

Disaster Drill Scenario: Student Release

School Based Tabletop Exercise

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TABLETOP EXERCISE

“Student Release Under Extreme Emergency Conditions”

**Developed by the
Mutual Assistance for School Safety
(MASS)
Working Group**

A training system and process to help Monterey County's schools and districts comply with State and Federal requirements for safety and crisis response.



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EOC: Emergency Operations Center

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Congratulations: This information packet is your Emergency Preparedness Drill. The scenario for this drill is the sudden release of students in an emergency situation. Please take a few minutes to read this information, and then activate your drill. When directed to **"STOP AT THIS POINT"** and follow the instructions and/or discussion points provided.

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PURPOSE:

This is a Tabletop Exercise to prepare staff for a real time, full-scale student release exercise on March 9, 2010. This exercise is written for a elementary school, but is easily adapted to middle school. It is suggested that to fully adapt the Tabletop Exercise to a high school, local fire and law be involved in the rewriting of it.

Real Time, Real Life Drill:

The Mutual Assistance for School Safety (MASS) Working Group has proposed March 9, 2010 as the date for schools to participate in a real time, real life drill. Only in real time and real life will staff have the opportunity to assess the amount of time needed to release students under controlled conditions.

MASS **suggested that the District select one or two schools where to conduct the real-time exercise** on March 9. To minimize disruption of the educational program, the exercise may be conducted at the students' normal release time. Representatives from the other schools in the District may serve as observers at the real-time exercise.

Small school districts may consider selecting a neighboring school to participate in the real time, real life drill while others serve as observers and recorders.

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Why Conduct This Tabletop Exercise?

Crisis incidents in schools are broadly defined as events that:

- cause sudden and/or significant disruption to the effective operation of school and/or community;
- have the potential to affect a large number of students, parents and staff;
- create significant dangers or risks to the physical and emotional well-being of students, parents, staff, first responders, and the community;
- attract media attention to a school, district office, students, parents and staff;
- Crisis incidents do not always occur on site or during the hours of operation. They can occur during a field trip or sporting event. Examples include sudden death, serious injury, illness, violence, abuse and suicide. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, fires, and flooding are other examples.

Why is Planning Important?

Evidence clearly shows that planning for a traumatic incident before it happens reduces the negative impact. All schools need a plan and procedures to respond effectively to a crisis incident. Ensure your plan can be used in a range of scenarios and incorporates a team approach.

When You Plan and Drill You Will be Better Able To:

- Gather the Facts/ Determine and Take Immediate Actions/
- Assemble the Incident Command System Team;
- Inform and Support Your Community;
- Establish Communication Systems

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- Respond to Injured People:
- Respond to the Public:
- Respond to the Media:
- Support Affected Staff, Students, Parents and the Community:
- Evaluate Your Plan, Procedures and Practice:

Instructions for this Tabletop Exercise:

A tabletop exercise is intended to stimulate the problem solving abilities of members of your school's and District's Incident Command System (ICS). Responses should be documented on a flip chart so all team members can participate.

When finished, a debriefing discussion should occur. Ask yourselves: Where are we, how did we do? What do we need to do to enhance our team?

When the exercise is completed, you will have the basis for planning for a real-time, full-scale student release exercise on March 9, 2010.

About the Fictional School in this Tabletop Exercise:

This elementary is in a urban, residential setting. It contains 714 students in grades K-6. There are two A.M. and two P.M. Kinder classes. There is a child care facility on site operated by the Mexican American Opportunity Foundation. The Y.M.C.A. operates an after school program, and extended day care facility.

Approximately 9 percent of the students have an I.E.P. and have mild to moderate conditions. Five students are confined to wheelchairs.

The site is bordered by single family residences and a large apartment complex. There is a city park located on the north-east corner of the school site. The apartment complex has a cinder block wall on the western border of the

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school. The homes have wooden fences and are located on the northern border of the school site.

