NEW HEIGHTS SCHOOLS, INC.

POLICY 806

CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY MANAGEMENT
Adopted: 12/2010
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Mandatory: Yes
Frequency: Annual
Distribution: Website, Main Office (procedure)

I. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the policy of New Heights School to provide a safe and healthy work environment for It's staff and students. The principal is directed to develop and implement procedures for responding to a wide range of natural and man-made crisis situations. Such plans shall include roles for New Heights principal, staff, community and county agencies in addressing emergencies.

Review of policy, procedures and attendant documents will be conducted in accordance with applicable laws.

A Crisis Management Procedure Handbook has been developed and will be reviewed annually as will this policy, with assistance from the school principal, and local emergency response agencies, and in accordance with Minnesota Statute § 121A.035. New Heights employees will be trained to address crisis situations on a school-level as required by State regulation.

The Crisis Management Procedure Handbook will be maintained by the main office of the school.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Crisis Management Policy is to act as a guide for the school and principal, school employees, students, board of directors, and community members to address a wide range of potential crisis situations in the school. The step-by-step procedures suggested by this policy will provide guidance to the school in drafting crisis management plans to coordinate protective actions prior to, during, and after any type of emergency or potential crisis situation.

The school will, to the extent possible, engage in ongoing emergency planning within the school and with emergency responders and other relevant community organizations. The school will ensure that relevant emergency responders in the community have access to their building-specific crisis management plans and will provide training to school staff to enable them to act appropriately in the event of a crisis.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. The Policy and Plans

The school's Crisis Management Policy has been created in consultation with local community response agencies and other appropriate individuals and groups that would likely be involved in the event of a school emergency.

Upon approval by the board of directors, such crisis management plans shall be an addendum to this Crisis Management Policy. ***This Policy and the plans will be maintained and updated on an annual basis.***

B. Elements of the Crisis Management Policy

1. General Crisis Procedures. The Crisis Management Policy includes general crisis procedures for securing the building, classroom evacuation, building evacuation, campus evacuation, and sheltering. The Policy designates the individual(s) who will determine when these actions will be taken. A communication system will be in place to enable the designated individual to be contacted at all times in the event of a potential crisis, setting forth the method to contact the designated individual, the provision of at least two designees when the contact person is unavailable, and the method to convey contact information to the appropriate staff persons. The alternative designees may include members of the emergency first responder response team. A secondary method of communication should be included in the plan for use when the primary method of communication is inoperable. The school will have access to a copy of the Comprehensive School Safety Guide (2011 Edition) to assist in the development of crisis management plans.

   All general crisis procedures will address specific procedures for the safe evacuation of children and employees with special needs such as physical, sensory, motor, developmental, and mental health challenges.

   [Note: More specific information on planning for children with special needs can be found in the Comprehensive School Safety Guide (2011 Edition) and United States Department of Education's document entitled, "Practical Information on Crisis Planning, a Guide for Schools and Communities." A website link is provided in the resource section of this Policy.]

   a. Lock-Down Procedures. Lock-down procedures will be used in situations where harm may result to persons inside the school building, such as a shooting, hostage incident, intruder, trespass, disturbance, or when determined to be necessary by the principal or his or her designee. The principal or designee will announce the lock-down over the public address system or other designated system. Code words will not be used. Provisions for emergency evacuation

will be maintained even in the event of a lock-down. The principal will submit lock-down procedures for their building as part of their crisis management plan.

[Note: State law requires a minimum of five school lock-down drills each school year. See Minn. Stat. § 121A.035.]

b. Evacuation Procedures. Evacuations of classrooms and building shall be implemented at the discretion of the principal or his or her designee. Each building's crisis management plan will include procedures for transporting students and staff a safe distance from harm to a designated safe area until released by the principal or designee. Safe areas may change based upon the specific emergency situation. The evacuation procedures should include specific procedures for children with special needs, including children with limited mobility (wheelchairs, braces, crutches, etc.), visual impairments, hearing impairments, and other sensory, developmental, or mental health needs. The evacuation procedures should also address transporting necessary medications for students that take medications during the school day.

