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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mitigation and Prevention................................................................................................ 1  
  A. Methods to Education, Inform and Communicate ................................................ 2  
  B. Policy Initiatives............................................................................................... 4  
  C. Prevention/ Mitigation Initiatives................................................................. 6  
  D. Fire and Accident Prevention ...................................................................... 7  
  E. Physical Security and Safety Procedures ....................................................... 7  

Preparedness................................................................................................................ 10  
  A. Using the Incident Command System ........................................................... 11  
  B. Buncombe County Schools System-Wide Incident Command Model ........... 15  
  C. Emergency Response Kits............................................................................ 16  
  D. Communications ........................................................................................... 17  
  E. Drills and Exercises ....................................................................................... 18  

Response...................................................................................................................... 20  
  A. System-Wide Safe School Plan CD-ROM/USB ............................................ 21  
  B. Emergency Contact List ................................................................................ 22  
  C. Dealing with the Media .................................................................................. 23  
  D. Basic Response to all School Emergencies.................................................. 24  
  E. General/Functional Protocols ........................................................................ 25  
      E.1 Resumption of Normal Activities ........................................................... 26  
      E.2 Perimeter Lockdown .............................................................................. 26  
      E.3 Full Lockdown ....................................................................................... 27  
      E.4 Evacuation-Bomb Threat Non-Fire Situation .................................... 29  
      E.5 Evacuation – Fire ................................................................................ 30  
      E.6 Remote Evacuation and Family Reunification .................................. 31  
      E.7 Reverse Evacuation ............................................................................ 32  
      E.8 Shelter in Place ................................................................................... 33  
  F. Man-Made Situation Protocols ...................................................................... 35  
      F.1 Intruder/Suspicious Person .................................................................. 36  
      F.2 Disruptive/Unruly Person .................................................................. 36  
      F.3 Kidnapping/Missing Child .................................................................. 37  
      F.4 Weapons Use ...................................................................................... 38  
      F.5 Hostage Situation ............................................................................... 39  
      F.6 Sexual Assault .................................................................................... 41  
      F.7 Bomb Threat/Suspicious Packages .................................................... 42  
          F.7(a) Bomb Threat Checklist ............................................................. 44  
      F.8 Bus Accident ...................................................................................... 45  
      G.1 Injury or Illness ................................................................................... 47  
      G.2 Suspected Biological Emergency – General Protocol .......................... 48  
      G.3 Anthrax Threat / Suspicious Package / Substance Exposure ............. 48  
      G.4 Chemical / Hazardous Materials Release ......................................... 50  
      G.5 Radiological Release ......................................................................... 51  
      G.6 Food Contamination or Poisoning ...................................................... 53  
      G.7 Pandemic Flu ...................................................................................... 53
H. Severe Weather/Natural Disasters Protocols .......................................................... 55
   H.1 Tornado ........................................................................................................ 56
   H.2 Flooding/Potential Flooding ......................................................................... 57
   H.3 Earthquake ................................................................................................. 58
   H.4 Fire ............................................................................................................. 58
   H.5 Utility Failure ............................................................................................. 59

Recovery ..................................................................................................................... 61
   A. Basic Principles of Crisis Intervention .......................................................... 63
   B. Planning and Implementation ....................................................................... 64
   C. Action Checklist for Recovery ..................................................................... 65
   D. Sample School Crisis Intervention Activities ............................................ 66
   E. Death Notification Protocol ......................................................................... 67
   F. Request from the Buncombe County Schools for Crisis Intervention Stress
      Management (CISM)/Student Response Center (SRC) Team Intervention .. 67

Evacuation and Reunification .................................................................................. 69
   A. Evacuation .................................................................................................... 70
   B. Remote Evacuation and Reunification .......................................................... 70
   C. Buncombe County Schools Emergency Staging Areas ............................... 73
MITIGATION AND PREVENTION

Mitigation and Prevention is the first phase of emergency management. Prevention is the attempt to deflect a crisis before it can occur, by mitigating or reducing risks.

Although schools have no control over some of the hazards that may impact them, such as severe inclement weather or earthquakes, they can take actions to minimize or mitigate the impact of such incidents. Schools in earthquake-prone areas can mitigate the impact of a possible earthquake by securing bookcases and training students and staff what to do during tremors.

Schools cannot always control fights, bomb threats, and school shootings. However, they can take actions to reduce the likelihood of such events. Schools may institute policies, implement violence prevention programs, and take other steps to improve the culture and climate of their campuses.
I. MITIGATION AND PREVENTION PHASE

- **Mitigation:** “Any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from a hazard event.” (FEMA definition from Practical Information on Crisis Planning – A Guide for Schools and Communities – United States Department of Education – May 2003.)

