Critical Incident Response Booklet
Recommendations for Schools, Law Enforcement and Emergency Responders

Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security

www.homelandsecurity.ok.gov
From The Director

Threat Assessments in Public Schools

Background

School violence remains one of the most pressing concerns across the United States. Oklahoma has a particular history with school violence. The May 1998 school shooting in Ft. Gibson remains the state’s gruesome highlight. The May 1998 shooting resulted in a total of five nonlethal causalities and was committed by a 13 year-old seventh grader. The Ft. Gibson shooting, though tragic, has been replaced in the national consciousness by the Columbine High School Shooting in Littleton, Colorado and most recently the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting in Newtown, Connecticut. Despite this, Oklahoma still faces a wide-range of school violence challenges. Considerable effort has been put toward understanding and reducing violence in schools across the nation. One of the key sources of information regarding threat assessment and violence in schools remains the joint work of the United States Department of Education and the United States Secret Service. This document entitled Threat Assessment in Schools: a Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates, along with the 2002 final report and findings of the Safe School Initiative provide a starting point for undertaking threat assessments and understanding school violence.

The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative Offers ten key findings:

- Most Violent incidents were planned in advance
- Other people frequently knew about the impending attack
- Direct threats of violence were rare
- No profile exists for the “usual” violent student
- Attackers frequently engaged in activity prior to event that caused concern
- Inability to deal with failure or loss was a frequent trait in attackers; as was a history of thoughts of suicide
- Attackers often had grievances against other students, usually in the form of bullying or persecution
- Attackers often had a history of having access to weapons
- In many attacks other students were involved in some capacity
- Shootings were often stopped by personnel other than law enforcement
# Table of Contents

"A Critical Incident Video"

## Introduction
- Readiness
  - School Administrators
  - Lockdown and Evacuation Procedures
  - Law Enforcement
  - Emergency Responders
  - Sample Map
  - How To Make It Work
- Response
  - The Clock is Ticking: Handling The First Twenty Minutes
  - Managing the Aftermath of the Incident
  - Recommended Items for the Kit
- Forms
  - Critical Incident Response Kit Checklist
  - School Incident Command System Assignment

---

**Introduction** ........................................................................................................... 4

**Readiness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Administrators</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lockdown and Evacuation Procedures</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Responders</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Map</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How To Make It Work</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Response**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Clock is Ticking: Handling The First Twenty Minutes</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing the Aftermath of the Incident</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Items for the Kit</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Forms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Incident Response Kit Checklist</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Incident Command System Assignment</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the likelihood of a violent school incident taking place is extremely low, school administrators, law enforcement agencies and emergency responders (e.g., fire and rescue personnel) must prepare for such a situation. This booklet and its accompanying video are designed to assist schools, law enforcement agencies and emergency services agencies in putting together the tools for responding to a critical incident at a school. For purposes of this booklet, the term “critical incident” is defined as an active shooter on campus.

This booklet is presented in two sections: Readiness and Response. And, it recommends a method for creating a critical incident response plan to meet the specific needs of each school. By working together and following these steps, the three major groups — school administrators, law enforcement agencies and emergency responders — can prepare for the possibility of a critical incident.

Readiness

This booklet discusses readiness for school administrators, law enforcement officials and emergency responders through three components: manpower, material and method. Most importantly, the readiness section recommends assembling a kit, which should include seventeen important items. It concludes with recommending how school officials, law enforcement officers and emergency responders should collaborate and practice their plan.

Response

Because response means carrying out the critical incident response plan, this section provides a checklist for principals, teachers, law enforcement officials and emergency responders to use during the first twenty minutes of a critical incident. Remember, however, these recommended responses should not replace common sense and experience. Next, this booklet discusses how the three major groups should manage the aftermath of an incident once the intruder has been apprehended.

Although these recommendations represent the best practices for handling a critical incident, new best practices become available on an ongoing basis. Thus, this plan should always be viewed as a living document. After initial completion, the plan should be updated on a regular basis.

Creating a critical incident response plan requires bringing together school administrators, law enforcement officials and emergency responders. And, it requires that each group know the roles and responsibilities of the other groups involved.
Readiness: School Officials

Introduction
Readiness means planning and preparing before an actual critical incident occurs. Readiness involves three key components or the “3m’s”: (1) manpower, (2) material and (3) method. In this phase, school administrators, in conjunction with law enforcement officials and emergency responders, should develop a tailor-made critical incident plan to meet the specific safety needs of their school.

Manpower

System-Level Crisis Planning Committee
Assemble a system-level Crisis Planning Committee. The superintendent or his/her designee should oversee a System-Level Crisis Planning Committee. The Committee should function to assist the School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team (see below) in establishing a lockdown procedure verbal code, coordinating drills and practices of the plan, and allocating all needed resources. This committee should be comprised of state and local agencies, particularly law enforcement agencies, fire and emergency medical agencies and school administrators.