[Note: State law requires a minimum of five school fire drills, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 299F.30, and one school tornado drill each school year. See Minn. Stat. § 121A.035.]

c. Sheltering Procedures. Sheltering provides refuge for students, staff, and visitors within the school building during an emergency. Shelters are safe areas that maximize the safety of inhabitants. Safe areas may change based upon the specific emergency. The principal or his or her designee will announce the need for sheltering over the public address system or other designated system.

2. Crisis-Specific Procedures. The Crisis Management Policy includes crisis-specific procedures for crisis situations that may occur during the school day or at school-sponsored events and functions. These procedures are designed to enable the principal to tailor response procedures when creating their specific crisis management plans.

3. School Emergency Response Teams

a. Composition. The principal will select a school emergency response team that will be trained to respond to emergency situations. All school emergency response team members will receive on-going training to carry out the building's crisis management plans and will have knowledge of procedures, evacuation routes, and safe areas. For purposes of student safety and accountability, to the extent possible,

school emergency response team members will not have direct responsibility for the supervision of students. Team members must be willing to be actively involved in the resolution of crises and be available to assist in any crisis situation as deemed necessary by the principal. The school will maintain a current list of school emergency response team members which will be updated annually. The principal, and his or her alternative designees, will know the location of that list in the event of a school emergency. A copy of the list will be kept on file in the school office.

b. Leaders. The principal or his or her designee will serve as the leader of the school emergency response team and will be the primary contact for emergency response officials. In the event the primary designee is unavailable, the designee list should include more than one alternative designee and may include members of the emergency response team. When emergency response officials are present, they may elect to take command and control of the crisis. It is critical in this situation that school officials assume a resource role and be available as necessary to emergency response officials.

IV. PREPARATION BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

A. Communication

1. School Employees. Teachers generally have the most direct contact with students on a day-to-day basis. As a result, they must be aware of their role in responding to crisis situations. This also applies to non-teaching school personnel who have direct contact with students. All staff shall be aware of the school's Crisis Management Policy and crisis management plan. ***The crisis management plan shall include the method and dates of dissemination of the plan to its staff.*** Employees will receive a copy of the relevant crisis management plans and shall receive periodic training on plan implementation.

2. Students and Parents. Students and parents shall be made aware of the school's Crisis Management Policy. The school's crisis management plan shall set forth how students and parents are made aware of the school plans. Students shall receive specific instruction on plan implementation and shall participate in a required number of drills and practice sessions throughout the school year.

B. Planning and Preparing for Fire

1. Designate a safe area at least 50 feet away from the building to enable students and staff to evacuate. The safe area should not interfere with emergency responders or responding vehicles and should not be in an area

where evacuated persons are exposed to any products of combustion. (Depending on the wind direction, where the building on fire is located, the direction from which the fire is arriving, and the location of fire equipment, the distance may need to be extended.)

[Note: Evacuation areas at least 50 feet from school buildings are recommended but not mandated by statute or rule. Evacuation areas should be selected based on safety and the individual school site's proximity to streets, traffic patterns, and other hazards.]

2. The building's facility diagram and site plan shall be available in appropriate areas of the building and shall identify the most direct evacuation routes to the designated safe areas both inside and outside of the building. The facility diagram and site plan must identify the location of the fire alarm control panel, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses, water spigots, and utility shut offs.

3. Teachers and staff will receive training on the location of the primary emergency evacuation routes and alternate routes from various points in the building. During fire drills, students and staff will practice evacuations using primary evacuation routes and alternate routes.

4. Certain employees, such as those who work in hazardous areas in the building, will receive training on the locations and proper use of fire extinguishers and protective clothing and equipment.

5. Fire drills will be conducted periodically without warning at various times of the day and under different circumstances, e.g., lunchtime, recess, and during assemblies. State law requires a minimum of five fire drills each school year, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 299F.30. See Minn. Stat. § 121A.035.

   [Note: The State Fire Marshal advises schools to defer fire drills during the winter months.]

