

# SCHOOL EMERGENCY AND CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE INFORMATION



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Many community issues spill over into the school setting, and the reverse also holds true. While it is not possible to anticipate every type of school disturbance or emergency that could threaten the safety of staff or students, the purpose of this guide is to assist Saanich School District employees in their response to emergencies or critical incidents/threats, and to help to ensure that the district is a safe place for students and staff. It enhances existing district policies and procedures on emergency preparedness.

It is of utmost importance that staff members consider their personal safety, first and foremost, and not approach any situation that would endanger their own safety, or the safety of a student or another staff member. School and district personnel should become familiar with the personal safety considerations that are included in this document.

If a crisis occurs, timely action should be taken to prevent and /or reduce the possibility of further incident, accident or event. Schools and facilities can take preventive steps that may help to minimize the consequences of an incident or event and any resulting confusion. A staff that is well trained in crisis management can help a school return to a normal routine as soon as possible in the aftermath of a crisis or emergency event.

Communication with parents, students and staff is imperative in the preventative process so that everyone is aware of what to do when an incident occurs. Communication is also an essential component of the debriefing process after an incident, so that everyone learns what went right and what changes need to be made.

We want to thank the following for sharing their resources in the development of this document:

*The Comox Valley Board of Education  
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Board of Education  
Keeping Schools Safe: A Practical Guide for Principals and Vice Principals*

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## **EMERGENCY AND RESOURCE PHONE NUMBERS**

<b>Contact</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Police/Fire/Ambulance	911 (Emergencies)
School District	250-652-7300
Board Office	250-652-7332
Superintendent	250-652-7330
Asst. Superintendent (Curriculum)	250-652-7322
Safe School Coordinator/ Director of Instruction (Learning Services)	250-652-7341
Director of Facilities	250-652-7337
Head of Maintenance (Buildings)	250-384-2353
<b>Emergencies during office hours</b>	
Associate Director, Capital	250-514-2696
Planning & Operations/H&S	250-208-8109
Transportation Manager	250-883-0791
Custodial/Com Serv Manager	250-514-7461
Operations Manager/H&S	250-208-8109
Maintenance Supervisor	250-514-1312
Grounds Supervisor	250-415-9489
Custodial Supervisor	250-920-8347
<a href="#">BC Hydro – Emergencies and power outages</a>	1-800-769-3766
<a href="#">FortisBC – Gas leaks and odours</a>	1-800-663-9911
<a href="#">Beacon Community Services</a>	250-656-0134
<a href="#">Community Living BC</a>	250-952-4203
<a href="#">Crisis Intervention</a>	1-800-784-2433
<a href="#">Discovery Youth and Family Substance Use Services</a>	250-519-5313
<a href="#">Kids' Help Line</a>	1-800-668-6868
<a href="#">Learning through Loss</a>	info@learningthroughloss.org
<a href="#">Mary Manning Centre</a>	250-385-6111
<a href="#">Ministry of Children and Family Development</a>	
• Aboriginal Child and Youth Mental Health	250-952-4041
• Children's Helpline and after hours	250-310-1234
• Saanich Peninsula Office	250-544-3300
• Saanich Mental Health	250-952-5073
• Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect	250-310-1234
<a href="#">NIL/TU,O Child and Family Services Society</a>	250-544-1400
<a href="#">Poison Control</a>	1-800-567-8911
POPFASD	1-250-564-6574
<a href="#">Project Alive</a>	250-952-5073
<a href="#">Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health</a>	250-519-5390

<a href="#"><u>Saanich Health Unit</u></a>	250-519-5144
<a href="#"><u>Suicide Hotline (1-800-SUICIDE)</u></a>	1-800-784-2433
<a href="#"><u>Surrounded by Cedar</u></a>	250-383-2990
<a href="#"><u>Vancouver Island Crisis Line</u></a>	1-888-494-3888
<a href="#"><u>Victim Services</u></a>	250-995-7351
<a href="#"><u>Victoria Association for Community Living</u></a>	250-477-7231
<a href="#"><u>Victoria Native Friendship Centre</u></a>	250-384-3211
<a href="#"><u>Youth Against Violence Line</u></a>	1-800-680-4264

## NON-EMERGENCY FIRE AND POLICE PHONE NUMBERS

Fire/Police	Schools
<p><b>Central Saanich Fire Department</b>                      1903 Mt. Newton Cross Road                      Saanichton, B.C. V8M 2A9                      Phone: (250) 544-4238                      Fax: (250) 652-0135</p> <p><b>Central Saanich Police Service</b>                      1903 Mt. Newton Cross Road Saanichton, B.C.                      V8M 2A9 Phone: (250) 652-4441                      Fax: (250) 652-0354</p>	<p>Brentwood Elementary                      Keating Elementary                      Bayside Middle                      Stelly's Secondary                      ILC Saanichton                      Board Office and Physical Plant</p>
<p><b>Saanich Fire Department</b>                      760 Vernon Avenue Victoria, B.C.                      V8X 2W6 Phone: 475-5503                      Fax: 475-5588</p> <p><b>Saanich Police</b>                      760 Vernon Avenue                      Victoria, B.C. V8X 2W6                      Phone: (250) 475-4321                      Fax: (250) 475-6153</p>	<p>Cordova Bay Elementary                      Lochside Elementary                      Prospect Lake Elementary                      Royal Elementary                      Oak Middle                      Claremont Secondary                      Children's Development Centre                      ILC Broadmead                      SIDES (Royal Oak Campus)                      SIDES (Beaver Lake Campus)</p>
<p><b>North Saanich Fire Department</b>                      986 Wain Road                      North Saanich, B.C. V8L 5N8                      Phone: (250) 656-1931                      Fax: (250) 656-0906</p>	<p>Deep Cove Elementary                      KELSET Elementary                      Parkland Secondary</p>
<p><b>Sidney Fire Department</b>                      2440 Sidney Avenue                      Sidney, B.C. V8L 1Y7                      Phone: (250) 656-2121                      Fax: (250) 656-6880</p>	<p>Sidney Elementary                      North Saanich Middle School</p>
<p><b>Sidney/North Saanich RCMP</b>                      9895 Fourth Street                      Sidney, BC V8L 2Z5                      Phone: (250) 656-3931                      Fax: (250) 656-8139</p>	<p>Deep Cove Elementary                      KELSET Elementary                      Sidney Elementary                      North Saanich Middle                      Parkland Secondary</p>

## **911 PROCEDURES**



## **911 TELEPHONE GUIDE**

Be prepared to tell the dispatcher:

### **“Do you want police, fire or ambulance?”**

- Where?** Specify school name, exact school address, your name and date of birth, specific location of the emergency (e.g. hallway, gymnasium etc.) If outside, bordering street information and direction is important.
- What?** Nature of the incident (fight, drugs etc.); is the suspect still present? Are there injuries; if so, extent of injuries? How many people are involved?
- When?** Is the incident in progress or did it happen in the past, and at what time?
- Weapons?** If weapons are involved, give specifics if possible (e.g. firearms, knife, pepper spray etc.)
- Who?** If known, names and full description of suspects and any victims.

### **IN THE CASE OF A FIRE**

- Are there any people trapped in the building?
- Are there any exposures (structures close to the building) that could catch fire?
- Are there any explosives or accelerants involved?

### **IN THE CASE OF AN AMBULANCE**

- What type of emergency is this? (car accident, illness, fall)
- Approximate age of the patient
- Is the patient conscious?
- Is the patient breathing?
- If it is an illness: Is there chest pain?
- If it is an injury: What is the site of the injury?
- Is there bleeding? Is it under control?
- Are there any medical conditions that you are aware of?

## **AFTER CALLING 911**

**Staff should report major accident or incident to their Principal immediately.**

### ***Principal or Designate:***

**Major accidents or incidents should be reported immediately to the Superintendent of Schools or Safe School Coordinator/Assistant Superintendent. When calling, please make it clear that this is an emergency.**

***"I am phoning to report a MAJOR emergency involving students/staff. Please transfer me immediately to: (the Superintendent of Schools)".***

**The following information will be important:**

- Name and position.
- Where are you calling from? Give location (facility and room or area of building).
- How can you be contacted? Cell: \_\_\_\_ On site phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- Briefly describe incident (facts only).
- Where did the incident occur? How long ago?
- Are the police and emergency services already involved?
- How many students in total do you think are at the accident/disaster site?
- Are any students injured?
- Where are the students who are not injured? It is important to keep them together.
- Have you any injured staff? How many staff are in attendance today? Are you injured?
- Are there volunteers in attendance today in your building/in the vehicle? Injuries?
- Are there any school district staff, other than you, in attendance that are able to assist now?
- Who has taken charge? The person in charge should ensure that no students leave the scene.
- Who have you contacted?
- Are members of the media already at the scene? Have you, or anyone else, made any comments?

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**SUPERINTENDENT AND SAFE SCHOOL COORDINATOR/ ASSISTANT  
SUPERINTENDENT**

***Superintendent:***

- Obtain details of the situation from the school principal and/or the Safe School Coordinator.
- Consult with the school principal and Safe School Coordinator to determine appropriate support response.
- Communicate with the Assistant Superintendent(s).
- Where applicable for assessment of the situation, consult necessary authorities, e.g., police, community agencies, lawyers.
- Communicate with all schools that may be impacted because of involvement of students from other schools, peer connections, attendance of siblings of any victims, previous attendance by any victims, etc.
- Communicate with the Director of Facilities if maintenance personnel working at the school may be at risk or if the school building is damaged.
- Communicate with the Board Chair, or others, as appropriate.
- Prepare a statement for the media, or designate someone to speak to the media on behalf of the District.

***Safe School Coordinator/ Assistant Superintendent:***

- Obtain details of the situation from the school principal.
- Consult with the school principal, the District Critical Incident Team Coordinator and/or the District Threat Assessment Team Leader to determine appropriate support response.
- Immediately inform the Superintendent of Schools.
- Contact community partner leads to move to District Threat Assessment Team status and invite relevant participants to the process.
- After consultation with the Superintendent, and where applicable for assessment of the situation, consult necessary authorities, e.g., police, community agencies, lawyers.
- Communicate with all schools that may be impacted because of involvement of students from other schools, peer connections, attendance of siblings of any victims, previous attendance by any victim, etc.
- Communicate with the Director of Facilities if maintenance personnel working at the school may be at risk or if the school building is damaged.
- After consultation with the Superintendent, communicate with the Board Chair or others as appropriate.
- After consultation with the Superintendent, prepare a statement for the media or designate someone to speak to the media on behalf of the District.

## **SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

- Call 911, if appropriate, with as much information as possible.
- Gather and verify preliminary information about the incident or threat.
- Phone the Superintendent of Schools or the Safe School Coordinator/Assistant Superintendent. Ensure accurate information is passed on. Leave a number where you can be reached at all times.
- Determine, in consultation with the Superintendent or Safe School Coordinator/Assistant Superintendent, what support may be required (District Threat Assessment team, District Critical Incident Response Team, community services).

### **In the Case of a Critical Incident:**

- Activate School CIRT and District CIRT to determine what needs to be done by whom.
- Follow procedures in District CIRT Manual.
- Provide office staff with informational script to be shared with parents/guardians and community.
- Direct media to the Superintendent's office.
- Arrange for a staff meeting to pass on information and outline the plan for handling the situation.
- Make note of staff that are having difficulty handling the news and may need short term TOC relief.
- Write a script for classroom teachers or counselors to read to students informing them of the situation. Ensure that students do not leave the school without this information.
- Contact PAC president to inform him/her of the incident.
- Write a letter to parents/guardians, if appropriate, to inform them of the incident and what the school is doing in response.
- Set up gathering places/counseling centres, if appropriate. Contact staff absent from school to inform them of the incident.
- Develop a plan for immediate and follow-up support, including access to district/community resources, if appropriate.

### **In the Case of a Threat:**

- Call 911 if the threat is immediate and proceed according to the District Threat Assessment Protocol.
- Lead the School Safety Team through Stage 1: School Safety/Threat Assessment Report to determine level of concern and possible interventions.
- Consult with the District Principal as necessary and access DTAT community partners as necessary.
- Contact the Safe School Coordinator to discuss activation of the District Threat Assessment Team after a student has been determined to pose a

medium or high level of concern to others students, staff, community members or themselves.

- Forward the School Safety Team documentation and intervention/management plan to the Safe School Coordinator and store a copy securely.
- Participate with the Stage II data collection and support planning when this step is initiated and in the review process.
- Inform staff, students and parents appropriately and as necessary.

## **OFFICE STAFF**

### ***Under the direction of the school principal:***

- Call 911, using the Emergency Telephone Response Checklist as a guide.
- Follow directions of administration.
- Obtain and follow a script from the school principal to guide response to calls from parents/guardians and the community. Pass along ONLY information approved by principal.
- Direct media to the Superintendent's Office.
- Copy and distribute letters to go home to parents/guardians, as directed by the principal.

### ***In the event that the school administration is not available, share this checklist with the Teacher in Charge (TIC) and:***

- Call 911, using the Emergency Telephone Response Checklist as a guide.
- Call the Superintendent or the School Safety Coordinator/Assistant Superintendent to provide information, using the Emergency Protocol Form as a guide.
- Get an informational script from District administration to be shared with parents/guardians and community.
- Direct media to Superintendent's Office.
- Call the school counselor and request his/her assistance.
- Upon return of a school principal, provide an accurate account of what has occurred to that point and follow further direction.
- Keep notes regarding what has been done and any questions arising from the situation.

## **STAFF**

- Send staff or student to the office to inform school administration of incident and to get assistance.
- When dealing with students, handle the situation calmly yet clearly, keeping personal safety paramount.
- Model control through calm, decisive directions; do not demand it through ultimatums.
- Attend staff meetings to ensure accurate, updated information is received.
- Read principal's script to students informing them of incident. If this is too difficult, ask for school counselor or district critical incident response team member to assist with this. Pass on information only if it has been confirmed as fact.
- Lead a class discussion, as appropriate.
- Alert counselors of any students who seem vulnerable or at-risk.
- Contact parents/guardians of at-risk students if requested to do so by the

counseling team or principal.

- Direct all inquiries to the administration.
- Document incident where appropriate.
- Reflect on personal needs and seek support as needed.
- Ask for help from school team.



