

*Adopted:
March 2000*

Wheaton ISD #803 Policy 806

806 CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Crisis Management Policy is to act as a guide for Wheaton Area School District building administrators, school employees, students, school board members, and community members as to how to address a wide range of potential crisis situations in the school district. The procedures suggested by this Policy will provide guidance to each school building in drafting crisis management plans to coordinate protective actions prior to, during, and after any type of emergency or potential crisis situation in the school district. Please note that, pursuant to this Policy, tailored crisis management plans may be developed for each school building in the school district and sections or procedures may be added or deleted in those crisis management plans based on building needs.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. The Policy and Plans.

The Wheaton School District's Crisis Management Policy has been created in consultation with local law enforcement agencies and other appropriate individuals and groups likely to be involved in assisting with a school emergency. It is designed so that each building administrator can tailor a crisis management plan to meet that building's specific situation and needs.

B. Elements of the District Crisis Management Policy.

1. General Crisis Procedures. The Crisis Management Policy includes general crisis procedures for securing the building, classroom evacuation, building evacuation and sheltering. It designates the individual(s) who will determine when these actions will be taken. These district-wide procedures may be modified by building administrators when creating the building-specific crisis management plans.

a. Lock-Down Procedures. Lock-down procedures will be used in situations that may result in harm to persons inside the school building, such as a shooting, hostage incident, intruder, trespassing, disturbance, or at the discretion of the building administrator or designee. The building administrator or designee will announce the lock-down over the public address system or telephone intercom system. The alert will be made using a pre-selected code word.

Provisions for emergency evacuation should be maintained even in the event of a lock-down.

- b. Evacuation Procedures.** Classroom and building evacuations may be implemented at the discretion of the building administrator or designee. Each building's crisis management plan will include procedures for moving students and staff a safe distance from harm to a designated safe area until released by the building administrator or designee, as appropriate. Safe areas may change depending on the emergency.

St. John's Lutheran Church will be the safe shelter area for the Middle and High School.

Bethlehem Covenant Church will be the safe shelter for Pearson Elementary Students.

- 2. Additional Procedures.** The school district administration will present recommended early school closure, media and grief counseling procedures to the school board for review and approval. Upon approval, such procedures will be an addendum to this policy.

- a. Early School Closure Procedures.** The superintendent will make decisions about closing a school or any school district building. Such decisions will be made by the superintendent as early in the day as possible. The early school closure procedure also will include a process for reminding parents and guardians to listen to designated radio and TV stations for school closing announcements.

- b. Media Procedures.** The superintendent has the authority and discretion for notifying parents and guardians and the school community in the event of a crisis or early school closure.

- c. Grief-Counseling Procedures.** The recommended grief counseling procedures will provide for initiating a grief-counseling plan utilizing available resources such as the school psychologist, counselor, community grief counselors, or others in the community.

- 3. Facility Diagrams and Site Plans.** School buildings will have a facility diagram and site plan showing at least the following: the location of primary and secondary evacuation routes, exits, designated safe areas inside and outside of the building, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses and water spigots. The facility diagrams and

site plans will be available in the office of the building administrator and in appropriate areas and will be kept on file in the school district office.

4. **Emergency Telephone Numbers.** Each building will maintain a current list of emergency telephone numbers and the names and addresses of local and county personnel who are likely to be involved in resolving a crisis situation.

A copy of the list for each building will be kept on file in the school district office and will be updated annually.

5. **Crisis Response Teams.**

- a. **Composition.** The building administrator in each school building will select a crisis response team trained to respond in an emergency. All team members will be trained to carry out the building's crisis management plan and have knowledge of procedures, evacuation routes, and safe areas. Team members must be willing to be actively involved with resolving crises and be available to assist when necessary. Each building will maintain a current list of crisis response team members and update it annually. A copy of the list will be kept on file in the school district office.

- b. **Leaders.** The building administrator or designee serves as the leader of the crisis response team and the principal contact for emergency response officials. When they are present, emergency response agents may elect to take command and control of the situation. It is critical in this situation that school officials assume a resource role and are available to the emergency response personnel.

