Expectations and Challenges to Preparedness In Kansas Schools

By

Kansas Center for Safe & Prepared Schools

Dr. Bob Hull, Director
Objectives and Discussion Points

- Our sense of School Safety & Preparedness is changing
- How is this a leadership function?
- New Expectations and Challenges in School Preparedness
- Foundations of School Preparedness
- Consistency of School Preparedness
Every Kansas educational setting is vulnerable to threats, hazards and disasters that have the potential to disrupt normal school operations and cascade into a crisis/emergency situation.

Kansas schools are not uniformly prepared, resource equipped or trained to respond to these emergency situations.
KC-SPS Guiding Principles

- Regardless of current challenges, schools have a duty of care to students, staff and the community
- All schools can implement minimal cost items that improve safety and preparedness
- Advocate for children during times of crisis
- Focus on the positive connection between a safe & prepared school and academic success
- A school crisis is a community crisis and a community crisis is a school crisis
- Training, using the all-hazards approach, must be continuous due to staff turnover and changing realities
- Clearly state standards, expectations and best practices for school safety and preparedness
- School safety & preparedness is not just an educational responsibility
- Advocate for keeping school law enforcement, school health professionals and mental/emotional health professionals in schools
KC-SPS Successes

- All Kansas School Districts are Members
- Annual State Safe & Prepared Schools Conference
- Regional Workshops
- Governor's Proclamation
- Model School Emergency Operation Plans (EOP)
- KC-SPS Advisory Group
- 11 Kansas Teams (Ulysses, Atchison, Winfield, Leavenworth, Haysville, Manhattan, Topeka, Wichita, Humboldt, Seaman & Kingman) have had EMI Training.
- Vulnerability Assessments for Schools – 25 + Districts
- Invitation to be a working member of the Fusion Center
- Published articles in the *Journal of Business Continuity and Emergency Management* and *The National Association of School Nurses Magazine* by Dr. Hull
Change and Leadership

- Changes in school preparedness/safety
  * Society
  * No more 'off limits for schools'
  * Resources
    + Financial
    + Personnel
    + Policies and procedures
Leadership and Change

“Anyone can steer the ship, but it takes a leader to chart the course.”

* Strategic adaptive change
* Working cultural changes
Expectations

- **Community** - Schools are Safe
- **Parents** - Mary and Johnny will be safe in school
- **Students** - I will be safe in school
- **Staff** - School provides a safe/prepared learning environment
- **1st Responders** - Schools and their staff are trained for emergencies
- **Emergency Management** - Schools have a comprehensive all-hazards plan for emergencies
The legislature strongly urges all public and private schools to create and update school crisis plans and to facilitate implementation of such plans by training personnel and conducting regular drills. Be it further resolved to deliver copies of this resolution to the Commissioner of Education and the chairperson of the State Board of Education.
Challenges to School Preparedness

- Budgets/Finances
- Apathy & Naïveté
- Politics
- Staff turnover
- Lack of Regulation
- Different Cultures
- Sustainability
Who Owns the Disaster?

- Government?
- Local Community?
- Emergency Management?
- 1st Responders?
- Schools?
- Individuals?

IT WON'T HAPPEN HERE BECAUSE . . .
Joplin Tornado
School Floods
Winter Ice Storms
Newtown Connecticut
Seneca, KS School Fire
Bath Michigan School Bombing
Foundations for School All-Hazards Preparedness

- Formation of School Crisis Management Teams (Community, District & Building)
- Creation and implementation of the All-Hazard School Emergency Operations Plan (District, Building and Classroom levels)
- Vulnerability Assessments for Schools
- Standardization of Emergency Drills
- Implementing Building & Classroom Crisis Kits
- Training and Exercises
- Sustainability
What is an **EOP**?

An **EOP** (emergency operations plan) is an overview of the School District’s approach to emergency operations. It describes the School District, its emergency management response policy, procedures and assigned tasks. The primary audience for the **EOP** are the key Administrative Staff, the BOE (policy makers) and First Responders. This plan serves as the foundation for the operationally orientated building level plans.
Crisis Management Action Outline
(All-Hazards Approach)

- People Caused
- Natural disasters
- Physical Plant or Technological Failures
Drills and Skills

• Standardization of drills and skills

• Drills all schools can use:
  1. Severe weather
  2. Evacuation
  3. Lockdown
  4. Shelter in Place
  5. Reunification
  6. Bus evacuation
Crisis Kits

All Disasters are Local

+ Classroom Crisis Kit
  * Intended to be Grab & Go
  * Use with every drill
  * Helpful items to the classroom teacher & students

+ Building Crisis Kit
  * Intended to be used during school emergencies
  * Organized to help building administrative & support staff during emergencies
  * Contains contact information for school students & staff
Table Top

As you are walking in from observing recess on this cold and windy fall day you hear off in the distance some rumbling noises that sounds like a collision. Once inside the building, the secretary hands you the phone. The Hazmat Officer from the local fire department is on the phone advising you of a train derailment approximately a mile away from the school. He informs you that you are in the downward wind plume and the cars are leaking a chemical. The initial information is the train tank cars are carrying chlorine gas.
## KC-SPS Survey Comparison Results 2009 vs 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Question</th>
<th>(Results in Percentages)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
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<td>Yes/No</td>
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<tr>
<td>#1 – My local school has an all-hazards crisis plan and is adequately prepared for crisis events</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>#7 – I believe there is a need for additional training for my school’s crisis management team</td>
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<td>#8 – My school’s crisis management plan has been shared with local emergency responders</td>
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<td>#9 – My local school has lock down drills at least annually</td>
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<td>#10 – My local school has a shelter in place drill annually</td>
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<td>#13 – My local school has a building crisis kit</td>
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<td>#14 – My local school has a grab and go crisis kit for every classroom</td>
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<td>#15 – My local school has an annual table top drill</td>
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<td>#16 – In my local community, school officials, first responders &amp; EM meet on a regular basis</td>
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<td>#18 – I believe a state wide office assisting local schools in emergency management is beneficial</td>
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</table>
Legislative Committee on Homeland Security Survey

- Coordinated through Dale Dennis' Office
- 100% Response
- Common themes in comments
  * Time
  * Resources
  * Community Involvement
  * Using resources of KC-SPS
School Safety and Preparedness

Our schools are the most valuable structures in our communities because they possess the most priceless treasures of our society. They should receive the constant attention and protection they deserve. School safety and preparedness should rise to the level of value we place on our children.*

*Adapted from an SRO article
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