6. A record of fire drills conducted at the building will be maintained in the principal's office.

7. The school will have pre arranged sites for emergency sheltering and transportation as needed.

8. The school will determine which staff will remain in the building to perform essential functions if safe to do so (e.g., switchboard, building engineer, etc.). The school also will designate the principal or his or her designee to meet local fire or law enforcement agents upon their arrival.

C. Facility Diagrams and Site Plans

The schools will have a facility diagram and site plan that includes the location of primary and secondary evacuation routes, exits, designated safe areas inside and outside of the building, and the location of fire alarm control panel, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses, water spigots, and utility shut offs. All facility diagrams and site plans will be updated regularly and whenever a major change is made to a building. Facility diagrams and site plans will be maintained by the principal and will be easily accessible and on file in the school office. Facility diagrams and site plans will be provided to first responders, such as fire and law enforcement personnel.

[Note: For single building school districts, such as charter schools, a secondary location for the diagrams and site plans will be included in the school's Crisis Management Policy and may include filing documents with a charter school sponsor, or compiling facility diagrams and site plans on a Flash Drive and distributing copies to first responders or sharing the documents with first responders during the crisis planning process.]

[Note: To the extent data contained in facility diagrams and site plans constitute security information pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13.37, the school is advised to consult with appropriate officials and/or legal counsel prior to dissemination of the facility diagrams or site plans to anyone other than first responders.]

D. Emergency Telephone Numbers

The school will maintain a current list of emergency telephone numbers and the names and addresses of local, county, and state personnel who may be involved in a crisis situation. The list will include telephone numbers for local police, fire, ambulance, hospital, the Poison Control Center, county and state emergency management agencies, local public works departments, local utility companies, the public health nurse, mental health/suicide hotlines, and the county welfare agency. A copy of this list will be kept on file in the school office and updated annually.

School employees will receive training on how to make emergency contacts, including 911 calls, when the school's main telephone number and location is electronically conveyed to emergency personnel instead of the specific building in need of emergency services.

School plans will set forth a process to internally communicate an emergency, using the intercom systems and cellular phones, as well as the procedure to enable the staff to rapidly convey emergency information to a building designee. Each plan will identify a primary and secondary method of communication for both internal and secondary use. It is recommended that the plan include several methods of communication because computers, intercoms, telephones, and cell phones may not be operational or may be dangerous to use during an emergency.

E. Warning and Notification Systems

The school shall maintain a warning system designed to inform students, staff, and visitors of a crisis or emergency. This system shall be maintained on a regular basis under the maintenance plan for the school building. The school should consider an alternate notification system to address the needs of staff and students with special needs, such as vision or hearing.

The principal shall be responsible for informing students and employees of the warning system and the means by which the system is used to identify a specific crisis or emergency situation. The school's crisis management plan will include the method and frequency of dissemination of the warning system information to students and employees.

F. Early School Closure Procedures

The principal will make decisions about closing school as early in the day as possible. The early school closure procedures will set forth the criteria for early school closure (e.g., weather-related, utility failure, or a crisis situation), will specify how closure decisions will be communicated to staff, students, families, and the school community (designated broadcast media, local authorities, e-mail, or school website), and will discuss the factors to be considered in closing and reopening a school or building.

Early school closure procedures also will include a reminder to parents and guardians to listen to designated local radio and TV stations for school closing announcements, where possible.

G. Media Procedures

The principal has the authority and discretion to notify parents or guardians and the school community in the event of a crisis or early school closure. The principal will designate a spokesperson who will notify the media in the event of a crisis or early school closure. The spokesperson shall receive training to ensure that the school is in strict compliance with federal and state law relative to the release of private data when conveying information to the media.

H. Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention Procedures

Short-term behavioral health crisis intervention procedures will set forth the procedure for initiating behavioral health crisis intervention plans. The procedures will utilize available resources including the school psychologist, counselor, community behavioral health crisis intervention, or others in the community. Counseling procedures will be used whenever the principal determines it to be

necessary, such as after an assault, a hostage situation, shooting, or suicide. The behavioral health crisis intervention procedures shall include the following steps:

1. The principal will meet with relevant persons, including school psychologists and counselors, to determine the level of intervention needed for students and staff.

