



# School Emergency Management: An Overview



Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools  
(REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center  
Office of Safe and Healthy Students (OSHS)  
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)  
U.S. Department of Education (ED)



# Summary of Webinar

---

- Welcome and Introduction of Secretary Duncan
- Secretary Duncan's Remarks
- Introduction of REMS TA Center
- Introduction of Presenter
- Webinar Presentation
- Q & A Session
- Wrap Up & Resources



# What is a School Emergency Management Plan?

- A critical step to securing and protecting our schools
- A key tool to handle emergencies
- Addresses safety needs of all students, staff and visitors
- Addresses both natural and man-made events that can disrupt teaching and learning
- Addresses events on the way to school, during school, and during after school activities



# Why do we need a School Emergency Management Plan?

- To reduce the opportunity for disruptive events to occur and lessen consequences if they do
- To comply with State and local laws and regulations
- To build confidence of public in operation of schools



# Key Elements of a School Emergency Management Plan

- Framed by the Four Phases of School Emergency Management
- Uses an all-hazards approach
- Based on vulnerability and risk assessment
- Integrates students and staff with disabilities and other access and functional needs
- Developed with community partners
- Incorporates NIMS and ICS
- Practiced consistently, reviewed, revised



# The Four Phases of School Emergency Management



# What is the Prevention-Mitigation Phase?

- Prevention is the action schools and districts take to decrease the likelihood that an event or emergency will occur
- Mitigation actions are steps that eliminate or reduce the loss of life or property damage for events that cannot be prevented (e.g., natural disasters)
- Many hazards have both components



# The Prevention-Mitigation Phase

- Designed to assess and address
  - Safety and integrity of facilities
  - Security
  - Culture and climate of schools
- Uses an all-hazards approach
- Builds on what schools are already doing
- Reliant on community partnerships and leadership
- Is an ongoing process
- Directly linked to the other three phases



# Key Elements of Prevention-Mitigation Phase

- Conducting vulnerability and risk assessments
- Anchoring outdoor, heavy indoor equipment
- Installing building access control measures
- Controlling access to hazardous areas
- Establishing programs to improve school culture and climate
- Establishing policies promoting safety and security
- Using the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) approach



# Preventing Violence: School Culture and Climate

Positive culture & climate=Less likelihood of violence



- Supports violence prevention
- Requires a long-term strategy
- Is program-based (anti-bullying, etc.)



# What is the Preparedness Phase?

The Preparedness phase is designed to facilitate a rapid, coordinated and effective response in an emergency.

The school community is strengthened by coordinating with community partners on:

- Developing an emergency plan, policies and protocols
- Communicating roles and responsibilities
- Adopting NIMS and ICS
- Conducting training, drills and exercises



# NIMS and ICS

## The National Incident Management System (NIMS)

- Used by all first responders
- Creates a common operating picture and mutual goals
- Puts forth the Incident Command System (ICS)

## The Incident Command System (ICS)

- Uses a single management system
- Facilitates effective response



# Key Elements of Preparedness Phase

- Integrate ICS
- Define Response phase protocols and procedures
- Address the needs of persons with disabilities and other access and functional needs
- Develop communications procedures and templates
- Develop accountability and reunification procedures
- Practice tabletops, drills, and exercises



# Persons with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs

Include district special needs experts on your planning team to address:

- Visual and hearing
- Mobility
- Cognitive
- Attentional
- Emotional
- Medical; and
- Communication needs



# Drills and Exercises

- Drills: Define frequency, responsibilities and procedures
- Tabletops: Informal gathering of partners to orally review and practice the plan
- Full-Scale Exercises: Require extensive planning, conducted with community partners, simulates a specific scenario



# What is the Response Phase?

- When emergency management plans are activated to effectively contain and resolve an emergency
- Plans developed during the Prevention-Mitigation and Preparedness Phases are utilized during the Response Phase
  - Activate the plan (lockdown, evacuation, shelter-in-place)
  - Work with community partners (NIMS, ICS)
  - Use accountability & reunification plan
  - Utilize communications plan



# Key Elements of Response Phase

- Activate the plan and the ICS
- Work with first responders and other community partners
- Assess the problem and determine response
- Deploy resources and make informed decisions
- Account for students, faculty and staff
- Reunify families with students
- Initiate transition to the Recovery Phase
- Conduct an after-action assessment



# Recovery Phase

- Designed to assist students, staff and their families in the healing process and to restore educational operations in schools.
- Has four primary components:
  1. Physical/structural recovery
  2. Business/fiscal recovery
  3. Academic recovery
  4. Psychological/emotional recovery



# Physical, Structural & Fiscal Recovery

Some elements of physical, structural & fiscal recovery include:

- Assessment and repair of facilities
- Possible need for alternative sites or buildings due to extensive damage
- Business and fiscal recovery (e.g., payroll, succession planning)
- Registration and record management systems



# Academic, Psychological/Emotional Recovery

- Academic recovery is key to restoring the teaching and learning environment
- Academic recovery is closely linked to the other aspects of recovery
- Psychological/emotional recovery promotes coping, supports resiliency for students and staff
- Establish a system for identifying and monitoring children and staff who may need additional support or interventions



# In Summary: Steps for Developing an Emergency Management Plan

- Step 1: Collect existing resources and assemble team with community partners
- Step 2: Conduct vulnerability and risk assessments
- Step 3: Identify gaps and weaknesses
- Step 4: Assemble plan



# In Summary: Steps for Developing an Emergency Management Plan

- Step 5: Incorporate vulnerability and risk data
- Step 6: Conduct trainings and exercises
- Step 7: Revise plan based on outcomes of trainings and exercises
- Step 8: Communicate plan as appropriate
- Step 9: Establish accountability measures



# Action Steps: The Four Phases

- Prevention-Mitigation (identify, plan, partner)
- Preparedness (integrate, define, practice)
- Response (activate, communicate, transition)
- Recovery (assess, restore, counsel)



# Action Steps: What You Can Do

- Identify key personnel for developing your school and district's plan
- Review your plan to ensure it includes the key elements and considerations
- Ensure all community partnerships are in place, and parents, students and staff know their responsibilities
- Assess and prioritize hazards and risks
- Plan an exercise or drill
- Review, revise and update your plan



# The REMS TA Center

For additional information, resources, training and technical assistance, please contact the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center:

Phone: (855) 781-7367 (REMS)

Email: [info@remstacenter.org](mailto:info@remstacenter.org)

Website: <http://rems.ed.gov>