### **SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM**

- Consultation on a needs basis to address worrisome and high-risk behaviors.
- Assist school principal in determining the level of threat and in the completion of the Stage I: School Safety/Threat Assessment Report.
- Assist in developing plans/interventions and in offering programs and resources.
- Ensure that the student body is made aware of the signs of mental illness, e.g., stress, anxiety and suicidal ideation, and encourage students to report concerns to an adult.
- Refer high-risk situations to District Safe School Coordinator and the District Threat Assessment Team as required.

### **DISTRICT THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM**

- Under the direction of the Safe School Coordinator consult with the school principal and the School Safety Team.
- Ensure appropriate community partners have been invited to participate.
- Review the Stage 1: School Safety/Threat Assessment Report data from the school team and complete Stage II: District Threat Assessment Report with the goal of creating an intervention plan/course of action(s).
- Follow through on intervention plan with supports and possible treatments and /or monitoring through appropriate agencies.
- Provide on-site debriefing for staff, students and parents/guardians, as required.
- Provide information and resources as appropriate for staff/students/parents/guardians.
- Recommend disciplinary action where necessary.
- Support CIRT Team where necessary.
- Ensure that school retains documentation for the student confidential file.
- Debrief and review DTAT process with district administration following an event.

Refer to Community Threat Assessment Protocol: A Collaborative Response to Threat Making Behaviors The Board of Education of School District 63 (Saanich) in Collaboration with Community Partners

### **SCHOOL/DISTRICT CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM**

- School principal activates school CIRT and contacts District CIRT if appropriate.
- Under the direction of the Assistant Superintendent, Learning Services, the District Team Leader consults with school and district administration to determine appropriate support response and then develop a plan of action with the team.
- Implement an appropriate action plan that may include:
  - Communicating with staff
  - Reassigning responsibilities of those most closely affected by the incident
  - Providing on-site debriefing for staff, students and parents/guardians
  - Providing information and resources for staff, students and parents/guardians
  - Connecting school with appropriate community resources
  - Developing a plan for long term support and monitoring
  - Providing ongoing updates to district administration throughout the response
- Debrief with district administration following a response in order to refine practices.

Refer to [Responding To Critical Incidents: A Resource Guide For Schools](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/critinc.pdf) (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/critinc.pdf) for further details

## **BUILDING/ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES**

## **DANGEROUS MATERIALS SPILL, GAS LEAKS, EXPLOSIONS**

### **On Site Contamination**

#### ***Classroom Teacher/Staff will:***

- When a chemical is spilled, evacuate the room and block access even to render first aid until materials have been identified.
- Do not clean up the spill. If the spill is small, the fire department is still required.
- Inform the school principal.
- When assembled, take attendance. Account for every person.

#### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Check staff and students exposed to material for injury or medical conditions and isolate exposed staff and students as necessary.
- If necessary, evacuate the building by activating the fire alarm.
- Call 911 if fumes are present or material poses a health risk to staff/students or if there are injuries. **Tell the dispatcher that it is a Hazardous Material incident.**
- Close the door and put up a warning sign indicating the presence of spill/substance.
- Determine the nature, location and size of the spill/explosion/incident and indicate location on a facility site plan for responding crews.
- Identify, if possible, the type of materials involved (toxic, flammable, explosive, biological) and make available the person(s) with knowledge of products used.
- Make available to responding crews a maintenance person with knowledge of the building's HVAC system if so equipped.
- Use caution tape and plastic sheeting to barricade open areas.
- Contact custodian and/or Maintenance Supervisor to shut off the ventilation system.
- Custodian should notify Maintenance Supervisor of the nature of the spill and for further directions or authority to contact (fire, gas).
- Contact site Health and Safety Committee member.
- If the decision is to evacuate the building and chemical fumes are escaping into the atmosphere, follow regular evacuation procedures and ensure staff and students do not assemble down wind of the source; relocate if necessary well out of danger.
- Notify Superintendent of location and await further instructions.
- If the effects of the spill will be long lasting, use phone tree and, through Superintendent's Department, media to notify parents/guardians of when and where to pick up their children and then use sign-out release procedure.
- Do not re-enter area/site until 'all clear' is given by the fire department.
- Fill in WCB Reportable Incident Form.

## **DANGEROUS MATERIALS SPILL, GAS LEAKS, EXPLOSIONS** (Cont'd)

### **Outside Air Contamination**

#### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Call 911 for the fire department, police, ambulance and/or assistance.
- Follow recommendations from officials regarding detainment/evacuation of school.

#### ***Advance Warning of Outside Air Contamination:*** (e.g., volcanic eruption, gas leak, chemical cloud, etc.)

- Contact Superintendent or designate.
- Alert staff and students to prepare for dismissal if time permits.
- Alert custodian and/or Maintenance Supervisor so that heating, cooling and ventilation systems can be turned off.
- Electricity is to remain on unless otherwise instructed by the Maintenance Supervisor.
- Instruct staff and students to cover their mouths and noses with handkerchiefs or some other article of clothing.
- Use media, through Superintendent's Department, to notify parents/guardians to pick up students from school.
- In order to ensure students leave with parent/guardian or emergency contact use sign out release procedure.

#### ***If Time Does Not Permit Dismissal:***

- Use P.A. system to announce that a chemical spill, etc. has occurred and that all individuals must remain inside the school until further notice.
- Move all students/staff inside the school and close all windows and exterior doors.
- Follow instructions for covering of mouths and noses, if this becomes necessary.
- Custodian and/or Maintenance Supervisor to shut off heating, cooling and ventilation systems. Electricity is to remain on unless otherwise instructed by the Maintenance Supervisor.
- Contact Superintendent or designate.
- Do not release staff/students until 'All Clear' given by fire department.
- Check staff and students exposed to material for injury; isolate as necessary and provide first aid until responders arrive.
- Make available to responding crews a maintenance person with knowledge of building's HVAC system if so equipped.
- Use media, through Superintendent's Department, to notify parents/guardians to pick up students from school.
- In order to ensure students leave with parent/guardian or emergency contact use sign out release procedure.

## **EARTHQUAKE**

Earthquake drills are to be held at least one time in each of the fall and spring school terms. Earthquake drill results are to be emailed to the Human Resources/Occupational Health and Safety Department on the School District's Earthquake Emergency Drill Record.

### **At the first sign of an earthquake, occupants should:**

- Move away from windows, shelves and heavy objects that may fall.
- Take cover under a table or desk, in a corner or doorway.
- In halls, stairways and other areas where no cover is available, move to an interior wall, kneel, clasp hands behind neck, and cover side of head with arms.
- In the library, move away from where books and bookshelves may fall, take cover.
- Stay inside; usually the most dangerous place is just outside of the building where debris may fall; exit only after the shaking has stopped.
- In science labs, extinguish all burners if possible, before taking cover; stay away from hazardous chemicals that may spill.
- In technical education shops, activate emergency shut-off for all power equipment if possible before taking cover; stay away from hazardous chemicals that may spill.

### **IN THE EVENT OF AN EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY SITUATION:**

#### **Classroom Teacher/Staff will:**

- Issue **"DUCK, COVER and HOLD ON"** command.
- Immediately face away from windows and take cover under or beside desks, counters or tables.
- Assume "Crash" position on knees, head down, one hand clasped over neck (or neck/ head covered with book or jacket) and one hand holding on to the furniture. Posture must be such that the most vulnerable areas (the neck and chest) are protected.

**Teachers must immediately take steps to protect themselves and prevent personal injury during an earthquake. Teachers have an extremely important role to play in assisting students through the post earthquake recovery stage.**

- Count aloud for the duration of the earthquake. After the shaking stops direct students to stay under cover and start counting again. Count aloud to 60.
- If the teacher is injured, two student monitors should have designated authority to give instructions.
- Sixty seconds after the shaking has stopped, students should be instructed to

check carefully for injuries and dangerous objects such as broken glass before moving and standing up. Students should be instructed to be silent during this time.

- **Apply lifesaving first aid interventions only.** Do not delay the evacuation. Be aware of material falling from above.
- Instruct students to evacuate. Students should be in a single file with shoes on. Do not wait for instruction from the office.

## **EARTHQUAKE** (Cont'd)

- Follow predetermined exit routes. If an exit route is blocked, teachers should calmly but firmly lead students to an alternate exit.
- Avoid overhead wires that may have broken during the earthquake. Lead students directly away from the building and into an open space.
- Survivors and walking wounded should be evacuated first. The seriously injured must be left for the school's designated search and rescue team.
- If a secondary earthquake or "aftershock" occurs, students/staff should "Squat and Cover." Place head close to knees, clasp hands behind neck, cover side of head with arms (if cover is available use it or place back against an interior wall). The "DUCK and COVER" procedure is not advised as the ground may be littered with debris from the initial shock. Repeat the above post earthquake instructions and continue evacuation procedures.
- Lead class to a safe assembly area. Do not use fire alarm. Do not use elevators. Account for all students and record information on class lists. Report evacuation information to Incident Commander (school principal) until police /fire emergency responders arrive. The Incident Commander needs to know as soon as possible if injured or trapped students/staff have been left in the building. Determine names, ages and possible location of individuals not yet accounted for, including students/staff waiting in secure areas of the school for assistance to be escorted from the building.

### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Give additional first aid as required.
- Pair older students with younger students. Secondary students can be paired within classes.
- Ensure all power, fuel and water mains have been shut off. Check for possible fires, utility leaks, hazardous material spills.
- Attempt to contact the Superintendent to relay your status.
- Await instructions from emergency officials over battery operated or car radio where possible.
- Consider plans for an extended stay with students and/or emergency evacuation to another site.
- Do not re-enter the building until approval is given by the Director of facilities or designate.
- Students must wait to be reunited with parents or guardians through the Student Release Station. If there are any students remaining after school hours, they must be accommodated at the school or at a posted Evacuation Reception Centre.

**Note: Prevent contamination of your school's water supply by shutting off the valve**



**that leads to the water main. Be careful of stream or river water. Broken sewer lines may contaminate all flowing water. All water used for drinking and cooking should be obtained from good quality stored water sources (e.g. bottled water, melted ice cubes, liquid from canned goods) or should be purified.**

Refer to School District 63 Emergency Management – 'Earthquake Ready: Preparedness Planning For Schools'

## **FIRE**

Fire drills are to be held three times in each of the fall and spring school terms. Fire drill results are to be emailed to the Human Resources/Occupational Health and Safety Department on the School District's Fire Drill and Emergency Evacuation Report.

### **In the event of a fire emergency situation:**

#### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- **Sound the fire alarm.** Do not attempt to put out any fire, no matter how small, until you have sounded the fire alarm.
- Confirm location of fire.
- **Call 911.**
- Proceed as per Evacuation Instructions
- Call Superintendent.
- Inform fire department of names, ages and possible locations of unaccounted-for students and staff.
- Follow directions of fire and/or police officials.
- Ensure that staff and students remain in designated areas until the fire department gives "All Clear."
- Notify Maintenance Supervisor without delay.
- If utility lines are affected, notify appropriate utility providers.
- Complete an incident report for all fires and false fire alarms on school property including any signs of fire vandalism.
- Activate school CIRT, as necessary.

**Note: Employees trained in using fire extinguishers may aid in the extinction of fires, only if such action will not endanger their lives.**

## **FLOODING (STORM DRAIN BACK-UP, LEAK, BROKEN PIPE)**

### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Move materials out of the affected area. Store on a higher floor or place off the floor.
- Notify Maintenance Supervisor (emergency after-hours 250-384-2353 or daytime 250-652-7337).
- If an electrical room is involved, do not enter unless you have the appropriate training.
- Remove all damaged materials. Dispose of materials that cannot be properly cleaned and dried.
- If necessary, alternate locations will be established to ensure that students are able to continue their schooling and any impending exams.

## **TSUNAMI**

A tsunami is a natural hazard consisting of a series of unusually large waves formed by a large –scale disturbance of water bodies. One of the primary causes of tsunamis is an earthquake, but tsunamis may also be triggered by landslides, volcanoes or explosions. It is likely we would have up to 2 hours to plan for the surge on the Peninsula after an earthquake.

Local government officials may not have enough time to issue a warning to residents in the event of a tsunami created by a near-shore earthquake. If you are near the ocean and feel a major earthquake lasting 60 seconds or more, or if the motion makes it hard to stand, get to higher ground immediately – DO NOT wait for an official warning. THE SHAKING IS YOUR WARNING.

### ***Unless identified as an at-risk school, retain your students until:***

- Normal closing time and an "All-Clear" has been announced by emergency personnel OR
- The Superintendent of Schools has announced a dismissal time.
- Parents/guardians arrive to collect their children or have indicated that they are ready to receive their children at home. In cases where this is not possible, students shall be retained at the school until instructions have been received from emergency personnel.

### ***Provide the following general safety instructions to students:***

- Stay away from all beaches or waterfront including streams and rivers.
- Keep tuned to the radio station for up-to-date information.
- Do not use the telephone, except to report serious emergencies. Ensure that you maintain high ground.

### ***If the school is being evacuated, efforts should be made to ensure the following:***

- Turn off power, gas and water.
- Follow Evacuation Procedures
- Cooperate fully with the police and emergency personnel.
- Do not return to the school until you hear an "All-Clear." A tsunami may continue for several hours.

**Note: Schools in areas identified as at-risk in a tsunami should have a plan specific to their situation. This plan should identify an alternate location and procedures for evacuating the school.**

## **EVACUATION, HOLD AND SECURE AND LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES**

## **EVACUATION OF A SCHOOL BUILDING**

Evacuation is used to move people out of a building in a safe and orderly manner, by a route designed to avoid contact with a potential threat, such as fire, earthquake or a hazardous spill.

### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Sound fire alarm or make announcement, as appropriate.
- Call 911, state the emergency.
- Inform the Superintendent as necessary.
- Do not re-enter the building or move to another side of the building until fire department or police have advised it is safe to do so.
- The Principal and district staff will arrange transportation to another site if weather is a problem.
- Depending upon the reason for the evacuation, advising parents to pick up their children through the Superintendent's Department and the local media may be necessary, in which case a release station would need to be set up.

