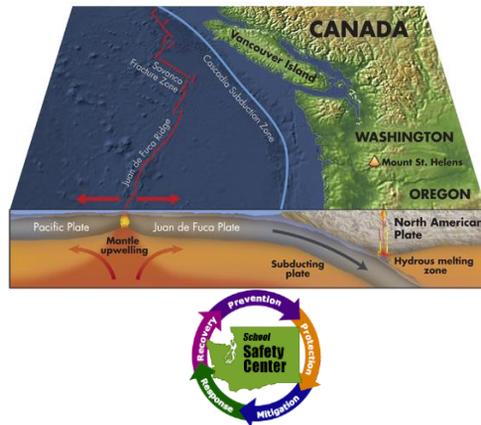


# Tabletop Exercise

## Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)



## Agenda

- Introductions
- Exercise Continuum
- COOP Review
- Today's Tabletop Scenario
- Discussions
- Hot Wash (Debrief)
- Action Planning
- Closure

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## Rules of the Road

- Creativity/Group Problem Solving
- Use the knowledge and information available in the room
- Active Thinking
- Active Listening
- Active Participation
- Respect – challenge ideas, not people
- Reality Check – make the exercise real for you.



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## Introductions



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# The Exercise Continuum

Briefly:

- Drills
- **Tabletop Exercises**
- Functional Exercises
- Full-Scale Exercises

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## Tabletop Exercises

- Simulate an emergency situation in an informal, stress-free environment.
- Initiate discussion of emergency guidelines.
- Focus on training and familiarization with roles, guidelines, and responsibilities.

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## Purpose

- To examine current policies, procedures, resources and actions in the context to a response to a major catastrophic event at a district level.
- To promote greater understanding and ability to apply COOP principles to your setting
- To make improvements as identified as an outcome of the exercise



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## Objectives

- To evaluate policies and procedures... your COOP plan
- To evaluate command and control including communications procedures
- To identify resources needed vs. available
- To identify training needs
- To identify needed improvements and create an action plan to address those needs



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## How a Tabletop Works

- A scenario-based discussion is guided by a facilitator.
- Problems talked through without stress.
- Feedback on the proceedings is offered.
- Policies, procedures, plans, and guidelines are discussed and suggested updates made.

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## Tabletop Success

Participants leave with:

- A positive learning experience
- Organizational learning
- Improvement action planning
- More effective policies, plans, and guidelines
- Improved preparedness

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## Exercise Guidelines

- This exercise is designed to test the preparedness of a district to respond to a multi-agency, multi-site emergency event.
- Following the exercise, there will be a debriefing time, aka a “Hot Wash”.
- Each participant will be given the opportunity to share his/her views on what worked well and what needs to be addressed in additional planning, training and/or drilling.

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## Guidelines (Continued)

- LEA policies and existing Continuity Of Operations Plans (COOPs) govern all activities relating to the emergency event.
- The facilitator will serve as the exercise referee and provide any official interpretation of the exercise rules.
- From time to time, there will be *injections* into the scenario. These are intended to further assess response to the exercise scenario.

*This is designed to be a learning experience for all.*

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# Continuity Of Operations Plans

## Review:

### COOP Planning Objectives:

- Ensure safety of employees
- Ensure continuous performance of critical functions
- Protect essential equipment, records and other assets
- Reduce disruptions to operations
- Minimize damage and losses
- Achieve an orderly recovery from emergency operations
- Identify relocation sites which ensure operational and managerial requirements



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# Continuity Of Operations Plans

## Review:

### A Well-Designed COOP addresses:

- Essential LEA Functions
- Orders of Succession
- Delegation of Authority
- Continuity Facilities
- Continuity Communications
- Vital Records Management
- Tests, Training, and Exercises
- Devolution of Control and Direction
- Reconstitution



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## Situation Demographics

### Overview:

For today's exercise, your Western Washington school district is in King, Pierce or Snohomish County.