The school is separated from a four-lane road by homes. The front (south) and eastern sides of the school site are bordered by a residential street.

How to Begin the Tabletop Exercise

To Start:

- Distribute a copy of the Tabletop Exercise to each participant.
- Caution each participant to NOT READ AHEAD.
- Be sure to set exercise time limit. We suggest the time allowed be 30 - 60 minutes
- Assign at least one Recorder to take notes. In a real event, the Recorder will be documenting your actions for cost recovery and insurance purposes.

Instructions: All communications should be simulated (unless otherwise pre-arranged). The purpose of this drill will be to test staff preparedness in the event of an emergency. In a real incident, all of your response teams would be utilized (for example: • First Aid Team, Fire/Utilities Team, Damage Assessment Team, Logistics Team, and so forth).

This tabletop exercise focuses attention primarily on only one element of a disaster: the release of students under emergency conditions.

The following teams will be tested:

- Incident Command Team, including Incident Commander and Public Information;
- Student Release Team
- Communications Team

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The major disaster the school is experiencing is as follows:

It is 9:57 a.m. on Tuesday, March 9 (or the date of your choice). There are no assemblies or special events planned for school today. The weather is clear and not cold. This is good because the boiler and heating system for the school have been having problems. You are meeting with the District's General Services Manager at 10:30 a.m. to talk about the repairs needed to heating and ventilation system. There are between 3 and 6 employees of Acme Heating and Cooling Company going in and out of the boiler room making repairs. The School's custodian has been working with them.

BEGIN THE TABLETOP EXERCISE

There is a loud rumble, a tremor, followed by a sonic boom and the windows throughout the school rattle for five to 10 seconds. The fire alarms go off.

1. "STOP AT THIS POINT"

- What should be happening now?

RETURN TO THE TABLETOP EXERCISE

You go outside and some students are running toward the front of the School. You see a teacher chasing after them. The students are approaching you, and you stop them. They are panicked. The teacher is ashen and terrified. The students and the teacher are shouting "It just blew-up!" and pointing at the rear of the school where the last row of classrooms are located. These are the where the sixth grade classes. You tell the teacher and students to follow their pre-planned evacuation route. You run to the area of the school they indicated.

When you come around the corner of the multipurpose room, you see debris laying around. The windows in the front of the sixth grade classrooms are shattered. There is a partial exterior wall collapse of the boiler room. You go

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to the collapsed section. There is a cloud of dust but no visible fire. You look through the hole in the collapsed wall, and you see dust, the shattered boiler, wiring and broken heating pipes hanging from the ceiling, and at least three people lying motionless on the ground.

You can look across the room and through a hole blown in the interior wall that separates the kitchen from the boiler room. You can smell the overpowering odor of natural gas. The fire alarm is sounding throughout the school. Students and staff are opening classroom doors and looking out.

2. "STOP AT THIS POINT"

- What should the school principal be doing at this point?
- What should teachers be doing at this point?
- What are the evacuation routes, and the alternative evacuation routes?

RETURN TO THE TABLETOP EXERCISE

At the Office, word has spread that there has been an explosion in the cafeteria/kitchen. Staff are asking for instructions and direction.

3. "STOP AT THIS POINT"

- Has 9-1-1 been called? Who telephoned? What information should you have in order to report the emergency?
- Should an evacuation be ordered?
- Should a lockdown be ordered?
- Should a shelter-in-place be ordered?

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- Who should be notified of the event and situation?
- Have the streets been closed off to allow emergency vehicles to enter? How was this done?

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Two fire trucks are arriving. There is one police car in the loading area in front of the school. People from the neighborhood are starting to gather in front of the school. The first parents are arriving from the homes and apartments around the school. They arrive on foot and in vehicles. One parent parks a SUV in the bus loading area and runs into the school.

Mrs. Jayne Doe, a parent who is confined to a wheelchair, is in the Office on parental business. Her son, John, is a third grade student. Mrs. Doe is upset and wants to be with her son.