School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team
Assemble a School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team. The School Centered Critical Incident Response Team should be comprised of school administrators, teachers, local law enforcement officials, facility personnel, school psychologist, parents, fire department officials and emergency medical responders. This team should develop a plan to respond to a critical incident, and the plan should be integrated with the local emergency response system (see Manpower: Incident Command System on this page).

Critical Incident Response Kit
Appoint a staff person to be primarily responsible for the kits. The Critical Incident Response Team should appoint a school staff person, preferably an assistant principal, to be responsible for gathering the components for two kits, one primary and one backup, and maintaining them.

Assign two other persons responsible for the kits. Two additional people should be assigned responsibility for the kits because the primary person responsible for the kits may not be at school during a critical incident. There should always be someone on the school campus with knowledge and access to the kits.

National Incident Command System (NIMS)
Complete the School Incident Command system assignments form. The National Incident Command System is a nationally recognized system designed to handle emergency situations. The major idea behind this system is that every emergency, no matter how large or small, requires that certain tasks or functions be performed. NIMS provides the flexibility to rapidly activate and establish an organizational form around the functions that need to be performed. The five functions under the system are: (1) management, (2) planning, (3) operations, (4) logistics and (5) finance and administration. School administrators should complete the School Incident Command System Assignment form found on page 20.

Assign two alternate persons to each Incident Command System position. School administrators should also identify two other persons for each Incident Command System Position.
Readiness: School Officials cont...

Incident Command System cont...

Know the National Incident Command System for lawn enforcement officials and emergency responders School administrators should meet with law enforcement officials and emergency responders in order to understand the Incident Command System for these agencies. By completing the School Incident Command System Assignment form, school administrators can communicate more effectively with these response agencies because of the similar roles described and common terminology. Also, this meeting will familiarize school administrators with the chain of command. As a general rule, if a criminal act has been committed, law enforcement has overall command. School officials should contribute logistical support, and fire and rescue should deal with safety issues.

Material

Critical Incident Response Kit
Purchase another container for a back-up kit. The containers should be clearly marked with the enclosed decals found in the package. Also, the School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team should purchase another container for back-up kit.

Gather and put items in the kits. A list of recommended items to be placed in the kits is found on page 18 of this book.

Complete the Critical Incident Response Kit Checklist form. The primary person responsible for the kits should fill out the Critical Incident Response Kit Checklist form on page 19 and update the form at least once a year, but preferably every semester. This checklist should be taped inside the kit’s cover.

Provide law enforcement officials and emergency responders with critical information. A number of the items placed in the kits should be provided to law enforcement officials and emergency responders. This will ensure that these agencies have access to important information in case access is not available to either of the school’s kits.

Method

Critical Incident Response Kit
Ensure both kits are readily accessible. One kit should be placed in the main office of the school, which will most likely be the “primary inner-perimeter command post.” The duplicate kit should be kept in an accessible location away from the main office. This is called the “secondary inner-perimeter command post” (see page 10 for definitions of terms).

Lockdown/Lockout Procedures
School staff, including teachers and principals should implement and practice lockout and lockout procedures. The staff can do several things ahead of time to understand and carry out lockdown procedures.

Cut, laminate and distribute the Response Checklist Card. Each staff member should receive a response card checklist, which may be created by using the recommended cards found on pages 18 and 19.

Watch the video. In addition, staff members should view the video that accompanies this booklet. The video shows the principal and teachers implementing a lockdown procedure during a critical incident.

Make sure Classrooms can be locked. All classrooms should be equipped with a locking device. Such a device reduces the likelihood of an intruder entering a classroom. Law enforcement officials recommend interior locks because they can reduce the amount of time it takes to lockdown a classroom. If locks are not available, teachers should have another method to secure the door (e.g., wedges or furniture).

Educate school staff in the lockdown/lockout procedure. The following procedures for principals and teachers are recommended:
Lockdown Procedures

Principal

Verify the Situation. Gather as many facts as possible and make your decision.

Dial 9-1-1. One of the administrative assistants should be directed to contact the local law enforcement agency and provide the information below.

Stay on the phone, if possible and wait until law enforcement arrives on scene:
- Location of incident
- Type of incident
- Number of injured
- Number and location of intruders
- Description of the intruders & weapons
- Law enforcement/ security on site?

Notify all personnel of school wide lockdown using plain English. The principal or designee should announce a school wide lockdown over the public address system using plain English to avoid confusion or misunderstanding.

Secure the office and retrieve the kit. The principal or designee should lock the office doors and retrieve the kit.

Notify Superintendent's office. The principal or designee should notify the superintendent’s office about the incident.

Check classroom status and make notes. The principal or designee should use the intercom to check classroom status. In addition, staff members should maintain a log documenting all conversations, events that take place, the time and outcome.

Meet and assist law enforcement officials. An appointed person should meet the responding law enforcement officials as they arrive at the site. Upon their arrival, the school staff should point out the location of the intruder on the floor plan to law enforcement official, if possible.

If you have a video system assign a staff member to watch the video monitor and provide updates.

Clear students from the hallway immediately. Teachers should clear students from the hallway immediately, and students should report to the nearest available classroom.

