying when they witness it or are victims of it, and where school officials and other authorities act to intervene” (2019, p. iv).

50. *“Code of Silence”*: District and school violence prevention efforts should break the “code of silence” by promoting student reporting as a positive intervention to support at-risk students. *References*: Colorado Office of the Attorney General (2019), Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), Columbine Review Commission (2001), FBI (2017), Fennelly & Perry (2014), NASP (2015), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), PASS (2018), Pollack et al. (2008), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

“Providing students with a means to anonymously report bullying, while also ensuring that all students have at least one positive relationship with a school staff member, will help to encourage students to



share actionable information when they observe incidents of bullying at school” (NTAC, 2019, p. 35).

51. Violence Awareness: The district should develop and schools should implement appropriate violence awareness training for students, teachers, and other school community members to recognize concerning behaviors and how to report them. *References:* Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), Columbine Review Commission (2001), DHS (2018), FBI (2017), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Mental Health Colorado (2018), NASP (2015), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), PASS (2018), Pollack et al. (2008), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

Violence prevention and early intervention depend on individuals recognizing, and knowing to report, indicators of potentially violent behavior (Pollack et al., 2008). Targeted violence is the end result of thoughts and behaviors that “begins with an idea (i.e., to use violence to address a real or perceived grievance), progresses to development of a plan, moves on to preparation (e.g., acquiring the means (e.g., weapons, training, capacity, access) to carry out the plan, and culminates in an attack.” Each step in this process may provide opportunities for others to observe and intervene before the subject takes violent action. “However, information is likely to be scattered and fragmented.... The challenge, and the key, is to act quickly upon initial reports of concern, gather other pieces of the puzzle, and assemble them to determine what picture emerges.” (Virginia DCJS, 2016, pp. 15-16)

52. Mental Health Awareness: District and school violence prevention efforts should recognize schools as essential providers in “comprehensive and coordinated systems of care in which behavioral health and physical health are understood as highly interrelated, are given equal priority, and are part of a holistic approach to wellness that sees the individual in the context of the family and broader community.” Schools should serve as sites for prevention and early intervention services and for psychoeducation (Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, 2015, pp. 82-83). *References:* AAP (2016), ASCA(2019), Mental Health Colorado (2018), National Association of School Nurses (2018), NASP (2013), NASP (2015), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2012), Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2015)

The AAP estimates that only 10% to 40% of students needing behavioral health services receive them (AAP, 2016; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2012).

“For adolescents and adults facing mental health diagnoses, effective psychoeducation of both individuals and families can promote acceptance and decrease stigma. Psychoeducation involves structured programs in which individuals and families are educated about mental illness and its treatment, and strategies are given for handling typical challenges that might arise in association with a particular condition. The goal of such programs is to recognize that someone whom they might consider ‘different’ or ‘odd’ may in fact need help. Participants learn ways to connect with an individual in need and to empower that person to seek help. Above all, such programs need to incorporate a model of wellness rather than focus primarily on illness.” (Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, 2015, p. 147)

Student Threat Assessment Team Programs

The core of a school’s threat management program is the student threat assessment team. The student threat assessment team should be a highly trained, multidisciplinary team of permanent and ad hoc



members tasked to reduce the risk of violence in schools by investigating concerning behaviors exhibited by students, assessing the student for risk of violence, and creating a plan to mitigate those risks. Schools establish student threat assessment teams composed of a core group of trained members who understand the methods and framework of student threat assessment. They are supported by ad hoc members who have close personal knowledge of the students involved or who are district or community partners who can fulfill specialized student threat assessment needs. Here are five best practices for student threat assessment team programs.

53. *Membership and Training:* The school should establish a locally based, multidisciplinary student threat assessment team or Crisis Management Team (CMT). The CMT is composed of a core group of trained members and identifies and establishes relationships with other district or community partners who can fulfill specialized student threat assessment needs. *References:* Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), DHS (2018), FBI (2017), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019)

A CMT is intended to reduce the risk of violence in schools by investigating concerning behaviors exhibited by students, assessing the student for risk of violence, and creating a plan to mitigate those risks. To be effective, the CMT requires a core group of trained members who understand the methods and framework of student threat assessment. This group processes case information, investigates claims, conducts assessments, creates case mitigation plans, and completes administrative tasks. Rotating membership is not advised for a CMT because student threat assessment skills require experience in the same position for an extended period of time.

Ad hoc CMT members with close personal knowledge of the students involved in an assessment represent a cross section of the school community. Ad hoc members know resources and information sources that can be engaged to conduct a full student threat assessment. Ad hoc members' value comes from close, personal knowledge of students. Ad hoc members should be aware of the CMT's purpose but do not require student threat assessment training. District and community partners provide the CMT with case-specific professional consultation in specialized fields, including mental health, social work, special education, law, or juvenile justice.

