

Next Steps in Crisis Management Planning for Schools: Ensuring Seamless Recovery and Reunification Procedures

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1



SCHOOL
SECURITY
ROUNDTABLE



safe and SOUND
— SCHOOLS —

Workshop Outline

- Opening Remarks, Introductions, & Review Agenda
- Module 1: Case Study of Sandy Hook Reunification - A Parent's Perspective
- Debriefing, Q and A
- Module 2: Defining Reunification and Examining Best Practices
- Module 3: Planning Considerations for Parent-Child Reunification
- Module 4: Supporting Staff and Students through Psychological Recovery
- Module 5: Tabletop Exercise
- Review and Closing

Case Study of Sandy Hook Reunification - A Parent's Perspective

Module 1



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Defining Reunification and Examining Best Practices

Module 2

GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING HIGH-QUALITY SCHOOL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANS



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

http://rems.ed.gov/docs/rems_k-12_guide_508.pdf

Five Preparedness Missions



USDOE (2013)

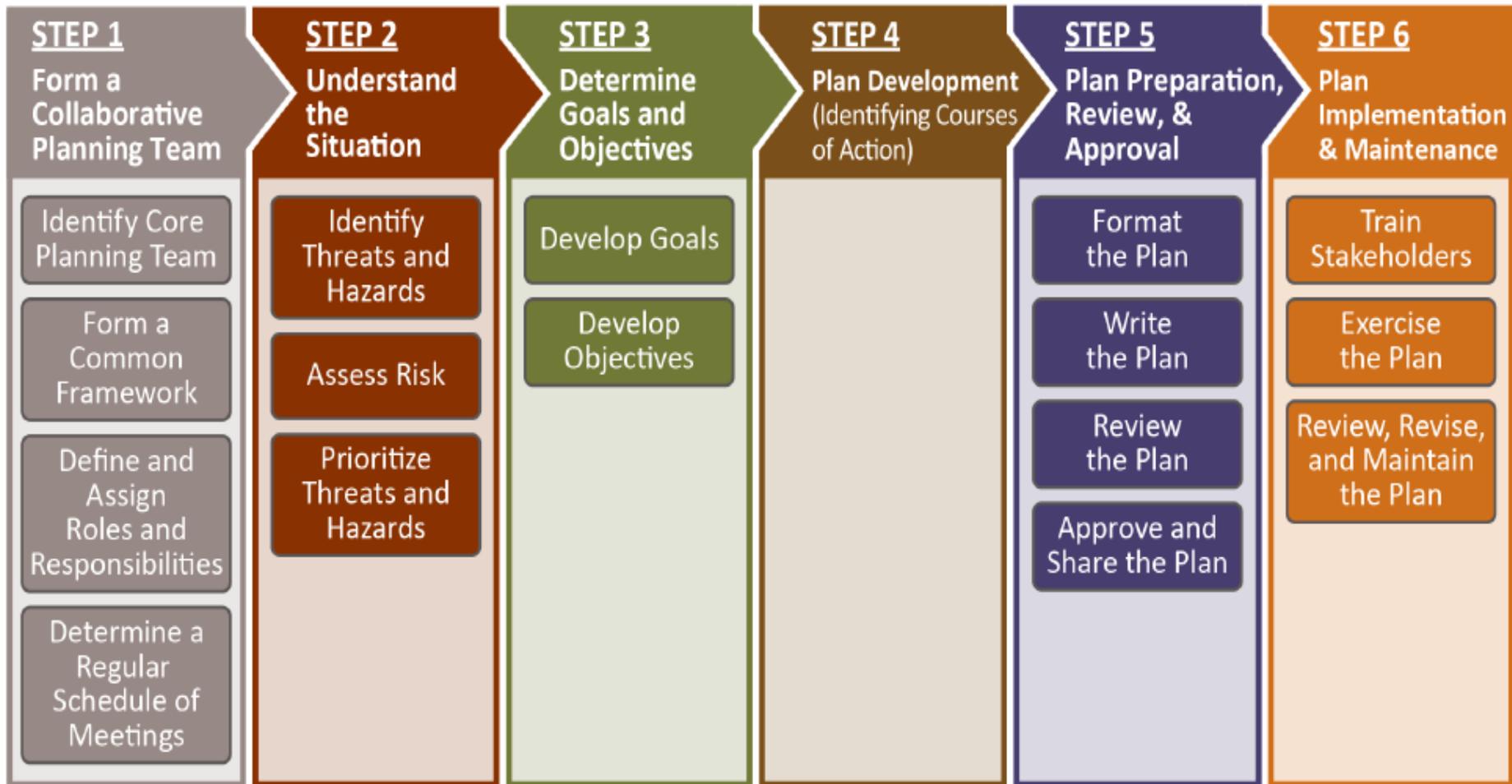
Planning Principles

Planning must:

- be supported by leadership
- use assessment to customize plans to the building level
- consider all threats and hazards
- provide for the access and functional needs of the whole school community
- consider all settings and all times
 - School EOPs must account for incidents that may occur during and outside the school day, and on and off campus (e.g., sporting events, field trips)
- be done by following a collaborative process
 - Templates provide guidance but should not undermine the collaborative initiative and collectively shared plan



Steps in the Planning Process



USDOE (2013)

Functional Annex: Reunification

Considerations:

- Educate families and guardians
 - Reunification process
 - Parent roles and responsibilities
- Verify adult is authorized to take custody of a student
- Minimize confusion and chaos
- Establish effective communication between check-in, student assembly & reunion areas
- Ensure students do not leave on their own
- Protect privacy of students and parents from the media and general public
- Provide frequent communication and information updates
- Manage and overcome technology barriers
- Address language access barriers



USDOE (2013)

6

Functional Annex: Communications and Warning Annex

- Efficient and effective communication
- Internal and external
- Technology barriers
- Language barriers
- Media
- Social Media
- Short and long-term impact on activities



Functional Annex: Accounting for All Persons

- Account for the where-abouts & well-being of students, staff, & visitors
- Identify those who may be missing or injured
- Determine attendance at reunification area
- Attendance reporting procedures
- Procedures in the event that student/staff cannot be located
- Procedures for when students will be dismissed or released



Functional Annex: Accounting for All Persons

Assign Key Roles:

- Student Accounting & Release Team Leader
- Two assistants:
 - Student Accounting Specialist
 - Student Release Specialist
- Work under Operations Section Chief
- Accountability:
 - class rosters including those absent, left school early, substitute teachers, volunteers



PREPaRE & Brock et al., (2016)

Handout: Student Accounting and Release Planning Checklist

11

Functional Annex: Evacuation Annex

- Safely moving students and visitors to designated assembly areas (e.g. classrooms, outside areas, cafeterias, & other locations)
- Identify both on-site and off-site evacuation locations
- Plan for use of district transportation



USDOE (2013)