### ***Classroom Teacher/Staff will:***

- Evacuate students immediately from the building to the designated area or, if directed, to an alternate area, using the nearest safe exit.
  - If safe to do so, ask students to take backpacks and personal belongings with them. Do not allow students to return to lockers.
  - Take class attendance sheet.
  - Take classroom emergency kit.
  - Turn off lights.
  - Close classroom doors.
- Assemble outside the building keeping clear of fire lanes.
- Stay with the students, keeping them in a group.
- Take attendance.
- Have a student report the attendance results to the Principal or designate.
- All media inquiries should be referred through the Principal to the Superintendent.

NOTE: Evacuation of a school building or a school site, a Hold and Secure exercise, and a Lockdown should be practiced minimally twice annually. Emergency Drill Records must be completed for each drill.

## **EVACUATION OF A SCHOOL SITE**

### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Determine method of transport to alternative site.
- Post alternative location prominently on the front door of the school.
- Discuss behavior expectations and what will happen on the way to the site and once at the new site.
- Use local media to inform parents/guardians of when and where students may be picked up.
- Set up a reception and sign-out area at alternative location. All parents/guardians must sign out students before taking students home.

### ***Classroom Teacher/Staff will:***

- Evacuate students from the building following evacuation procedures. Stay in class group in muster stations until directions are given.
- Proceed in an orderly fashion to new site. Teachers and support staff will stay with their classes.

## **HOLD AND SECURE**

This is used when it is desirable to secure the school due to an emergency situation occurring that, in the opinion of the police and school principal, does not require a lockdown, e.g. a robbery or serious criminal offence in close proximity to the school or where a suspect is being pursued by police. In this situation, the school continues to function as normally as possible, with the exterior and possibly interior doors being locked until such time as the situation is resolved.

### ***Principal or Designate:***

- Announce "ATTENTION ALL STAFF AND STUDENTS. THE SCHOOL IS NOW IN A HOLD AND SECURE SITUATION." over the PA system. Repeat the announcement several times. The Principal/Vice Principal or designate can provide more information.
- Additional directions may be added as appropriate, e.g. that in the event of a fire alarm to either evacuate to the outside or to remain in the school until otherwise advised or whether movement is restricted and if class change bells should be ignored.
- Advise staff to lock classroom doors and keep students with them if necessary.
- Ensure all students and staff participating in outside activities are moved into a secure (safe refuge) location (which may be off site depending on the circumstances).
- Move all students and staff from portables into the main building if access to washroom facilities will be a problem.
- All exterior doors are locked and monitored to allow for staff or students to enter from outside but the doors should otherwise remain locked.
- Call the Superintendent's Office **250.652.7300**
- Confirm with police when the Hold and Secure situation has ended.
- Notify staff and students that the Hold and Secure has ended by using the PA.
- School and possibly District CIRT available to support any students or staff affected by the event.
- Classes continue to function normally.
- After any Hold and Secure, a communication should go out to parents/guardians briefly outlining the situation and how it was handled. This will ensure that accurate information goes home and that parents/guardians can support their children if they have questions or concerns.



## **LOCKDOWN**

**Anyone observing a threat or serious potential threat must contact the main office immediately to initiate the lockdown.**

**All staff members including all facilities staff (custodial, grounds, maintenance and transportation) must know the lockdown phrase and how to announce it including knowledge on how to properly operate the PA system.**

**All exterior exit/entrance doors remain “as is” at the time of a lockdown.** In planning no one is designated to lock/unlock exit doors after lockdown is announced – all persons must secure themselves in a shelter area.

### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Announce the following message over the PA system “ATTENTION ALL STAFF AND STUDENTS. IMPLEMENT SCHOOL LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES.” Identify who is making the announcement. Use this plain language, no codes and repeat the message several times.
- Use the AIR HORN to inform classes or students that are outside the building. One long blast.
- Activate emergency services. Call 911 and inform the dispatcher that the school is in lockdown. Have someone remain on the line with the dispatcher.
- Disable bells if possible.
- Notify Superintendent of Schools or Safe School Coordinator through the main SBO switchboard.  
**250.652.7300**
- Remain in a secure location and communicate with the office/administrative staff and with police from there.
- Do not move out of the school until directed by Police.

### ***Classroom/Staff response:***

- Immediately cease all business (i.e., teaching, group work, meetings, etc.)
- Direct students and staff to an area where there will be the least possibility of being seen and instruct them to sit on floor and keep away from and below the level of the windows.
- Clear hallways. Instruct all students and staff to immediately enter the nearest classroom. Without delay lock all doors providing access to the classroom and barricade room.
- In an elementary setting, staff teaching in the classroom(s) closest to the washrooms should be assigned the task of getting those children into classrooms.
- Turn off classroom lights, pull down blinds on doors and windows if possible.

- Put all electronic devices on SILENT and instruct students to refrain from using cell phones.
- Be as quiet as possible.
- In the event that a fire alarm is pulled once a lockdown has been called, staff and students shall not respond as they normally would do to a fire alarm, but shall remain locked down, if it is safe to do so.
- Ignore school bells.
- In the washrooms, staff and students should lock the door if possible, enter a cubicle, lock the door and crouch on the toilet seat. Remain there in the least visible area.

- Record the names of all who are in the classroom if it is possible. Do not use the classroom computer. Note last destination of missing students. Record names of extra students present.
- DO NOT respond to anyone at the door. No one is to leave the room. The room will be cleared by police when it is safe to do so but it could take several hours from the onset of the lockdown.
- If you are directed by police to leave your secured area assist others in moving as quietly and quickly as possible. When police clear the classroom students MUST NOT be holding anything in their hands.

### **IF INCIDENT OCCURS WHILE STUDENTS ARE ON GROUNDS:**

#### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Students and staff on school grounds when a lock down is initiated will be informed by the use of the Air Horn. One long blast. Ensure all staff are moved into a secure (safe refuge) location (which may be off site depending on the circumstances.)

### **When the area has been deemed safe for evacuation:**

#### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Attend each room in person accompanied by the local police authority and, on a room by room basis, give permission to evacuate the school. (DO NOT evacuate the school if the fire alarm is pulled or if an announcement is made over the PA system).
- Call the Superintendent's Office **250.652.7300** to provide an update.
- Work with the Superintendent's Office to establish a plan to use media to inform parents when and where students may be picked up.
- Police/teachers will escort the students to the designated safe areas where they will join their assigned classes.
- Once at the designated site, teachers will take attendance and report any missing students to the Principal/Vice Principal citing the last known destination.
- All students will remain in the designated site until directed otherwise by police or Principal.

### **IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING INCIDENT:**

- Have a staff meeting to debrief the incident (include police if appropriate).
- Activate school CIRT/threat assessment team and develop a plan for immediate and follow-up support for students and staff. This may include the district CIRT and/or the district threat assessment team.

- Document details of the incident.
- After any lockdown, a communication should go out to parents/guardians briefly outlining the situation and how it was handled. This will ensure that accurate information goes home and that parents/guardians can support their children if they have questions or concerns.

Refer to Responding To Critical Incidents: A Resource Guide For Schools ([www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/critinc.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/critinc.pdf)) for further details

## PREPLANNING:

In preparation for Lockdown and Hold and Secure situations, administrative staff should ensure the following:

- A copy of the lockdown procedure is included in staff substitute files.
- All personnel on supervision carry two-way radios with communication to the main office.
- A prearranged audible signal has been established to notify outdoor supervisory staff of a lockdown situation.
- All classrooms can be visually isolated from the hallways (prefabricating window coverings for this purpose may be necessary).
- Administrative staffs have District registered cell phones.
- An off-site assembly area has been identified which students are able to access immediately. Neighboring schools may not be the best option as off-site evacuation locations as they too may be locked down upon notification of an incident at a nearby school.
- All classroom teachers carry classroom keys. Auxiliary locks from the inside of doors are recommended. Simple methods such as wedges should also be considered.
- Consideration should be given to a media staging area that is away from where emergency responders will be conducting operations.
- In an actual event staff/students may be contained for several hours and rudimentary comforts should be considered to the extent possible (bottled water, first aid, washroom requirements etc.) to help everyone remain in the shelter as long as necessary.
- Parents/guardians must be informed about the existence of the lockdown plan and know where to meet their children in a designated staging area if an incident should happen.
- Parents/guardians should be informed that they **do not phone students during the lockdown**. Cell phone lines must be kept open for emergency responders and so that locations of students within the school are not inadvertently revealed to attackers.
- Controlled and uncontrolled (e.g. during lunch break etc.) drills need to occur. However, schools should **never** hold "surprise" lockdown drills. Drills must be planned in advance and everyone, including police, parents/guardians, and the District Safe School Coordinator must be notified in advance.
- *Police will locate and open the lockbox, and access the 4 small laminated maps with grease pencils located in the envelope in the office.*

## LONG TERM RESPONSE

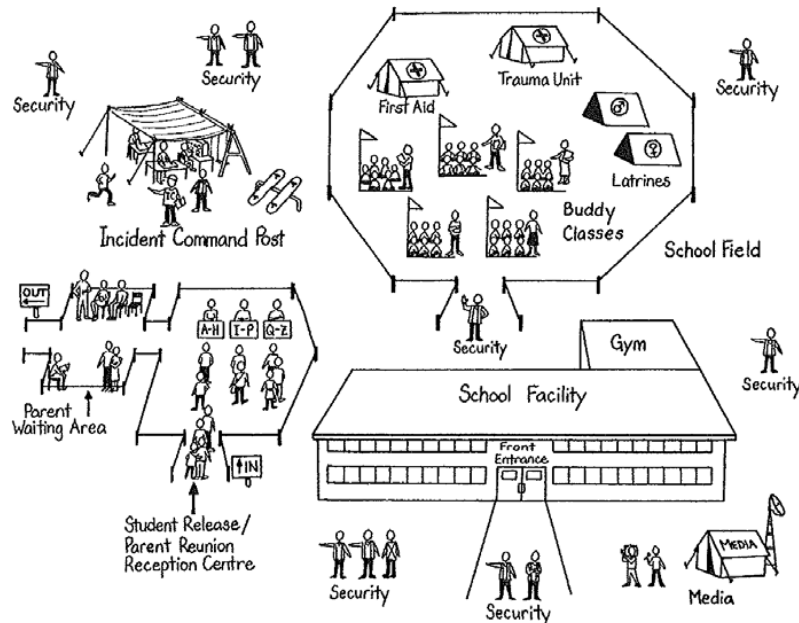
After an emergency occurs and immediate response actions have been taken, there will be a need to follow a process for carrying out longer term response actions. This process involves:

- Identifying the most important functions (things that need to be done)
- Organizing the response...that is, determining how the functions should be carried out
- Assigning appropriate staff to each function (In the preparation stage, staff may already have assignments/training for certain functions, e.g. first aid, but may no longer be able to carry out that role. Cross training and having a backup plan can help.)
- Carrying out the necessary functions
- Assessing and revising activities.

Some of the functions will include:

- Setting up an incident command post
- Providing a student release area and having class lists with contact numbers available
- Supervising a student assembly area
- Establishing a first aid station
- Ensuring there are latrines
- Having a place for media
- Placing security personnel
- Providing for day to day needs such as distribution of fresh water.

### **Outdoor School Site Sample Map:**



## **LONG TERM RESPONSE** (Con't)

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Incident Commander (school principal, vice principal or designate):
  - Set up Incident Command Post (ICP).
  - Notify staff of school evacuation and communicate that THIS IS NOT A DRILL.
  - Direct teachers to pre-designated spots. Analyze situation; re-evaluate evacuation spot to determine if students should be moved.
  - Determine medical and assistance needs after population assessment. Send staff member to classroom muster areas where first aid requirements have been noted. They will help move injured to first aid station
  - Send names of students who are absent and those who need first aid to the Parent Check in/Student Release Area so Student Emergency Release Forms can be updated;
  - Determine search and rescue needs. Reassess as situation changes.
  - Keep staff informed as to status of missing students.
  - Report to responding emergency personnel.
  - Keep Superintendent of Schools (or designate) updated.
1. Classroom Teachers
  - Evacuate students designated area, with students grouped as determined by district or school site.
  - Take attendance and make note of any students or staff unaccounted for or who have sustained injuries.
  - Send report to Incident Command Post (ICP) by student runner.
  - Organize students. Monitor students' medical and emotional condition.
  - As runners come to take students to Parent Check In/Student Release Area note their status on class attendance list.
2. First Aid (if necessary)
  - Set up First Aid station and administer first aid as required. Monitor patients' medical and emotional condition.
3. Student Release Team:
  - Set up the designated Parent Check In/Student Release Area.
  - If possible, set out tables at least 20 feet apart to reduce crowding.
  - For large student body, establish several lines for speedier processing.
  - Post signs and set out Student Emergency Release Form for each line.
  - Note status on forms of absent, injured and missing students (when information received from Incident Command).
  - Identify volunteer runners and review where to find students.
4. Traffic Controller(s):
  - Set out parking area traffic cones if necessary.
  - Keep parent vehicles from blocking access by first responders.
5. Other Staff:
  - Any other staff should report to Incident Command Post to be assigned other

duties as required, i.e. man a parent information station, act as runners, provide crowd control, set up temporary toilets.

6. Parents/Authorized Adults:

- Read all signs, listen carefully and be patient so that all children can be accounted for and released in an orderly manner.



## **STUDENT RELEASE PROCEDURE GUIDELINES**

Release of students may be advised by public safety officials or authorized by the principal or superintendent whenever a condition exists warranting such action. Such conditions include earthquake, flood, severe winter storm, etc.

Parents will be advised of release criteria and procedures, in writing, at the beginning of each school year. Guidelines may be modified for the release of students as long as they are released in a safe and orderly manner.

When the decision has been made to release students, local Fire and Police departments will be notified. School closure and reopening will also be reported to radio stations by the superintendent or designate.

- All students will remain under the supervision and care of the school until released to a parent/guardian or authorized designee (emergency contact).
- Students must be signed out to a parent/guardian or emergency contact.
- Where possible, identification will be provided before releasing students to an adult's care.
- Students who are not picked up or who are unable to proceed home will be kept at the school or at the designated alternative shelter.
- Parents are responsible for notifying the school and emergency contact that such authorization has been given and so that they are aware of any medical needs of the child.

### **PARENTS SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO PICK UP THEIR CHILDREN DIRECTLY FROM THE STUDENT ASSEMBLY AREA.**

- Students will only be released to parent/guardian or emergency contact.
- Parents and authorized adults are required to go to the Parent Check In/Student Release Area before the child will be released from the campus.