Close and lock all windows and doors. The teacher and students should not leave the location.

Teachers

Account for students. The teacher should account for students in the classroom as well as any injuries.

In the event an intruder enters the classroom and begins shooting, the teacher should instruct students to leave the classroom. They should be further instructed to leave the building or to run to another location that can be locked.

All teachers should have a way to contact the office (e.g., intercom system).
Lockout Procedures

Principal

Verify the Situation. Gather as many facts as possible and make your decision.

Dial 9-1-1. One of the administrative assistants should be directed to contact the local law enforcement agency and provide the information below.

Stay on the phone, when law enforcement alerts you to a situation going on outside of your school, you should find out:

- Call back number for law enforcement
- Type and location of incident
- Number of and description of suspects
- Weapons involved
- Law enforcement/security the site?

Notify all personnel of school wide lockdown using plain English. The principal or designee should announce a school wide lockout over the public address system using plain English to avoid confusion or misunderstanding.

Secure the office. The principal or designee should lock all outside doors and retrieve the kit.

Notify Superintendent’s office. The principal or designee should notify the superintendent’s office about the incident.

Check classroom status and make notes. The principal or designee should use the intercom to check classroom status. In addition, staff members should maintain a log documenting all conversations, events that take place, the time and outcome.

Meet and assist law enforcement officials. An appointed person should meet the responding law enforcement officials as they arrive at the site. Upon their arrival, the school staff should point out the location of the intruder on the floor plan to law enforcement official, if possible.

If you have a video system assign a staff member to watch the video monitor and provide updates.

Clear students from the hallway immediately. Teachers should clear students from the hallway immediately, and students should report to the nearest available inside classroom.

Close and lock all windows and doors. The teacher and students should not leave the location.

Carry on as normal class schedule as possible.

Teachers

Account for students. The teacher should account for students in the classroom.

All teachers should have a way to contact the office if they see something report it.
Evacuation Procedures

Evacuation, Transportation & Relocation Procedures

Once the critical incident is resolved, law enforcement officials will begin to evacuate each classroom. After the evacuation takes place, students and staff should be transported to a relocation site. Again, the School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team can do several things to prepare for this situation:

Develop an evacuation plan and place it in the kits. The Critical Incident Response Team should divide the school into four or five sectors and establish a primary evacuation route with exit routes for each sector. In addition, the Critical Incident Response Team should establish an alternate evacuation route in case the primary evacuation route is blocked. These evacuation routes should be included in the kits.

Identify safe rally points. The Critical Incident Response Team should also identify safe rally points for each evacuation plan. These points should be locations where students and staff meet after evacuating the school. In planning for these locations, identify areas that will offer natural protection from unidentified threats inside the building.

Develop a transportation plan. The Critical Incident Response Team should develop a plan for transporting all staff and students to the relocation site. For example, busses from surrounding schools could be used for transportation purposes. Remember busses on campus during the incident may not be used because they are part of the crime scene.

Establish a reunification site. The Critical Incident Response Team should select a predetermined site where students can be relocated. In order to minimize confusion, this site should be several miles away. It may be another school, a church or a community center. In addition, the Critical Incident Response Team should identify a secondary relocation site in case the other facility is not available. Within the relocation site, that becomes a reunification site, four centers should be identified:

-Check-in center. At this center, students and teachers check-in as they arrive at the reunification site.

-Check-out center. At this center, students are brought to the area for parents to take home. Parents MUST sign out students.

-Medical center. A medical center should be established for emergency medical personnel.

-Special needs center. Students who have difficulty locating their parents should report to this center.

Set up a phone bank system. A telephone bank, using a telephone number provided to the public through the media should be established at the local county Emergency Management Center. Contact your county or city Emergency Management Office for more information.
Readiness for law enforcement agencies can be divided into three phases: (1) before the incident arises; (2) the first twenty minutes of the incident; and (3) the extended duration after the incident, which may vary from several hours to days. In preparing for an emergency situation, law enforcement agencies should dedicate the appropriate time and resources to match each phase. If law enforcement agencies plan for the worst type of scenario, they will be prepared to respond to a less severe situation.

Law enforcement experts have repeatedly observed that the Columbine incident “had broken the mold.” Before Columbine, local law enforcement agencies relied heavily on SWAT teams and special intervention units to respond to situations involving deadly force. As a result, traditional police training for first response was to “surround and contain” events until the arrival of a SWAT team. It was clear that this approach had to be changed.

The Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security (OKOHS), in conjunction with the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training (CLEET) has made available to all local law enforcement agencies across the state, including School Resource Officers (SROs), A.L.L.E.R.T. or Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training. The technique teaches law enforcement officers who are first on a school violence scene to assemble a “contact” team, enter a building, and locate and subdue the active shooter. A “rescue” team is the next group

### Manpower

**Assign a law enforcement officer to the School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team.** A law enforcement officer should be intimately involved in the Critical Incident Response Team’s planning process (see Readiness: School Officials on page 5). If a SRO has been assigned to the school, he or she would be the ideal representative on the Critical Incident Response Team. Such participation also signifies collaboration between school administrators and law enforcement officials.