- **Prevention:** Those methods that are designed to prevent crime, violence, disruption, accidents and crisis situations, and used by school officials to reduce injury, death and damage to property at schools, school events and during school related transportation.

A. METHODS TO EDUCATE, INFORM, AND COMMUNICATE

1. A system-wide safe school plan (Parts A and B) has been developed through a committee composed of school officials, parents, community support agencies, and emergency services responders. Each Buncombe County school has developed a crisis response plan based upon the system-wide response protocol. In addition, each Principal is responsible for identifying appropriate staff to serve on a crisis response team at the beginning of each school year. This team will meet monthly to plan safe school activities, to mitigate hazards, and to determine that all safe school goals/mandates have been met.

2. The Buncombe County School System and representative schools are responsible for providing to the school communities information relevant to the basic safe school concepts found within the plans. Methods used to communicate information include Web pages, handbooks, brochures, public presentations (PTSO, Advisory Council, etc) and workshops. Evidence of this mandate will be presented at the principal's summative evaluation.

3. School discipline policies are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year. Signatures are obtained from both student and parent indicating provision of policies.

4. Transfer students are provided school discipline policies throughout the school year at the time of registration.

5. DVD's/videos about the individual school's safety procedures are shown to all students during yearly orientation and to new students throughout the school year at registration.

6. Students are informed within the schools handbook, as defined within BCS Board Policy 4342, that their person, book bags, lockers, and other
belongings are subject to search based upon reasonable suspicion. Student vehicles parked on campus also fall under potential search. Legislation now allows a school resource officer to search based upon reasonable suspicion while in the presence of a school administrator.

7. Periodic efforts are made within Buncombe County Schools to remind students that weapons, drugs, alcohol, and tobacco are prohibited on school property at all times. Students are informed of the disciplinary consequences that result from possession and/or use.

8. Students are informed through both written and verbal communications, as defined within BCS Board Policy 4335, that school officials are required to report to law enforcement officials when they have reasonable belief that one or more of the following incidents has occurred on the campus: assault resulting in serious injury, assault involving weapon use, assault on school personnel, bomb threat, arson, death by other than natural causes, homicide, kidnapping, possession of alcohol, possession of controlled substance in violation of law, possession of firearm or explosive, possession of a weapon, rape, robbery with or without a dangerous weapon, sexual assault, sexual offense, and taking indecent liberties with a minor.

9. Signs requiring all visitors to report to the main office are located at each campus entrance.

10. The Buncombe County School System has adopted and implements both standardized programs of bullying prevention and relational aggression.

11. Several schools have Chapters of Students Against Violence Everywhere (S.A.V.E.) and are open to middle and high school students.

12. All internet users must agree to sign an Internet Use Agreement. The agreements are signed by student, parent/legal guardian, and teacher as well as maintained at the school with reference to updated and maintained signatures. The applicable BCS Board Policy 646 emphasizes the establishment of a safe cyber environment for students.

13. On a yearly basis, disciplinary data and statistics collected from each school within the Buncombe County School System are reported on the Department of Public School website and may be accessed at www.ncpublicschools.org.
Staff Development Efforts

1. On an annual basis, all classroom teachers will receive a presentation and update of information regarding basic aspects of the school’s safe school and crisis response plan. An emphasis will be placed on designating their roles within the operations plan. This presentation will be provided during the initial opening weeks of school and open to other relevant staff.

2. Annually, the following classified staff employees will attend workshops or training sessions with emphasis on relevant issues of school safety and emergency management: bus drivers, child nutrition workers, custodians, teacher assistants, and office staff.

3. Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, all crisis response team members submitted a completion certificate for the FEMA/NIMS, web-based course titled ICS 100 for Schools. This process will be ongoing as new members are added to the response teams.

4. A mechanism has been developed within each school to provide an introductory training to initially new classroom teachers, substitute teachers, interns, student teachers and building staff regarding the safe school plan with emphasis on response procedures. A training log will be maintained in each school office to verify the date on which each staff member was trained and the signature of the trainer. The crisis team at each school may elect responsibility for this training.

5. On an annual basis, the Superintendent or his designee, will develop and offer to relevant system-wide staff, workshops relative to the following areas: hearing board convener protocol; multi-hazard site assessment; crisis team response protocol and drills; and the threat/risk assessment process. Local community emergency management officials will be asked to participate in the presentation process.

