



Pembina Trails
School Division

— Accomplish Anything —

1.0 - Introduction

- Purpose
- Key Elements of the Manitoba Education Safe School Legislation
- Coordination with Emergency First Responders
- Components of the Emergency Response Plan
- Resources

INTRODUCTION

The possibility that school communities may experience death, violent acts and natural disasters always exists. It has been said that there are two types of schools: those that have faced a crisis and those that are about to.

The Pembina Trails School Division believes that the safety and security of all students and staff is a major priority. While schools cannot prevent crisis situations they can prepare to respond quickly, efficiently and appropriately to ensure the safety of students and staff members when situations do occur.

Young people are looking for models or standards for their behaviour in times of stress and grief, and as in the case of many other social and emotional situations, it is the public school system, in collaboration with the family, which is often called upon to respond.

The Emergency Response Guideline was originally introduced in November 2006, and was created to incorporate best practices and latest information in the area of emergency response planning to assist schools in creating emergency response plans, of the highest standard, that best serve their individual settings. The second edition has additional sections to address issues that have emerged since 2006 and updated information and protocols based on improvements in crisis management practices that have developed during the intervening period.

PURPOSE

The overall goal of this guideline is to protect the health and safety of all students and staff in the Pembina Trails School Division. It is a comprehensive document that focuses on the preventative, proactive, and crisis management.

This document serves as a training manual that will enable school-based crisis response teams to go into action quickly and competently when a crisis or traumatic event occurs. It also serves as a quick reference for creating your emergency response plan as well as for the many important details that must be attended to during and after a crisis or emergency. The terms crisis response team and emergency response team can be used interchangeably.

The purpose of the guideline is to provide information on how to respond to emergency incidents by outlining the responsibilities and duties of each school and its employees. Customization of the information to meet the schools needs and circumstances is important. Developing, maintaining and exercising the plan empowers employees to act quickly and knowledgeably. The guideline assists in educating staff, faculty, students and other key stakeholders on their roles and responsibilities before, during and after an incident. The guideline also provides parents and other members of the community with assurances that their school has established guidelines and procedures to respond to incidents/hazards in an effective way.

Developing, maintaining and exercising the Emergency Response Plan increases legal protection. Schools without established emergency management procedures may be found liable for their absence. While no set of policies rules out the potential for legal problems, establishing procedures and guidelines on the best professional practices provides a margin of protection against liability.

Note: School Administrators are required to give all staff an orientation on the emergency response plan at the beginning of each school year and within two weeks of their start date, when hired throughout the school year.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE MANITOBA EDUCATION SAFE SCHOOL LEGISLATION:

1. Role of Principal, staff, counselling and crisis intervention personnel in the event of an emergency.
2. Procedures for controlling visitor access to the school site.
3. Procedures for communicating inside and outside the school building in an emergency.
4. Procedures for contacting pupil's parents or guardians in an emergency.
5. Procedures for responding to the threat posed by a person having a weapon on the school site.
6. Procedures for dealing with bomb threats, fires, chemical spills and weather-related emergencies.
7. Procedures for evacuating school buildings and carrying out practice drills.

COORDINATION WITH EMERGENCY FIRST RESPONDERS

Various agencies and services are involved in responding to school incidents, including emergency responders from law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, workplace safety, as well as other community emergency response organizations. An important component of the School Emergency Response Plan is advanced planning with various federal, provincial, city, and/or local agencies and community service providers to aid in timely communication and response to an incident. Advance planning may or may not include written agreements to help coordinate services between the agencies and school. If mutual aid agreements are created, a copy should be maintained with other important documents related to this safety plan. Advanced planning should specify the type of communication and services provided by one agency to another.

COMPONENTS OF THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN:

To provide the best information to staff or first responders coming to the aid of a school during an emergency or critical incident, schools have three guides to assist in developing their school safety plan:

- **School Emergency Response Guideline:** (This document) is a comprehensive document that focuses on preventative, proactive, and crisis management. The guideline is a tool to be used by staff to assist in developing their Emergency Response Plan.
- **Emergency Response Plan / Template** (Customized for each site in the template provided)
 - The Emergency Response Plan was developed to provide critical information to staff during their immediate response to an incident. This plan should be customized to meet your school's specific needs and circumstances. Meeting with emergency first responders and other community stakeholders is recommended as you develop and customize your plan. The template is also a part of the fire plan that is required by the fire code. Schools are required to update the Emergency Response Plan every year and submit a copy to the Divisional Safety Officer at the beginning of the school year.
- **Floor Plans** - School floor plans (not a building blueprint) shall be submitted as part of the Emergency Response Plan. Standardized floor plans must be up-to-date, clear and provide critical information in responding to an emergency in a school facility.

RESOURCES

1. A Critical Incident: What To Do in the First 20 Minutes (video); State of North Carolina
2. Emergency “Go Kits”; US Department of Education and Crisis Management TA Center
3. Emergency “Go Kits”; New Jersey Department of Education.
4. Guidelines for the Development of a School Crisis Response Plan, Winnipeg School Division
5. How I Handled a Child Who Was Reported Lost or Missing; Education World, Connecting Educators to What Works.
6. Management Workbook - Crisis Management/Crisis Readiness, Office of Security and Risk Management Services Fairfax County Public Schools
7. The Virginia Educator’s Guide for Planning and Conducting School Emergency Drills, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services; Virginia Center for School Safety and Virginia Department of Education
8. Education Update – Handling Disasters Takes a Team Approach; ASCD – November 2005
9. Fire Protection and Emergency Planning; Manitoba Emergency Services College
10. Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans; FEMA
11. Guide for Preventing and Responding to School Violence; US Department of Justice.
12. Practical Information on Crisis Planning - A Guide For Schools and Communities; U.S. Department of Education
13. Emergency Planning and Procedures Guide for Schools; Minnesota Department of Public Safety
14. Missing Student or Student Who has Run Away; New York City Capital
15. Pembina Trails School Division – Policies and Regulations
16. Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools, REMS Technical Assistance Center: US Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools
17. Recommended Contents for School “Go Kits”; Center for Safe Schools
18. River East Transcona - Lockdown Program.
19. School Safety/Emergency Operations Plan; Ohio Attorney General School Safety Task Force.
20. St. James School Division – Emergency Preparedness Program
21. Suspicious Packages; Canada Post
22. University of Manitoba – Emergency Quick Reference Guide