**Identify all potential law enforcement responders.** Law enforcement agencies should be familiar with the other potential responders to a school incident. For example, these first responders may include SROs, who have law enforcement training and work in the school or private security guards, who may not have law enforcement training but are working in the school. Both groups may be the first responders to a critical incident at the school.

**Coordinate efforts among all law enforcement agencies.** In many instances, the first responders may be composed of representatives from different agencies. For example, the first responders might include a city police officer and county deputy sheriff. In remote parts of the state, the first responder may be the state park ranger. The establishment of an Incident Command System along with coordinated training ahead of time, allows the different groups involved to respond effectively to a critical incident. Law enforcement agencies should identify in advance the incident commander at each school location.
Readiness: Law Enforcement cont...

Material

Share information about equipment with first responders. Potential first responders should share information about the equipment available, including weapons and protective equipment, that may be used in pursuit of an active shooter.

Know the contents of the kit. As discussed, law enforcement responders should know the appropriate components of the kits. Prior knowledge about items (such as the floor plan of the school, designated command posts and staging areas) can better prepare the responders.

Complete the School Security Assessment form. This form should be completed by the local law enforcement agency and school officials for each school. Filling out this form ensures that law enforcement officials will have important information on hand during an incident (see the form on page 21).

Method

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

Know the school’s lockdown, evacuation, transportation and relocation procedures. Law enforcement officials should help develop and be familiar with these procedures.

A.L.L.E.R.T.

Train officers in rapid response training. The local law enforcement agency should designate a member of the command staff to oversee this initiative. This person should be familiar with the current critical incident response procedures. All officers, regardless of rank, should receive this training.

National Incident Command System

Review the National Incident Command System. Most law enforcement agencies are familiar with the Incident Command System. Under this system, the law enforcement agency should designate an incident commander in advance. The incident commander should anticipate the problems that may arise in a worst-case situation.

Develop a communication strategy. The greatest barrier to an effective multi-agency response is an inadequate communication system. Because few departments share a common frequency, it is critical to develop a communication strategy. The incident commander should designate an officer at the outer perimeter command post to coordinate communications among all responding agencies. All information should be relayed to the command post, and a log maintained detailing this information.

Contact and rescue team. A primary frequency should be assigned to the contact and rescue team. As soon as officers enter the building, they should secure this frequency and direct all other radio traffic to an alternate channel.

Support Units. A separate frequency should be established between the command post and support units such as traffic control, triage areas and outer perimeter units.
Command Posts and Staging Areas

Before an incident happens, the Critical Incident Response Team should agree upon the location of certain sites (see sample map on page 12). However, predetermined sites may change according to where the incident occurs. For example, an inner-perimeter command post cannot be established in the main office if an incident takes place in that location.

Establish an inner-perimeter command post. An inner-perimeter command post will most likely be located in the main office of the school. This command post should be the point where one of the kits is kept. A secondary inner-perimeter command post should be established away from the main office. The duplicate kit should be kept in this location.

Establish an outer-perimeter command post. This command post should be located away from the building, preferably just off the school grounds. All law enforcement and emergency responders with leadership responsibilities should report to this post for briefings, and further instructions. School staff should work with law enforcement officials to select this site.

Establish a law enforcement staging area. This staging area should be established away from the school. All law enforcement personnel should initially report to this staging area unless otherwise instructed.

Establish a fire and rescue staging area. Like the law enforcement staging area, this area should be established away from the school. All fire and rescue personnel should first report to this area unless otherwise instructed.

Establish a media staging area. This staging area should also be established away from the school and large enough to accommodate a number of vehicles. Law enforcement should contain the media within this designated site.
Readiness: Emergency Responders

Introduction

Emergency responders, including fire and rescue personnel, should play a significant role in developing a response to a critical incident because they are intimately familiar with the National Incident Command System. The National Incident Command System is recognized as the most effective way to address large-scale emergency situations. The Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security offers basic courses on the Incident Command System. For more information about the courses, contact the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security at: 405-425-7296.

Manpower

Assign persons to the School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team. Individuals from the command structure of both fire and rescue services should work with the Critical Incident Response Team.

Help Organize the Incident Command System. Because fire and rescue units are familiar with such a system, they should play an important role in developing the command structure.

Material

Share information about fire and rescue equipment. Information about fire and rescue equipment availability should be shared with other first responders.

Review the kit content. Emergency responders should familiarize themselves with the kit’s content.

Get contact information for school nurses. Emergency responders should have the contact information for school nurses.

Complete the School Security Assessment form. Emergency responders should also help to complete the School Security Assessment form that is on the attached DVD.

Establish Global Position Satellite (GPS) coordinates. GPS coordinates should be established for medical helicopter landing sites at each school. Most fire departments and emergency managers have access to GPS equipment.