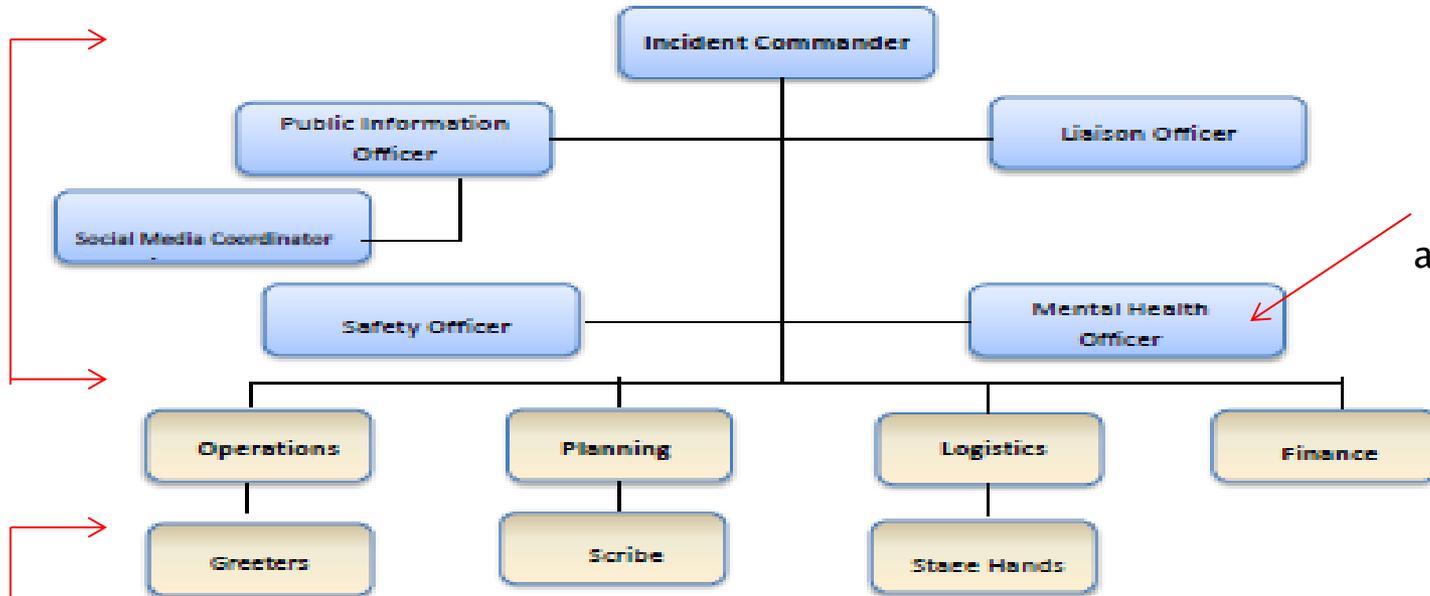
Functional Annex: Security Annex

- Secure agreements with law enforcement agencies
- Ensure building's physically secure
- Move students safely
 - Traffic & pedestrian safety
- Respond to threats
- Manage media
- Information sharing
(e.g. FERPA/HIPPA)



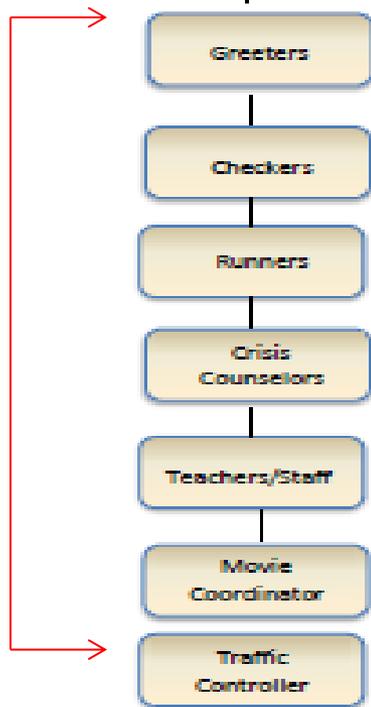
Reunification Incident Team according to ICS roles

U.S. Departments of
Homeland Security &
Education



NASP
PREP_aRE
added role

I Love U Guys Foundation &
Adams 12 School, Rhode Island



Handout: Reunification ICS Graphic

Adapted from: Keyes, J.M (2011). *Standard reunification method: A practical method to unite students with parents after an evacuation or crisis.* I Love U Guys Foundation: Author.

<http://iloveugays.org.srm.Standard20%Reunification%20Method.pdf>

Reeves, M., Nickerson, A., Conolly-Wilson, C., Susan, M., Lanzaro, Jimerson, S., Pease, R. (2011). *PREP_aRE: Crisis Prevention and Preparedness (2nd Ed)* - Comprehensive School Safety Planning. National Association of School Psychologists, Bethesda, MD. Primary author.

Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (2013). *Rhode Island model for school emergency planning, mitigation/prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.* Providence, RI: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.riema.ri.gov/preparedness/schoolsafety/documents/1-Introduction%202013.Final%202-7-2014.pdf>

Standard Reunification Method



A Practical Method to Unite Students with Parents After an Evacuation or Crisis.
Based on the Adams 12, Five Star School District Practices.

The "I Love U Guys" Foundation
Version 0.9.5

***I LOVE U GUYS FOUNDATION AND
ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR SCHOOL DISTRICT***

Standard Reunification Method

Critical features:

- Establish Reunification Incident Team
 - Align with ICS roles
- Control lines of sight
- Traffic control and flow
- Reunification site set-up
 - Multiple rooms needed
- Reunification cards
 - Whitelist or Blacklist Custody Verification
- On-site and off-site reunification
- Reunification go-kit



Many of these will be discussed more in-depth in Module 4

Standard Reunification Method in a Nutshell

1. Establish a caregiver check-in location.
2. Deliver students to a student holding area (not visible to caregivers). Greeters direct caregivers to check-in location and help them understand the reunification process.
3. Caregivers complete reunification cards.
4. Procedure allows caregivers to self-sort during check-in, streamlining the process.
5. Runners recover student from the student staging area.
6. Controlled lines of sight allow communication and other issues to be handled with diminished drama or anxiety.
7. Medical or investigative contingencies are anticipated.



