Emergency Operations Plan

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Section 1
Introduction

1.1 Purpose, Scope and Relationship to Other Plans

This emergency operations plan details how the school district will operate during critical incidents affecting students, faculty, staff or facilities. It is designed to provide guidance for personnel who discover or are notified of any emergency situation. The plan also aids in the resolution of the events by structuring levels of potential responses, each designed to address a corresponding level of threat. The emergency operations plan does not replace existing contingency plans. Rather, it supplements those plans by providing a means for “operationalizing” them quickly and efficiently.

1.2 Incident Command System

The emergency operations plan is based on the nationally-recognized Incident Command System (ICS). ICS provides flexibility and adaptability to a wide variety of situations. It does this by establishing common standards in organization, procedures, communications and terminology. The system calls for the appointment of an Incident Coordinator (IC), a person responsible for the overall coordination of a situation. An Incident Management Team (IMT) is also appointed to help manage a response. The IMT serves under the direction of the IC.

This plan recognizes the need to ensure direction and control for an incident affecting more than one site or school district. When such a situation exists, a unified command structure will be used under the direction of one IC. The concept of unified command means that all agencies and organizations having responsibility and authority at an incident will contribute to the process of

- Determining overall response objectives
- Selecting response strategies
- Ensuring joint application of tactical activities
- Maximizing the use of available resources

1.3 How Incidents will be Managed

Generally, emergency incidents will be managed and progress through the following steps:

- A faculty or staff member discovers or is notified of an incident and takes appropriate immediate action. One such action is to notify a person authorized to be an IC.
- The IC determines the level of threat and sets proper response actions into motion. The IC notifies the members of the Incident Management Team (IMT) and consults with them as the situation and time permit.
- The IC directs faculty and staff on-scene to take additional steps in line with the level of threat.
- Faculty and staff follow the directives of the IC
- When other sites, districts or agencies are involved, a unified command structure is employed.

1.4 Role and Authority of Incident Coordinator and Incident Management Team

By adopting this emergency operations plan, the school district empowers the Incident Coordinator and Incident Management Team to take action as appropriate to protect students faculty, staff, visitors, facilities and equipment during all critical incidents. The IC and IMT are authorized representatives of the Superintendent; their directives are to be followed.
2.1 “All Hazards” Approach

This emergency operations plan uses an “all hazards” approach, allowing it to be effective in any emergency situation. An “all hazards” approach calls for an initial response based on the threat posed by the event, not the event itself. This is possible because many events, though widely different in nature, create similar risks to lives and property. As such, planning for potential levels of threat is often more effective than planning for the multitude of situations that could conceivably happen. Once an initial protective action has been taken, more detailed strategies and plans for resolving a particular situation can be implemented.

2.2 Levels of Threat

The emergency operations plan uses three levels of threat to structure the district’s response. Characteristics of each level are discussed below. Examples are also given, although they are not meant to be a complete listing of possible situations that could occur.

Level I – Monitor

A Level I situation is one where a minor event occurs or may occur that could negatively affect one or more district facilities, students, faculty and staff. It is characterized by the following:

- No immediate danger or emergency exists, but the potential is present.
- A minor incident occurs that appears to be of short duration.
- The situation is limited in scope and can be managed by the appropriate administration.

Examples of a Level I situation includes:

- A severe storm watch issued by the National Weather Service
- A fire or hazardous materials incident within the district or within two(2) miles of a district facility
- A minor building system problem
- A local power outage

Level II – Standby

A Level II situation is one where a risk exists or is about to occur that will impact one or more district facilities, students, faculty or staff. This risk requires that a preparatory status be adopted. Level II is characterized by the following:

- The potential danger is real; district personnel should be prepared to react.
- The situation has the potential for expanding beyond a limited area.
- The situation may continue for an extended duration.
- Resolving the situation may require resources in excess of those available locally.
Examples of a Level II situation include:
- A severe storm warning issued by the National Weather Service
- A major fire or hazardous materials incident within one-half (1/2) mile of a district facility
- A major building system failure
- An incident at a district facility that, although being handled by the appropriate administration, may need additional district resources such as personnel, transportation, supplies, notifications, etc.