Method

LOCKDOWN/LOCKOUT PROCEDURES

Know the school’s lockdown/lockout and evacuation procedures. Fire and rescue responders should be familiar with the school’s lockdown and evacuation procedures.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Prepare evacuation plan for hazardous situations. Emergency personnel should also prepare a rapid evacuation plan for the hazardous situations such as fire and gas leaks.

TRIAGE AND STAGING AREA

Help identify staging area for fire trucks and ambulances. Emergency responders should assist the Critical Incident Response Team in establishing a staging area large enough to support emergency vehicles (see command posts and staging areas page 10).

Establish triage area. A triage area should be established away from the incident but close enough that it is easy for patients to be brought into the triage area. Treatment areas should also be set up close to the triage area.
Medical Facilities and Protocol

Particular form of medical assistance. Generally, hospitals have a plan to address a mass-casualty situation, emergency responders should establish a liaison with other area hospitals and Medical Emergency Resource Centers (MERCs).

SAMPLE MAP
Readiness: How To Make It Work

Introduction

Getting ready for a critical incident requires a great deal of work. Turning planning and preparation into readiness requires even more effort. The accompanying video begins with the dramatization of a school crisis. After the dramatization, the video reviews the incident step-by-step and recommends response procedures, including the rapid deployment technique, to such a crisis. This video also underscores the importance of cooperation among school administrators, law enforcement personnel and emergency responders, and preparing for an event before it ever unfolds.

Planning Teams

System-Level Crisis Planning Committee
As previously discussed, the System-Level Crisis Planning Committee should be comprised of state and local agencies, particularly law enforcement agencies, fire and emergency medical agencies and school administrators. The committee should function to assist the School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team in establishing a lockdown procedure verbal code, coordinating drills and practices of the plan and allocating all needed resources.

School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team
The School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team should be comprised of school administrators, teachers, local law enforcement officials, counselors, facility personnel, parents, school psychologist, fire department officials and emergency medical responders. The Critical Incident Response Team is responsible for assembling the kit.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)
School administrators, law enforcement officials and emergency responders should be intimately familiar with NIMS. An overall Incident Command System structure should be established to address the duties of all responding agencies. The most effective response strategies should be developed during these preparation sessions. To ensure that the plans are followed during an actual critical incident, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) should be completed and signed by all agency officials. This MOU should spell out which agency will provide what resources. Furthermore, the MOU should clearly identify critical roles and assign specific tasks. As a general rule, if a criminal act has been committed, law enforcement has overall command. School officials should contribute logistical support, and fire and rescue should deal with safety issues not directly related to the intruders. Once this memorandum is completed, it should be updated and reviewed annually. A sample MOU may be found on the Center for the Prevention of school Violence’s website at: www.cpsv.org.

Practicing The Plan

Readiness involved not only being prepared before the critical incident unfolds, but also rehearsing and testing the school’s critical incident plan. Practicing the plan is important for two reasons: 1) school personnel may change frequently and 2) frequent practicing of the plan can cover a wide range of possible emergency situations.
Staff Education

Once the School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team, in conjunction with the System-Level Crisis Planning Committee, has completed the plan, all personnel need to be oriented to it. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommends that this orientation be informal and not a simulation. In addition, the staff education meeting should discuss the school personnel’s roles and responsibilities and introduce them to the related procedures and plans.

Exercises

It is critical to practice the plan periodically to make sure that it works, and that all personnel understand their roles. FEMA recommends four different ways to practice the plan. Each level of practice involves a more extensive commitment of time and resources. The School-Centered Critical Incident Response Team, in conjunction with the System-Level Crisis Planning Committee, should decide the most appropriate level of testing for the school.

Tabletop Exercises

Tabletop exercise involves low stress, little attention to real-time, lower level of preparation and only rough attempts to simulate actual conditions. Each school should conduct a tabletop exercise once a year. The tabletop exercise is a discussion based exercise designed to test written policy and procedure. A tabletop exercise is NOT designed to test a participant’s response capabilities.

A tabletop exercise is conducted in a meeting format with one or more facilitators. The facilitator leads the conduct of the tabletop exercise and makes sure every participant responds during the exercise. Once the exercise is completed, the results should be evaluated. An immediate post-exercise critique should be held followed by an evaluation report.

Lockdown/Lockout drills

The practice of a lockdown drill should be thought of like a fire drill. While a planned drill will allow persons involved to rehearse their roles, a surprise drill can be more educational and expose flaws in the plan. A lockdown drill should take no more than an hour to practice. The Critical Incident Response Team should decide whether or not to include students in lockdown drills. There are good arguments for and against involving students in a drill.
Functional Exercise.
The functional exercise tests capabilities of the participants under a stress-induced environment with time constraints but does NOT involve full activation of personnel and facilities. The functional exercise is based on a simulation of an emergency including a description of the situation, a master sequence of events list and communications between participants and simulators.
Generally, this type of exercise emphasizes the emergency functions of the plan. Examples might include perimeter security (securing all doors of the school), utility shut-downs and accounting for all people (students and staff) who should be in the school at the time. Like the tabletop exercise, the critique, the evaluation report and the follow-up recommendations in the report are important aspects of the functional exercise.