2. Designate specific rooms as private counseling areas.

3. Escort siblings and close friends of any victims as well as others in need of emotional support to the counseling areas.

4. Prohibit media from interviewing or questioning students or staff.

5. Provide follow-up services to students and staff who receive counseling.

6. Resume normal school routines as soon as possible.

I. Long-Term Recovery Intervention Procedures

Long-term recovery intervention procedures may involve both short-term and long-term recovery planning:

1. Physical/structural recovery.

2. Fiscal recovery.

3. Academic recovery.

4. Social/emotional recovery.

V. SAMPLE PROCEDURES INCLUDED IN THIS POLICY

Sample procedures for the various hazards/emergencies listed below are attached to this Policy for use when drafting specific crisis management plans. Additional sample procedures may be found in the Response section of the Comprehensive School Safety Guide (2011 Edition). ***After approval by the board of directors, an adopted procedure will become an addendum to the Crisis Management Policy.***

A. Fire

B. Hazardous Materials

C. Severe Weather: Tornado/Severe Thunderstorm/Flooding

D. Medical Emergency

E. Fight/Disturbance

F. Assault

G. Intruder

H. Weapons

I. Shooting

J. Hostage

K. Bomb Threat

L. Chemical or Biological Threat

M. Checklist for Telephone Threats

N. Demonstration

O. Suicide

P. Lock-down Procedures

Q. Shelter-In-Place Procedures

R. Evacuation/Relocation

S. Media Procedures

T. Post-Crisis Procedures

U. School Emergency Response Team

V. Emergency Phone Numbers

W. Highly Contagious Serious Illness or Pandemic Flu

VI. MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES

A. Chemical Accidents

Procedures for reporting chemical accidents shall be posted at key locations such as chemistry labs, art rooms,and janitorial closets.

[Note: School buildings must maintain Material Safety Data Sheets (M.S.D.S.) for all chemicals on campus. State law, federal law, and OSHA require that pertinent

staff have access to M.S.D.S. in the event of a chemical accident.]

B. Visitors

The school shall implement procedures mandating visitor sign-in and visitors in the school building. See MSBA/MASA Model Policy 903 (Visitors to School Buildings and Sites).

The school shall implement procedures to minimize outside entry into the school building except at designated check-in points and assure that all doors are locked prior to and after regular building hours.

C. Student Victims of Criminal Offenses at or on School Property

The school shall establish procedures allowing student victims of criminal offenses on school property the opportunity to transfer to another school within Independent School District 834.

[Note: The Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. § 6301, et seq.; Title IX, 20 U.S.C. § 1681, et seq.; and the Unsafe School Choice Option, 20 U.S.C. § 7912, require school districts to establish such transfer procedures.]

Questions relative to the creation or implementation of such plans will be directed to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

Legal References:
Minn. Stat. Ch. 12 (Emergency Management)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 12A (Natural Disaster; State Assistance)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.035 (Crisis Management Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.06 (Reports of Dangerous Weapon Incidents in School Zones)
Minn. Stat. § 299F.30 (Fire Drill in School)
Minn. Stat. § 326B.02, Subd. 6 (Powers)
Minn. Stat. § 326B.106 (General Powers of Commissioner of Labor and Industry)
Minn. Stat. § 609.605, Subd. 4 (Trespasses on School Property)
Minn. Rules Ch. 7511 (Fire Safety)
20 U.S.C. § 1681, *et seq.* (Title IX)
20 U.S.C. § 6301, *et seq.* (Every Student Succeeds Act)
20 U.S.C. § 7912 (Unsafe School Choice Option)
42 U.S.C. § 5121 *et seq.* (Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance)

Cross References:
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 407 (Employee Right to Know – Exposure to Hazardous Substances)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 532 (Use of Peace Officers and Crisis Teams to Remove Students with IEPs from School Grounds)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 903 (Visitors to School District Buildings and Sites)
https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/sfm/documents/2011comprehensiveschool safetyguide.pdf