6. **District Employees.** Teachers generally have the most direct contact with students on a day-to-day basis. As a result, they should be aware of their role in responding to crisis situations. This also applies to non-teaching school personnel who have direct contact with students. All staff should be aware of the District Crisis Management Policy and their own building's crisis management plan.

III. CRISIS AREAS COVERED BY THIS POLICY

This Crisis Management Policy provides sample procedures for addressing the following

crises:

A.	Fire	4, 5, 6
B.	Severe Weather	
	1. Tornado/Severe Thunderstorm/Indoor Shelter	6, 7, 8
	2. Flooding/Evacuation	6, 7
C.	Assault/Fight	8, 9
D.	Bomb Threat	9, 10
E.	Intruder	10, 11
F.	Serious Injury/Death	11, 12
G.	Shooting	12, 13, 14
H.	Suicide.	14
I.	Weapons	14, 15

Building-specific crisis management plans will include such procedures and any other appropriate procedures.

IV. CRISIS-SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

A. Fire.

School preparation before the emergency:

1. Designate a safe area at least 100 feet away from the building and away from fire lanes.
2. Each building's facility diagram and site plan will be available in appropriate areas of the building showing the most direct evacuation routes to the designated safe areas, and the location of fire alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses, and water spigots.
3. Teachers and staff will be trained regarding the main emergency evacuation routes and alternate routes from various points in the building. The school district will develop a numbering system to indicate a blocked entrance. When this exit number is given, the responsible adult must immediately identify an alternate route.
4. The school district will conduct fire drills which include practicing how to move safely through blocked entrances and using alternate alarm systems. Fire drills will also include instruction/review of the use of fire extinguishers. The drills will emphasize the use of fire extinguishers to assist in evacuation.
5. Fire drills will be conducted periodically and at irregular times without

warning (i.e., lunchtime, recess, and during assemblies). State law requires a minimum of nine drills each school year.

6. A record of fire drills conducted at the building will be maintained in the building administrator's office.
7. The school district will arrange for emergency shelter sites and transportation as needed.

Procedures in the event of fire, smoke from fire or a gas odor has been

detected:

1. Pull the fire alarm, notify building occupants of the evacuation, and evacuate the building. (The system is programmed to call the fire/police department, head custodial and the superintendents of schools homes.)
2. The first person who is aware of the fire should contact the building administrator and attempt to evacuate the area. Check facility diagrams for the nearest evacuation route and safe area.
3. Designate a responsible adult or administrator to meet with local fire or law enforcement agents upon arrival. Give them an update, a facility diagram and a site plan when they arrive.
4. The building administrator or superintendent will report the incident (even if it is a false alarm) to the fire marshal as required by state law. (Minn. Stat. §299F.452).

Procedures for teachers:

1. During an evacuation, take the class roster. Make sure all students and adults have left the room. Close the classroom door but leave it unlocked.
2. Lead all students in an orderly manner to the safe area. Do not allow students to stop at lockers to get books, sweaters, jackets, or other personal belongings.
3. The first person to reach any door should feel the door to see if it is hot. If it is not hot, open it and proceed slowly and low to the floor. If it is hot, the teacher will quickly find an alternate route and lead the students in an orderly manner along the alternate route.

At the safe area:

1. When the group arrives at the safe area, check for any missing students and

report them to the building administrator.

2. Do not block any door or gate that may be used by emergency response personnel.
3. While at the safe area, teachers supervise the group closely.
4. Do not re-enter any school buildings until officials declare them safe.
5. Transport students as needed.

B. Severe Weather.

1. **Tornado/Severe Thunderstorm/Snowstorm/Indoor Shelter.** These procedures are for any weather situation in which students and staff should remain in the building until it is safe to leave.

Procedures before the emergency:

- a. The school district will identify both potential problem areas on the campus and areas with the highest degree of safety for students and staff. Unsafe areas include rooms with large unsupported roof spans, large windows, or rooms located where they will receive the full force of the wind such as upper floor gymnasiums and auditoriums. Safe areas include small rooms with few windows, on the lowest floor of the building, and at the interior of the building, such as restrooms, locker/shower areas, basement gymnasiums, and closets.
- b. Facility diagrams will be prepared for each classroom/office/work area showing the most direct evacuation route to the safest areas of the building.
- c. Provide training to appropriate staff, including the crisis response team, on how to deal with inoperative communication systems, absence of natural light in a power outage, inoperative devices in a building with students who have special needs, and inoperative refrigeration systems, alarms, heating and cooling systems.
- d. Review “drop and tuck” procedures with students.
- e. Keep a record of all tornado drills performed at the building in the building administrator’s office.

