

This Month's Topic: Creating Your School's Safety Team



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Charter School Safety Awareness Newsletter March 2017

WELCOME to the inaugural issue of the Colorado League of Charter Schools' Safety Awareness newsletter! These monthly newsletters are designed to provide charter leaders with the knowledge and resources necessary to continuously improve the safety of their school environments. Each issue will feature a specific topic to inform and guide readers along the ever-evolving journey of school safety compliance and practices.

As a charter public school, your organization must comply with federal, state and local safety/emergency planning laws. Read this publication to stay abreast of your obligations and implement the proven practices and procedures shared here by government agencies, safety experts and fellow charter school operators.

Why Do You Need School Safety Awareness?

By both federal and state law, charter public schools are required to perform specific safety duties and administer certain responsibilities. The CO School Safety Act, C.R.S. 22-32-109.1 is Colorado law. View the law here: http://www.lpdirect.net/casb/crs/22-32-109_1.html

Section (4) School response framework - school safety, readiness, and incident management plan. Each board of education shall establish a school response framework that shall consist of policies described in this subsection (4). By satisfying the requirements of this subsection (4), a school or school district shall be in compliance with the national incident management system, referred to in this subsection (4) as "NIMS", developed by the federal emergency management agency.

*In Section (4), there are 16 points of compliance for schools to execute.

National preparedness efforts, including planning, are now informed by Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8, which was signed by the president in March 2011 and describes the nation's approach to preparedness. This directive represents an evolution in our collective understanding of national preparedness, based on the lessons learned from terrorist attacks, hurricanes, school incidents, and other experiences. - See more at: <http://rems.ed.gov/K12IntroandPurpose.aspx#sthash.D9T7qdEt.dpuf>

The U.S. Department of Education recommends a Six-Step Process for creating a compliant school Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), aka the School Response Framework. http://rems.ed.gov/docs/rems_k-12_guide_508.pdf

Create Your School Safety Team

Step one of your safety preparations should be the formation of your school's safety team. The Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center recommends the following process for putting together a school safety team. <http://rems.ed.gov>

Identify Core Planning Team

The core planning team should include representatives from a wide range of school personnel, including but not limited to the following: administrators, educators, school psychologists, nurses, facilities managers, transportation managers, food personnel, and family services representatives. It should also include student and parent representatives, and individuals and organizations that serve and represent the interests of students, staff, and parents with disabilities, and others with access and functional needs, as well as racial minorities and religious organizations, so that specific concerns are included in the early stages of planning. Additionally, the core planning team should include community partners such as first responders, local emergency management staff, and others who have roles and responsibilities in school emergency management before, during, and after an incident. This includes local law enforcement officers, emergency medical services (EMS) personnel, school resource officers, fire officials, public and mental health practitioners, and local emergency managers. Their expertise will inform the development, implementation, and refinement of the school emergency operations plan (EOP).

The planning team should be small enough to permit close collaboration with first responders and other community partners, yet large enough to be representative of the school, its families, and its community. It should also be large enough as to not place an undue burden on any single person.

Form a Common Framework

A shared approach facilitates mutual understanding, coordination, and execution of the emergency management strategies as well as works from a common command structure. All team members need to take time to learn each other's vocabulary, command structure, and culture in order to facilitate effective planning. (See the National Incident Management System (NIMS) section below.)

Define and Assign Roles and Responsibilities

Each person involved in the development and refinement of the plan should know her or his roles and responsibilities in the planning process.

The [Colorado School Safety Resource Center \(CSSRC\)](#), a division of the Colorado Department of Public Safety, has developed Colorado-specific resources and tools for public schools to access for free. In their resource, [Comprehensive School Safety Planning: Suggested Elements for Districts and Schools](#), CSSRC provides the following guidance for creating safety teams:

1.1 Identification of Teams

Various teams will be necessary to plan and/or respond to crises. Individuals may participate on multiple teams. It is not the number of teams or number of members that is important but that the functions described are completed.

1. **District Safety Planning Team** - This team does the safety planning for the entire district/may also be trained to respond to individual schools as

part of the District Crisis Response Team. Members of this team should also be prepared to provide through training or contracting both ongoing building safety assessments as well as assessments after crises.