### **SITE PLAN**

Each school should identify an interior and exterior area where students may be kept until they are released to an authorized adult, depending on the circumstances of the emergency. Possible sites should also be established ahead of time for Incident Command Post and Parent Check In/Student Release Area. Thought should be given to possible traffic control issues.

## **STUDENT RELEASE PROCEDURE GUIDELINES** (Con't)

### **SUGGESTED SUPPLIES FOR STUDENT RELEASE**

#### **INCIDENT COMMAND POST**

- Bullhorn with extra batteries
- Portable AM/FM radio with extra batteries
- Two-way radios
- Yellow caution tape and duct tape
- Hats or vests to identify emergency staff and volunteers
- Master roster of students and staff

#### **STUDENT ASSEMBLY AREA**

- Master roster of students, per teacher
- Minor first aid supplies
- Emergency Kits

#### **PARENT REQUEST/STUDENT RELEASE AREA**

- Folding tables and chairs
- Copy of Master class lists for students and staff
- Hats or vests to identify emergency staff and volunteers
- Clipboards (many) and pens for Student Request Forms
- Stationary supplies (pencils, stapler, tape, Post-its, etc)
- File box(es) with alphabetical dividers for completed Student Emergency Release Forms

#### **TRAFFIC CONTROL**

- Directional signs
- Traffic cones
- Caution tape
- Site map (enlarged) with key areas highlighted: First Aid Station, Parent Request/Student Release Area
- Handouts of site map
- Two-way radios
- Hats or vests to identify emergency staff and volunteers
- Note pads, pencils, tape

## **STUDENT RELEASE PROCEDURE GUIDELINES** (Con't)

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN/EMERGENCY CONTACT CHECK IN/STUDENT RELEASE AREA**

- CHECK students off according to class list and have parent/guardian/emergency contact sign list for pick up;
- REPORT to Parent Check In/Student Release Area;
- WHEN DIRECTED, REPORT to teacher in Student Assembly Area to collect a student. Teacher calls student forward and notes student status on attendance roster;
- ESCORT student to Parent Check In/Student Release Area, OR;
- RETURN to Parent Check In/Student Request Area with student status information if student is not in area.

### **TRAFFIC FLOW**

Parking at many schools is limited. In times of an emergency, the first responders – fire officials, law enforcement and public works – need priority access to the campus for their vehicles.

- For the safety of all, traffic should be directed by signs, cones and staff;
- Spaces for emergency vehicular parking should be cordoned off with traffic cones and/or caution tape;
- Post a large site map near the main parking area with a walking path designated for parents picking up students;
- Colour coded signs are useful; e.g. yellow signs identifying the Student Request Table and yellow for student requests; green for the Student Release Table;
- Schools with no room for parent parking and turnaround may develop a student release procedure that enables students to be released directly to the authorized adult's vehicle.

### **PARENT NOTIFICATION**

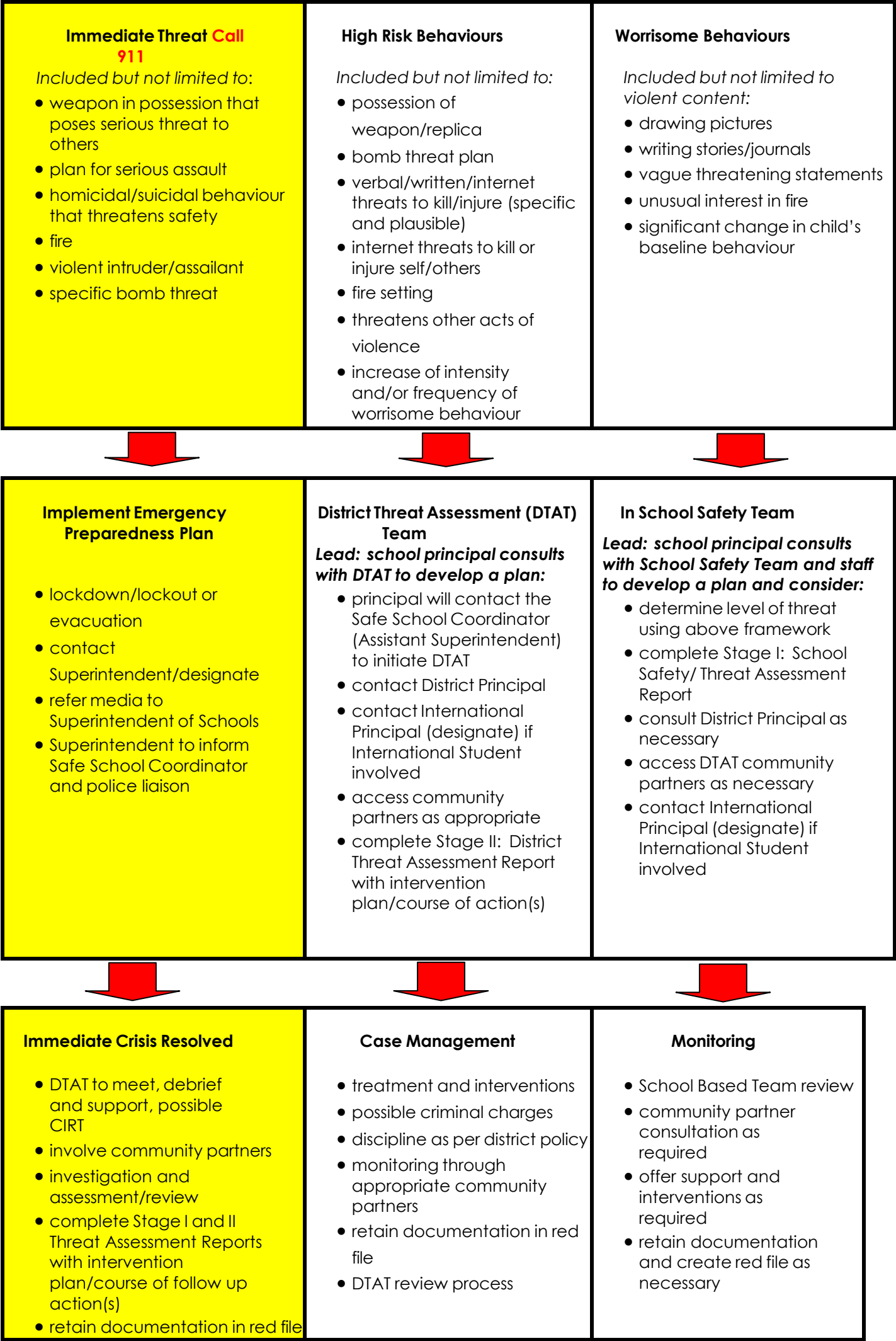
It is important that parents understand procedures that they and school staff must follow in the event students are released prior to the end of the academic day.

Attempts to notify parents as to the situation should be made as soon as possible. Multiple forms of communication should be used such as: telephone tree, website alert, radio announcement and school auto-dialer. Depending on the extent of the emergency, it may be possible to get help from the Board Office, especially with mass media communication.

## **CRITICAL INCIDENTS/THREATS**

# Responding to Threats - A Guide

Any person who is concerned will **call 911** in the event of an immediate threat.  
High risk behaviours that may pose a risk/threat to others must be reported to the  
**SCHOOL PRINCIPAL/DESIGNATE**  
who will initiate threat assessment protocol.



## PRINCIPAL'S CHECKLIST FOR IMMEDIATE THREAT/HIGH RISK BEHAVIOURS

*Recognizing that every situation is unique and responses will vary*

- ☐ **CALL 911** if there is imminent danger.
- ☐ **School Principal/Designate informed**
- ☐ Ensure student safety: lockdown or
- ☐ evacuate if necessary. If immediate threat, call Superintendent.
- ☐ If not an immediate threat, initiate Stage I protocol.
- ☐ To prevent use of weapons, do not allow access to desks, coats, backpacks, lockers or vehicles.
- ☐ Monitor and/or detain student(s) until the police arrive or as appropriate. Do not put yourself or others in harm's way.
- ☐ Determine if threat maker(s) has access to weapon(s).
- ☐ Collect initial data from all participants in order to understand situation or circumstances.

*If possible and without compromising safety, parents/guardians or a child advocate should be present for in-depth interviews. If a legal investigation is likely to occur, police/MCFD*

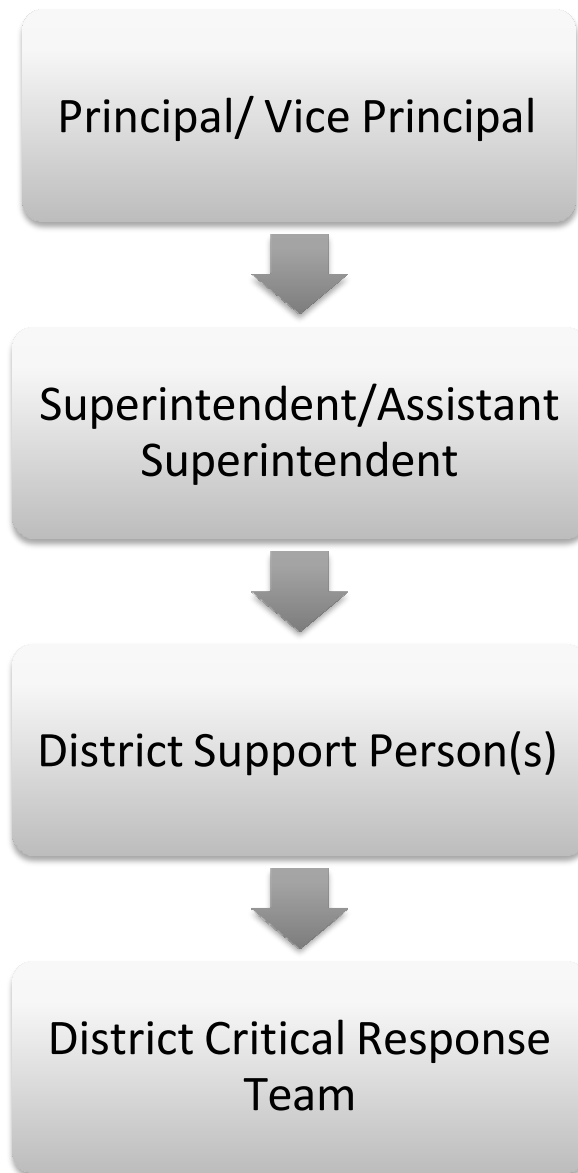
- ☐ Begin process of recording dates and times of calls/interviews.
- ☐ Notify the threat maker's parent(s) or guardian(s).
  - ☐ Parent(s)/guardian(s) have been notified of the situation and this
  - ☐ assessment Parent(s)/guardian(s) have not been notified because:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Notify the victim's parent(s) or guardian(s)
  - ☐ Parent(s)/guardian(s) have been notified of the situation and this
  - ☐ assessment Parent(s)/guardian(s) have not been notified because:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ If necessary, move to Stage II.
- ☐ Contact Safe School Coordinator to initiate District Threat
- ☐ Assessment Team. Contact District Principal.
- ☐ Contact International Principal (designate) if International student involved.

**PRINCIPAL'S CHECKLIST FOR IMMEDIATE THREAT/HIGH RISK BEHAVIOURS  
(Con't)**

- ☐
  - ☐ Fax completed Stage I: School Safety/Threat Assessment Report to Safe School Coordinator.
- ☐ Participate with District Threat Assessment Team to Complete Stage II: District Threat Assessment Report with intervention plan / course of actions
- ☐ Retain documentation in Principal office, scan a copy to Director of Instruction
- ☐ Participate in review process

## **DISTRICT CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM CALL OUT PROCEDURE**

The District Critical Incident Response Team, when necessary, assists schools during and after a critical incident that affects some or all members of a school community. The call out procedure is:





## **PRINCIPAL'S CHECKLIST FOR CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE**

*Recognizing that every situation is unique and responses will vary*

### **Initial Response**

- ☐ Verify the facts and collect information:
  - confirm with appropriate sources, e.g. family, police, coroner, district personnel, community resource personnel.
  - exact details, identification of those involved, immediate safety needs of students and staff. Ensure detailed notes are kept.
- ☐ Ensure building security.

### **Contact with the District:**

- ☐ Contact Superintendent of Schools (250-652-7332) and/or Assistant Superintendent, Learning Services (250-652-7322).
- ☐ Media issues managed through the District.
- ☐ Consult with Assistant Superintendent regarding deployment of District CIRT.

### **Activate School CIR Team**

- ☐ Principal/Vice-Principal contacts relevant parties :
  - school CIR Team members
  - consider who else needs this information, eg other schools, police?
- ☐ Activate school-based CIR plan including plan for contacting staff.
- ☐ Ensure all information and decisions are documented.

### **Joint Response**

- ☐ Consider accessing outside agencies/supports.
- ☐ Contact family:
  - will the school visit, send food, flowers?
  - in case of suicide, does the family want it publicly stated as a suicide?
  - what should be done with the student's belongings at school?
  - what are the families wishes for funeral memorial activities?
- ☐ Hire substitutes as necessary.
- ☐ Secure locker and materials of deceased.
- ☐ Determine if legal counsel is needed.
- ☐ Write a statement for phone inquiries.
- ☐ Organize staff meeting.
- ☐ Consider school closure (depending upon the nature and timing of the incident).

### **Communicating with Staff:**

- ☐ Inform all staff of the critical incident by pre-determined process or call an emergency staff meeting.
  - consider which staff will be most affected and plan appropriate contact
  - avoid leaving a message on an answering machine/voice mail or with a child.
- ☐ Determine what information can be/needs to be shared.
- ☐ Plan for the staff meeting:
  - how to support students
  - ensure that additional supports are available
  - introduce any members from District CIRT
  - identify high risk staff.
- ☐ Make a plan to respond to emotional needs of staff.
- ☐ Develop a plan for the day with staff

## **PRINCIPAL'S CHECKLIST FOR CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE** (Con't)

### **Responding to Emotional Needs of Students and Parents:**

- ☐ Identify high risk students.
- ☐ Identify/support students with exceptional needs (contact school-based IST and possibly District IST [Inclusive Education]).
- ☐ Write statement for students.
- ☐ Prepare parent letter and handouts.
- ☐ Carry out individual debriefing:
  - those identified as a close friend, sibling, or otherwise at risk should be met with.
- ☐ Offer individual counseling.
- ☐ Prepare materials for students.
- ☐ Organize safe room.
- ☐ Consider holding a parent information session.