6. As many members as possible from the system-wide and school based crisis response teams will attend at least one workshop training, or complete one web-based course per year relative to emergency management and crisis response/recovery.

B. POLICY INITIATIVES

1. The Buncombe County Board of Education requires that each student be issued a school disciplinary code of conduct at the beginning of each school year. A copy of the conduct code is issued to transfer students upon admission to the school.
2. G.S. 115C-288(g) requires that principals MUST IMMEDIATELY report to law enforcement the following "criminal offenses" that occur on school property or at a school activity of which they have personal knowledge or actual notice from school personnel. The list includes: homicide; assault resulting in serious personal injury; sexual assault; sexual offense; rape; kidnapping; indecent liberties with a minor; assault involving the use of a weapon; possession of firearm in violation of the law; possession of a weapon in violation of the law; possession of a controlled substance in violation of the law; robbery with a dangerous weapon. All other offenses must be reported within 72 hours of the incident to the Director of Safe Schools office.

3. Board policies 1710/4021/7230 and 1720/4015/7225 address efforts at reducing acts of bullying, sexual harassment, and hazing in addition to establishing a clear line of communication and report protocol.

4. School Board Policy 4302 has been established to define acceptable and unacceptable uses of student isolation, seclusion, and restraint. The policy also addresses both a staff procedural training requirement and a parental reporting protocol.

5. The Board of Education within multiple policies defines the unlawful possession and/or use of alcohol, tobacco products and controlled substances on school grounds or at school sponsored extracurricular activities as prohibited. The policies furthermore associate violations with school discipline and law enforcement notification. Particular to student athletes, violations either on or off campus result in athletic suspension for a minimum of six weeks from the date of the infraction.

6. A system-wide policy has been implemented to recognize the authority of school based administrators to conduct reasonable searches of student’s person, lockers, vehicles, and other belongings within the school premises. Conditions for search validation and accompanying procedures are clarified. By state law, school resource officers may conduct reasonable searches of students’ person, lockers, vehicles and other belongings within the school premises without probable cause if in the presence of a school administrator.

7. Protocol and procedure have been put in place to activate the process of conducting a student threat/risk assessment when conditions warrant or there is reasonable suspicion that an individual’s or group’s behavior threaten school safety.

8. Buncombe County School Board Policy mandates that bi-annually, each principal conduct a tactical site survey respective of multiple hazards for his or her campus. In addition, a survey is to be conducted each year
sampling students, staff, and parents relative to school safety factors. The tactical site hazards survey is due in the Superintendent’s office by November 1 each year and the sampling survey is due in the Superintendent’s office by May 1.

C. PREVENTION/MITIGATION INITIATIVES

1. In coordination with the Buncombe County Sheriff’s Department, school resource officers have been placed within the middle and high schools. These officers are readily accessible to students and staff.

2. Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports is being initiated across all Buncombe County Schools by 2015. Provides the structures and interventions that allow all students to learn and practice positive behaviors that support academic achievement and social/emotional growth.

3. Crisis Response Teams are represented within each school district. This team is available upon the administrator’s request to provide a student threat/risk assessment in addition to developing local agency and in-house support options.

4. Social workers and counselors monitor student attendance and truancy and develop personalized intervention plans to increase family/student involvement and connectedness with school.

5. Threat assessments are completed by social workers and counselors who involve parent, law enforcement, juvenile court counselors, mental health agency providers, school nurses, and other relevant personnel as needed. Safety plans are developed when appropriate to allow access to mental health supports, education, and increased supervision and communication. If a significant threat is identified and centralized safe schools threat management team uses the assessment to identify the need for additional safety interventions, including exclusions from school

6. Both at the system- and school-based levels, counselors, psychologists, and social workers are available to assist students and parents with behavioral health issues that may impact school safety.

7. Anonymous surveys that include an emphasis on safe school issues are provided to students and staff on an annual basis representing every Buncombe County school.

8. School-based therapy and day treatment are provided through collaboration and interagency agreements with community-based mental health agencies.
9. School nurses support students with mental health and other serious illnesses.

10. A high school alternative to short-term suspension with preventative counseling services and academic support is provided to reduce further suspensions.

D. FIRE AND ACCIDENT PREVENTION

1. A tactical site survey adopting a multi-hazard approach is conducted by the principal and/or designees on a bi-annual basis. A report of this survey is due in the Superintendent’s office by November 1 of each year. The Superintendent or his designee will provide a workshop bi-annually to instruct appropriate staff on basic procedures to complete the survey (see Part A, Attachment IS, No. 1).

