School Safety Planning

All-Hazards Emergency Operations Plan Threat Specific Annexes

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- **Guidance & Resources:**
  - School Crisis Planning Guide
  - School Safety Drill Guidance
  - School Safety Emergency Planning Guide for Parents & Guardians
  - Emergency Response Planning Guide with Response Protocols
  - Crisis Communication

- **Planning, Training, Exercise and Technical Assistance:**
  - EOP Development
  - Training and Exercise delivery
  - Crisis Communication
  - Critical Incident Response
  - Critical incident Review

Act 29, Section 2: All-Hazards Emergency Operations Plans

- Each SU/SD and Independent School shall adopt and maintain an all-hazards emergency operations plan

- EOP must be reviewed and updated on an annual basis

- Must be at least as comprehensive as [All-Hazards Emergency Operations Plan template](#) provided by the Vermont School Safety Center

- Must be developed and updated **in collaboration with local emergency first responders and local emergency management officials**

- Should include location-specific **Threat Annexes**

What is a Threat Annex?

- A threat annex is a document that describes the unique actions to take in response to a specific threat or hazard. These annexes are a key part of an emergency operations plan and are based on special planning requirements that aren't common across all threats.

- Threat annexes can include:
  - Response details
  - Risk areas and evacuation routes
  - Emergency public information
  - Protective equipment for responders
  - Tabbed maps, charts, and inventories

Purpose of an Annex

- An Annex should describe the **goals** (broad statements that indicate the desired outcome), **objectives** (measurable actions that are necessary to achieve the goals), and **courses of actions** (specific procedures used to accomplish goals and objectives) for before, during, and after an incident.

- Each of the threat- and hazard-specific annexes describe the courses of action unique the particular threats and hazards each school may face.

- Courses of action already outlined in a functional annex need not be repeated in a threat- or hazard-specific annex. Develop these based on the prioritized list of threats and hazards determined in the assessment process.

- As planning teams develop courses of action for threats and hazards, they should consider the federal, state, and local regulations or mandates that often apply to specific threats and hazards.

Considerations

- If there is a functional annex that applies to one of the threat- or hazard-specific annexes, the latter will include it by reference.

- For example, if a "during" course of action for a fire hazard involves evacuation, and there is an Evacuation Annex, the Fire Annex would indicate "see Evacuation Annex" in the "during" course of action section rather than repeat the evacuation courses of action in the Fire Annex.

Threat and Hazard Types and Examples

- **Natural Threats**
  - Earthquakes
  - Lightning
  - Severe wind
  - Hurricanes
  - Floods
  - Extreme temperatures
  - Winter precipitation

Technological Hazards

- Accidental release of hazardous materials from within the school, such as gas leaks or laboratory spills

- Hazardous materials releases from major highways or railroads

- Dam failure

- Power failure

- Water failure

Biological Hazards

- Infectious diseases (coronavirus, influenza, tuberculosis, staphylococcus aureus, meningitis, etc.)

- Contaminated food outbreaks: (Salmonella, botulism, E. coli, etc.)

- Toxic materials present in school laboratories

Adversarial, Incidental, & Human-caused Threats

- Fire

- Active shooters

- Bomb threats

- Domestic violence and abuse

- Cyber attacks

- Suicide

- Kidnapping, missing student

- Bus accident

- Riot/Student demonstration

Functional Annexes

- The functional annexes within an EOP focus on critical operational functions that apply to more than one threat or hazard and on the courses of action developed to carry them out.

- As the planning team develops goals and objectives for hazards and threats, the team may identify cross-cutting functions.

- The planning team should consider the various actions in which team members must collaborate with community partners when developing goals, objectives, and courses of action to support pandemic planning in cross-cutting functional annexes.

Cross-Functions

- While these functions should be described separately, it is important to remember that many functions will occur consecutively.

- Functions build upon one another and overlap; thus, it may not be necessary to repeat a course of action in one functional annex if it appears in another functional annex.

- As each annex is developed, it is helpful to consider and include processes from other functional annexes, such as communication and continuity of operations (COOP), that will play a critical role in responding.

Example Cross-Functional Annex: Communications and Warning

Functional Annex	Sample Goals, Objectives, and Courses of Action
Communications and Warning Annex: Defines processes for communicating with both internal and external stakeholders before, during, and after an emergency, including an infectious disease outbreak or pandemic.	• Create templates for letters related to a variety of outbreaks to send to the school community. • Identify appropriate spokespersons (e.g., superintendent, school nurse, public information officer), and ask them to practice in advance. (These may not be the same spokespersons as other school emergencies.) • Promote awareness on healthy hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and protective health measures. • Inform students, staff, and families about practices and policies to prevent such an outbreak in the future. • Ensure that daily communications highlight positive aspects about the situation, even if to say no changes.

Continuity of Operations (COOP) Annex

COOP Annex: Describes how a school will help ensure that essential functions continue during an emergency and its immediate aftermath.

- Provide continuity of teaching and learning via technological and nontechnological opportunities (or a combination of both), allowing students to maintain skills while they remain at home.

- Ensure that students continue to receive other essential services from the school (e.g., feeding and food distribution, mental health services) in the event of school closures, distance learning, quarantining, etc.