Level III – Emergency
Level III recognizes that a risk is real and requires a response by the district. It is characterized by the following:
- Students, faculty or staff are in danger; facilities are at risk. Immediate action is necessary.
- The incident is on district property, or it is off district property but close enough to affect a facility or involves district students or personnel.
- The situation requires the coordination of district resources or coordination with outside agencies.

Examples of a Level III situation include:
- A fire or hazardous materials incident occurring at a district facility
- A major storm or weather event that is causing or has caused injury/damage
- A traffic accident involving students and/or district personnel
- Notification by competent authority that action is required due to a fire, hazardous materials incident or other emergency near a district facility

2.3 Determining the Level of Threat
The process for determining the level of threat for any incident will be as follows:
- The IC, upon being notified of an incident, will determine the level of threat.
- The IC, either personally or through the IMT, will communicate the level of threat to those who need to know.
- The IC may modify the classification up or down as more information becomes available or as the situation changes.
- Any reclassification of the level of threat will be communicated by the IC, either personally or through the IMT.
Section 3
General Response Options

3.1 Limited Options Rationale
The nature of any response taken by the school district will be limited. This is because the ones who will be responsible for resolving the most serious incidents are police, fire, emergency medical, emergency management, and utilities personnel. The district’s primary responsibility is to protect students, faculty and staff.

3.2 Options
There are six general response options available to the district in a critical incident. These options can be modified to fit the parameters of a particular event and the needs of a specific site. The options are discussed individually on the next few pages, addressing issues, priorities and procedures.

Cancel School prior to Start
Cancelling school prior to start means notifying students, faculty, staff, transportation and facility managers that school will not be open on a specific day. A variation of this option is to notify students and personnel that reporting times for a specific day have been changed. This option is available whenever district buildings are unoccupied and the time of day allows sufficient time for notifications. Procedures are as follows:

- The IC, with the concurrence of the Superintendent, will notify the IMT that school is to be canceled or that reporting times have been changed, except for routine inclement weather days.
- The IC and/or IMT will contact local media except for routine inclement weather days.
- All students, parents, faculty and staff should monitor local radio and television stations for announcements.

Early Dismissal
Early dismissal refers to releasing students, faculty and staff prior to normal dismissal times. This option assumes there is a need to clear buildings while school is in session. This planning and coordination of transportation needs will be important. Early dismissal should be used only when it is safe to do so. Students, faculty and staff should not be released if they will be exposed to more danger by leaving school facilities than they would if they remained under the district’s control. Procedures are as follows:

- The IC, and/or the IMT, with concurrence of the Superintendent, will notify administrators of the time the dismissal should take place.
- The IC and/or IMT will notify parents through local radio and television stations of the early dismissal.
- The IC and/or IMT will notify the transportation supervisor, who will notify bus drivers and other general transportation personnel of the early dismissal.
- The IC and/or IMT will notify the food service supervisor, who will notify the food service staff if necessary.
- A 100% accounting of students will be completed and verified immediately preceding the dismissal.
Shelter-in-Place

Shelter-in-place refers to protecting students, faculty and staff within the buildings where they reside. This option can be used in two types of situations. First, there is no immediate threat to the structure of the facility itself, so all people can remain safe by staying inside. Second, the threat is such that an attempt to move students, faculty and staff from the building would expose them to more danger than they would face by staying put. This option would most likely be used during a hazardous materials incident, such as the escape of a gas that could cause harm to those who inhale it. It might also be used if releasing students and personnel could interfere with the law enforcement or fire fighting activity in the area. Procedures are as follows:

- The IC or public safety authorities will direct on-site administration to implement the shelter-in-place option.
- On-site administrators will determine whether sheltering should take place in classrooms or pre-determined shelters within the confines of the buildings.
- Take steps to isolate students and personnel from the external environment during environmental or hazardous materials incidents. This should include closing all outside doors and windows and turning off A/C and air handling systems.
- All students, faculty and staff should seek shelter by moving away from outside windows and doors as well as all air ducts and ventilation systems.
- All 100% accounting of students will be completed and verified.
- The IC or public safety authorities will notify on-site administrators when it is safe to resume normal operations.