2. In accordance with G.S. 115C-288(d), each Buncombe County school will conduct a monthly fire evacuation drill in addition to completing a comprehensive inspection of the campus to document the status of fire prevention equipment and identifying potential fire hazards or obstacles for evacuation. During these monthly drills, the safe schools team will observe and evaluate the drill for the purpose of planning more effective drills and future safe schools activities.

3. On an annual basis, the Maintenance Department will provide training to school-based and system-wide maintenance staff and custodians focused on safety including proper lifting techniques, use of chemical agents (insecticides, cleaners, etc.), fire extinguisher use, and equipment uses, and new policies/procedures which have been adopted since the previous training.

4. Buncombe County Schools will continue to strive towards full compliance with the Chemical Hygiene Plan (NCDPI) with emphasis on proper chemical storage and functional eye wash/shower stations within science labs at the middle and high schools.

E. PHYSICAL SECURITY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

1. A video security system, consisting of cameras currently placed within the six regular high school campuses with future implementation to include the seven middle school campuses, has been designed. System access will be secured and include potential first responder agencies in the event of an emergency.
2. An electronic blueprint of all campuses within the Buncombe County School System has been developed. The design includes safety factors such as the location of emergency utility cutoffs to accommodate first responders.

3. Signs directing visitors to sign in at the main office are posted at all main entrance doors at every Buncombe County school.

4. Students and staff at each high school are issued numbered decals for parked campus vehicles during the registration process each school year. An assigned security officer at each high school daily inspects the school parking lots to verify valid vehicles.

5. The random use of drug dogs by school officials to circulate throughout a school campus – buildings and parking lots have been sanctioned by the Board of Education.

6. All employees of the Buncombe County School System are required to wear standardized photo identification badges.

7. A system-wide emphasis has been established by administrators in all schools to ensure that doors to classrooms, offices, closets, and other utilized spaces will be locked when not occupied or in use.

8. Fixed asset numbers have been attached to capitalized equipment of $5,000 or more in value and non-capitalized equipment that is motorized, electronic, or computerized. A fixed asset inventory is conducted prior to the end of each school year.

9. Buncombe County School’s construction criteria places the highest priority on addressing facilities containing progressively deteriorating conditions which, if not corrected, could result in safety concerns. This criteria is strictly followed during the annual evaluation process of capital requests.

10. Board policy provides the system’s technology administrators allowance to monitor all activity on the computing facility network or stand alone equipment for which they are responsible. The file system may be searched for specified violations of policy when reasonable cause is provided. Prohibited activities include usage of profanity and downloaded sites for pornography, hate groups, gang activity and weapon or bomb making instructions. A new, more powerful filtering system for the internet actively has further limited access to such sites.
11. Each school has established procedures restricting unauthorized access into buildings throughout the school day by maintaining specified doors to be locked when not in use.

12. Precautions have been taken to limit and control access to the wireless systems currently installed in our schools and the county administrative offices.

13. All members of each school’s Crisis Response Team are encouraged to take free training in CPR, AED, First Aid, and other skills that can be used until First Responders arrive. A list of all personnel certified in these skills will be made available to all building personnel on an annual basis.
PREPAREDNESS

After completing the mitigation and prevention phase, school officials must next take steps to prepare the school community for the potential disasters, emergencies or other threats. This is the Preparedness Phase.

Crisis have the potential to affect every student and staff member in a school building. Despite everyone’s best efforts at crisis prevention, it is a certainty that crises will occur in schools. Good planning will facilitate to a rapid, coordinated, effective response when a crisis occurs. Being well prepared involves an investment of time and resources—but the potential to reduce injury and save lives is well worth the effort.

Every school needs a crisis plan that is tailored to its unique characteristics. Within a school district, however, it is necessary for all plans to have certain commonalities.
II. PREPAREDNESS PHASE

**Preparedness:** Actions or steps taken to appropriately and quickly respond to a crisis or emergency including the development of protocols and policies that coincide with identified potential hazards.