### **After the Initial Crisis Response:**

- ☐ Funerals:
  - what are the family's wishes?
- ☐ Consider memorial options.
- ☐ Evaluate and debrief response.
- ☐ Plan follow-up:
  - who will continue follow-up with at risk people?
- ☐ Assess those who continue to be affected.
- ☐ Consider anniversaries.
- ☐ Manage additional issues.

## **ABDUCTION AND/OR MISSING STUDENT**

### **Missing:**

- “All call” on PA for child to come to office.
- Check school sign out book to determine if the student is out on a school activity or for medical reasons.
- Interview contacts – teachers, siblings, lunch hour supervisors, classmates, office staff, to determine:
  - Where/when was the student last seen
  - What was the student wearing
  - Does the student have any identifying features
  - Who was the last contact, and
  - Who spoke with the student
- Search site – washrooms, playground and common areas.
- Have office staff:
  - Prepare hard copy of pupil information sheet
  - Contact home or emergency contact number
  - Check for custodial order or restraining order and if present make a copy for the police
- In consultation with parents/guardian, notify police. Provide police with description, pictures, what clothes the child was wearing.
- Notify the Superintendent's office at 250-652-7332.
- Send staff by the house, check with neighbors about other information or possible sightings.
- Other areas to concentrate on:
  - Student's route and means of transportation to and from school
  - Best friends, home, local stores, mall and parks
  - Siblings and the school(s) they attend
- If the student is in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development call 250-334-5820 to report that he/she is missing.
- If the student is found, re-notify all parties involved.

### **Suspected Abduction:**

- Verify that the student is missing and possibly abducted.
- Call 911.
- Follow the above protocol and try to determine names and phone numbers of witnesses.
- Ask about any suspicious persons/vehicles in the area.
- Inform parents/guardians.
- Notify the Superintendent's office at 250-652-7332.
- The police will determine whether or not to activate the Amber Alert system.

## **ABDUCTION AND/OR MISSING STUDENT** (Cont'd)

### **Attempted Abduction:**

- Ensure that an adult stays with the student involved to provide emotional support and reassurance.
- Gather as much information as possible from the student and witnesses including physical description of abductor(s), clothing, vehicle type, license plate number etc.
- Call 911.
- Inform parents/guardians.
- Notify the Superintendent's office at 250-652-7332.
- Initiate school CIRT and District CIRT as necessary

### **Confirmed Abduction:**

- Call 911 (with as much information as possible). The police will likely activate the Amber Alert system.
- Inform parents/guardians.
- Notify the Superintendent's office at 250-652-7332.
- Initiate school CIRT and District CIRT as necessary.

### **All Situations:**

- Meet with staff as soon as possible and advise teachers on sharing information with students.
- The Superintendent or designate in conjunction with the police will decide upon notifying all schools in the district via e-mail/phone regarding the incident.
- Talk to students about safe travel practices between home and school when appropriate.
- Identify students at risk and provide counseling.
- Provide additional supervision for students as necessary.
- With police, develop a fact sheet to respond to telephone inquiries.
- Direct media to the Superintendent's Office. Prepare for media onslaught and continue to direct all calls to the Superintendent.
- Send a letter home to all parents/guardians outlining facts, as known, and alerting them to any possible concerns, as well as school/police initiatives and ways they can support their children.
- Develop a plan for follow-up support for students.
- Develop a plan for immediate and follow-up support for student(s).

Refer to Responding To Critical Incidents: A Resource Guide For Schools ([www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/critinc.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/critinc.pdf)) for further details

## **ACCIDENT ON A FIELD TRIP**

**Ensure that all staff taking students on field trips carry the phone numbers (home and cell) of their principals and parents/guardians. Staff should know to immediately call and personally speak to a school principal if a serious accident occurs.**

### ***Principals will:***

- Gather preliminary information about the accident (location, description of accident, emergency personnel involved, number of students involved, seriousness of injuries, names of students, staff or parents/guardians taken to hospital, their condition, if known, and the name of the hospital receiving the injured).
- Ensure that the parents of injured students and emergency contacts for injured staff members are immediately notified and advised regarding specified hospital if known.
- Establish a contact person and a number at the site of the accident where that person can be reached at all times. Establish a back up plan if phone contact cannot be made (e.g., alternate contact number).
- Notify the Superintendent of Schools or Assistant Superintendent of the accident.
- Meet with all of your school's principals to formulate an initial plan to handle the incident and assign responsibilities. Decide whether to request one of the principals to attend the scene. If the accident is serious or involves casualties, it is advisable to do this, if at all possible.
- Direct all media inquiries to the Superintendent's Office.
- Request involvement of District Critical Incident Response Team, if appropriate.
- Notify staff.
- Provide staff handling the telephone with a script to share with parents/guardians and the community.
- Notify parents/guardians of the students on the trip. Give them only verified information and invite them to meet at the school for further information.
- Contact PAC President to inform him/her of the accident.
- Establish a room for parents/guardians in which to meet and ensure an principal or Critical Incident Team member is present to provide information on an ongoing basis. Provide separate rooms for parents/guardians of critically injured student(s).
- Establish a room for students who turn up at the school. Ensure that there is a staff person who can provide information and monitor their needs.
- Arrange for a staff meeting to pass on information and outline the plan for handling the situation.
- Write a statement to be delivered by classroom teachers, counselors or principals informing fellow students of the accident, if appropriate. Ensure

that students do not leave the school without this information.

- Write a letter to parents/guardians, if appropriate, informing them of facts about the accident, support provided by school and ways they can support their children.
- Develop a plan for immediate and follow-up support for students and staff.

Refer to Responding To Critical Incidents: A Resource Guide For Schools ([www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/critinc.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/critinc.pdf)) for further details

## **BOMB THREAT**

- For an imminent threat, call 911 immediately. Then call the Superintendent's or Safe School Coordinator's Office.
- If a threat specifies a future time or date, call the Superintendent's or Safe School Coordinator's Office immediately to consult about a plan of response.

**CAUTION:** Do not use radios, cellular phones or pagers as they may trigger an electronic detonator. Do not touch a suspicious device or assume that there is just one device.

### **WHEN A BOMB THREAT IS RECEIVED:**

#### ***By Phone:***

- Listen.
- Be calm and courteous.
- Do not interrupt the caller.
- Obtain as much information as possible:
  - Ask - WHERE is the exact location of the bomb? Ask - WHEN will it explode?
  - Ask - WHAT is the explosive? Ask - WHY was it placed?
  - Ask - WHO are you?
  - Ask - WHERE are you?
- Obtain as much information as possible about the bomb and its location. Legitimate callers usually wish to avoid injury or death – request more data, expressing a desire to save lives.
- Immediately after the call is terminated attempt to use \*57 to identify the caller. Record the number and provide this to the police when they arrive.
- Call 911.
- Notify the principal.
- Complete the District Bomb Threat Report as soon as possible and provide this to the Principal.

#### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Call the Safe School Coordinator and activate the Threat Assessment Protocol.

## **BOMB THREAT Con't**

### **IN THE CASE OF A BOMB THREAT BY PHONE**

#### **Help to Identify A Caller:**

1. Did the caller appear familiar with the school by his/her description and remarks?  
☐ Yes   ☐ No   How? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Caller's identity: ☐ Male   ☐ Female   ☐ adult   ☐ estimated age \_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_
3. Origin of call: ☐ local   ☐ long distance   ☐ cell/landline (clarity) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Voice:        ☐ loud            ☐ soft            ☐ raspy            ☐ pleasant  
                  ☐ high pitch   ☐ deep            ☐ intoxicated ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_
5. Speech:       ☐ slow            ☐ fast            ☐ nasal            ☐ stutter  
                  ☐ distorted   ☐ distinct       ☐ lisp            ☐ slurred  
                  ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_
6. Language:    ☐ excellent   ☐ fair            ☐ poor            ☐ colloquial  
                  ☐ foul            ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_
7. Accent:        ☐ local            ☐ not local       ☐ foreign        ☐ race \_\_\_\_\_
8. Manner:       ☐ calm            ☐ deliberate   ☐ rational       ☐ righteous  
                  ☐ coherent   ☐ laughing       ☐ incoherent   ☐ angry  
                  ☐ emotional
9. Background Noises:  
                  ☐ machines   ☐ vehicles       ☐ train            ☐ bedlam  
                  ☐ music        ☐ animals       ☐ children        ☐ mixed  
                  ☐ quiet        ☐ voices        ☐ aircraft        ☐ office machines  
                  ☐ party        ☐ television  
                  ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_



## **BOMB THREAT Con't**

### **WHEN A BOMB THREAT IS RECEIVED:**

#### ***In Writing:***

##### ***Classroom Teacher/Staff will:***

- Notify principal immediately.

##### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Call the Safe School Coordinator and activate the Threat Assessment Protocol.
- If threat is on the wall: take a photo of the threat, then call the Maintenance Supervisor at 250-514-1312 to have the threat removed immediately. (If in a washroom stall, close that cubicle or washroom until the threat is removed, if possible.)
- If on paper, make a photocopy of the threat and put the original in a protective cover to give to the police. Handle the original with care, by edge only, to preserve any evidence that may be found.

#### ***Electronically:***

##### ***Classroom Teacher/Staff will:***

- Print a copy of the threat.
- Notify principal immediately.
- Do not delete the threat from your computer.

##### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Call the Safe School Coordinator and activate the Threat Assessment Protocol.

## **BOMB THREAT (Con't)**

### **AFTER THREAT ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL IS ACTIVATED:**

#### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Have copies of the school floor plan ready for police and cooperate in search procedures.
- Decide whether to evacuate the building or to simply alert the staff. Key factors to consider in this decision are:
  - Results of consultation with police
  - The level of unrest and violence in the community
  - Suspects with an identified history of violence or instability
  - Information provided by the caller about the specified time of detonation.
  - The suspected age and credibility level of the caller
  - Safety of evacuation route
  - Weather conditions the students would be exposed to during evacuation
  - **Err on the side of caution**
- If a decision to evacuate is made:
  - **Unknown location of suspected bomb:** pull the fire alarm and proceed with emergency evacuation. Students should not re-enter the building until the police have given the all clear. Do not announce the possibility of a bomb.
  - **Known location of suspected bomb:** evacuate staff and students from area nearest the threat and then in stages.
  - Do not pull fire alarm.
  - When evacuating leave classroom doors closed, but unlocked.
  - Assembly area should be at least 100 metres away from the school building.
- If a decision is made not to evacuate, notify the staff discreetly, if appropriate.
- **If searching for a device**, note the location of any suspected or unusual object, but do not touch anything. The most common locations for bombs reported are: boys' bathrooms, students' lockers, Principal's office, parking lots, hallways, windows/skylights, trophy cases, planters, stairwells, water fountains and trash cans. Look for objects that are out of place, cannot be accounted for, or have a suspicious shape or label.
- **If a device or suspect device is discovered**, do not touch or move it; do not assume that it is the only one. Notify the police immediately. Do not allow students/staff to pass by this area.
- Assess needs of students and/or staff for follow-up services. Activate the school threat assessment team if the suspect is a student.
- Consider sending home a letter to parents/guardians to ensure that they receive accurate information about the incident and are aware of the efforts of the school to ensure the safety of their children.

## **DEATH OF A STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER**

### ***Principal or Designate will:***

#### ***At School — Call 911:***

- Remove onlookers by directing students back to classrooms, if possible.
- Call next of kin and inform them that an emergency has taken place. Direct them to go to the school or specified hospital, as appropriate. Ensure that someone meets them when they arrive.
- Call the Superintendent.
- Activate school CIRT and request support from District Critical Response Team.
- Communicate the nature of the incident to staff and direct them to contain students in classrooms.
- Follow procedures for all situations below.
- Ensure documentation is complete.

#### ***Out of School:***

- Confirm details.
- Inform the Assistant Superintendent, Learning Services.
- Meet with the school CIRT and consider requesting support from District Critical Response Team.
- Meet with staff to inform them of the death. If possible, do this before school starts so that staff have a chance to process the information before going to their classrooms.

#### ***All Situations:***

- Follow procedures outlined in the CIRT Manual.
- Contact family. Express sympathy, both personally and on behalf of the school. Sensitively confirm what information about the death may be shared. Be aware of multicultural sensitivity (See Resource Section for chart.).
- Initially gather student's personal belongings with public access and store in a safe place.
- Prepare a script for office staff to share with parents/guardians and community members who call or drop in.
- Prepare a script to be read to students by classroom teachers, counselors, or critical incident team members.
- Write a letter to inform parents/guardians, if appropriate, of the facts about the death, support provided by the school and ways for parents/guardians to support their children.
- If appropriate, set aside specific rooms and identify staff members to provide support to other staff and students.
- Hold a staff meeting as soon as possible (recess or lunch) to provide

updated information, gather information on how students are doing and check on wellbeing of staff.

- Circulate among students and staff as they change classes, eat lunch, etc.
- Obtain assistance of community agencies as required.
- Contact staff members who are absent from school to inform them of the death.
- Share information about funeral arrangements with staff and students.
- Ensure students are supervised until they are picked up or released.

## **DEATH OF A STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER** (Cont'd)

- Share information about funeral arrangements with staff and students.
- In consultation with CIRT, hold a memory event at school to come together as a school community, honor the life of the person who has died and begin the transition back to normal life.
- Following the funeral, encourage return to a normal day with established routines.
- Monitor student reaction, request additional counselors, if necessary.
- Monitor social networking sites (Facebook, etc.), if possible.
- Have counselors connect students/parents/guardians with community resources, as appropriate.
- Develop a plan for immediate and follow-up support for students and staff.
- Direct staff members to remove student's name from computer, attendance and mailing lists.
- Involve family and/or close peers of the deceased in the plan for clearing the student's locker, desk, and returning personal effects.
- Complete an incident report.