Recovery Annex – VERY Important!!

Functional Annex	Sample Goals, Objectives, and Courses of Action
Recovery Annex: Describes plans to recover from an emergency. The four most fundamental kinds of recovery are academic recovery, physical recovery, fiscal recovery, and psychological and emotional recovery.	• Define how the school or school district will address health, social, emotional, and behavioral needs after a prolonged pandemic. • Identify potential organizations and personnel to support recovery needs.

Example Annex: Infectious Illness

- When planning for a contagious illness, the annex may incorporate processes for the following:

    - Decreasing exposure to the illness;

    - Limiting the disruption of day-to-day learning activities;

    - Adapting to evolving knowledge and guidance from health care professions or CDC;

    - Supporting students and staff with disabilities, chronic health conditions, limited access and functional needs, and limited English proficiency; and

    - Communicating updates to students, families, and the community.

Example Annex: Infectious Illness

- The Infectious Illness annex should clearly outline what to do before, during, and after a case, outbreak, epidemic, or pandemic occurs.

- Response, in each phase, will not necessarily follow the same protocol because infectious diseases range in severity levels and duration.

- Thus, it is important to consider different infectious disease scenarios to emphasize the uniqueness of the actions needed as the incident unfolds.

Planning Phase: Before Incident

Phase	Questions to Consider/Ask	Actions
BEFORE Establish and implement policies before the onset of an infectious disease.	• Does the school and/or district currently have infectious disease policies? • What are they? • What do they include? • Have they been shared with the core planning teams and other key stakeholders?	Review, update, or establish policies that • Provide guidelines that specify conditions that would keep students home from school; • Reinforce common preventive habits, such as • Handwashing; cough and sneeze etiquette; routine cleaning and sanitation; and vaccinations, if applicable; • Provide guidelines for • Separating sick students and staff; • Increasing social distances within the school environment; and • Adapting attendance policies; and • Develop and discuss scenarios to determine actions and resources needed.

Planning Phase: During Incident

| **DURING** Implement policies and processes that schools and school districts should implement during an incident. | • What is the source and scale of the pandemic?
 • What is the categorization of the disease? (e.g., Who is sick? When did they get sick? What are the symptoms? What is the level of infectiousness?)
 • What response is needed to align with the disease categorization and scope of the spread?
 • What are the guidelines for dismissing or closing schools? | Continually inform students, staff, and families about

 • Methods for detecting the disease and resources for at-home and community screening;
 • Characteristics or symptoms of the disease;
 • Current and future response measures;
 • Prompt treatment for those at higher risk; and
 • Guidelines for school dismissals or closures, which may include

     • Selective dismissals to prevent the spread of disease to vulnerable communities;
     • Reactive dismissals that occur when schools are not able to maintain normal functioning; and
     • Preemptive dismissals as a proactive strategy to decrease the spread of disease. |

Planning Phase: After Incident

Phase	Questions to Consider/Ask	Actions
AFTER Review and update policies after the end of an infectious disease incident.	• What went well? What can be done differently next time? • What changes should be made to the Infectious Disease Annex or future use? • What practices should be discontinued, and what practices should remain in place?	Determine the extent to which • A school facility needs remediation before it can reopen (a school might need remediation if, e.g., it was used for a vaccination clinic or some other health-related purpose); and • Processes for reopening schools or reconvening students follow the advice of medical and health departments • Guidelines for communicating with parents, students, staff, and the media follow established procedures.

Annex Recommendations (at minimum)

- **This is not a complete list, but it is recommended that all EOPs include at least the following annexes:**
  - Evacuation Annex
  - Lockdown Annex
  - Shelter-in-Place Annex
  - Accounting for All Persons Annex
  - Communications and Warning Annex
  - Family Reunification Annex
  - Continuity of Operations (COOP) Annex
  - Recovery Annex
  - Public Health, Medical, and Mental Health Annex
  - Security Annex

Practice makes Perfect

- Several types of trainings and exercises can be used to identify strengths and needed improvements of EOPs and Annexes.

  - Facilitated Discussions

  - Table-top exercises

  - Functional Exercises

- By partaking in different types of exercises, education agencies can identify the appropriate methods to address the five National Preparedness System mission areas: **protection, prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery**.

- Exercises that specifically focus on individual incidents may also expose the limitations of existing EOPs, such as procedural gaps or training needs.

Crisis/Emergency Planning Teams

- All core planning team members should be part of evaluating the effectiveness of the EOP and modifying it as needed on the basis of lessons learned.

- Schools can work with key stakeholders within the whole school community to help ensure that everyone is aware of the documented procedures and has time to practice school safety roles and responsibilities as outlined within school EOPs.

- By participating, everyone can assess the roles, responsibilities, relationships, communication strategies, and resources that would be critical should an actual incident occur.

Resources:

- Vermont School Safety Center (Resource Hub)

- Readiness in Emergency Management for Schools (REMS)

- Vermont Emergency Management

- Agency of Education

- FEMA Incident Command Trainings (free and virtual!)

- SchoolSafety.gov

- National Center for School Safety

- Regional Emergency Management Committees

Questions?

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