The Buncombe County School System and staff of our individual schools will become familiar with the system that responders often use to efficiently manage emergencies, particularly when the incident requires a multi-agency response. This method, called the Incident Command System (ICS), has proven to be useful in managing small emergencies as well as catastrophic disasters. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and many state, county, and city emergency management agencies have adopted ICS as the preferred method of managing multi-agency responses. Because of the increasing need to engage law enforcement and emergency management officials in responses to school emergencies, the Buncombe County Schools will utilize common communication links. ICS unifies terminology, structure, objectives, resources, strategies, and functions. When implemented correctly, ICS establishes one central chain of command that smoothly directs information to all of the agencies concerned. Each principal will possess certification through completion of the following NIMS standard courses:

A. **USING THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM**

The Buncombe County Schools Incident Management and Safety Plan utilizes the Incident Command System (ICS), a nationally recognized structure for emergency response that enables schools, first responders, other government agencies, and private-sector organizations to work together when responding to an emergency. ICS provides a framework for operations, resource management, communications and information management, support, and incident management for the life cycle of an incident. The ICS structure provides response flexibility, common terminology, integrated communications, a manageable span of control, and accountability. ICS also provides for a smooth transition of command and tasks, which prevent “turf battles” and miscommunication, which can cost valuable time during an emergency.
Structure: The levels of responsibility in the ICS system are:

- **Command Staff:** The Command Staff consists of the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They report directly to the Incident Commander.

- **General Staff:** The organization level having functional responsibility for primary segments of incident management (Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration).

- **Branch:** That organizational level having functional, geographical, or jurisdictional responsibility for major parts of the incident operations. The Branch level is organizationally between Section and Division/Group in the Operations Section, and between Section and Units in the Logistics Section. Branches are identified by the use of Roman Numerals, by function, or by jurisdictional name.

- **Division:** That organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. The Division level is organizationally between the Strike Team and the Branch.

- **Group:** Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation. Groups are located between Branches (when activated) and Resources in the Operations Section.

- **Unit:** That organization element having functional responsibility for a specific incident planning, logistics, or finance/administration activity.

- **Task Force:** A group of resources with common communications and a leader that may be pre-established and sent to an incident, or formed at an incident.

- **Strike Team:** Specified combinations of the same kind and type of resources, with common communications and a leader.

- **Single Resource:** An individual piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or an established crew or team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be used on an incident.

**Titles:** ICS positions have distinct titles. Only the **Incident Commander (IC)** is called a commander – and there is only one Incident Commander per incident. The principal of the school where the incident is located will generally be considered the initial Incident Commander. If the principal is directly involved in the incident, there is another person who is designated as the Incident Commander under the school’s Incident Management and Safety Plan.

The Incident Commander is ultimately in charge of the operations and activities associated with the event. All school staff operates within the framework of the incident
command system during crisis situations. The IC is supported by a Command Staff, called Officers, for public information, safety and liaison duties.

The IC also calls on a General Staff made up of four Chiefs, for operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration. Under the General Staff are branches, divisions, groups, units, and strike teams. Most of the Response Phase takes place under the branches and divisions of the Operations Section Chief, with support from the other three branches.

Duties of the Incident Commander:

- Appoints the Command Staff:
  - Public Information Officer (PIO) - Point of contact for the media and other people or organizations seeking information.
  - Liaison (LO) - Point of contact for other agency representatives involved in the incident or event, aids in coordinating their involvement.
  - Safety Officer (SO) - Monitors safety conditions and develops measures for assuring the safety of all personnel.

- Appoints General Staff:
  - Operations Section Chief (OSC) - Conducts tactical actions to carry out the plan and develops the tactical objectives, organization and directs all resources.
  - Planning Section Chief (PSC) - Develops the Action Plan to accomplish the objectives, collects and evaluates information, maintains resource status and documents the incident.
  - Logistics Section Chief (LSC) - Provides support to meet incident needs, provides resources and all other services needed to support the incident.
  - Finance/Administration Section Chief (FSC) - Monitors costs related to the incident and provides accounting, procurement, time recording and cost analysis.

- Conducts incident briefings for Command Staff and General Staff
- Monitors activities and events
- Scales back personnel if necessary

Depending on the size of the event, all or some of the above positions may be activated. However, any task not assigned is the responsibility of the Incident Commander.
In the event of an emergency response implemented in one or (simultaneously) multiple schools, the central office response will utilize the preceding model of Incident Command. Although the majority of emergencies are anticipated to fall within a Type 5 or 4 requiring activation at the Incident Commander and Command Staff levels, Buncombe County Schools are prepared to implement General Staff levels and Branches or Divisions as needed. The model subscribes to the principles of Unity of Command and Span of Control.

C. EMERGENCY RESPONSE KITS

1. Each Buncombe County school will develop and maintain a minimum of two emergency response kits. Placement location(s) will allow immediate access yet provide secure storage. The Principal is responsible for periodically updating student information including current medical alerts.

2. As a mandatory step in each evacuation drill conducted within the school year, the emergency response kits will be in the possession of the Principal or designee.