Refer to Emergency Management Planning Guide for Schools, Districts and Authorities for further details

(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/emergency-management-guide.pdf> )

## **INJURY TO STUDENTS OR STAFF**

### **For Medical Emergencies:**

- Apply first aid (Call First Aid Designate).
- Don't move the individual unless there is immediate danger and don't leave alone.
- If appropriate, call 911.
- If needed, contact parent/guardian for student or emergency contact for employee.
- Check the health record of the individual to identify any pre-existing medical conditions or allergies to medication and have this information ready for emergency personnel.
- If parents/guardians have not arrived, have a staff member accompany student to hospital.
- Send pertinent personal and medical information to the hospital with the individual.
- Promptly inform immediate supervisor and Manager, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety if injury is serious or unusual.
- Complete necessary forms.
  - Student — complete School Protection Plan Incident Report immediately and forward to Manager, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety
  - Employee — report injury to First Aid Attendant and supervisor and contact WSBC Teleclaim at 1-888-967-5377
  - Employee Supervisor – complete Incident Investigation Report and forward to Manager, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety

### **For Disaster-Related or Multiple Injuries to Several Employees or Students:**

- Phone 911. If phone system is not functioning, report Incident Commander and note:
  - Number of people injured
  - Number with minor injuries who can be tended by First Aid Attendant on-site
  - Number with serious injuries who will need on-site treatment beyond abilities of First Aid Attendant
  - Number with serious injuries who will need transportation to hospital or emergency relief center
  - Number of employees on-site with first aid training
- Call immediate supervisor to report situation or use radio to contact Incident Commander.
- If required, assign employees trained in first aid to assist medical professionals.
- Follow Accident/Incident/Investigation procedure found at [www.sd63.bc.ca/health](http://www.sd63.bc.ca/health)

### **For Communicable Diseases:**

- Report to medical health officer at the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) 250 331-8591 any and all students with a suspected communicable disease (e.g. fifth disease, whooping cough, measles etc.) and any disease affecting 10% or more of your school population (e.g. influenza, chicken pox

etc.).

For a complete list of communicable diseases refer to VIHA's "School Years" web pages at: [http://www.viha.ca/children/school\\_years/](http://www.viha.ca/children/school_years/)

**Note: VIHA is responsible for all communications to parents/staff during a communicable disease outbreak.**

## **INTRUDER**

**Intruders are individuals who may present a threat to the school environment**

***Classroom Teacher/Staff will:***

- Contact the school principal(s) and/or office to report the intruder's location and description.
- Never compromise your own safety. Maintain a safe distance from the intruder. Whenever possible, approach in pairs.

***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Walk to the location; never run; approach in a non-confrontational manner and assess the situation/intruder.
- Ensure students' safety; request students leave the area.
- Maintain a safe distance.
- Identify yourself and ask if you can help the individual. This could answer why they are there.
- Ensure that you do not block the intruder's exit and identify an exit for yourself.
- Ask the intruder to accompany you to the main office, explaining the safety concerns.
- If the intruder refuses to cooperate, the school principal should direct the intruder to leave the school grounds, using a calm, clear voice.
- Withdraw immediately if you sense the potential for violence.
- Call 911 if intruders do not leave immediately. Avoid further confrontation by observing the intruder from a distance.
- If intruder poses a serious threat, follow "Lockdown Procedures."
- Document details of the incident.

## **INTRUDER WITH A WEAPON**

***Classroom Teacher/Staff will:***

- Do not approach or attempt to intervene.
- Contact the school office to report the armed intruder's location and description.

***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Follow Lockdown procedures.
- Call 911 and state that there is a person in the school with a weapon. If possible, give the last known location and a description of the person. Stay on the line with the 911 dispatcher.
- Do not activate the fire alarm.
- Phone the Superintendent of Schools or the Safe School Coordinator/Assistant Superintendent.
- Develop a plan with the school CIRT for immediate and follow-up support for students



and staff.

- Request services of district CIRT team/threat assessment team as appropriate.
- Document details of the incident.
- Complete violent incident report and submit to Safe School Coordinator.

## **SUICIDE**

### **At School:**

- Check vitals. Call 911 and inform dispatcher that a suicide has taken place.
- Call parents/guardians and inform them that an emergency has taken place. Direct them to go to the school or hospital, as appropriate. Ensure that someone meets them when they arrive.
- Secure the room that the student is in, as it is a crime scene.
- Take any witnesses to a private area to wait for police. Have a staff member with them to provide support.
- Call the Superintendent's Office.
- Wait for police and brief them when they arrive to take over the scene.
- Activate school CIRT and request help from District Critical Incident Team.
- Inform staff of the incident and have them contain students in classrooms.

### **Out of School:**

- Inform the Superintendent.
- Activate the school and district CIRT and plan response.
- Meet with staff to inform them of the death. If possible do this before school starts so that staff have a chance to process the information before going to their classrooms.
- Provide TOC coverage for staff that are unable to return to their classrooms right away.
- Contact staff that are absent to inform them of the death.

### **All Situations:**

- **Do not talk to the media.**
- Follow CIRT processes as outlined in CIRT Manual.
- Contact family. Express sympathy, both personally and on behalf of the school, keeping multicultural sensitivities in mind (see chart attached).
- If possible, sensitively clarify with family what details may be shared with the school community and whether the family is referring to the death as a suicide or a sudden death.

### **In Collaboration with CIRT:**

- Call close friends of the student out of class to tell them about the death. Contact their parents/guardians immediately so that the students have support at home.
- Prepare a statement to be read to students giving basic facts, but no details, of the death. Unless the parents/guardians give permission to refer to the death as a suicide, call it a sudden death.
- Prepare a letter to go home to parents/guardians, informing them of the sudden death, outlining support provided by the school and ways that they

can support their children.

- Develop a plan for immediate and follow-up support for students and staff. It is likely that district and/or community support will be needed to deal with a suicide due to the magnitude of its impact. Contacting these supports and engaging their assistance quickly will be beneficial. The District Critical Incident Team, Project Alive, and Living and Learning through Loss can provide support.
- Prepare a list of students who might be at risk of suicide and contact parents/guardians, if appropriate.
- Organize a drop-in center for students.

## **SUICIDE** (Cont'd)

### **All Situations:** (cont'd)

- Monitor social networking sites (Facebook, etc.), if possible.
- Hold a staff meeting at the end of the day. Assess staff needs.
- Ensure documentation is complete.
- Initially gather student's personal belongings with public access and store in a safe place.
- Inform staff and students of funeral arrangements.
- Following the funeral, have school return to normal routines. Continue to monitor student reaction (particularly students identified as at-risk for suicide) and connect vulnerable students with community resources.
- Direct staff members to remove student's name from computer, attendance and mailing lists.
- Involve family and/or close peers of the deceased in the plan for clearing the student's locker, desk and personal effects
- Monitor student reaction on anniversaries of the suicide and provide support, as necessary.

**Note: Following a suicide, or a sudden death, students may be more vulnerable to suicide attempts, particularly on anniversaries.**

Refer to Suicide, What You Need To Know: A Guide for School Personnel ([www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/suicide.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/suicide.pdf)) for further details

## **SUICIDE ATTEMPT**

**(The student makes an attempt at school or returns to school having made an attempt.)**

- Do not compromise your own personal safety if a weapon is involved.
- Do not leave the student alone until police or ambulance personnel take control.
- Do not allow bystanders to view the event.
- Do not bring other students to talk to the person attempting suicide.
- Administer first aid, if required. (Call First Aid Designate.)
- Call 911, inform the dispatcher that it is a suicide attempt, and ask for the Emergency Mental Health Services Team (IMCRT) 1-888-494-3888, if available. Have someone meet police/ambulance and escort them to the student. The student may be taken to the hospital by ambulance for a mental health assessment.
- Clear non-essential personnel from the area or move the student to a safe area.
- Identify a key staff member who has positive connections with the student and have them remain with the student to provide support.
- Check medical information on file for pre-existing conditions, medications and allergies and have this ready for ambulance/hospital personnel if necessary.
- Contact the parents/guardians (and/or social worker, if involved).
- If the student is transported by ambulance/police to the hospital, arrange to meet parents/guardians at the hospital. If transportation is not required, arrange to meet them at the school.
- Inform the Safe School Coordinator (Assistant Superintendent/District Principal).
- Ask the individual if they have a current mental health therapist and contact when possible.
- Consult with the police when they arrive to take charge of the scene.
- Activate school threat assessment team/CIRT.
- Inform staff members and debrief at the end of the day.
- Plan for and provide support to classmates and school population, as appropriate.
- Identify other students who may be at risk for suicide and monitor their behavior.
- Monitor social networking sites (Facebook, etc.) if possible.
- Connect parents/guardians with appropriate community resources, if appropriate.
- Ensure that a written record of the attempt is kept in the student's file and that this information is given to the receiving school immediately should the student transfer.
- Develop a re-entry support plan with parents/guardians, students, counselor and key staff to address the student's needs when returning to school after hospitalization or treatment.
- Continue to monitor the student for changes in appearance, attitude, academic performance or behavior, which might signal an increase of risk. Provide ongoing support.

**Note: Following a suicide or a sudden death, students may be more vulnerable to suicide attempts.**

## **SUICIDE THREAT - STUDENT**

**(The student is talking about a future suicide/ recent suicidal thoughts/self injury or the student's behavior suggests suicidal risk, or concern is expressed for the student's safety.)**

- Inform Principal and ask him/her to initiate Threat Assessment Protocol.
- Remain calm and take the situation seriously.
- Use language that supports disclosure.
- Reinforce the need to involve others who can help.
- Identify a key person who has positive connections with the student.
- Have that key person talk to the student to determine seriousness of the risk. (Lethality, availability and short timeframe). The more lethal and available the means, and the more definite the timeframe, the greater the risk.
- In any situation where suicidal risk is a concern or there is a disclosure contact Project Alive\* to request assistance: 250 952-5073.
- If the risk is imminent contact the Emergency Mental Health Team, or if the student's behaviour escalates beyond control, contact 911 and request on-site assistance.
- Seek counseling services for the student to address the risk and youth's reaction to having parent/guardian notified.
- Inform parents or guardian and direct them to come to the school to meet with you and pick up the student or if the Emergency Health Team/911 responders direct the child to a hospital, have a staff member accompany the student and meet the parents/guardians at the hospital.
- Inform classroom teachers as needed.
- Review student's history to determine whether previous threats/attempts have been made.
- Ensure a written record of this threat is kept in the student's file and that this information is given to the receiving school immediately if the student transfers. If threat is serious, develop a safety plan outlining supports in place.
- Continue to monitor the student for changes in appearance, attitude, academic performance or behavior, which might signal an increase of risk and provide ongoing support.
- Provide ongoing support.

**\* Note: When contacting Project Alive talk to personnel directly. Do not leave a voice message.**

## **SUICIDE THREAT – STAFF MEMBER**

### **(A staff member is talking about a future suicide)**

- Inform the Principal.
- Remain calm and take the situation seriously.
- Use language that supports disclosure.
- Reinforce the need to involve others who can help.
- Identify a key person who has positive connections with the staff member.
- Have that key person talk to the staff member to determine seriousness of the risk. (Lethality, availability and short timeframe.) The more lethal and available the means, and the more definite the timeframe, the greater the risk.
- If serious, call Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP) — Crisis intervention.
- Inform family, partner, and adult support.
- Inform Manager, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety — 250-652-7365
- Connect individual with community doctor/resources.
- Continue to monitor the staff member for changes in appearance, attitude, well being or behavior, which might signal an increase of risk.
- Provide ongoing support.

Refer to Suicide and Self Harm: Getting Help for further details.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/mental-health-support-in-bc/suicide-and-self-harm>





## **THREATS TO STAFF**

Threats may be made in person, in writing, or by phone. They can have a serious effect on a staff member's sense of personal safety and well being.

### ***If threat is in person:***

- Call 911, if appropriate (serious threat of immediate harm).
- Advise school principal of the incident.
- While involved: Communicate in calm, non threatening tones.
- Create a distance between you and the individual with a clear path to exit, if possible.
- Document the incident, recording date and time, exact words, threats made, threatening gestures/actions or names of witnesses.
- Complete Incident Investigation Report and forward to Manager, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety.

### ***If threat is via phone:***

- If you do not have call display, hang up the phone after the threatening phone call. Pick up the same line again and dial \*57. Record the number and report it to police.
- Call 911, if appropriate (serious threat of immediate harm).
- Advise school principal of the incident.
- Document the incident recording: date and time, caller's exact words, voice description (e.g., accent, male, female, intoxication, child, adult, adolescent) background noise, (e.g., vehicles, music, talking, machines).
- Complete Incident Investigation Report and forward to Manager, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety.

### ***If threat is in writing or via email:***

- Advise school principal of the incident.
- Call 911, if appropriate (serious threat of immediate harm).
- Make a copy of the letter and keep the original for police. Print a copy of the email and ensure the email is not deleted.
- Complete Incident Investigation Report and forward to Manager, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety.

If a threat is not deemed to be an emergency refer the 'incident' to the police through the police liaison officer or the non-emergency police number.

### ***In All Situations, the Principal or Designate will:***

- Provide support to the staff member who has been threatened and activate the Threat Assessment Protocol.
- Advise the Safe School Coordinator if 911 has been called.

## VIOLENT INCIDENTS

**Personal safety is paramount. Determine if weapons are involved. If so, remove yourself from the situation immediately.**

### **Teacher or Staff Member will:**

- Immediately notify a school principal and/or the office as soon as possible.
- Have someone call 911.
- Assess your ability to intervene:
  - **Model control: don't demand it.** Maintain a calm, professional manner. By demonstrating self-control, you may avoid increasing anger and anxiety in others. Do not use ultimatums.
  - **Assess as you approach.** Approach overtly, not head on, as this can be perceived as a threat to the aggressor. Assess for weapons, purpose, how many are involved and whether they are students from your school.
  - **Disperse any crowd of onlookers.** When possible assign tasks (e.g. "Go to the office and ask another teacher to come here, and report back to me.")
  - **Watch the periphery of the area.** Any weapons involved can be passed to individuals on the periphery. Watch for weapons and other problem individuals.
  - **Work in pairs.** Person One makes contact and gives directions. Person Two monitors the incident while standing approximately three meters from Person One.
  - **Ensure you have a clear exit.** Prior to entering the area, ensure you can leave easily. Never stand with your back to a door as it blocks the exit of the person.
  - **Allow a clear exit.** Always ensure there is an exit available to the aggressor. If the aggressor chooses to leave, allow him/her to go. Do not chase.
  - **Keep your hands free.** Avoid carrying anything in your hand. It is difficult to appear in control when your hands are not free and it is easy for the aggressor to misinterpret the purpose of what ever you may be holding.
  - **Identify yourself by name and /or position.** Don't assume this will bring about immediate compliance. However, it is less likely to trigger the common phrase, "Who do you think you are?" from the aggressor.
  - **Listen, listen, and listen.** Let them talk. If an angry individual is willing to talk, let them, regardless of whether or not you agree with them; it is a great way for them to 'let off steam'. You can also learn where their frustrations lie and it may help you later with 'talking them down'. Often they need to 'save face'.
  - **Maintain casual eye contact.** While the issue of eye contact has

many variables (gender, culture, etc.), it is important to maintain at least casual eye contact.