It has:

- Number of schools/facilities
- Types of schools/facilities
- Athletic facilities
- Student population
- Employee population

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## First Responder Resource

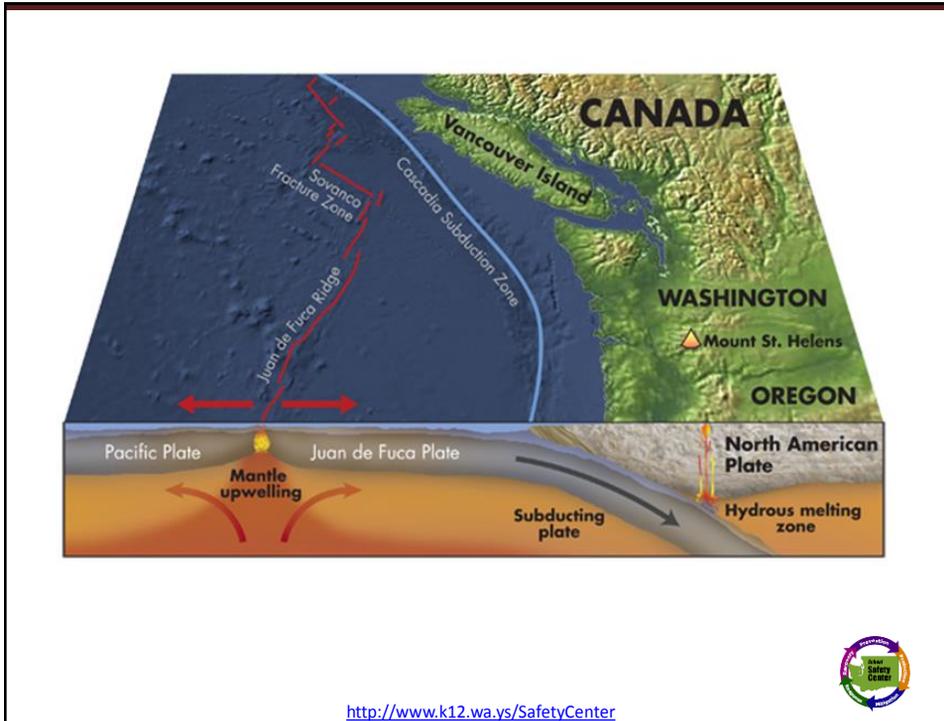
### Overview

The first responder resources immediately available to your school, include but are not limited to:

- Police
- Fire
- EMS
- OTHER

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## Scenario Set-up

You are part of the central office administrative team for your school district in the King, Pierce, Snohomish county region.

- The tri-county region has approximately 50 public school districts.
- There are approximately 1,000 public schools.
- They are in urban, suburban, and rural communities.
- They serve over 500,000 students – almost half of the state's K-12 student population.
- In addition to all of the public school districts, schools and students, there are dozens of private schools, as well.
- You are in earthquake territory.

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## Scenario

### It's a weekend in early October.

Schools are planning to participate in the **Great WA ShakeOut** later in the month.

There have been a few minor tremors over the last couple weeks. Nothing serious at all.

Then, late on Sunday afternoon, the Juan de Fuca plate slips and causes a magnitude **8.8** earthquake.

The shaking lasts for **several minutes**.



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## Scenario (Continued)

### The immediate result:

- Homes, businesses, schools – buildings of all kinds - are damaged or destroyed across the region.
- Most of the region's infrastructure, including roads and bridges, is damaged or destroyed.
- Your district offices are destroyed.
- All schools are damaged to one degree or another.
- Other district facilities, and much of your district transportation resources, are seriously damaged, others are completely destroyed.



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## Scenario (Continued)

### The immediate result:

- There are multiple injuries and deaths throughout the area.  
Exact numbers are not yet known.
- You do not know the status of any of your district leadership team or your school staffs.
- The governor and local political leaders declare a state of emergency.
- Your school district will not be able to operate – likely for quite some time.



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## Questions

### What are your main priorities?

- Do you activate components of your Emergency Operations/Safety Plan?
- **Do you activate your district COOP?**
- *How* do you activate your COOP plan?
- What essential district functions need to be addressed?
- Which are impacted by the current events?
- What is the message to the school district community?



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## Inject #1

(Sunday into Monday)

- There have been several powerful after-shocks.
- The earthquake generated a tsunami which inundated communities along the coast. Those who are able are trying to make their way inland.
- Travel is treacherous, at best.
- Phone and cell service are all but non-existent.



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## Inject #1 - Continued

**Within 1~2 days of the initial quake**, the county EMD and several city governments request the district assist with emergency response as described in the local emergency operations plan.