- f. Set up "buddy homes" each year.

Procedures when a blizzard warning has been issued and no travel advised:

- a. Monitor weather reporting services and local law enforcement office.
- b. Keep students in school, unless picked up by their parents.
- c. Make arrangements to bus students to in-town buddy homes.
- d. Notify radio - TV stations.

Procedures when a tornado/severe thunderstorm warning has been issued:

A tornado/severe thunderstorm warning is issued when a tornado or severe thunderstorm has developed and has been spotted in the area. This is a more imminent threat.

- a. Evacuate unsafe classrooms and offices. Teachers take class rosters. Close the classroom door but do not lock it.
- b. Move along inside walls to the safest areas of the building.
- c. Ensure that students are in the "tuck" position.
- d. Account for all students and staff. Report any missing students or staff to the building administrator, when it is safe to do so.
- e. The administration will monitor any changes in the weather.
- f. Remain in the safe area in the tuck position until the warning expires or emergency response personnel have issued an all-clear signal.

Procedures after the emergency:

- a. Notify the utility company if a break is suspected in the building gas, water, or electrical lines.
- b. Check utilities and electrical devices for damage due to any outage.

C. Assault/Fight.

These procedures apply to close contact physical confrontations including fist-fights, knife assaults, and the use of other weapons which require close proximity to result in a significant physical threat.

Procedures:

1. Ensure the safety of all students and staff.
2. Contact the building administrator, police, or 911, if necessary.
3. Approach in a calm and controlled manner. If possible, address the combatants by name and use a distraction to defuse the situation.
4. Control the scene and demand that the combatants stop; clear onlookers.
5. Contact CPR trained staff member or school nurse to handle medical emergencies until medical help arrives.
6. Escort the combatants to the office keeping them away from each other and other students.
7. Seal off the area where the assault took place.
8. Notify the building administrator. The building administrator will:
 - a. Notify the superintendent and combatants' parent(s) or guardian(s), as appropriate.
 - b. Notify law enforcement if a weapon was used, the victim has a physical injury causing substantial pain or impairment, or the assault involved sexual contact (intentional touching of anus, breast, buttocks, or genitalia of another person in a sexual manner without consent, including touching of those areas covered by clothing).
9. Assess counseling needs of victim(s) or witness(es). Initiate the grief-counseling plan, if necessary.
10. Document all activities.

D. Bomb Threat.

A bomb threat should always be considered a real and immediate danger to students and staff and requires an immediate response by the person receiving the bomb threat message. Consequently, all staff should be familiar with the bomb

threat procedures established by the school district. No bomb threat will be disregarded as being a prank call.

It is important that all staff be knowledgeable in the procedures to initiate evacuation, in the notification of local law enforcement agencies and appropriate personnel, and in the steps to take before the site is cleared for reentry. All staff should be aware of the location of bomb threat procedures.

If the building administrator determines it is necessary to evacuate the campus, the superintendent and local law enforcement should be consulted to determine how parents and guardians can be notified, school facilities can be protected, and crowd control can be provided, if needed.

At least one bomb threat drill should be conducted each school year. Because evacuation of the students and staff is the response used for a number of other crises in addition to bomb threats, staff members will probably not be aware they are evacuating because of a bomb threat. Therefore, it is good practice that whenever exiting the classrooms or work areas for any kind of drill, all personnel should quickly inspect their work area for anything unusual or out of place and be aware of any unusual or suspicious persons on the site.

Never attempt to touch, move, dismantle, or carry any object that is suspicious.

Procedures for bomb threat recipient:

1. If you receive a bomb threat by written message, preserve the note for the police by touching it as little as possible and placing it in a document protector or plastic bag, if available. Go to Step 2.