3. The following items are designated as mandatory (M) or additional (A) for inclusion in all emergency response kits:
   a. Copies of the Buncombe County Schools System-Wide Safe School Plan (Part B) and individual school’s Emergency Response Plan. (M)
   b. Administrator’s copy of the Emergency Response Flipchart. (M)
   c. Laminated campus floor plans with designated buildings and classroom numbers (located in the Emergency Response Plan). (M)
   d. Laminated emergency contact list of names and phone numbers. Include faculty and staff listings. (M)
   e. NCWise student demographic information and Master schedules. (M)
   f. Medical alert student information. (M)
   g. Student list of restricted adult contact/release. (M)
   h. Copy of master key(s) for the building including perimeter gate key(s), each key should be well marked. Periodic checks should be made to verify Knox box contents represent current keys. (M)
   i. Small first aid kit with plastic gloves. (M)
j. Copy of current attendance roster for the day. (M)

k. Flashlight with extra batteries. (A)

l. Small transistor radio with extra batteries. (A)

m. Portable plastic container or backpack. (M)

n. Small carrier on rollers. (A)

o. Pair of reading glasses. (A)

p. Laptop with electronic versions of downloaded information. (A)

q. Portable P.A. system or bullhorn. (A)

r. Caps (school logo) or high visibility vests to identify staff. (A)

s. Miscellaneous items: pens and pencils, tape rolls, notepads, and paper towels. (A)

D. COMMUNICATIONS

The ability to communicate during an emergency event is a primary and critical component to the efficient and effective response. The following methods of communication are represented with the emergency response mechanism for the Buncombe County School System:

1. School Messenger Rapid Notification Service – Coordinated through the Communications Department, this system delivers phone notification to parents/guardians within a brief time period as a means of emergency communication. The system also has multilingual capabilities.

2. Seven Kenwood Model TK-272G two-way handheld devices are located within the Central Office, Department of Transportation, and Department of Maintenance. The device allows communication between the school system and 12 emergency response channels representing the Buncombe County Emergency Management, Fire Department, and Sheriff’s Department.

3. Cellular phones have been provided to school principals, in addition to, central office staff members represented within the system-wide Incident Command Model. This system of devices allows group network communications between the Incident Commander and building level administrator.
4. Buncombe County School's system website will host a page devoted to safe schools information including general overview of the Safe School Plan and contact information numbers.

5. School bus communication has been established between the Department of Transportation and each bus within the fleet through placement of a cell phone within the driver's cab area. Each bus driver has the capability of making a 911 emergency call.

E. DRILLS AND EXERCISES

1. Tabletop Exercise represents a minimal stress and active response within a confined discussion-only format involving one facilitator and the school's crisis response team. A scenario involving one or more crises is presented to the team and each member responds relative to his or her role accordingly. Upon exercise completion, an evaluation of results should be written and followed by a session critique. Each Buncombe County school’s response team will participate in two tabletop sessions annually.

2. Functional Exercise, similar to the Tabletop, is confined to a discussion-only format; however, differs in the presence of a stress-induced environment with time constraints. A facilitator provides a description of the situation, master sequences of time events, and communications between participants and simulated responders. Representatives from the local first response agencies are appropriate participants to join the school response team. An immediate post exercise critique and written evaluation are important components. Each Buncombe County school's response team will participate in a minimal single function exercise annually.

3. Perimeter, Shelter-In-Place and Full-Scale Lockdown Drills require participants to actively rehearse roles during the simulated response. Drills may include or exclude student participation within a planned or unannounced session. Each drill will be concluded with a written post-event evaluation including an indication of time from lockdown initiation to normal activity return. Each Buncombe County school will conduct a minimum of one drill per each of the three categories on an annual basis. The Principal is responsible for notifying the Assistant Superintendent’s office by phone or e-mail prior to an unannounced lockdown drill.

4. **Fire, Bomb Threat, and Tornado Drills** require full activation of personnel and facilities. Fire drills will be conducted on a monthly basis during the regular school year according to G.S. 115C-288(d). Student
and staff evacuation relative to a received bomb threat will also be drilled at each school (utilizing an alternate evacuation route) at a time within the school year designated by the Principal. Tornado drills will be conducted once annually as a component of Severe Weather Awareness Week.