They are asking for the following:

- Shelters at less badly damaged schools;
- Use of schools for food and supplies collection, storage, and dissemination;
- Assistance with overall damage assessment and debris removal;
- Use of all functioning buses for transportation to/from shelters; and
- Use of district warehouse facilities for distribution of incoming medical supplies.



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## Inject #1 -Continued

### As a result,

The school board wants to know

- who agreed to using schools as shelters,
- the extent of damage to all the schools, and
- when the district and schools will reopen.

### In addition,

School staff *who are able to do so* are calling

- reporting on their status, and
- wanting to know if/when they should return to school.

### In the meantime,

No one has been able to make contact with the superintendent or the CIO.



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## Questions

- What are your priorities?
- How does your COOP address this disaster for the district?
- Based on your COOP, who has lead responsibility in this situation?
- Who has the authority to close the schools?
- How do you respond to the request to use schools as shelters? And to Board questions about this?
- What partners are involved with this situation?
- What messages are being sent to parents, and staff. How?



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## Inject #2

(By the end of the week)

You get preliminary damage assessments of school buildings.

These initial reports indicate that

- you *might* be able to reopen *some* buildings within two-three weeks, while
- others will take a month or longer.
- Some, however, will have to be completely rebuilt.
- You can expect to receive more specific information within another week.



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## Inject #2 (Continued)

### In addition:

- As initially reported, the school district's administrative center is totally destroyed.
- Normal operations will not be available for at least six months if not longer.
- Your district IT resources and data center had all been housed at the admin. center.
- The bus barn collapsed and at least half of your bus fleet has been destroyed.
- The teacher's union has inquired about uninterrupted pay and benefits.



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## Inject #2 (Continued)

### In human terms:

- Many staff members - central office and school-based - have had homes destroyed and/or were severely injured. Several lost family members.
- You have heard of at least 12 fatalities, including the *superintendent*, 2 principals, 5 teachers and 4 support staff.
- The total number of casualties is still unknown. The CIO is still unaccounted for.
- Most shelter operations are expected to continue for at least three - four weeks.

**Smaller aftershocks continue.**

**However, they are becoming fewer and farther apart.**



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## Questions

- What are your immediate priorities?
- Based on your COOP, who has lead responsibility in this situation?
- What type of plans or procedures does your COOP call for?
- Are all essential district functions addressed?
- How does the need for to use school buildings as shelters impact your ability to return to more normal functioning?



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## Questions

- Who has the authority to reopen the schools?
- How will you address the need for additional instructional space?
- Where is your back-up administrative center?
- How do you track financial expenditures related to the emergency?
- How and where is your data stored?  
Can/will it be retrieved?



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## Inject #3 (March)

**It's March** – nearly 6 months after the initial events.  
You are in long term response and recovery mode.

- After a rugged winter, area roads are still in rough shape.
- Your district family is recovering from many fatalities to staff, students and others across the broader school community.
- As a result of the devastation, many students and families are now homeless.
- As a result of coastal tsunamis, there are also many new families living within your district boundaries.
- You lost several weeks of instructional time over the fall and into the winter.
- The district is looking for ways to fund reconstruction, rebuilding, and replacement of destroyed assets.
- Your IT staff is struggling to rebuild all of the lost data and its infrastructure.



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## Questions

- How are **you** doing?
- How will you approach all of these – and other – issues?
- What other issues are there at this point?
- How long do you think it will take to fully recover?
- How can you better plan for major disasters in the future?
- Did you also implement components of your LEA Emergency Operations/Safety plan?
- Did your schools?
- What will you do next?



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TAKE A  
DEEP  
BREATH  
THEN  
CONTINUE

....

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## Hot Wash



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## Hot Wash

- Did your Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) work?  
How well?
- Did you have all the elements of a well designed COOP in place?
- What actions will you take toward improvement?
- Did your Devolution Plan work?  
Did your Communications Plan work?

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## Hot Wash

- What can be done to improve overall planning and preparedness?
- What external agencies would the district need to work with in this scenario?
- Are all necessary agreements in place to facilitate cooperation among agencies?

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## After Action Plan

### Lessons Learned:

For an improved district COOP, consider what you will:

- Keep Doing?
- Stop Doing?
- Do Differently ?
- Start Doing?

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# Conclusion

- What is your biggest take away today?



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