4. "STOP AT THIS POINT"

- Is it the school's responsibility to allow this woman to go to her son's classroom.
- Is it the school's responsibility to properly care for Mrs. Doe?
- Has the school activated its Incident Command System? If "yes," which positions have been filled/needed?
- Who is in charge? The police, the fire commander, or the school administrators?

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More fire trucks are arriving. Paramedic units and ambulances arrive. The Fire Department Commander enters the Office and orders the school to be immediately evacuated. There is a real danger of another explosion from the gas

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leaking from the broken pipes. The smell of natural gas is powerful. Some people are beginning to complain of dizziness.

The school's Incident Commander meets with the Incident Commander for Fire and notifies the Fire Commander that the schools' evacuation point is the city park located across the playing fields to the northeast of the school. The Fire Commander agrees that this will be far enough away.

Five minutes after the Tabletop Exercise begins all electrical power in the school is lost.

5. "STOP AT THIS POINT"

- Determine the type(s) of communication that are now available to you. (School to district office, to parents, to the media)
- Has the District Command Center has been activated?
- Has the school's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) been established? Where is it located?
- Are Incident Command Team leaders reporting to the school's and district's Command Centers (Emergency Operations Center) before they start their tasks?

Does your school have the following, or similar, items currently in place?

- **Forms to identify adults authorized** to pick up students and to track the custody of each student from the school through the release process.
- **Student Emergency Card:** *Used to identify authorized adults for student release and emergency medical information*
 - **Does the school SEND** the blank card home to parents at beginning of school year
 - **Does the school make** a copy for First Aid Station?

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- **Does the school store** a copy for the emergency container?
- **Student Attendance Roster (in teachers' go-packs):** *Used to note student status when the school has been evacuated*
 - **Does the school PRINT** a roster each semester for each class
 - **Do the teachers daily mark the** student status on the roster?
- **Student Nametags (in teachers' backpacks)** *Used for quick student status assessment immediately after the class has evacuated*
 - Does the school have PRE-PRINTED nametags each semester for each class?
 - Does the nametag contain: student's name, grade, school, room number and teacher?
- **Does the school provide Parents with Wallet Cards?:** *Used to assist parents in remembering adults they have authorized to pick up their child*
 - Does the Wallet Card contain school hotline number and evacuation/student pick-up point information
 - Does the school DISTRIBUTE two cards to each family at the beginning of the school year?
- **What are the school's evacuation procedures** to move all of the students, staff and visitors from the school site to the evacuation point?

RETURN TO THE TABLETOP EXERCISE

You have successfully moved students and staff to the city park (evacuation point).

You cannot locate eighteen students. The teachers believe they slipped away and walked to their homes. The streets are filling with cars. The police have stopped traffic at the corner of Madison and Lincoln, and at the corner of Kennedy and Lincoln, not allowing any vehicles toward the school on Lincoln Street.

The students are sitting on the grass, grouped by their class, with their teacher keeping watch.

6. "STOP AT THIS POINT"

- What makes the decision to release students?

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- Where do you set-up the student release site, including the parent check-in?
- How do you communicate to the parents where they are to go to pick-up their children?
- At this time, **using the following matrix on the next page**, discuss the procedures you set into place for student release, and the logistics needed to support the orderly student release.
- For example, do you have a bullhorn or other way of communicating with students, staff and parents?
- How do you keep parents from simply walking away with the children?
- What do you do if staff want to leave?
- Do you make any requests of the police for their help? If "yes," list those requests.
- Does the school use the buddy teacher system or something similar? Will the buddy teacher have enough information about the students in the classes you were blending to manage both?
- Briefly describe the types of problems you can envision with the parents once they arrived to pick up their children?
- How do you account for visitors, substitutes, or others who are not regular staff?