54. *Membership and Training:* The district should create policies and procedures that establish

- **Clear functional roles and responsibilities for CMT core members**
- **Training requirements for CMT membership, an onboarding process for new members, onboarding and training materials for ad hoc members, and a training schedule for current members**

References: Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), DHS (2018), Fennelly & Perry (2014), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), NASRO (n.d.), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), NJSSTF (2015), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

The district is best suited to create guidance for CMT functional roles and responsibilities for schools because it has the authority to set standards and promulgate them across the district. Assignment and training for functional roles for CMT members are necessary for effective program management. Any core member of the CMT can fill these roles provided they have the skills necessary to carry out their



functions. It is recommended that CMT members stay in their roles for at least 1 year to gain proficiency in that function.

Given the high stakes involved in student threat assessment and threat management, CMT members must be properly trained. Further, it takes time for CMT members to gain experience in student threat assessment and threat management. Losing trained CMT members could expose the school and the district to unnecessary risks of violence. The district is best suited to promulgate standards for training and professionalization across their district.

55. *Membership and Training:* District SRO policy should assign SROs as members of the school's CMT and define the SRO's role in student threat assessment and mitigation actions (see Best Practices 10–11). References: Broward County League of Cities' School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), FBI (2017), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NASP (2015), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), NJSSTF (2015), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

SROs have the authority to “access police and juvenile records otherwise unavailable to the school and may assist with and/or perform interviews of out-of-school situations such as work, family, and social media accounts. Furthermore, if the threat assessment evolves to a potential criminal investigation, the SRO does not require permission from the parent or guardian to interview the student.” (WisDOJ, 2019, p. 31)

56. *Information Handling and Sharing:* The district should establish clear procedures and legal guidance regarding the collection and handling of student threat assessment information by the CMT, including sharing of student information with relevant community partners. References: Broward County League of Cities' School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), NTAC (2019), U.S. ED (2013), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

Information sharing can introduce significant liability for the district and involved partners, especially regarding the collection and sharing of a minor's information. Consultation with district legal counsel to determine which types of student threat assessment information require parental permission to collect or share will eliminate uncertainty and allow CMTs to operate with more confidence when they interact with parents and outside partners.

57. *Threat Categorization and Thresholds:* The district should establish common terminologies for student threat assessment and, in partnership with law enforcement, develop and maintain clear, plain-language guidance for behavioral risk categories that establish a clear link between the behavior and the threat of violence that the behavior presents. References: Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), FBI (2017), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), NTAC (2019), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

According to the NTAC (2018, p. 4), schools must establish clear policies defining behaviors that warrant immediate intervention, including threats or acts of violence, bringing weapons to school, bullying and harassment, and other concerning or criminal behaviors. School policies should define a range of behavioral indicators that may be less immediate risks but that require reporting and



intervention.

A common set of core concepts that are clearly defined and understood by all CMT members is critical to any threat management program. Misunderstanding of core concepts, procedures, and terms can lead to unmitigated risks to the school environment. The district is best suited to take the lead in creating and promulgating a common terminology and framework to ensure that there is common understanding among its schools. The district is better resourced than individual schools and will have a cross-district understanding of challenges and resources available. The district also has a better opportunity to ensure consistency across schools and improve CMT interoperability.

Student Threat Assessment Procedures

Procedures for responding to a potential threat include investigation, assessing the threat, and developing an appropriate plan to mitigate the threat and corresponding risks. For effective threat management, “the central question in a threat assessment inquiry or investigation is whether a student poses a threat, not whether the student has made a threat” (Fein et al., 2004, p. 29). Student threat assessments should therefore gather as much relevant information as possible.

To support the investigation process, districts should develop interview guides and templates based on student threat assessment protocols for interviews with the person who reports the threat, the student of concern, other students, school staff, and parents. Districts should also maintain common standards for conducting searches and seizures of student belongings, including searches of lockers, classrooms, and the parking lot, and provide clear guidance for handling and tracking dangerous confiscated items for student threat assessment purposes. Here are six best practices for student threat assessment procedures.

58. Reporting and Intake: The district should develop clear policies and procedures for CMTs to conduct initial inquiries to assess whether a report of violence should be closed, investigated, escalated, and/or referred to law enforcement. *References:* FBI (2017), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

Because the student threat assessment and management process can be long and laborious, it is important for the CMT to have a triage process through which no-risk, low-risk, or high-risk reports can be categorized and resources properly allocated. Each report does not require the convening of a full CMT, but there should be an initial assessment process that determines the level of risk of violence. The initial assessment should identify positive evidence of a lack of threat instead of assuming that the absence of information means the absence of a threat. An initial assessment will help the CMT make an informed decision on how to proceed and use members’ time appropriately.

59. Investigation Procedures: The district should develop clear policies and procedures for CMTs to investigate potentially violent behavior and collect necessary information to effectively assess and mitigate risk and develop interview guides and templates based on student threat assessment protocols for interviews with the person who reports the threat, the student of concern, other students, school staff, and parents. *References:* Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), FBI (2017), Fein et al. (2004), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)



“The central question in a threat assessment inquiry or investigation is whether a student poses a threat, not whether the student has made a threat” (Fein et al., 2004, p. 29).