5. **Full Scale Exercise** represents the highest level of active participation, as well as, the most comprehensive involvement of facilities, equipment, and first response agencies. Due to the potential for community and media attention, in addition to, the risk of miscommunication, an exercise at this level should only be performed following extensive planning involving all participating teams and agencies. Any full scale exercise involving a Buncombe County school must have gained prior approval from the Superintendent or his designee. The full scale drill may or may not include student participants, in addition to, the process of evacuation and family reunification. A written post exercise critique and summary evaluation are required components for completion.
RESPONSE

IN THE RESPONSE PHASE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY OFFICIALS WORK TOGETHER TO DESIGN PROTOCOLS THAT OUTLINE THE RESPONSES TO BE TAKEN WHEN A DISASTER OR EMERGENCY STRIKES.

A CRISIS IS THE TIME TO FOLLOW THE CRISIS PLAN, NOT TO MAKE A PLAN FROM SCRATCH. THIS SECTION SUMMARIZES SOME OF THE MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS GATHERED FROM EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS AND OTHER EXPERTS ABOUT POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN CALLED ON TO IMPLEMENT YOUR CRISIS PLAN.
III. RESPONSE PHASE

Response includes direct actions taken to provide emergency assistance, save lives, minimize property damage, and speed recovery immediately following a disaster.

In the response phase of emergency management, Buncombe County Schools and community officials have worked together to design protocols that outline the responses to be taken when a disaster or emergency strikes. When an emergency occurs in or near a school, public safety and health care officials must respond immediately but with careful planning to address the needs of children and school staff. Because emergencies in schools have complex ramifications, it is essential for schools to implement a comprehensive approach in response that takes into account the ages and mental health of students as well as their physical abilities and limitations.

The Buncombe County Schools have worked closely with local emergency responders to ensure mutual understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities in an emergency. Toward that goal, agreements that clearly delineate protocols, expectations, and roles have been developed.

Effective school safety plans must also be school-centered, integrating the distinct needs of each individual school with the support available from our system and surrounding community. For schools to meet their individual needs, each Buncombe County school has developed a Crisis Response Plan. The Plan contains only the items of the system-wide plan that would be needed in an emergency. The contents of the Crisis Response Plan should be updated in the same manner as the more comprehensive and system-wide Buncombe County Schools Plan.

A. SYSTEM-WIDE SAFE SCHOOL PLAN CD-ROM/USB

Each school should maintain a CD-ROM or USB drive with all of the information contained in the Buncombe County Schools Safe School Plan, and the Crisis Response Plan for the school. This will allow the school to quickly and easily update the Plan as needed, and will also provide an electronic copy of the Plan in the event that the notebook(s) become damaged or otherwise unavailable during an emergency.
B. EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

**Note:** A school-specific emergency contact list must be updated at least once per semester, and posted in the main office and in at least one other prominent area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fire Service</td>
<td>Emergency: 911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>SRO</td>
<td>Name:</td>
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<td>Other Law Enforcement</td>
<td>Local Police: 828-250-6600</td>
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<td>State Highway Patrol:</td>
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<td>Buncombe County</td>
<td>828-250-6600</td>
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<td>Emergency Mgt.</td>
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<td>Power Company</td>
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<td>School Maintenance</td>
<td>828-232-4244</td>
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<td>School Transportation</td>
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<td>Central Office</td>
<td>Superintendent: Dr. Tony Baldwin – 232-4160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associate Superintendent: Susanne Swanger-255-5958</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Safe Schools Director: Dr. Robbie Adell – 255-5879</td>
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<td>Others appropriate for</td>
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<td>your school</td>
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RECOVERY

During Recovery, schools must work closely with community organizations, government officials, and other stakeholders to restore the learning environment.

The goal of recovery is to return to learning and restore the infrastructure of the school as quickly as possible. Focus on students and the physical plant, and to take as much time as needed for recovery. School staff can be trained to deal with the emotional impact of the crisis, as well as to initially assess the emotional needs of students, staff, and responders. One of the major goals of recovery is to provide a caring and supportive school environment.
IV. RECOVERY PHASE

The Buncombe County School system will work closely with community organizations, government officials, and other stakeholders to restore the learning environment after an emergency or natural disaster. A collaborative effort will be made to return students and staff to the school environment as soon as possible to resume the educational process.

Recovery includes actions taken to return to a normal or improved operating condition following a disaster. The recovery phase begins at the same time as the response phase; by utilizing school crisis plans, teams and other qualified professionals, Buncombe County Schools will assess the emotional needs of students and staff and arrange for appropriate intervention. Children, teachers, and administrators will be provided support from community based professional services to help them cope with trauma or other challenges that can arise following a crisis.

During the recovery phase it is important to maintain consistent communication with parents/guardians regarding actions the school is taking to facilitate recovery. This information may be conveyed through media briefings, letters, phone notification, or parent-school activities. All such communications will be developed with the approval and collaboration of the Director of Communications.