If you receive a bomb threat by telephone:

- a. Record exactly what the caller says. Complete the “Bomb Threat Phone Report” and the “Caller Identification Checklist.”
 - b. Remain calm, be firm, keep the caller talking. Listen carefully to the caller’s voice, speech patterns, and to noises in the background.
 - c. After hanging up the phone, immediately dial the callback service in your area to trace the call, if possible. *69
2. Notify the building administrator.
 3. Call 911 and report the bomb threat.

4. Call the superintendent to report the incident and any action taken so far.
5. DO NOT activate the fire alarm since the noise may detonate some bombs. A public address announcement should be made to initiate building evacuation; do not mention “bomb threat.”
6. Students and staff may be evacuated from the building and proceed to the designated safe area away from the building. Close the classroom door but leave it unlocked. Teachers take class rosters. Once evacuated, roll call should be taken. Notify the building administrator of any missing students or staff.
7. If the bomb threat message contained a specific time of detonation, the buildings will not be cleared for reentry until a significant period of time has lapsed after that time, no matter how thorough a check was conducted.
8. When reentry is permitted, staff should once again visually inspect their classrooms and work areas for unusual items before allowing students to enter.
9. Notify parents and guardians per school district policies.

E. Intruder.

Individuals who pose a possible threat could include a sniper on campus, someone who may attempt to abduct or injure a student, or any unauthorized visitor without a legitimate purpose. It may be a law enforcement agency who notifies the school or school district of the dangerous situation, or it may be school personnel who first recognize the danger.

____ Procedures before the emergency:

1. Implement lock-down procedures to secure the school building, to keep students inside and keep the danger outside of the building away from students and staff. A code word should be predetermined to alert staff when the school building will be secured and lock-down procedures initiated.

Procedures for the staff member who sees an unauthorized intruder:

1. If possible, have another staff person accompany you when approaching an intruder that does not indicate a potential for violence.

2. Politely greet the intruder and identify yourself.
3. Ask the intruder to identify himself or herself and to state what is the purpose of his or her visit.
4. Inform the intruder that all visitors must register at the main office.
5. If the intruder's purpose is not legitimate, ask him/her to leave and accompany intruder to exit if possible, or arrange for someone else to accompany the intruder.
6. If the intruder refuses to leave or is a repeat offender, warn him or her of the consequences of staying on school property. Inform him or her that the police will be contacted.
7. If the intruder still refuses to comply, notify building administrator or police and give as complete a description of the person as possible.
8. Walk away from the intruder if the intruder indicates a potential for violence. Do not attempt to disarm anyone with a weapon or physically restrain anyone who may be capable of inflicting bodily harm. Monitor the intruder leaving campus, if possible.
9. Call 911 and provide law enforcement agents with as much identifying information as possible (physical description, location in the school building, where the person is going, if the intruder is armed).

F. Serious injury/death.

Procedures:

1. Call 911, but do not leave the victim unattended.
2. Contact a first aid provider or a member of the crisis response team.
3. Clear onlookers and isolate the victim.
4. Perform preliminary first aid, if trained.
5. Do not move the victim unless an immediate emergency situation dictates evacuation.
6. Notify the building administrator.

7. Designate a staff person to accompany the injured or ill person to the hospital.
8. Administrative follow-up may include the following:
 - a. Notify parent(s) or guardian(s) of an injured or ill student or a family member of an injured or ill employee.
 - b. Notify the superintendent.
 - c. Determine method of informing staff, students, and parents, if appropriate.
 - d. Prepare an accident report.
 - e. Initiate the grief-counseling plan, if appropriate.
 - f. Prepare a news media release with the superintendent.

G. Shooting. These procedures apply to snipers inside or outside of the school building or any other firearm threat that poses an immediate danger. The threat may also result from an intruder or from participants in a demonstration.