Student threat assessment is meant to make a risk determination, not to assume risk and build a case against the student. As such, all information about the student, including prosocial factors, should be included in any assessment. All information gathered and stored by the CMT should be directly relevant to making a student threat assessment. Any information that does not help build context around behaviors, explain motivations, or help make a risk determination should not be gathered or stored.

60. Investigation Procedures: The district should consider establishing district-wide policies and procedures for conducting searches and seizures of student belongings, including searches of lockers, classrooms, and student vehicles on campus. Search and seizure policies should address use of search and seizure for criminal justice and student threat assessment purposes, including procedures for handling and tracking dangerous confiscated items. *References:* Broward County League of Cities’ School and Community Public Safety Task Force (2018), Columbine Review Commission (2001), DHS (2018), FBI (2017), Fennelly & Perry (2014), NASP (2015), NTAC (2018), NJSSTF (2015), Virginia DCJS & VDOE (2019), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

A school administrator’s ability to search a student and their belongings falls under the legal standard of reasonable suspicion rather than probable cause.

Districts develop clear procedures for handling and tracking dangerous confiscated items based on legal requirements in the specific jurisdiction. Schools record confiscation of dangerous items in the student threat assessment case management system.

61. Risk Assessment: The district should develop behavior-based risk assessment protocols that have proven reliable for assessing a student’s risk of harm to self or others, including an iterative approach to determining the full context of the risk-concerning behavior by assessing student motives and goals of violence, capability to carry out the threat (e.g., access to weapons), risk factors, and protective factors. *References:* Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), FBI (2017), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

To make a full student threat assessment, the CMT must examine the whole context surrounding the reported behavior. Without context, such as the student’s level of emotional development, it will be difficult for the CMT to estimate the actual risk of the student. Context, such as motives or social situation, provides valuable information concerning student behavior.

Student threat assessment is an iterative process, and the CMT must be prepared to reassess as new information becomes available. Motives and capability are the two most essential parts of student threat assessment because they provide context as to why the student may be pursuing violence as well as their ability to carry out a threat. Risk factors and protective factors should be considered in the context of whether they increase or decrease the risk of violence.

62. Case Management: The district should consider developing and maintaining an individualized case management system that tracks a student threat assessment case report from intake to resolution. The district should use electronic software or a database that can collect, access, or store case



management information in accordance with State and Federal privacy laws. *References:* Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), FBI (2017), NTAC (2019), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

“A well-documented record provides baseline information and can be useful if the student comes to authorities’ attention again, or if, at some point in the future, investigators or school personnel need to determine whether the subject has changed patterns of thinking and behavior. This documentation can also be an asset in demonstration that a threat assessment process was conducted properly and in compliance with applicable laws, policies, and procedures.” (Colorado School Safety Resource Center, 2019, p. 16)

63. Mitigation Management Plan: The CMT should create an individualized mitigation plan for each student presenting a risk of violence that reduces the subject’s risk of violent behavior, protects the targets of threats, addresses social and environmental risks and mitigating factors, and supports all involved students in the successful reintegration of the subject in the school community. *References:* ASCA (2016), Colorado School Safety Resource Center (2019), Goodrum & Woodward (2019), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (2019), Mental Health Colorado (2018), NTAC (2018), NTAC (2019), Virginia DCJS (2016), WisDOJ (2019), WisDOJ, Office of School Safety (2019)

Effective risk mitigation requires the CMT to determine specific risk factors that can be mitigated and to develop an individualized mitigation plan. Incidents involving multiple students or victims require an individualized plan for each. Victims may be at risk of violence after an incident as well as the students displaying concerning behavior. Those who have experienced some wrong may hold onto the grievance and want to retaliate. Individualized mitigation plans help reduce the threat of violence from all parties involved in an incident.

Conclusion

We identified the best practices included in this booklet after reviewing dozens of published reports and checklists related to school violence and associated incidents. Schools and school districts should review each best practice and identify and take appropriate actions to address gaps in their current programs. Further details on these best practices and how to implement them can be found in the references cited throughout.



List of Acronyms

AAP	American Academy of Pediatrics
ASCA	American School Counselor Association
CMT	Crisis Management Team
COPS	Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
DCJS	Department of Criminal Justice Services
ED	U.S. Department of Education
ICS	Incident Command System
NASP	National Association of School Psychologists
NASRO	National Association of School Resource Officers
NCTSN	National Child Traumatic Stress Network
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NJSSTF	New Jersey School Security Task Force
NTAC	National Threat Assessment Center
PASS	Partner Alliance for Safer Schools
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
PFA-S	Psychological First Aid for Schools
SPR	Skills for Psychological Recovery
SRM	Standard Reunification Method
SRO	School Resource Officer
SRP	Standard Response Protocol
VDOE	Virginia Department of Education
WisDOJ	Wisconsin Department of Justice



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