The Office of Student Services will coordinate resources to help children cope with anniversary dates or memorials that remind them of past disasters or other events. To assist in coping with these events, the Director of Communications will be available to help prepare informational "tip" sheets that help parents and the staff speak to children about the event. Established lists of qualified health-care professionals and community or faith-based organizations will be available during the preparedness phase.

In addition to mental health recovery, Buncombe County Schools must be prepared to manage the restoration of the physical school environment. This process may involve dealing with substantial damage to the physical school facility after such disasters as fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, or earthquakes. The Director of Facilities Services in coordination with the Director of Maintenance will provide a post crisis evaluation of the campus and make recommendations to the Superintendent.

The recovery phase is usually the longest phase of emergency management, beginning as soon as the response phase begins and lasting until the physical environment, students, and staff have returned to a sound physical and emotional state. The steps taken during the recovery phase will have a lasting effect on the school environment and the community's perception of the response to the event.

For Buncombe County Schools, the overall goal of recovery is to ensure the continuation of vital emotional and cognitive processes for students and staff in the event that a disaster or a major crisis event occurs. The guidelines of the Buncombe County Schools Recovery Plan will be used to help individuals recover from a crisis.
event, provide procedures to handle emergency situations that may have an emotional impact on people, and to accomplish the following objectives:

- Prepare behavioral health responders to address human needs effectively during and after an event,
- Manage the recovery activities in an effective manner, and
- Limit the negative emotional impact of a crisis situation or traumatic event.

Should an emergency situation occur at any Buncombe County school, the Recovery Plan will provide an effective method that can be used by responders and behavioral health specialists to prepare all activities associated with the crisis response in a proactive manner and to mitigate the potential negative impact with all populations.

Recovery actions for the Buncombe County Schools will incorporate the Incident Command System structure and terminology, (FEMA course IS-700), and The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation’s Critical Incident Stress Management guidelines. The Recovery Plan was developed as a collaborative effort between the Buncombe County Schools, community mental health officials, emergency management personnel, and public health representatives.

For certain incidences of crisis response that are related to the accidental death of students, staff, or other significant traumatic events that may not be related to community disasters or emergencies, Student Services has developed a protocol for Flight Team response that incorporates an assessment of school and student needs, mobilization of school counselor response, support of student and school staff, and appropriate follow-up activities. This process will be implemented by contacting the Liaison officers and the Director of Student Services.

A. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CRISIS INTERVENTION

**Definition:** Crisis intervention is defined as the provision of emergency psychological care to victims as to assist those victim’s in returning to an adaptive level of functioning and to prevent or mitigate the potential negative impact of psychological trauma.

1. **Intervene Immediately.** By definition, crises are emotionally hazardous situations that place victims at high risk for maladaptive coping or even for being immobilized. The presence onsite of crisis trained personnel as quickly as possible is paramount.

2. **Stabilize.** One important immediate goal is the stabilization of the victims or the victim community actively mobilizing resources and support networks to restore some semblance of normalcy and routine. Such a mobilization provides the needed tools for victims to begin to function independently.

3. **Facilitate Understanding.** Another important step in restoring victims to pre-crisis level of functioning is to facilitate their understanding of what has occurred. This is accomplished by gathering the facts about what has occurred, listening to
the victims recount events, encouraging the expression of difficult emotions and reactions, and helping them understand the impact of the critical event.

4. **Focus on Problem Solving.** Actively assisting victims to use available resources to regain control is an important strategy for crisis responders. Assisting the victim in solving problems within the context of what the victim feels is possible enhances independent functioning.

5. **Encourage Self-Reliance.** Akin to active problem-solving is the emphasis on restoring self-reliance in victims as an additional means to restore independent functioning and to address the aftermath of traumatic events. Victims should be assisted in assessing the problems at hand, in developing practical strategies to address those problems, and in fielding those strategies to restore a more normal equilibrium.
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Evacuation and Reunification

The goal of the Evacuation and Reunification Plan is to give school-based administrators and their Crisis Teams specific locations, protocol and guidelines in the event of a crisis that requires removing hundreds and possibly thousands of students and staff from campus.

Some crises require the immediate removal of students and staff from the campus. A detailed plan must be in place to handle massive crowds of people. Students must be accounted for, transported to a safe location and eventually reunited with their parents and guardians. This section lays out a detailed plan for evacuating students and staff. It also gives specific protocol and guidelines on transporting the students to predetermined destinations that are capable of accommodating them for several hours. This section also gives protocol on the specific requirements to reunify students with their parents/guardians.