Full-scale exercises draw media and community attention; teach by doing; test total coordination among different agencies; and point out physical resource capabilities and/or limitations. At the conclusion of the exercise, the critique and evaluation report are important so that necessary follow-up action can be taken.

Like lockdown and lockout drills, the Critical Incident Response Team should decide whether or not to use students in a full-scale exercise. Again, there are good arguments for and against involving students in such an exercise. Student involvement in full scale exercises should be done on a voluntary basis and require parental consent.

A full-scale exercise requires a great deal of planning and resource coordination. In addition to the amount of time required to plan and conduct a full-scale exercise they, depending on the situation, can be costly. For this reason it is recommended that a school conduct either a tabletop or functional exercise prior to a full-scale exercise. Upon the completion of the tabletop or functional exercise, plans should be reviewed and changed if necessary according to the exercise evaluation results. Once the necessary changes have been made a school administrator may choose to conduct a full-scale exercise to fully test the response capabilities of the school staff and emergency responders.

Full-Scale Exercise
The full-scale exercise is the most comprehensive test. It is intended to evaluate the operational capability of the plan in a stressful environment with the mobilization of school administrators, law enforcement personnel and emergency responders.
Response: The Clock Is Ticking

Response is the process of carrying out plans *when and while* the critical incident unfolds. In other words, respond means “doing what the school is prepared to do.” Both readiness and response will help save lives should an incident occur. This checklist serves as a guide for each agency during the first twenty minutes of critical incident. Each checklist should be cut, laminated and issued to the respective persons who may respond to a critical incident.

**SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

**PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST FOR LOCKDOWN**

- **Verify** the situation and gather as many facts as quickly as possible
- **Notify** all personnel to lockdown
- **Dial** 9-1-1 and provide the following information to the call-taker. Stay on the phone, if possible, and wait until law enforcement arrives on scene and you are told by the call taker to hang up:
  - Location of incident
  - Type of incident
  - Number injured
  - Number and location of intruders
  - Description of the intruders and weapons
  - Whether or not there is on-site law enforcement or security
- **Switch** bells to manual mode.
- **Secure** and retrieve the Critical Incident Response Kit
- **Use intercom** to check classroom status
- **Meet** law enforcement officers
- **Provide** floor plans to officers
- **Notify** the superintendent’s office

**TEACHERS CHECKLIST FOR LOCKDOWN**

- **Clear** students from the hallway immediately and have them report to the nearest available classroom.
- **Close** and lock all windows and doors.
- **Move** students away from windows and doors. It is preferable to seat students against an interior wall which will provide them with some level of protection.
- **Account** for students.
- **Turn** off lights.
- **In** the event the intruder gains access to the room and takes hostages and the room is contacted by the office use clear words or do not answer.
- **In** the event the intruder gains access to the room and begins shooting, instruct the students to leave the classroom/building if possible.
SCHOOL PERSONNEL

PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST FOR LOCKOUT

☐ **Verify** the situation and gather as many facts as quickly as possible

☐ **Notify** all personnel of lockout

☐ When the law enforcement alerts you to a situation going on outside of your school, you should find out:
  - Location of incident
  - Type of incident
  - Number and description of the suspects and weapons involved
  - Call back number for law enforcement

☐ **Lock** all outside doors and windows.

☐ **Have** someone located at and controlling the main entrance.

☐ **Use intercom** to check classroom status.

☐ **Have** classes outside of the main buildings come to an inside class rooms.

☐ **Have** classes change rooms as normal as possible.

☐ If suspect comes onto schoolgrounds, go to LOCKDOWN.

TEACHERS CHECKLIST FOR LOCKOUT

☐ **Clear** students from any outside classrooms and have them go to an available classroom.

☐ **Close** and lock all windows and doors.

☐ **Account** for students.

☐ **Attempt** to carry on your daily schedule as much as possible.
Handling the First Twenty Minutes

LAW ENFORCEMENT CHECKLIST

Initial Response

An initial police response to an active shooter should consider the following steps:

- Report to the office or other established inner-perimeter command post.
- Assess the situation with the staff.
- Locate, isolate and stop the threat using rapid deployment technique.
- Form rescue teams and locate and evacuate the injured.

First Supervisor On The Scene

The first supervisor on the scene should participate in the initial contact team response. However, if he or she is not part of the initial contact team, the supervisor should:

- Dispatch additional contact and rescue teams.
- Direct officers to rally points.
- Provide a safe approach for rescue personnel.
- Relay intelligence from staff to contact teams.
- Direct officers to block all road way entrances and establish an outer-perimeter command post.