2. **District Crisis Response Team (ICS)** - This team will be trained to respond to crisis in the district and hold an ICS role in that response.
3. **Building Safety Planning Team** - This team does the safety planning for an individual school. Members of this team should also be prepared to provide both ongoing building safety assessments as well as assessments after crises. Community emergency responders should be invited to assist with the planning by this team.
4. **Building Crisis Response Team (ICS)** - This team provides the response to crises in their school and may serve on the Building Safety Planning Team. They hold ICS role designations.
5. **Multi-Agency Crisis Planning Team** - The District Planning Team should work with community emergency responders (law enforcement and juvenile justice, fire, EMS, community mental health, victim advocates, etc.) and together form a Multi-Agency Planning Team to assist with both planning and responding as appropriate.
6. **Threat Assessment Team** - This multidisciplinary team of no less than three members (two of whom would be on-site) would include at least one administrator, one mental health staff member and one law enforcement professional. The team must be trained in threat assessment in accordance with district policy.
7. **Psychological Recovery Teams** - The district will train mental health professionals district wide to be available as the psychological recovery teams to identify and provide follow up interventions for students and staff for any building/district crisis.

Compliance with National Incident Management System (NIMS)

As stated in Section (4) of the Colorado School Safety Act above, the school team's framework must comply with the Federal **National Incident Management System (NIMS)**. NIMS is a systemic template enabling various entities to work together with consistency to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. The NIMS system contains the **Incident Command System structure (ICS)** that your safety team must utilize. ICS is the coordinating link between multiple agencies and jurisdictions in an emergency response. Each district/charter school will adopt ICS as the management structure to be utilized in school and district emergency response plans. The ICS describes the Roles and Responsibilities that your safety team members should perform in the event of a crisis.

Safety team roles typically include the following:

- School Incident Commander
- School Information Officer
- School Safety Coordinator
- Operations Team Leader
- Emergency Medical Coordinator
- Student and Staff Communication Coordinator
- Student Care and Recovery Coordinator
- Student Supervision Coordinator
- Student and Parent Reunion Coordinator

View the [Incident Command Structure \(ICS\) Tools for Schools from CSSRC](#). They offer sample ICS structure/organizational charts for small schools and large

schools.

Once you have your Safety Team in place, the members should complete the recommended minimum NIMS trainings: ICS100SCa and IS700, and the IS-362 Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools. These courses are available for free on the FEMA website at <https://training.fema.gov/nims/>

Free Resources

These links will provide you tools to begin your SAFE journey in creating your team successfully.

[Colorado School Safety Resource Center March Newsletter](#)

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cssrc>

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cssrc/cssrc-tools-and-templates>

<https://training.fema.gov/emi.aspx>

Upcoming Safety Events

Positive Youth Development Training (Violence and Injury Prevention)

Dates: Monday, April 24 (La Junta) or Friday, April 28 (Cortez)
[Information and Registration](#)

Save the Dates: 2017 Rural Safe Schools Summits

Hosted by the Colorado School Safety Resource Center

Durango - Tuesday, April 25

Grand Junction - Thursday, April 27

La Junta - Thursday, May 11

[More Information](#)

School Safety Advisory Committee Members

Thank you for the 2016-17 School Safety Advisory Committee Members who have volunteered their time and resources to help the League produce this newsletter. School leaders are invited to contact any of the members below for additional assistance and insights with your school safety efforts.

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Vendor Spotlights

ProSec Alarm Integration



ProSec Integration, LLC, is a full-service provider for electronic security and fire alarm systems, video surveillance systems and access control systems. They also provide 24/7/365, central-station monitoring services for virtually any managed alarm system, including intrusion, fire, video surveillance and elevator systems. As a full-service installation and system maintenance provider, ProSec places a high degree of focus on providing exceptional customer service on every job, big or small. If you're looking for quality service with attention to detail and IMMEDIATE RESPONSE to your needs, ProSec is the solution! They provide the solutions to your security and safety needs, nothing less and nothing more!

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**Next Month's Topic: Child Sexual Abuse/Assault Prevention
Plan & Volunteer Screenings**

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