Procedures for staff and students if a person threatens with a firearm or begins shooting:

1. If outside, staff and students should go inside the building as soon as possible. If staff or students cannot get inside, they should make themselves as compact as possible, put something between themselves and the shooter, and not gather in groups.
2. If inside, staff, students and visitors should turn off the lights, lock all doors and windows, and close the curtains, if it is safe to do so.
3. Staff, students and visitors should crouch under desks without talking and remain there until an all-clear signal is given by the building administrator.
4. If safe to do so, staff should check the halls for wandering students who are not the threat and bring them immediately into a classroom, even if they are from another classroom. When it is safe to do so, staff should notify the office if students from another class are in their room.

5. Take roll call and notify the building administrator of any missing students or staff, when it is safe to do so.

Procedures for the building administrator or police liaison if a person threatens with a firearm or begins shooting:

1. Assess the situation as to:
 - a. shooter's location,
 - b. injuries, and
 - c. potential for additional shooting.
2. Call 911 and give them as much detail as possible about the situation.
3. Secure the school building, if appropriate.
4. Assist students and staff in evacuating from immediate danger to a safe area.
5. Care for the injured to the extent practicable until emergency personnel arrive.
6. Refer media calls, contacts, and questions to the school district superintendent.
7. Meet with the superintendent to prepare a news or information release.
8. Notify parents and guardians per school district policies.
9. Hold an information meeting with all staff.
10. Initiate the grief-counseling plan.

H. Suicide.

Procedures for a suicide attempt:

1. Intervene prior to an attempted suicide, as appropriate. Try to calm the suicidal person.
2. Prevent others from witnessing a traumatic event, if possible. Isolate the

suicidal person or victim from other persons. Remain calm and reassure students.

3. Call 911 if the person dies, needs medical attention, has a weapon, or needs to be restrained.
4. Notify the school psychologist or counselor, building administrator, or appropriate crisis intervention team members
5. The building administrator will activate the crisis response team.
6. Stay with the person until counselor/suicide intervention arrives. **DO NOT LEAVE A SUICIDAL PERSON ALONE.**
7. Designate a responsible adult to meet with emergency personnel upon arrival.
8. The building administrator will notify the superintendent and the parent(s) or guardian(s) if the suicidal person or victim is a student, or a family member if the person is a staff member.
9. The building administrator may arrange a meeting with parents and the school psychologist or counselor to determine a course of action.
10. Determine method of notifying students, staff and parents, as appropriate.
11. Initiate the grief-counseling plan, if appropriate.

I. Weapons.

If a student or staff member is aware of a weapon brought to school:

1. Immediately notify the building administrator, teacher, or police.
2. Tell them the name of the person suspected of bringing the weapon, where the weapon is located, if the suspect has threatened anyone, or any other details that may prevent the suspect from hurting someone or himself or herself.
3. If a teacher suspects that a weapon is in the classroom, he or she should confidentially notify a neighboring teacher or the building administrator. Do not leave the classroom.

Procedures for the building administrator if a weapon is suspected:

1. Call the local law enforcement agency if a weapon is reasonably suspected to be in the building or on school grounds.
2. Isolate the suspect from the weapon, if possible. If the suspect threatens with the weapon, do not try to disarm the suspect. Back away with arms up. Stay calm.
3. Ask another administrator or police to join in questioning the suspected student or staff member.
4. Accompany the suspect to a private area and wait for local law enforcement agents.
5. Inform the suspect of his or her rights before you conduct a search of their property, if appropriate.
6. Document the incident and report it, if appropriate. (Minn. Stat. § 121A.06 - Reports of dangerous weapon incidents in school zones.)
7. Notify parents or guardians if the suspect is a student and explain to them why a search was conducted and the results of the search.

Legal References: 42 U.S.C. § 5121 et. seq. (Disaster relief and emergency assistance)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.06 (Reports of Dangerous Weapon Incidents in School Zones)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.57 (Crisis Management Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 609.605, Subd. 4 (Trespasses on School Property)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 299F (Fire Marshall)
Minn. Rules, Pt. 3530.4400 to 3530.4700 (Civil Defense)
Minn. Rules, Pt. 7510 (Fire Safety)
Uniform Fire Code

Cross References: Policy 407 (Employee Right to Know - Exposure to Hazardous
Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)
Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
Policy 803 (Warning Systems and Emergency Plans)
Policy 804 (Bomb Threats)
Policy 903 (Visitors to the School District Buildings and Sites)