Lockdown

Lockdown is protecting students, faculty and staff from an internal or external threat, such as a violent person, by excluding or isolating that threat. This option requires the ability to quickly secure classrooms, exterior doors and the physical plant. Movement of students and school personnel should be limited; protective cover should be sought.

Procedures are as follows:

- The IC or public safety authorities will order the lockdown, specifying the scope, i.e. exterior doors and windows only, classrooms only, specific sections, etc.
- On-site administrators will oversee the lockdown and notify the IC when the procedure is completed.
- All students, faculty and staff should move into isolated sections of buildings and reduce exposure to outside windows and doors.
- A 100% accounting of students will be completed and verified.
- The IC and/or IMT will inform public safety authorities of the lockdown and ensure that appropriate public safety personnel have keys to access the secured areas.
- The IC or public safety authorities will notify on-site administrators when it is safe to resume normal operations.

Evacuation

Evacuation is the removal of all students, faculty and staff from district facilities. Designated safe areas for each facility should be pre-established, with primary and secondary sites being identified. Routes to get to those designated safe areas should also be pre-established.

Procedures are as follows:

- A directive to evacuate can be issued by the IC or public safety authorities.
- Evacuate students to the primary safe area unless directed to go to a secondary location or to a congregate care center established by public safety authorities.
- All persons will leave the facilities by moving along assigned routes.
- Remain calm and keep students as calm as possible.
- Close all doors behind you. DO NOT LOCK DOORS.
- A 100% accounting of students, faculty and staff will be completed and verified.
- All students shall remain under the control and authority of the school district.
- All buses and cars will be moved as necessary to allow the access of emergency equipment.
- All persons will remain in a safe area until receiving verbal notification from on-site administrators to the facility. DO NOT CONSIDER THE BELL AS A SIGNAL TO RETURN; IT MIGHT BE A MALFUNCTION.

Relocation

Relocation is very similar to evacuation in that it is the process of vacating district facilities. It could occur during an incident that does not directly threaten the school but where public safety authorities wish to use the premises as an emergency center. Procedures are as follows:

- A directive to relocate can be issued by the IC only. (All public safety requests for relocation must go through the IC).
- The IC will determine the location to where students will be moved.
- Moving procedures are the same as for evacuation.
- A 100% accounting of students, faculty and staff will be completed and verified following relocation.
Section 4
Faculty / Staff
Initial Actions and Responses

4.1 Initial Actions “What to Do if You Discover an Incident”

Typically, incidents involving schools will come to the attention of a faculty or staff member by observation or telephone notification. The first faculty/staff member discovering or receiving information about an incident will do the following:

1. Call police, fire or EMS if needed. The local emergency number is 911
2. Activate the emergency system - Notify the IC, providing the following information:
   • Your name
   • Nature of incident
   • Location of incident
   • Severity of injuries or property damage
   • Telephone number (as a call back)

3. Take action to protect students, faculty, staff and property. This might include:
   • Moving people away
   • Isolating and securing the area
   • Providing assistance as needed to students and personnel
   • Directing public safety responders to the scene

The district recognizes that catastrophic events can occur with little or no warning. Events such as earthquakes, tornados and explosions may require taking action to protect lives prior to notifying the IC. Among the actions that might be taken is duck and cover.