- **Keep a barrier between yourself and the individual when possible.** This will allow you to keep a safe distance away and discourage direct contact.
- **If you approach a vehicle,** note the license number and description of the vehicle. Do not stand in front of or behind the vehicle. Do not stand beside doors. Do not lean on the vehicle.
- **Do not get between combatants.**
- **Do not use physical restraint.**

## **VIOLENT INCIDENTS** (Cont'd)

### ***The Principal or Designate will:***

- Call the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent.
- Collect documentation details from staff and ensure that a copy is placed on the file(s) of the student(s)
- Complete an Incident Investigation Report or, if appropriate, Employee Injury/Incident Student Related Report Form and submit to Manager, Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety (refer to [www.sd63.bc.ca/departments/healthsafety](http://www.sd63.bc.ca/departments/healthsafety)).
- Assess the needs of students and/or staff and activate the Threat Assessment Protocol as necessary. If 911 has been called, the school principal should advise the Safe School Coordinator.

Refer to Community Threat Assessment Protocol: A Collaborative Response to Threat Making Behaviors The Board of Education of School District 63 (Saanich) in Collaboration with Community Partners

## RESOURCES

## **WEATHER/SNOW NON-EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE**

### ***For snow or other unexpected closures prior to school opening:***

- The Transportation Supervisor advises the Superintendent that the roads are in poor condition and it is inadvisable to run the buses. The Superintendent then makes a decision to close schools for students or for both staff and students on that day. The Superintendent makes Media contacts and the SBO website is updated.
- If the police issue a "stay off the roads" warning for our school district area, the Superintendent will make an announcement that schools/district sites are closed to both students and staff.
- If the local police do not issue a "stay off the roads" warning for our school district area, then staff members are expected to get to their worksite or an alternative worksite at the earliest safe time or arrange to use a discretionary day, holiday, or take time off without pay. Additionally, parents are advised through the media and the SBO website that schools will be open should parents be able to transport students safely to school. Expectations of employees will be as follows:
  - School principals - are expected to attend at their school as close to the regular time as safety permits. Supervision of staff and any students who do arrive, and dealing with any home contacts will be important on that day.
  - Teaching staff - are expected to attend at their school as close to the regular time as safety permits. Such a day provides opportunities to plan, make home contact, focus on student assessment and complete other duties. Teachers not able to be in attendance at their regular school site are expected to attend at another district school site for the day.
  - Non-teaching school staff - are expected to attend at their school as close to the regular time as safety permits. Such a day provides opportunities to complete other duties in the work area. Support staff members not in attendance at their regular school site are expected to attend at another district school site for the day.
  - District Staff and those not assigned to a specific worksite - are expected to attend at their usual places of work as close to the regular time as safety permits. As possible, these staff members will continue with regular duties.

### ***For snow or other non-emergency closures once the school day has commenced:***

- The Transportation Supervisor or other member of the Physical Plant staff provides input to the Superintendent of Schools. In all but exceptional circumstances, the schools will remain open and students will continue with

classes for the duration of the school day in order to provide duty of care. If the decision is made to close the schools prior to the normal end of day, the Superintendent of Schools advises the schools of the decisions and contacts the local media.

- An emergency bus schedule is organized and schools are advised regarding their school's closing time dependent on the arrival of buses.
- For elementary and middle school students, parent contact or emergency number contact is made to advise that schools are closing early.

## **WEATHER/SNOW/NON-EMERGENCY/SCHOOL CLOSURE** (Cont'd)

- For elementary and middle school students for whom no home or emergency number contact is made, the school administration and staff make arrangements for the students to stay at school under supervision until there is a contact made and transportation home can be arranged.
- Teaching and CUPE staff may leave the school once all students have been attended to and any alternative arrangements have been made. Employees will be paid for their full day of duty.

**Other special conditions on an individual school basis:** (School heating plant fails to function; loss of power/light to individual school; local flooding or damage to all or part of a school; natural gas build-up, etc.)

- School custodian notifies school principal.
- School Principal notifies Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent.
- School custodian notifies Maintenance Supervisor.
- Supervisor/Director of Facilities/school principal examines situation and utility companies, fire department are consulted as needed.
- Action to be determined by school principal in consultation with Superintendent.



## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS SCHOOL EMERGENCIES**

SCHOOL DISTRICT 63 (SAANICH)

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Our school is developing an emergency plan to help ensure the safety and well-being of your child(ren) and staff in the event of an emergency affecting the normal operation of the school. This plan includes procedures relating to fire, threats to the school, violent incidents, school bus accidents, severe weather, earthquake, hazardous spills, pandemic, abduction and incidents on field trips.

In the event of an emergency requiring the closure of a school, these procedures will be followed:

- Students will be released to parents/guardians and emergency contacts authorized by parents/guardians.
- All authorized adults who come to pick up students must ensure that they report to the Parent Check In/Student Release Area. Children will be signed out here.
- Do not directly seek out your child(ren) as school staff has established routines for their orderly release (following calm, orderly procedures will help all children feel less frightened).
- If you are unable to reach the school, contact your authorized emergency contact to collect your child(ren).
- Do not call the school as telephone lines must remain open for emergency calls.
- If the school is in Lockdown, do not call students on personal cell phones.
- Do not drive immediately to the school as school access routes and street entrances must remain clear for emergency vehicles. Also, in some instances, it may be necessary for staff and students to be evacuated to an Emergency Social Services Reception Centre, and you may need to pick up your child(ren) there. Listen to the local media or check the school or District website for updates.
- Any emergency instructions regarding the status of students at a district school will be broadcast on local radio stations – CFX 1070 AM in particular.
- Please also check the District website for updates: [www.sd63.bc.ca](http://www.sd63.bc.ca).

Please discuss this information and your family emergency plan

with your child(ren). Yours respectfully,

Principal

## **MULTICULTURAL SENSITIVITY**

The following information, although not conclusive, introduces an overview of the beliefs and customs pertaining to grief and loss. The intention is to provide a foundation from which one can build greater understanding for the diversity found in our communities.

<b>Religion Culture</b>	<b>Expressions of Sympathy</b>	<b>Visitation and Burial</b>	<b>General Information</b>
BAHA'I	Similar to the Christian customs	Baha'i dead must be buried within an hour's travel distance from the place of death. Baha'is do not embalm or cremate their dead. The dead body is washed and wrapped in a shroud. The deceased, if he or she is fifteen years of age, should also be buried wearing a Baha'i burial ring. The only ceremonial requirement of a funeral is the recitation of the Prayer for the Dead.	Death is regarded as a 'messenger of joy' for the deceased. Baha'is believe the soul lives on after the body's death and embarks on a spiritual journey.
CHINESE	Flowers, cards, telephone, visit the family and present a white envelope with money in it.	Most Chinese families prefer open caskets, thus it is polite to stop for a few seconds to view the body before proceeding out. A burial is more traditional than cremation. People usually stay at the funeral home until the family leaves for the interment. A wake follows. There is usually a one-month mourning period following the death for family members only.	Female family members wear a white flower on their head and male members wear a black arm band during the funeral ceremony. Both the white flower and black armband will be placed on top of the casket just before burial.
CHRISTIAN	Flowers, cards, and/or donations to designated charities are appropriate.	Funeral and memorial ceremonies allow family and friends to gather and pay tribute to a unique life that has been lived. The funeral is a service for the living that allows friends and relatives to offer comfort and support to one another.	Family members are the last to enter and first to leave the service. Other mourners follow the lead of the family or their designate. There are no general rules on

		The funeral service may take many forms; held at the funeral home or the family church, conducted by clergy or not. The service should meet the needs of the surviving family.	dress or format There may or may not be visiting hours.
FIRST NATIONS	Sending flowers, food, sympathy card or money is appropriate. A representative from the school may deliver them.	<p><b>Coast Salish:</b> (Comox to Victoria, including Saanich &amp; Gulf Islands) A prayer service is held the night before the service. Classmates and school personnel are welcome to attend. The funeral, which is a full day process, may be held in the church or Longhouse.</p> <p><b>Nuu Chah Nulth:</b> (West coast of Vancouver Island from Kyuquot to Port Renfrew) The deceased will usually be taken back to their home reserve to be buried. A gathering or prayer service may be held here prior to that with school personnel and students welcome.</p> <p><b>Kwa Kwa ka'wakw:</b> (Northeast coast of Vancouver Island Comox to Port Hardy) The same as above, although the prayer services may be held at an individual's home and space may be limited. Check with the family before attending. The deceased may often be taken back to their reserve to be buried.</p>	<p><b>Coast Salish, Nuw Chah Nulth:</b> At the prayers, there may be drumming, singing and a long eulogy. There is usually an open casket and people go by to pay their respects. Pictures of the deceased may be taken down and not shown for a year. Family members or close relatives may cut their hair. The family will expect time to be given to the children to cry and grieve for the deceased. A memorial service may be held as much as a year or up to four years after the burial.</p> <p><b>Kwa Kwa ka'wakw:</b> As above, including that people may express their emotions as the body is placed in the ground and the memorial may take place as long as four years after the burial.</p>

## **MULTICULTURAL SENSITIVITY** (Cont'd)

<b>Religion Culture</b>	<b>Expressions of Sympathy</b>	<b>Visitation and Burial</b>	<b>General Information</b>
HINDU	Flowers or a letter are appropriate.	There is visitation if the deceased is an adult. If the deceased is a child, there is usually no visitation. However, classmates might be permitted with the consent of the parents. Those in attendance sit during the chanting of hymns and then go to express their condolences. Traditionally, the deceased is cremated the same day, but in Canada there is usually a 48-hour delay. It is important to check with the funeral home. Very young children (under 12 years of age) are not cremated. They are buried.	When entering the temple, shoes are to be removed and the feet are sprinkled with the water that is provided. Preferably, the person enters the temple in bare feet. However, socks are acceptable. Shoulders and knees are to be covered. Women usually stand to the left of the men. A handshake between a man and woman is not traditional.
ISLAM	Salutations and offering of remembrance s for the dead are acceptable. All other ways, such as placing wreaths, flowers, paying homage, etc., are incorrect.	The deceased is buried as soon as possible, with the mourning period lasting four months and ten days. As burial is done quickly, there is no time for visitation prior to the funeral. Funeral services are carried out at the cemetery, outdoor facility or building designated for such an event. Funeral services are never performed in a Mosque.	One should be most humble, express grief, speak less about worldly affairs, should not joke or laugh, and, mention the good acts and deeds of the deceased. Choice of clothing color is optional.
JAPANESE	Flowers sent to the family should only be white or yellow. Black should be worn. There should be no ornamental jewelry except	There are one, two, or three days of mourning, depending on the size or social status of the family. The funeral usually takes place in the home; however, more so now in community centers. There is often an open casket and the body is not left alone.	An offering or donation to the family is acceptable. The family usually gives gifts back to those who gave offerings, unless they have donated to a charity instead of giving a gift.

	pearls.	Traditionally, the body is cremated. The ashes are kept in the home. After 49 days, they are put in the grave so the spirit will be at rest.	
JUDAISM	A letter is appropriate. Flowers are NOT to be sent.	Burial is the same day or the next day. There is no visitation before the burial. The family is visited during the Shiva, which is observed for seven days. The day of the burial is considered to be the first day of Shiva and lasts until the first five minutes of the last day with a full five days in between. If one of the interim five days falls on a Sabbath, visitation does not begin until sunset. During the visitation, it is preferable to wait for a family member to speak first, after the initial expression of sympathy.	It is not traditional for a man and a woman to shake hands, if they are of the Orthodox faith.
SIKH	Flowers or a letter are appropriate.	People usually go to the bereaved family's home to express their condolences. The deceased is cremated, either the same day or as soon as possible. On the day of cremation, the family is given the Holy Book to take home to read for ten days duration. During the ten days, and after the tenth day, people may go to the bereaved family's home to pay their respects.	There are no color restrictions for clothing, but simplicity is stressed. During PRAYERS and the Temple, men and women must have their heads covered. Men from the Sikh faith wear turbans. Shoes are to be removed before entering the temple. Men and women stand on different sides in the temple. A handshake between a man and a woman is not traditional.

## **GRIEF/LOSS**

### **Script for Office Staff**

After a death or critical incident, it is important to provide a script for office staff who will be answering school phones and greeting people who come in to the office. CIRT will assist school in developing an appropriate response.

It is not possible to provide a ready made script as each incident is unique and the information appropriate for sharing with callers will change throughout the process.

Here are some considerations to guide the development of a script:

- **Staff should only share information approved by the school principal.**  
Information gathered from other staff members, parents or community members is not to be shared unless directed by the principal. Often initial information from the public proves to be inaccurate and passing this on can be damaging or hurtful. Try to balance the need to be sensitive to the family of the deceased and the need of school parents to be reassured that their children are okay.
- When deciding what information to include in the script, consult with the Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent and CIRT.
- Share only information that has been confirmed by the police or the family of the deceased.
- In the event of a confirmed death, acknowledge that you have lost a member of the school community but do not give the name of the student/staff member.
- Emphasize that the focus at the school is supporting the students.
- Confirm that information will be coming home to parents by the end of the day. If office staff receive information from callers, have them pass it on to the principals as soon as possible.
- Update the script as new confirmed information becomes available.

**Media inquiries should be directed to the Superintendent.** Do not share information with the media unless approved by the Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent.

## **SUPPORT AFTER AN INCIDENT**

The importance of the development of a plan to provide both immediate and follow-up support to students and staff following a traumatic incident cannot be over-stated.

This plan should:

- Help staff, parents/guardians and students understand how youth react to critical incidents.
- Help staff members deal with their own reactions to the critical incident/loss through debriefing and support services.
- Help students and families adjust after the critical incident/loss through the provision of both immediate and follow-up support.
- Connect students and families to community resources where support beyond that which the school can offer is needed.
- Help victims and family members of victims re-enter the school environment.
- Help students and staff address the return of a student removed because of an incident.