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ACTION MATRIX (SIMULTANEOUS ACTIONS)

ADMINISTRATION / STAFF	TEACHERS	STUDENTS	PARENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up Incident Command Center Set up communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evacuate students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evacuate with teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to Request Gate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set-up Student Request and Release Gates Place traffic cones and signs to direct parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply nametags to students; take roll and assess population Hold up colored Assessment Card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remain at designated evacuation area until further instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Student Request Form for each student requested; hand form to Request Gate and show photo ID. Wait patiently while ID and authorization are checked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check attendance roster. Pull, note cards of absent students and file in back. Remove nametags of absent students and send other nametags to EOC Note cards of missing, injured students and store separately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note absent students on remaining nametags and send nametags to the Incident Command Center Send injured students to First Aid station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injured students to First Aid station 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verify ID and authorization; and note on Request Form. File requested student cards at back of file box 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra staff partner for other assigned duties; report to Incident Command Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remain at designated evacuation area until requested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move to Release Gate to reunite with requested student(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give Request Form to runner; runner to Assembly Area to retrieve student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call requested student forward; release to runner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accompany runner to Release Gate to meet up with parent or authorized adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait patiently at Release Gate until called.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Runner escorts student to Release Gate then returns to Request Gate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note students released on roll sheet 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show photo ID at Release Gate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check parent ID again at Release Gate. Runner returns to Request Gate for next student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor students' medical/emotional condition at all times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reunite with adult. Leave campus together immediately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents sign out at Release Gate; note time, phone and destination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical situation: Direct parents to Parent Information Station or crisis intervention counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As students are released, extra staff report to ICP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taken by staff to First Aid Station, if necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical: Escorted to First Aid Station by crisis management staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Release Gate staff file signed Request Forms alphabetically 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reunite with student. Leave immediately.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with Incident Command Center to reassign teams as needed 			

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All students have been released to their parents, except for 58 students who no one has arrived to claim them.

Some students were showing obvious signs of emotional trauma.

Some of the staff are experiencing emotional trauma.

Parents have not been reunited with nine students: they are not among the 58 that remain nor the students who have been released.

7. "STOP AT THIS POINT"

- How does the Counseling Support Team get activated?
- How long will it take the District to get trained personnel to respond?
- What is the plan for helping the students, parents and staff who are dealing with emotional trauma? Immediate, next day, and into the future.
- Has your team been adequately trained to handle the problems that may arise during the emergency?
- What will you do with the remaining 58 students?
- How do you deal with the parents of the nine uncounted for students?
- How will you go about locating the students and re-checking your records of the student release?

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The Incident Commander for Fire notifies the school's Incident Commander that one student has been confirmed dead, and two employees of the heating and cooling company are dead.

One food service worker, the school's custodian, and a third employee of the contractor are severely injured and in route to a trauma center. Two other food service workers, eight students and one teacher have injuries and are being transported to local hospitals.

The Incident Commander for Fire provides you with a list of the dead and injured, and the names of the hospitals where the injured are being transported.

8. "STOP AT THIS POINT"

- What information do you provide to the parents of the injured students?
- What information do you provide to the parents of the deceased student?
- What actions are taken in regards to the deceased employees and their families?
- Following the event, and in the days ahead, what actions will the school and district take to return operations to normal? Next day, next week, next month, and next year?

GENERAL DISCUSSION POINTS:

- Does your school and each classroom have Go Packs? Are they sealed for emergency use only?
- Do the Go Packs contain:
 - Disaster kit?

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- Class roster?
 - Emergency cards (containing authorized persons to pick-up students)?
 - Medicines?
-
- Does your school use the red/green card system for “all clear,” all accounted for,” “injured,” “missing”?
 - Does your school use the buddy-teacher system?
 - Does your school lock or not lock doors in an evacuation?
 - Does your school have sufficient Mega phone (bull horn), two-way radios, and other communication devices?
 - Does your school have a directory of staff cell phone numbers to be kept in the Incident Commander’s kit?