Emergency Management: A Checklist of Best Practices

As the school climate continues to change and increasingly complex threats emerge, it's critical that schools have a holistic, robust, and multi-layered approach to safety and security. It may be virtually impossible to predict an emergency, but there are many things you can do to be prepared for any crisis.

Based on our conversations and partnerships with over 35,000 K-12 U.S. schools, Raptor® has compiled this checklist of best practice action items to help schools prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

Prepare

PLAN FOR ALL SCENARIOS

☐ Assemble a security planning team of key stakeholders, representatives from your school community, and community partners

☐ Conduct a thorough risk assessment for each building to analyze threats and vulnerabilities

☐ Complete an annual physical security assessment that examines safety, security, climate, culture, and emergency preparedness

☐ Develop a comprehensive emergency operations plan (EOP) that will be the foundation of your school safety and security

☐ Incorporate industry-leading protocols like The "I Love U Guys" Foundation® into your EOP

☐ Set a cadence to regularly review and update your EOP throughout the year

☐ Create detailed maps that combine floor plans, high-resolution imagery, and gridded overlay to share with first responders

☐ Complete district-wide, age-appropriate safety training like the H.E.R.O Program from Safe Kids, Inc.®

☐ Train teachers and staff how to quickly summon help for any emergency, including school- or district-wide emergencies and localized incidents, like student fights or irate visitors

ALWAYS KNOW WHO IS ON CAMPUS

☐ Develop visitor management policies and procedures and train all staff

☐ Screen every visitor, including contractors, volunteers, and guardians, against the sex offender databases in all 50 states and U.S. territories

☐ Require every visitor to wear badges with their name, photo, destination, and time of entry so they are easily recognizable on campus

☐ Maintain custom databases—like banned visitors, custodial restrictions, restraining orders etc.—to ensure only approved visitors gain access to your buildings

☐ Record visitor information and activity to see who visited both at the school and district level

☐ Keep a log of current visitors to quickly know who is on campus during an emergency

☐ Ensure you release students to only approved guardians by screening guardians for custodial restrictions and confirming guardian matches the student's record

Prepare (cont.)

NEVER MISS A DRILL

- ☐ Create a drill schedule that complies with your district and state requirements

- ☐ Announce upcoming drills to staff, students, parents, and other participants ahead of time

- ☐ Invite first responders to participate in drills

- ☐ Regularly conduct age-appropriate drills at various times throughout the day to create muscle memory, build confidence, and increase response efficiency

- ☐ Conduct all-hazard, scenario-based drills and tabletop exercises with community partners (law enforcement, fire, and EMS) biannually

- ☐ Train students and staff beyond the typical procedure so they know what to do if they are in the hallway, bathroom, or away from their class when an emergency is initiated

- ☐ Track drill compliance by school to ensure no school misses a drill and notify district administrators if a school is out of compliance

- ☐ Create robust reports to assess drill performance after each drill

- ☐ Debrief immediately after so students, staff, and other participants can provide feedback

Respond

ENSURE IMMEDIATE AWARENESS

- ☐ Follow your emergency protocols and EOP

- ☐ Employ technology, like a mobile panic button, that immediately notifies 9-1-1 and other first responders of the emergency

- ☐ Enable all teachers, staff, and personnel to initiate an emergency regardless of where they are on campus

- ☐ Immediately communicate situation-specific, detailed information to everyone involved, including all staff, teachers, and first responders, when an emergency begins—preferably through multiple channels like emails, text messages, voice calls, and push notifications

- ☐ Have two-way communication with teachers, staff, incident commanders, and first responders so everyone stays updated

- ☐ Share critical information, documents, and maps with multiple first responder agencies (police, EMS, and fire), staff, and teachers
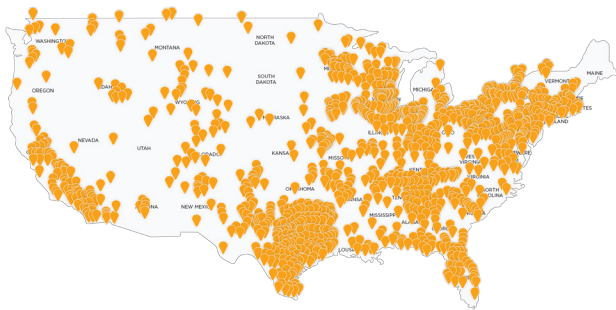
ACCOUNT FOR EVERYONE

- ☐ Make sure staff, teachers, incident commanders, and first responders have quick access to updated class rosters

- ☐ Have a method to account for all students, staff, and visitors on campus

- ☐ Ensure any teacher or staff member can account for any student, including students that are not in their assigned classroom

- ☐ Track student, staff, and visitor activity, location, and status during emergencies to quickly see who is accounted for or marked missing, injured, or unknown

- ☐ Update incident commanders and first responders in real-time as statuses change

- ☐ Give first responders access to accountability tracking that includes student information, including their medical conditions, allergies, and guardian contact information

Recover

REUNIFY STUDENTS FASTER

☐ Develop a reunification procedure with components that include:

- your reunification teams and their roles and responsibilities
- the reunification site location and staging
- your plan to transport students, staff, and emergency supplies to the site
- the involvement of law enforcement and mental health professionals
- how you will confirm students are reunified with approved guardians

☐ Stage the reunification site with clear signage to direct guardians

☐ Employ first responders and security personnel to help maintain a safe environment and manage the influx of guardians and media

☐ Have mental health professionals at the reunification site

☐ Screen guardians against the sex offender database and your custodial restriction database to confirm you are releasing students to only approved guardians

☐ Capture the guardian's signature at point of reunification

☐ Track status changes in real time so you can create a detailed history of events for each student and staff member for post-incident reporting and debriefing

☐ Follow industry-leading protocols like The "I Love U Guys" Foundation® Standard Reunification Method™ (SRM)

Trusted to protect over 35,000 K-12 U.S. schools, the Raptor K-12 integrated safety platform empowers schools to screen & track visitors; vet & approve volunteers; summon help immediately with a silent panic button; and maintain real-time visibility during drills, active incidents, and reunification events.

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> We would highly recommend Raptor to other districts. The idea of multiple integrated security modules indicates the versatility of the system, and we really value the fact that we can rely on one trusted source for all our safety technology.
>
> Crisis Management Technician, WY

Learn more online, contact us here, or call 877-772-7867 to schedule a personalized demo.

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