Procedures for Duck and Cover

• If inside, use a desk or piece of furniture as a shield.
  o Drop to knees with your back to the window
  o Make body as small as possible
  o Bury face in arms
  o Keep eyes closed and ears covered

• If outside, try to get behind any solid object.
  o Lie prone with face away from source of event
  o Cover head, face and as much skin surface as possible
  o Keep eyes closed and ears covered
4.2 Executing Decisions of IC and/or IMT

The school district has empowered and authorized the Incident Coordinator and Incident Management Team to direct the district’s response to emergency situations. The IC will classify the levels of threat for all incidents and determine the appropriate actions based on the level assigned. On-site administrators may be notified of actions to take by either the IC or another member of the IM, most likely the person serving as Operations. District personnel will follow and execute all directions and orders from the IC and/or IMT.
GENERAL RESPONSE OPTIONS

Twin Valley Community Local School District

Cancel School Prior to Start

- The Superintendent (Plan & Intel) or Designee (Incident Coordinator) will make a One Call Now to all students, parents, faculty and staff and notify local media that school is to be canceled or that reporting times have been changed.
- All students, parents, faculty and staff should monitor local radio and television stations for announcements. TV Channels: 2, 7 and 22. Radio Stations: FM: 91.3, 92.1, 92.9, 94.5, 95.2, 99.1, 99.9, 102.9, 103.9, 104.7, 105.5, and 107.7

Shelter-in -Place

- The IC or public safety authorities will direct on-site administration to implement the shelter-in-place option.
- On-site administrators will determine whether sheltering should take place in classrooms or pre-determined shelters within the confines of the buildings.
- Take steps to isolate students and personnel from the external environment during environmental or hazardous materials incidents. This should include closing all outside doors and windows and turning off A/C and air handling systems.
- All students, faculty and staff should seek shelter by moving away from outside windows and doors as well as all air ducts and ventilation systems.
- A 100% accounting of students will be completed and verified.
- The IC or public safety authorities will notify on-site administrators when it is safe to resume normal operations.

Early Dismissal

- The Superintendent or Designee will notify on-site administrators and the Food Service Manager that school is to be dismissed early and of the time the dismissal. The Superintendent or Designee will notify local radio and television stations of the early dismissal.
- The Transportation Supervisor will notify bus drivers and other general transportation personnel of the early dismissal.
- Students will be released to a parent or guardian only unless prior written authorization is on file. A building Principal may approve the release of a student(s) to a non-parent only if they have verified with a parent or guardian that release is approved by the parent or guardian.

Lockdown

- The IC or public safety authorities will order the lockdown, specifying the scope, i.e. exterior doors and windows only, classrooms only, specific sections, etc.
- On-site administrators will oversee the lockdown and notify the IC when the procedure is completed. When a LOCKDOWN is called, ALL Persons – Staff, Students and Visitors are to report IMMEDIATELY to their assigned classroom, area or office.
- All students, faculty and staff should immediately LOCK their room doors and reduce exposure to outside windows and doors. Take attendance and report any missing students to the office. A 100% accounting of students will be completed and verified. DO NOT OPEN YOUR DOOR UNLESS REQUESTED BY AN ADMINISTRATOR POLICE OFFICER OR FIREFIGHTER IN UNIFORM.
- The IC and/or IMT will inform public safety authorities of the lockdown.

Evacuation

- A directive to evacuate can be issued by the IC or public safety authorities.
- Evacuate students to the primary safe area unless directed to go to a secondary location or to a congregate care center established by public safety authorities.
- All persons will leave the facilities by moving along assigned routes.
- Remain calm and keep students as calm as possible.
- Close all doors behind you. DO NOT LOCK DOORS.
- A 100% accounting of students, faculty and staff will be completed and verified.
- All persons will remain in a safe area until receiving verbal notification from on-site administrators to return to the facility. DO NOT CONSIDER THE BELL AS A SIGNAL TO RETURN; IT MIGHT BE A MALFUNCTION.

Relocation

- A directive to relocate can be issued by the IC only. (All public safety requests for relocation must go through the IC.)
- The IC will determine the locations to where students will be moved.
- Moving procedures are the same as for evacuation.