## **TALKING WITH STUDENTS AFTER A TRAUMATIC EVENT**

The purpose of this document is to help students begin to process their feelings in a healthy way after a traumatic event such as a suicide, murder, car accident involving multiple students or witnessed by students.

### **Check Facts:**

- Give out the facts as given by police/family.
- Check out the rumors. This is particularly important in the initial stages where there is much misinformation about what happened. It is important to give the police time to sort out exactly what happened. Facts received early on are usually very limited.
- Beware of chat line/Facebook communications as they are not always based on fact.

### **Check Feelings:**

- Normalize the reactions that students may be experiencing, for example: shock, anger, disbelief, sadness, fear, indifference.
- Allow students the opportunity to share reactions upon hearing the news.
- Allow students the opportunity to share stories about their connection to the student who has died or about other losses.

### **Educate:**

- Talk about common reactions to an event such as this, for example: loss of appetite, irritability, difficulty focusing in school, range of emotions, desire to take risks, desire to self-medicate.
- Allow students the opportunity to share concerns for the future, for example: safety; things will never be normal again; this could happen to me; did he/she do something to deserve it. Talk about strategies they can use to keep safe and to look out for each other.
- Educate about the process of grief, that it takes time, that it may come and go, but that it does change and become easier to deal with.



## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RESOURCE - SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN GRIEF/LOSS**

### **Helping Elementary School Youth Deal with Grief and Loss**

Here are some things that parents/guardians can do to support children dealing with death.

#### **CHECK FACTS:**

- Give simple, accurate information about what happened. Tell only what you know to be confirmed.
- Do not allow children to watch media coverage of the death.
- Answer questions honestly, providing only as much detail as requested.
- Check out what has been heard about the death and correct any misinformation or rumors. "Tell me what you have heard . . ." is a good conversation opener. Be aware of the kind of information exchange happening through msn, chat lines, or social networking sites (Facebook, etc.).

#### **CHECK FEELINGS:**

- Ask your child how he/she is feeling.
- Tell him/her that feelings of anger, sadness, guilt, fear, and relief are all common.
- Children will often feel responsible in some way for a death. They may believe that it is punishment for something they have done wrong. It is important to reassure them that this is not the case.
- Be aware that this kind of news and these strong feelings can lead to: nightmares, irritability, stomachaches, loss of appetite, and lack of interest in normal play activities. Your child may also cry more easily, be clingy and not want to be alone, wet the bed, or revert to immature behaviors. These are all common reactions under these circumstances and are usually temporary.

#### **EMPOWER:**

- Encourage your child to attend school.
- Invite your child to talk about the person who has died.
- Help your child identify what he/she has done in tough or sad situations before and how it has helped.
- Remind him/her that you know he/she is strong and has coped with difficult situations in the past.
- Facilitate opportunities for him/her to engage in coping activities such as: talking to friends or relatives, getting together with peers, writing in a journal, drawing a picture, going to a memorial service, making a memory book or collage, planting a flower or tree. Follow his/her lead.

## **HELPING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YOUTH DEAL WITH GRIEF AND LOSS** (Cont'd)

### **MONITOR:**

- For older children, monitor chat lines/msn/Facebook and other social networking sites use.
- Watch for signs that your child may need professional help to cope with this loss:
  - Normal living patterns do not resume over time
  - A continuation of nightmares or need to talk about the death
  - A continuation of feelings of insecurity and fear
- Seek support from your family doctor, Living and Learning Through Loss (250-413-3114 or [info@teenloss.com](mailto:info@teenloss.com)), Hospice (250-370-8715), or Child and Youth Mental Health, school or community counselors.

**REMEMBER THAT CHILDREN ARE REMARKABLY RESILIENT. WITH LOVE AND SUPPORT THEY DO RECOVER FROM THE VERY SAD AND TRAGIC EVENTS THAT LIFE CAN THROW THEIR WAY.**

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RESOURCE – SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN GRIEF/LOSS**

### **Helping Middle School Youth Deal with Grief and Loss**

Here are some things that parents/guardians can do to support youth dealing with death.

#### **Check Facts:**

- Give accurate information about what happened. Tell only what you know to be confirmed.
- Limit viewing of media coverage of the death as repeated viewing may be traumatizing.
- Answer questions honestly, providing only as much detail as requested.
- Check out what has been heard about the death and correct any misinformation or rumors. "Tell me what you have heard." is a good conversation opener. Be aware of the kind of information exchange happening through msn, chat lines, or social networking sites (Facebook, etc.).

#### **Check Feelings:**

- Ask your youth how he/she is feeling.
- Tell him/her that feelings of anger, sadness, guilt, fear, and relief are all common.
- Be aware that this kind of news and these strong feelings can lead to: nightmares, irritability, stomach aches, loss of appetite, lack of interest in normal play activities, desire to be alone. Your youth may also exhibit a decline in school performance and an increase in acting out behaviors, including exaggerated emotional responses. These are all common reactions under these circumstances and are usually temporary.

#### **Empower:**

- Encourage your youth to attend school.
- Invite your youth to talk about the person who has died.
- Help your youth identify what he/she has done in past tough or sad situations and how it has helped.
- Remind him/her that you know he/she is strong and has coped with difficult situations in the past.
- Facilitate opportunities for him/her to engage in healing activities such as: talking to friends or relatives, getting together with peers, writing in a journal or writing a poem, drawing or painting, participating in sports activities, going to a memorial service, making a memory book or collage, planting a flower or tree. Follow his/her lead.

## **HELPING MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH DEAL WITH GRIEF AND LOSS** (Cont'd)

### **Monitor:**

- Communication exchanges through msn, chat lines or social networking sites (Facebook, etc.). Participation in at-risk behaviors such as isolation, drug and alcohol use, violence, and delinquency.
- Watch for signs that your youth may need professional help to cope with this loss:
  - Normal living patterns do not resume over time
  - A continuation of nightmares or need to talk about the death
  - A continuation of feelings of insecurity and fear
- Seek support from your family doctor, Living and Learning Through Loss (250-413-3114 or [info@teenloss.com](mailto:info@teenloss.com)), Hospice (250-370-8715), Child and Youth Mental Health, or school or community counselors.

**REMEMBER THAT CHILDREN ARE REMARKABLY RESILIENT. WITH LOVE AND SUPPORT THEY DO RECOVER FROM THE VERY SAD AND TRAGIC EVENTS THAT LIFE CAN THROW THEIR WAY.**

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RESOURCE – SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN GRIEF/LOSS**

### **Helping Secondary Youth deal with Grief and Loss**

Here are some things that parents/guardians can do to support youth dealing with death.

#### **Check Facts:**

- Give accurate information about what happened. Tell only what you know to be confirmed. Answer questions honestly, providing only as much detail as requested.
- Be aware that repeated viewing of the media coverage of the death can be traumatizing.
- Check out what has been heard about the death and correct any misinformation or rumors. "Tell me what you have heard . . ." is a good conversation opener. Be aware of the kind of information exchange happening through msn, chat lines, or social networking sites (Facebook, etc.).

#### **Check Feelings:**

- Ask your youth how he/she is feeling.
- Tell him/her that feelings of anger, sadness, guilt, fear, and relief are all common.
- Be aware that this kind of news and these strong feelings can lead to: nightmares, irritability, stomachaches, loss of appetite, lack of interest in normal activities, desire to be alone. Self-criticism, displaced anger, decline in school performance, and participation in at-risk behaviors may also occur. These are all common reactions under these circumstances and are usually temporary.

#### **Empower:**

- Encourage your youth to attend school.
- Invite your youth to talk about the person that he/she has lost.
- Help your youth identify what he/she has done in tough or sad situations before and how it has helped.
- Remind him/her that you know he/she is strong and has coped with difficult situations in the past.
- Facilitate opportunities for him/her to engage in healing activities such as: talking to friends or relatives, getting together with peers, writing in a journal, drawing or painting, listening to music, participating in sports, going to a memorial service, making a memory book or collage, planting a flower or tree. Follow his/her lead.

## **HELPING SECONDARY SCHOOL YOUTH DEAL WITH GRIEF AND LOSS** (Cont'd)

### **Monitor:**

- Monitor chat line/msn/Facebook, etc., use.
- Monitor risk-taking behavior such as use of alcohol and drugs, violence, delinquency, and self-harm.
- Watch for signs that your child may need professional help to cope with this loss:
  - Normal living patterns do not resume over time
  - A continuation of nightmares or need to talk about the death
  - A continuation of feelings of anxiety, insecurity and/or fear
- Seek support from your family doctor, Living and Learning Through Loss (250-413-3114 or [info@teenloss.com](mailto:info@teenloss.com)), Victoria Hospice (250-370-8715), Child and Youth Mental Health, or school or community counselors.

**REMEMBER THAT CHILDREN ARE REMARKABLY RESILIENT. WITH LOVE AND SUPPORT THEY DO RECOVER FROM THE VERY SAD AND TRAGIC EVENTS THAT LIFE CAN THROW THEIR WAY.**

## **SECONDARY STUDENT SELF-CARE**

### **Taking Care of Yourself**

It is important for each of you to take care of yourself and each other during this very difficult time.

#### **Be Aware That:**

- It is common to have feelings such as: shock, sadness, anger, and guilt, fear.
- You might experience nightmares, irritability, stomachaches, loss of appetite, fatigue.
- You may want to talk about this a lot, you may not.
- You may remember other losses or difficult times in your life and some of the feelings may return.
- Grief is different for everyone. It is okay for it to take a long time or a short time.
- It is okay for friends and family to see that you are struggling to deal with this loss.
- Drugs and alcohol can intensify feelings and make it more difficult for you to cope.

#### **Know What Helps:**

- Look after yourself. Drink lots of water, eat healthy food, and get as much sleep as you need.
- Connect with the people who are the "rocks" in your life (family members, friends).
- It's also okay to spend time alone, if that is what helps.
- Make time for activities that help when you are troubled or stressed: journaling, reading, hanging out with friends, playing sports, and listening to music.
- Trust yourself. We generally know what we need to do to take care of ourselves; we just don't always do it.

#### **Seek Help If Needed:**

- You can get more help from:
  - School Counselors
  - Living and Learning Through Loss: 250-413-3114 or [info@teenloss.com](mailto:info@teenloss.com)
  - Need Crisis Line: 250-386-6323
  - Community Counselors

**This is a time to look after yourself and each other.**

## **PARENT SELF-CARE**

### **Taking Care of Yourself**

When your child has experienced the loss of someone in his/her life, that loss affects you as well. Feelings of grief, sympathy for the family of the deceased, fears about whether this could happen to your family, concerns about the well-being of your child, and memories of other losses you have experienced are common.

It is important that you acknowledge and process your feelings/reactions to this death so that you can support your child and model healthy ways to deal with grief and loss.

#### **Be Aware That:**

- Along with your child, you may be experiencing a normal and wide range of emotions including: shock, sadness, anger, guilt, fear.
- Along with your child, these strong feelings may lead to: nightmares, irritability, stomachaches, loss of appetite, fatigue, the need to be alone or conversely to be with others. Some of you may have a need to talk about this loss a lot; others may not want to talk about it at all.
- This loss may trigger strong memories of other losses or difficult times in your life and some of the associated feelings may return.
- It may trigger a desire to keep your children close to you and to limit their independence. The grieving process can take much longer than we anticipate and strong feelings and reactions can catch you off guard during this journey.
- While your child needs to know that you are strong and that they can count on you, he/she also needs to know that grieving is hard for everyone. It is okay for him/her to see that you are struggling to deal with this loss.

#### **Know What Helps:**

- Look after your physical health by drinking lots of water, eating healthily, and getting as much sleep, as you need.
- Connect with the people who are the "rocks" in your life (family members, friends).
- If you process feelings through talking, identify someone whom you trust with your confidences. It might be a close friend, someone who has been through a similar experience, or a religious leader.
- Give yourself permission to spend time alone, if that is what helps.
- Think about what activities you usually turn to when you are troubled or stressed: journaling, reading, painting, exercising or gardening. Make time for them.
- Trust yourself. We generally know what we need to do to take care of ourselves; we just don't always do it.



## **PARENT SELF-CARE** (Cont'd)

### **Seek Help If Needed:**

- If you feel that you are struggling with the impact from this loss, don't hesitate to get help:
  - Living and Learning Through Loss: 250-413-3114
  - Family Doctor
  - Community Counselor

**Remember that taking care of yourself is an important part of taking care of your child.**

## **STAFF SELF-CARE**

### **Taking Care of Yourself**

When schools are rocked by a tragic event, staff tend to focus all of their energies on caring for their students. It is important, however, for each of you to take care of yourself during this very difficult time.

#### **Be Aware That:**

- Along with your students, you may be experiencing a normal and wide range of emotions including: shock, sadness, anger, guilt, fear.
- Along with your students, these strong feelings may lead to: nightmares, irritability, stomachaches, loss of appetite, fatigue, the need to be alone or conversely to be with others.
- Some of you may have a need to talk about this loss a lot; others may not want to talk about it at all.
- This loss may trigger strong memories of other losses or difficult times in your life and some of the associated feelings may return.
- If you are a parent, it may trigger a desire to keep your children close to you and to limit their independence.
- The grieving process can take much longer than we anticipate and strong feelings and reactions can catch you off guard during this journey.
- While your students need to know that you are strong and that they can count on you, they also need to know that grieving is hard for everyone. It is okay for them to see that you are struggling to deal with this loss.

#### **Know What Helps:**

- Look after your physical health by drinking lots of water, eating healthily, and getting as much sleep, as you need.
- Connect with the people who are the "rocks" in your life (family members, friends).
- If you process feelings through talking, identify someone whom you trust with your confidences. It might be a close friend, someone who has been through a similar experience, or a religious leader.
- Give yourself permission to spend time alone, if that is what helps.
- Think about what activities you usually turn to when you are troubled or stressed: journaling, reading, painting, exercising or gardening. Make time for them.
- Trust yourself. We generally know what we need to do to take care of ourselves; we just don't always do it.

#### **Seek Help If Needed:**

- If you feel that you are struggling with the impact from this loss, don't hesitate to get help:
  - Learning Through Loss: <https://www.learningthroughloss.org> or tel. 250-413-3114
  - Family Doctor
  - Community Counselor