EMERGENCY RESPONDERS CHECKLIST

- Respond to staging area for emergency responders
- Implement the National Incident Command System
- Send emergency medical technicians to inner-perimeter command post (when directed by law enforcement).
- Establish triage and treatment area.
- Contact hospitals and other outside responders.
- Establish life flight landing zone.
- Assist law enforcement with initial traffic control.
- Evaluate and prepare for non-law enforcement hazards.
Response: Managing the Aftermath of the Incident

Once the intruder has been apprehended or contained, school administrators, law enforcement personnel and emergency responders must manage the aftermath of the incident. This begins with the evacuation, transportation and relocation of students and staff. Because the aftermath also involves providing emotional support, this phase may linger for days, weeks and even months. Students and staff may need support as they attempt to return to a sense of normalcy.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
Evacuation of students and staff members. After the intruder has been subdued, law enforcement personnel will begin the evacuation of the school. Students and staff members should be transported to the pre-designated relocation site.

Reunification site. The school should activate the telephone bank to inform the public through the media about the reunification site, where parents can pick up their children. At the checkout center in the reunification site, students are brought to the area for parents to take home. Parents must sign out students and show picture identification. The checkout location should account for all student departures.

Community resources. School administrators may rely heavily upon the community and outside resources to recover from an incident. A list of counselors from the faith based community and private practices who can provide mental health support should be identified ahead of time (see Recommended Items for the Kit on page 18). These individuals should be contacted for services during and after the crisis. If community resources are inadequate, administrators should contact the Safe and Alternative Schools section of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) for help.

Debriefing session. After the incident, the Critical Incident Response Team should meet for a debriefing session. This debriefing session should include recommendations to improve the plan and response to the incident.

LAW ENFORCEMENT
Transition to SWAT. Within the first hour, SWAT teams will arrive and be in position to deploy. At this point, the contact team should have contained the intruder. Generally, the first available tactical team will be sent to support and replace the contact team. If the shooter has not been located but the active shooting has stopped, the SWAT team will initiate a more complete search of the building.

State and federal law enforcement support. Local law enforcement agencies should expect additional law enforcement agency support within the first two hours. This includes state responders (such as OSBI, the Highway Patrol, the FBI etc...)

Evacuation. Law enforcement personnel should not begin a complete evacuation of the building until the shooter has been contained; the injured have been treated and removed; the perimeter and rally points have been secured; and a safety sweep has been conducted to identify hazards (e.g., explosives, weapons, hazardous materials).

Before evacuating the students, law enforcement officials should notify personnel at the relocation site, and adequate transportation should be available. Officers should work in pairs to enter each room and escort all students outside to a rally point. An orderly evacuation should minimize the trauma experienced by the students. Additional officers should stand by the rally points waiting to transport students and staff to the relocation site.
Response: Managing the Aftermath of the Incident

EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

Hazardous situations. Fire personnel should be prepared to respond at the request of law enforcement if explosives are located. Also, they should work out a protocol for an emergency evacuation with law enforcement if a fire breaks out or a gas leak is detected when the school is still in a lock down procedure.

Additional resources. Outside responders should be identified and requested to assist with other unrelated emergencies that may occur at locations outside the school area.

Communication with hospitals. Medical personnel should notify surrounding hospitals and the medical emergency resource center (MERC). Someone should also keep a master log of who is transported to which hospital.
## Recommended Items for the Kit

### SCHOOL BUILDING INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Floor Plans</td>
<td>Floor plans should identify important building features such as locations of the fire alarm turn-off, utility shut offs, sprinkler system shut-off, cable television shut-off, first aid kits and fire extinguishers. In addition, the floor plans should show the location of all telephones and telephone wall jacks, computer locations and all other devices, which may be useful for communication during a critical incident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td>Maps will help responders understand the traffic patterns and intersections that will be affected during a critical incident. In addition, maps can identify the relocation site. Several copies of these maps should be kept in the kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blueprints</td>
<td>Architectural blueprints should be kept in the kits because the detailed information is important for SWAT teams, especially during a bomb threat. The facility personnel should have access to such blueprints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariel Photos</td>
<td>Ariel photos of the school and surrounding area can assist law enforcement officials and emergency responders involved in the critical incident. Generally, these photos can be obtained from your local municipality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evacuation Plan with Routes and Rally Points</td>
<td>Each school should have an evacuation plan (i.e., the fire escape plan) with exit routes and rally points clearly marked. In addition, each school should have an alternate evacuation plan in case of unforeseen factors such as a chemical spill. Each evacuation route should have a safe rally point located away from the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placards with Directional Words</td>
<td>During a critical incident, placards with direction words such as “Medical Services” and “Media” make it easier for individuals to find where they need to go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures to cut off alarms and utilities</td>
<td>Procedures to shut off fire alarms, utilities (such as gas, water and electricity), sprinkler system and cable television should be kept in the kits. However, the decision to turn off these systems should be made on a case-by-case basis by the Incident Commander.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys and/or Codes</td>
<td>The kits should contain a master key (or master codes) and other important keys to the building. These keys should be easily identifiable by tags. The keys for the school could be placed in a separate locked container within the kits. Placing the Keys in a locked container adds another measure of security for the keys. Fire department officials recommend keeping the master key in a Knox box outside the school. A Knox box is a non-destructible box mounted near the building entrance. The fire department controls the master key to the box, giving them immediate access during an emergency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Recommended Items for the Kit

### SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND STUDENT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master Schedule</td>
<td>On the day of the crisis, one of the challenges is accounting for all the school's students. A master schedule allows for officials to know where students are located during the incident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Day Roster</td>
<td>A current day roster also allows officials to know which students are present at school that day. Some should be assigned the duty of updating and placing the roster in the kits at the beginning of each school day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff Roster</td>
<td>A faculty/staff roster should list those with first aid and emergency services training and their cell phone numbers. In addition, the roster should identify those individuals with special needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Roster and Route</td>
<td>Bus roster and routes allow officials to know the whereabouts of students if an incident were to occur before or after school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Letters Notifying Students and Parents of Incident</td>
<td>Sample statements provide clear and concise ways of notifying all interested parties that an incident has taken place. Example statements should be placed in the kits as references along with a disk copy of the statement, so specific details can be added.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Release Forms</td>
<td>Enough student release forms should be kept in the kits and provided to the student accounting &amp; Release Coordinator of the school's Incident Command team. Student release forms will help keep track of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact List</td>
<td>A contact list should be kept in the kits. The contact list should include: 1) community emergency phone numbers (police, sheriff, rescue, fire, local hospital, counselors in faith community and private practice); 2) school numbers (list of cell phone numbers and pager numbers of staff); 3) volunteer and parent organizations numbers; and 4) media contacts to inform parents where children can be picked up.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BASIC SUPPLIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>These items should include: 1) pens and pencils, 2) notepads, 3) tape, 4) flashlights, 5) batteries, 6) name tags, 7) paper towels and 8) laptop computers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**Critical Incident Response Kit Checklist**

**Instructions:** Complete this form by filling in the person responsible for each item of the kit. In addition, record the date the item was placed in the kit. *This checklist should be updated regularly.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>PERSON IN CHARGE</th>
<th>DATE PLACED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Floor Plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blueprints</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerial Photos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evacuation Plan with Routes and Rally Points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placards with Directional Words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures to Cut-off:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fire Alarm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Utilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sprinkler System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cable Television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys and/or Codes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Day Roster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff Roster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Roster and Routes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Letters Notifying Students and Parents of incident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Release Forms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact List</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community and Emergency phone numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School Numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Volunteer and Parent Organization Numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Media Contacts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Miscellaneous Items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pens and Pencils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Notepads</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tape</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flashlight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Batteries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Name Tags</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paper Towels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Laptop Computers</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# School Incident Command System Assignments

**Instructions:** Complete this form by filling in the person responsible for each item of each position. In addition, assign two alternate people in case the primary person in charge is absent during the critical incident.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>NAME, LOCATION &amp; NUMBERS</th>
<th>ALTERNATE NAME, LOCATION &amp; NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management/Principal or Administrator:</strong> Responsible for the school’s plan and management of the emergency situation. He/she activates the Incident Command System and remains in charge until the arrival of law enforcement officials.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management/ Public Information Officer:</strong> Establishes the media staging area near the command post and coordinates information released to the media.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management/ Safety Officer:</strong> Monitors safety conditions of an emergency situation and serves as a point of contact for assisting law enforcement and fire and rescue agencies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning/Instructional Staff:</strong> Gathers and assesses information. Someone who can use computer equipment and gather information such as a librarian or computer center manager, is recommended.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operations/First Aid Coordinator:</strong> Knows the location of medical supplies and oversees care given to the injured until paramedics arrive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operations/Facility and Grounds Coordinator:</strong> Knows the school campus and location of shut-off valves for utilities, fire alarm, and sprinkler system and cable TV.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operations/Food and Water Coordinator:</strong> Oversees the distribution of food and water.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operations/Student Accounting &amp; Release Coordinator:</strong> Accounts for everyone on site and should have access to attendance records and visitor sign-in sheets.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operations/Traffic Safety Coordinator:</strong> Obtains resources to support the operations functions and monitors inventory of supplies and equipment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Finance &amp; Administration/Documentation Coordinator:</strong> Oversees documentation and record keeping activities and develops a system to track expenses. Generally, administrative staff, which handles finances for the school, should be assigned to this position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statistics of School Shooters

- 27% of attackers exhibited interest in violent movies.
- 37% of attackers exhibited interest in violence in their own writings, poems, essays, and journal entries.
- 59% of attacks occurred during the school day.
- 63% of attackers had a known history of weapons use.
- 68% acquired the weapon used from their own home or that of a relative.
- 93% of attackers engaged in some behavior prior to the attack that caused others to be concerned.
- 93% of attackers planned out the attack in advance.
- 95% of attackers were current students.
- Odds are one in 1 million that a student will die at school as a result of a violent act.
Indicators of Potential Violence by a Student

- Fascination with violence in films and TV
- Angry outbursts
- Inability to take criticism
- Exaggerated sense of self-importance
- Intolerance
- Narcissism
- Attention seeking
- Nihilism
- Mood swings
- Inappropriate sense of humor
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Excessive practicing with firearms