Reunification Information (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Have photo identification out and ready to show school district personnel.

Student Name

Student Grade Student Cell Phone Number

Name of person picking up student

Signature

Phone number of person picking up student

Relationship to student being picked up

Photo identification matches name of person picking up student? Y or N

Parent completes:

Print Student Name Again

Student Grade

Student Birthday

School personnel completes upon release of student

TIME INITIALS OTHER

Signature

Print Your Name

Date

Parent Guardian Sign Off

I have read and understand these instructions.

Reunification

First, we want to thank you for your patience during this reunification. We share the same goal during this process: Getting you and your student back together as quickly as possible. The reason we're going through this is that an event has occurred at the school that mandates we personally reunite you with your child.

Instructions

1. Please complete the information on the other side of this card.
2. Prepare identification (if you don't have ID with you, please move to the side of the line, it may take a little longer to verify your identity.)
3. Select the check-in line based on either student last name or student grade.
4. After check-in, staff will split this card and a runner will be sent to recover your student. Please step over to the Reunification Location.
5. If there has been injury or other concerns, you may be asked to meet a counselor.
6. Please don't shout at school or district staff. We'll get through this as quickly as possible.



PREP_aRE Model

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL
PSYCHOLOGISTS

Quality Reunification

- Use of multi-disciplinary team and collaboration with community stakeholders
- Reunification is *one* component of a comprehensive safety and crisis plan
- Supports alignment with ICS
- Incorporates USDOE Guidelines and Standard Reunification Method (I Love U Guys)
- Provides for staff development and clearly defined and well-practiced roles and responsibilities
- Planning, preparation, and staff development is an on-going, continual process
- Provides additional guidance on Accounting for All Persons Annex, legislative/legal implications
- Strong focus on mental health

Emotional impact

- Reunification linked to all phases of crisis preparedness
- Poor reunification increases threat perceptions & traumatic impact
 - negatively impacts academics, behavior, social-emotional stability
- Strong focus on staff development
 - school employed mental health professionals should have the skills to provide high quality crisis interventions and mental health supports during and after reunification
- Good reunification facilitates recovery and increases resiliency



Annual Review of Student Release Procedures

- Identify Student Accounting and Student Release Team Leader, Student Accounting Specialist, and Student Release Specialist (and backup personnel)
- Identify reunification sites both on and off campus grounds, including alternate sites
- Update current classroom rosters in crisis team/administrator, classroom, and reunification go-kits
- Maintain an emergency card for each student and staff member in the main office, crisis response team/administrator's emergency response go-kit, and in each classroom's go-kit
 - lists family members or adults authorized to pick up student
 - have accessible electronically (if possible)
- Check Reunification Go-Kits and ensure all items are included

20

Crisis Plans: Legislation



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- No Child Left Behind (NCLB)
 - Requires safety or school crisis plan; ADA, FERPA, HIPPA
 - Reasonable actions to maintain order; care and supervision
- **ESSA requires assistance to LEA's: address bullying, harassment, discipline; & annual reporting of climate, bullying, and harassment data**
 - ***use at least 20% of Title IV Part A funds to improve student mental and behavioral health, school climate, or school safety***
 - ***can include trauma informed practices and mental health first aid***
- Foreseeability & Negligence (includes civil rights violations)
- State-level legislation:
 - Colorado Senate Bill 15-213 (Claire Davis School Safety Act)
 - Pending: Class Action Lawsuit against Compton Unified School District, CA

Sources: Bailey (2006); NCLB (2001); U.S. Dept. of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2010); U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students (2013); ESSA (2015)

21

Reunification

“Crisis has the power to divide us; but, we have the power to put ourselves back together. How we choose to do so determines the recovery of our students, teachers, families, and community.”

-Alissa Parker, Safe and Sound Schools